Norad

Making Sense of the Nexus

Rethinking Development Project Report

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Making Sense of the Nexus

In 2019, OECD DAC adopted the recommendations on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (hereinafter HDP Nexus) with the aim of working more effectively in the intersection between humanitarian, development, and peace action. This discussion paper

- presents the 'problem' the HDP Nexus approach tries to solve,
- discusses the changing 'reality' of development cooperation that makes the nexus approach more relevant than ever,
- and presents the core elements of the HDP Nexus approach and what it may entail in practice.

The discussion will highlight some of the trends, developments, milestones, and insights that have fed into the process of formalizing the approach within the OECD and present insights from recent studies and reports on the issue. After reading this you will be acquainted with key concepts and definitions that will likely influence development cooperation in the coming years. Forthcoming Norad discussion papers will discuss more thoroughly the specific challenges facing Norway, the contexts and engagements in which the HDP Nexus is particularly relevant, and the wider implications for Norway's international engagement.

Key points:

- While increasingly operating in the same contexts – often protracted crises – humanitarian assistance, long-term development, and peace activities usually have different institutional 'homes', work under different principles, and receive funding through different mechanisms. This results in a fragmented and incoherent system which does not effectively meet people's needs.

- HDP Nexus seeks to capitalize on the comparative strengths of humanitarian, development, and peace efforts to address unmet needs, reduce vulnerability, and address drivers of conflict.

- HDP Nexus requires all involved parties to agree on 'collective outcomes' (a measurable goal based on joint assessments) and increased collaboration without compromising on their distinctive mandates. As such, the HDP Nexus approach pushes the envelope on coherence while staying well within the existing structure of development cooperation.

- HDP Nexus is not a standard operating procedure; the way it is orchestrated depends on the context and the population's needs. All three pillars are not always equally relevant, and the approach may differ between contexts.

The "problem"

Recent upheavals and major crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, higher levels of conflict, the debt crisis, and increased costs of living are increasingly complex and co-evolving. According to the UNDP 2021/2022 Human Development Report, these developments represent a new 'uncertainty complex'. The crises' multidimensional, cascading, and cyclic nature is disrupting our often linear and sequential way of thinking about development. Long-term complex emergencies, or 'protracted crises', defined as contexts where 'a significant proportion of the population is acutely vulnerable to death, disease and disruption of their livelihoods over a prolonged period of time' (Macrae and Harmer 2004:1), are the new norm (Weishaupt 2020). Against this backdrop, the word 'nexus' simply refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development, and peace actions (OECD DAC 2019).

Examples of such interlinkages include impacts of development action that strengthens resilience to future humanitarian crises and the ability to bounce back after a crisis; impacts of peace building efforts on humanitarian needs and long-term development; and impacts of humanitarian and development action on the level of conflict. In addition, more and more evidence suggests that people in poverty are usually more exposed to, and less able to prepare for, the impact of climate change and extreme weather as many rely on agricultural income, work outdoors, and spend much of their income on food (World Bank Group 2022).

In the presence of such interlinkages, a coherent approach is needed across the three pillars to effectively address people's needs and vulnerabilities. Otherwise, there is a risk of gaps, duplication, lack of understanding of overlaps, underinvestment in measures that reduce future humanitarian need, and undermining efforts in other areas.

This is more easily said than done. For decades, humanitarian and development action have been treated as separate compartments, and for good reasons (see table 1). Humanitarian aid, development aid, and peace activities represent profoundly different approaches to meeting people's needs. While humanitarian aid is concerned with meeting immediate needs, development aid seeks to meet peoples' needs in the long run by addressing the root causes of under-development, such as lack of clean water, electricity, and jobs; scarce educational opportunities; or systemic challenges such as insufficient governance and societal capacities and slow economic growth. These approaches require different ways of working, e.g., different interventions, time horizons, and ways of relating to local partners and national governments.

The different approach to national governments is particularly deep-rooted. While humanitarian actors zealously protect their independence and are careful not to engage too closely with political actors and warring parties, development actors committed to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness usually emphasize local ownership and strengthening of national systems. The tension is even stronger in the pillar of peace promotion, which typically involves direct engagement with warring parties. The issues of accountability and relations to national governments pose increasingly crucial questions as more and more people are living in contexts in which the relationship between development donors and national authorities is ruptured. Due to, inter alia, coups, human rights abuses, sanctions, and contested electoral situations in countries such as Mali, Somalia, Afghanistan, Sudan, Eritrea, and Syria, donors and development actors are struggling to find the right balance between legitimizing illegitimate governments and supporting national systems.

Furthermore, separate organizational and financial structures have evolved to support these different ways of working, with different specialist competencies and cultures, different fundraising approaches, and different results frameworks and accountability systems.

In this connection, the goal of the HDP Nexus is to nudge these modalities and structures towards a more joint and coherent way of addressing people's needs and vulnerabilities, most importantly through improved coordination and a common set of goals and analysis, and a long-term commitment to building resilience and prevention capabilities through flexible and patient funding.

Although initiatives and examples of good cooperation across these areas exist, the general picture is that coordination and coherence in line with the ambition of the HDP Nexus approach is lacking. There is of course a general lack of coordination *within* each pillar as well, as many donors, NGOs, multilateral agencies, and national and local authorities pursue their own priorities. This is a well-known problem within aid, once referred to by Nancy Birdsall as one of foreign aid's 'deadly sins' (Birdsall 2008:523). While humanitarian coordination has improved over the years, the problem is still acute in the development pillar, with its wide range of goals and disintegrated mandates. The fact that 90 per cent of

development funding is channelled outside the UN system illustrates the scope of the challenge (Center on International Cooperation 2019).

Among the problems emanating from the traditional distinction between the three pillars of humanitarian assistance, development aid, and peacebuilding are:

Lack of conflict sensitivity. From Rwanda to South Sudan there is criticism of aid actors ignoring the drivers of conflict. Identifying the complex drivers of conflict and the means to abate them is difficult. But if development initiatives are unable to relate to deep-seated grievances in a particular context, these can easily undermine development efforts. Furthermore, because conflict is an important cause of humanitarian needs, it is essential that humanitarian and development actors make sure their actions do not undermine peace or exacerbate conflict but rather contribute to reduce conflict when possible. This requires conflict analysis: taking account of sociohistorical needs and disputes, conflict dynamics, political actors' incentives, and conflict triggers, including how one's own efforts affect these, across all three pillars. However, conflict analysis and political economy analysis still rarely receives adequate attention outside the peace pillar. If carried out as one-off events and not systematically revised, they quickly lose their relevance for planning and programming.

Lack of incentives and scope for coherent action. Separate funding streams with different sets of grant management rules, means of accountability, narrowly defined objectives and result indicators do not encourage actors to work coherently and in a complementary fashion across pillars; there are few incentives for joint planning of collective outcomes on the ground. As a result, a 'whole-of-context' approach suffers as the array of different actors continue working towards different goals and on separate projects. Because the separate system of three pillars is maintained and incentivized by donor funding, it may actually entail a real cost to organizations to work more closely in coordination with other actors and pillars. Hence, development actors are sometime hesitant to commit to coordination out of fear for their independence and unique funding (Fitzpatrick et al. 2021). The problem transmits *within* NGOs and donor agencies as different parts of organizations may have different mandates. As funding is usually tied to specific pillars, there is also limited scope for adjusting activities, for instance moving from development to a humanitarian response when a crisis emerges. Limited multi-year funding in humanitarian responses also prevents long-term planning and action. Although there have been some initiatives, such as One UN, in most contexts a centralizing body or platform does not exist. In practice, however, more and more actors are trying to work in nexus type arrangements, yet these initiatives are often ad hoc and voluntary 'pockets of nexus' and remain deviations from standard practice. Thus, while intellectual recognition of the need for change is gaining ground, organizational and financing structures are not.

Alternative structures to national systems in protracted crises. 'In complex, protracted emergencies humanitarians generally try to distance themselves from the government and

all other warring parties in order to maintain the humanitarian principles' (ibid. 23). This may lead to long-lasting service structures in parallel to existing national systems. This problem becomes especially acute when humanitarian funding dominates certain contexts. While access usually is an important argument for neutrality and independence, we need to recognize one important alternative: the fact that the notion of 'neutrality' is often contested and many local actors (non-neutral) are best positioned to access many crises. The ethical and rational argument of supporting local or government-led approaches seems to weigh heavily in the aid literature and is the reason why the European Commission among others requires grantees to justify whenever they are *not* working through existing national systems when responding to crises (Center on International Cooperation 2019).

Gaps and overlaps, lack of long-term perspective. The consequence of a lack of nexus approaches for the people on the ground may be that critical needs are not met, or that they are met in poorly overlapping, uncoordinated, and inefficient ways. For example, the total reach of humanitarian and development programmes in Yemen *exceeds* 100 per cent of the population. Still, many poor households receive no help while others are covered by multiple projects (Ghorpade and Ammar 2021). A particular concern is that insufficient attention is paid to reducing 'long-term humanitarian needs' if development actors do not contribute to addressing root causes and building resilience. If crises are increasingly cyclic or recurrent and the underlying problem is not dealt with (regardless of whether it is climate-induced or political), this undermines the long-term goal of development cooperation and will only prepare the ground for more humanitarian relief. If development aid is not anticipating and detecting signs of looming disasters, and likewise, if humanitarian actors are not working towards long-term solutions, we will see constant disruptions and gaps in service delivery in protracted crises and fragile contexts.[1]

The growing magnitude of these and related problems explain why the considerations and dilemmas around humanitarian, development, and peace efforts have regained a significant place on the international development agenda. Thus, while fads and trends come and go in the field of development cooperation, the concept of nexus seems to speak to certain fundamental challenges many aid providers and development actors face. It is not just another contender in the long line of priorities, but an inherent dilemma affecting the effectiveness of development, rooted in the very structure of development cooperation – at least as long as fragility and protracted crises remain hallmarks of development contexts.

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[1] UNDP has developed a 'risk-informed development' (RID) approach to rig its system for anticipation and prevention efforts. They have also developed a Risk Anticipation Hub to detect risks: UNDP's Crisis Offer | United Nations Development Programme

The changing "reality"

Before we explore the concrete set of recommendations from the OECD on how to deal with nexus situations more closely, it is important to revisit the wider contextual 'reality' to which the concept of 'nexus' has emerged as a response. The 'changing reality' confronting development assistance in a time of synergic vulnerabilities is exactly what is exposing the problems discussed – from lack of coordination and dysfunctional organizational design to disparate analysis and fragmented and inconsistent funding.

As development cooperation moves further from the 'reconstruction and growth' paradigm of the twentieth century towards a 'crisis and sustainability paradigm' dealing with interrelated and recurrent crises and development deficits – including climate and nature induced disasters, increased levels of conflict, and record levels of displacement – it pushes our system to the brink. This recognition is not new, and the last years' conceptual development represents a response to the fact that the realities of development cooperation currently do not 'fit' the underlying development logic our systems are built around: how we are organized, how we plan, how funding is structured, how principles and narratives are distinguished into different 'sequences', 'silos', or 'pillars' (see table 1).

TABLE 1 Characteristics of the HDP pillars

	Humanitarian aid	Development aid	Peace activities
Rationale for intervention	Needs-based, save lives, alleviate acute suffering, protect civilians	Poverty reduction, increase welfare, promote sustainable development, prevent crises, strengthen governance	Address grievances and root causes of conflict, prevent violence and conflict, build lasting peace
Principles	Humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence, apolitical	Country ownership, inclusion, localization, mutual accountability, results-orientation, transparency, political	Trust, dialogue, equity, long-term commitment, inclusivity, political
Implementation	INGOs, NGOs, UN agencies	Ideally governmental agencies, ministries, but also INGOs, NGOs, the World Bank, the UN, philanthropists, IFIs	Diplomats, national governments, mediators, peace convoys, dialogue facilitators, peacekeepers, civil society groups, religious leaders
Context	Ongoing emergencies, crises, disruption of normal life	LICs, MICs, LDCs, fragile and conflict-affected contexts	Emerging crises, fragile contexts, post-conflict settings
Duration and scale	• Short-term • Limited/focused on hotspots • Ex post	• Medium- and long-term • Large/country wide • Ex ante /ex post	• Medium- and long-term • Small or large • Ex ante/ex post
Relation to national authorities	Exogenous: Distance and independence to maintain humanitarian principles	Exogenous and endogenous: Collaboration, burden-sharing and transfer of resources and responsibility	Exogenous and endogenous: Impartial, yet deeply engaged
Links to other pillars	Stabilize and create preconditions for **development** and **peace**	Bring resources and prevent the need for **peace** and **humanitarian**	Reduce need for **humanitarian** Precondition for **development**

Development cooperation increasingly deals with contexts in which there is a *simultaneous* need for humanitarian responses, long-term solutions to national development problems, and peacebuilding that addresses root causes of conflicts. On the ground, these three areas

do not represent clearly defined areas of work or 'sequences' of development but interdependent drivers of distress, grievance, and poverty. For example, the seasonal rain in the Horn of Africa has below average for four consecutive year. Before 1999, these seasonal deviations happened once every 5-6 years; now they happen every 2-3 years – and they are likely to continue.[2] Thus, while other aspects of the crisis in countries such as Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya – such as the conflict with al-Shabaab or the Tigray conflict – can improve, a very important structural feature of the region will not. As such, the 'normal' is indeed changing.
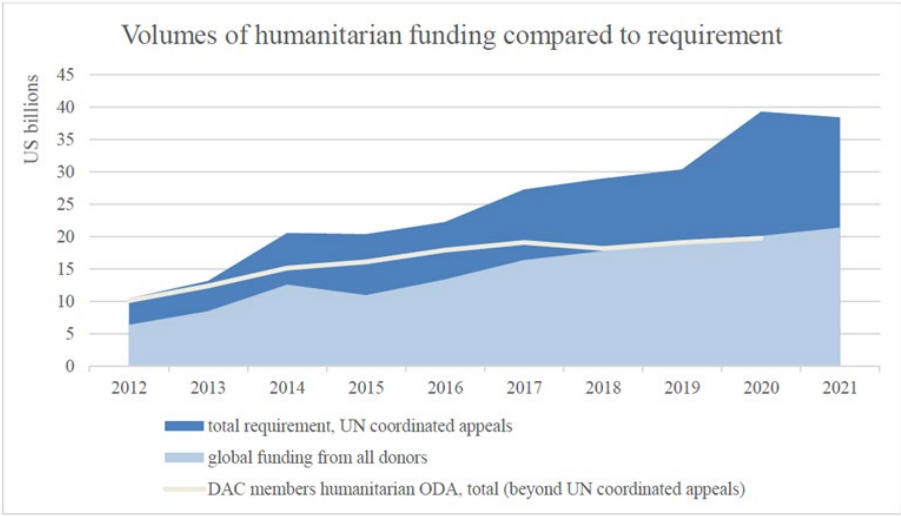
From the point of view of **humanitarian assistance**, the changing reality relates most specifically to the fact that the duration of humanitarian crises keeps increasing. Refugees and internally displaced people spend on average ten years in displacement (OECD 2022b). This stands in stark contrast to the often short-term funding mechanisms for humanitarian assistance and obscures the notion of 'post-conflict' or 'postcrisis' situations, on which most aid tends to focus and which explains the strong volatility of aid inflows to fragile contexts (Chandy et al. 2016; UN and World Bank 2018). In other words, in some humanitarian settings, international organizations and humanitarian actors have been present and working to 'save lives' and 'reduce suffering' for more than two decades (UN and World Bank 2018). Ninety-seven per cent of humanitarian crises are categorized as 'complex emergencies' requiring engagement across a number of sectors (ibid.), and close to 90 per cent of humanitarian funding is going to protracted crises (OECD 2019).

As international spill-over crises, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the climate crisis, tend to worsen existing crises and underlying conflicts, the complexity of humanitarian engagement is not likely to abate. The underfunding of emergencies will most likely continue to worsen as humanitarian crises draw out and add new layers of complexity. The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance is currently at a record 274 million (OECD 2022a), up from 136 million in 2012, and humanitarian appeals consistently exceed available funding. In 2017, a mere 60 per cent of humanitarian requirements were met, and in 2021, only 56 per cent of requirements were covered (see figure 1) (OECD 2022; World Disaster Report 2018).

In some cases, the foreign policy – and consequently development policies – of donors exacerbates crises through sanctions, isolation, unwillingness to think of long-term solutions in collaboration with the national authorities, and a predominantly short-term orientation via humanitarian aid only. This simultaneously curtails the development interventions *and* stretches the humanitarian actors across a number of needs (mission creep) as there is no alternative development intervention despite the increasing complexity.

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[2] Scientists sound the alarm over drought in East Africa: what must happen next (theconversation.com)

FIGURE 1 Gaps in humanitarian funding

Volumes of humanitarian funding compared to requirement

- total requirement, UN coordinated appeals
- global funding from all donors
- DAC members humanitarian ODA, total (beyond UN coordinated appeals)

Source: OECD (2022c)

However, this kind of mission creep is sometimes the result of an intentional reorientation by humanitarian actors that pragmatically expands the humanitarian principles in volatile and complex contexts (Lie 2020). In sum, the humanitarian system is severely resource-constrained, and there is a dire need to invest in prevention of the next crises, which is much cheaper than responding when a crisis has occurred. At present, only a marginal share of ODA is spent on prevention, peacebuilding, and disaster-risk reduction (around 1–2 per cent in fragile settings).[3]
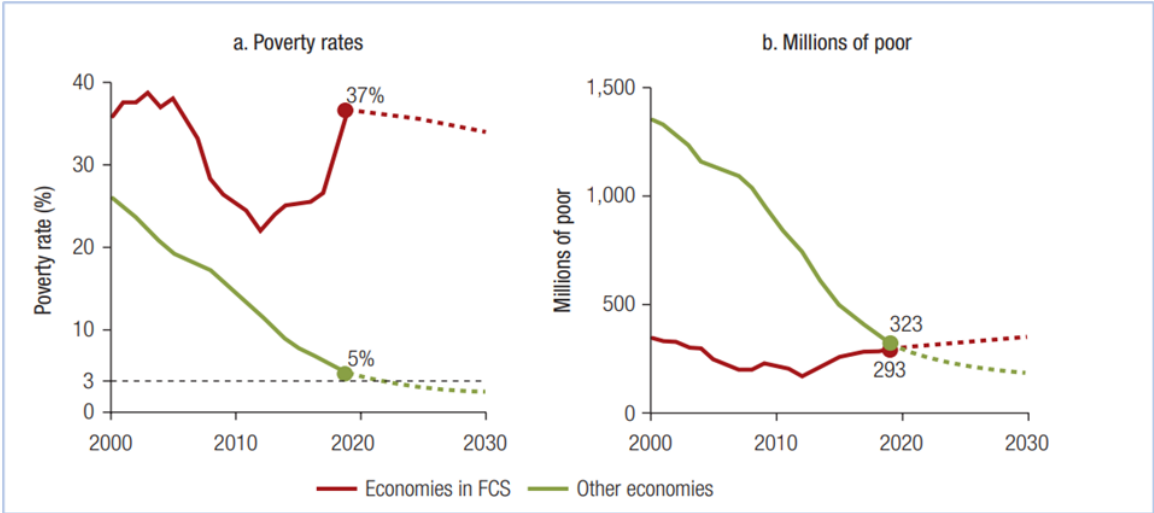
From the perspective of **long-term development**, emphasis on interlinkages between development, humanitarian assistance, and conflict seems to emanate from increased civil conflicts, insurgency, and 'new wars' around the end of the Cold War and after, including the clear rise in UN Peacekeeping missions. With the breakdown of the bipolar international system and the resuscitation of the UN Security Council, development aid expanded and gradually developed from more separate 'project-based' interventions to increasingly address 'root causes' related to states' basic functions and national systems. This prompted the World Bank to ask 'Why should the World Bank focus on civil war?' in its ground-breaking report *Breaking the Conflict Trap* from 2003 and conclude in its 2011 WDR, *Conflict, Security, and Development*, that countries characterized as either 'failed' or 'fragile' were the poorest performers under the current development regime, the UN Millennium Development Goals. The strategic turn within development towards security, conflict, fragility, and conflict prevention has since been consolidated at policy level by new research and data and,

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[3] Between 2005 and 2010, 1.3 dollars out of every 100 dollars spent on disaster response, and 2 per cent of ODA in fragile contexts in 2016 (Center on International Cooperation 2019: 65).

importantly, through new and joint initiatives by the World Bank, the UN, the OECD, bilateral donors, and not least conflict-affected states themselves (see textbox on International Milestones).[4] For example, a by now well-known insight is that extreme poverty and humanitarian crises are strongly linked to conflict. Conflicts drive 80 per cent of global humanitarian needs (UN A/70/709), and an estimated 80 per cent of the extremely poor will live in fragile contexts by 2030. From 2010 to 2019, the number of active violent conflicts in fragile contexts more than doubled (128 per cent increase), and in 2019 a record high 26 million people had sought refuge outside their home country (OECD 2020). The number of displaced people in the world reached more than 100 million in 2022.[5] Against this backdrop, research shows how economic development is a significant causal factor in reducing conflict and the level of violence towards the civilian population (Sambanis and Hegre 2004).

A violent civil conflict costs the average developing country roughly 30 years of GDP growth, and countries in protracted crisis can fall over 20 percentage points behind in overcoming poverty (Gates et al. 2012; DeGroot et al. 2022). As underlined by the World Bank, if the world consisted of poor yet stable peaceful countries, we would be on track to eradicate extreme poverty this decade (figure 1).[6] The OECD therefore reckons 'fragility' is possibly the single biggest threat to the realization of the SDGs (OECD 2018).

FIGURE 2 Poverty Trends in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States vs. Other States

a. Poverty rates — b. Millions of poor — Economies in FCS — Other economies


Given the often close and contingent relationship between root causes of underdevelopment and humanitarian needs, the bridge to **peace efforts** seems obvious.[7] Considering the trends mentioned and the vast evidence on conflict and development, few question the significance of the 'peace pillar'. Yet there seems to be less consensus about what the inclusion of the peace dimension implies for the other pillars. As a result, the peace pillar remains the area in which the international development community has covered the least ground (OECD 2022a). Notably, in 2020, peace activities stood for about 12 per cent of the OECD DAC members' bilateral ODA to fragile contexts. Respectively, humanitarian objectives and long-term development received 25 and 63 per cent (OECD 2022d). Peace and conflict prevention interventions can be categorized along a continuum depending on the context and situation (World Bank and United Nations 2018): conflict sensitivity, dealing with underlying and structural imbalances, local-level mediation, strengthening capacities for peace, peacebuilding, high-level diplomacy (ibid. Oxfam 2019).

The interests of nation-states engaging in peace and conflict prevention will also vary, from soft power engagement and 'idealistic' development to hard-nosed realpolitik and the securitization of development processes. In some contexts, peace engagements will require efforts to provide 'negative peace' (ending direct violence) while in other contexts it will be necessary to address structural injustices and underlying grievances and rebuild social capital ('positive peace'). As such, the peace pillar consists of disparate groups of activities with *no overarching common principles*, as is the case with humanitarian engagements and even (although to a lesser extent) development cooperation with its principles for aid effectiveness and similar normative frameworks.

In addition to the three pillars that make up the HDP Nexus, **the climate crisis and environmental degradation** pose a significant risk of further conflict escalation, increased humanitarian needs, and stagnation of development in many fragile contexts. The compartmentalization of international development and the humanitarian principles were sketched out in a time when climate did not affect conflict and power struggles as it does today (Lie 2020). The likely event of more frequent instances of extreme weather such as floods, droughts, and heat waves will harm livelihoods and households – notably in areas inhabited by agricultural and pastoral communities (Kohli et al. 2028). Environmental degradation leading to increased competition over natural resources is already driving conflicts and displacement in areas such as South Sudan, DRC, CAR and the Sahel (SIPRI/NUPI 2022). A common characteristic of many of these fragile contexts is a low level of social cohesion and weak resilience in the face of environmental degradation.

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[7] It is worth noting that at the dawn of international development cooperation in the post–World War II reconstruction era, this distinction – between the long-term development agenda, peacebuilding, and humanitarian assistance – was particularly hard to draw (Simensen 2003). As such, the underlying dilemmas and challenges of nexus approaches are not new to development cooperation.

To illustrate how all these factors are blending, see the following map (Kohli, A., Steinemann, M., Denisov, N. and Droz, S. 2018):
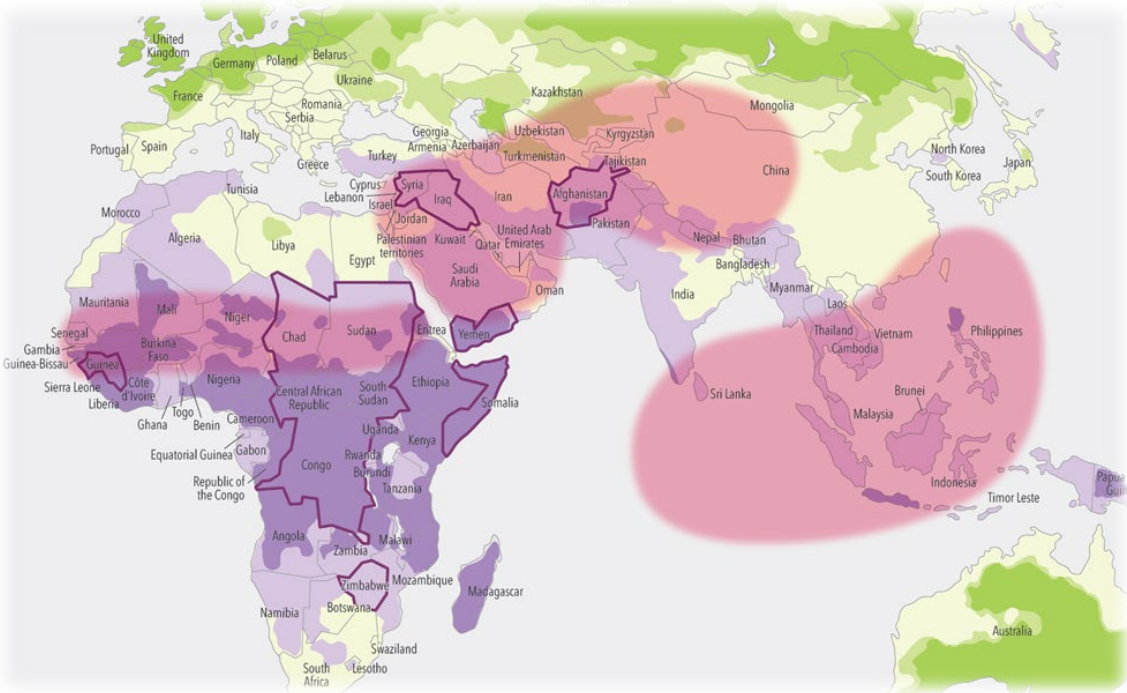
The map highlights areas of vulnerability (purple = high, white = medium, green = low) and areas in which climate is increasing the potential for conflict (pink). Fragile contexts, high alert (purple frame): The fact that a map from 2018 does not include countries such as Mali, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Eritrea illustrates the volatility and uncertainty of fragility.

Ukraine illustrates the wide relevance of nexus

The violent conflict in Ukraine erupted in 2014 and has displaced hundreds of thousands and claimed 13,000 lives in its first eight years. With the full-scale invasion by Russia, and UN estimates of 12 million people in need of relief and protection, the 'humanitarian crisis' seems to be one for the long haul – and closely connected to the root causes of the conflict (Kirn and Ossenbrink 2022). However, there are several examples of persistent humanitarian crises across the world, many of which seem more intractable than Ukraine due to the complex conflict dynamic, for example in the Sahel, Somalia or South Sudan.

While the Ukraine war currently has the characteristics of an 'old war' – extreme levels of violence, mobilization of the entire nation and state apparatus, and usually only two sides trying to impose their will on the other – a number of crises around the world bear the hallmark of 'new wars', with numerous factions, ethnicization, lower and more dispersed levels of violence, irregular threats, conflict entrepreneurs, and looting. In the latter case, the conflict dynamic thus seems to make up a 'social condition' or even a 'system' – further complicating the notion of 'stages' such as conflict, post-conflict, and reconstruction. Some of these conflicts are often de facto civil wars or international civil wars, and research shows that the economic effects of civil wars and internal violence are greater than for interstate wars (Davenport et al. 2019).

Indeed, the average number of armed groups in civil wars increased from 8 in 1950 to 14 in 2010, making these conflicts harder to solve (von Einsiedel 2017). As such, it is no wonder that the Center on International Cooperation (2019: 65) notes that 'the moral and business case for greater financing of prevention and preparedness is by now well established' within the nexus discourse. Preventing the next shock and the drivers of conflict and crises is key to sustainable development.

... and the solution?

With more protracted crises and a concentration of the extremely poor in fragile contexts, how can humanitarian and development interventions simultaneously deal with immediate and long-term needs? It will require efforts to reduce vulnerability, address unmet needs, resolve underlying conflicts, and build resilient national systems capable of dealing with new shocks and crises. The HDP nexus approach therefore seeks to **improve the strategic and operational linkages between development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and peace activities**.

In short, it attempts to ensure that these different needs are met concurrently and that the three different pillars support, rather than undermine, each other. As noted by Lie (2020), the idea is quite straightforward: do away with the compartmentalization and understand these efforts as different aspects of a whole. According to the OECD DAC Recommendations on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus from 2019, a 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.[8]

As the definition highlights, the nexus approach does not mean *merging* all three pillars (humanitarian assistance, long-term development, and peace-related efforts) into one. Rather the nexus literature emphasizes complementarity and distinct advantages. Actors working in each pillar need to keep an eye on the larger picture and 'understand how their own approaches affect the outcomes of others' because development ultimately depends on the success of their shared efforts and objectives (DuBois 2020). This requires a 'whole-of-context' approach to the needs and opportunities in each context – not that each individual organization or actor be multi-mandated (covering two or all areas). A nexus approach does not mean, for example, that humanitarian programmes should merge with development programmes and lose their distinctiveness. Rather, different actors and institutions are usually 'anchored' in one of the three pillars, and while direct collaboration is not always needed, one always remains sensitive to it. Also, depending on the context, each of the pillars may require different levels of attention and effort. In some cases, the full 'triple' HDP nexus approach may be required, which commits all pillars to seek coherence (such as in South Sudan, Mali, Somalia, and DRC). In other cases, two of the dimensions dominate, such as in Sri Lanka or Honduras (peace and development pillars), or Malawi (development and humanitarian assistance).

In other words, the differences between the pillars should be seen as nothing more than 'technical', and not separate endeavours or positions in some normative hierarchy (Fitzpatrick et al. 2019). The responsibility is shared, yet the competencies, approaches, and resources are different. All efforts in a context must therefore be *orchestrated* in such a way as to accumulate impact beyond individual actors' separate mandates.

To better understand what this requires, the HDP nexus recommendations distinguish between efforts in the areas of **_coordination_, _programming_, and _financing_.** In the following, we present the main recommendations for each of these areas, along with a status report based on the 2022 OECD HDP Interim Progress Review.

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[8] OECD, *DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, OECD/LEGAL/5019.

Coordination

Recommendations
- Joined-up analysis and planning
- Identification of collective outcomes
- Empowered UN leadership and cost-effective coordination
- Political and diplomatic engagement to identify opportunities for coherent approaches

Status
- Some progress on shared analysis, for example on tools like Common Country Analysis (CCA), Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)
- Joined-up planning processes initiated in 25 countries
- Still siloes and little overall coordination with IFIs, diplomacy, and intelligence
- Lack of attention and will to coordinate on behalf of national authorities and donors

Programme

Recommendations
- Prioritize prevention and early recovery
- Be conflict sensitive, gender-sensitive, and 'people centred'
- Include and strengthen national institutions and local organizations
- Address structural drivers of conflict. Enable state institutions to assume responsibility from humanitarian actors

Status
- Efforts to formulate collective outcomes in more than 20 countries
- Still a fragmentation of diagnostic and decision-making tools
- Increased, but still little use of political and conflict analysis
- Little progress on localization and strengthening of local capabilities
- Joined planning not resulting in joined implementation

Financing

Recommendations
- Multi-year financing strategies
- Predictability and flexibility wherever possible
- Aligning financing with collective outcomes
- Ensuring financial flows do not contribute to conflict or instability

Status:
- Financing not adequately risk tolerant
- Financing still fragmented with little alignment across the nexus
- Absence of legitimate authorities tend to delay or put financing on hold
- Some progress on making financing more flexible in response to changes in the context

HDP Nexus and Fragility:

The problem of coordination and collaboration has been particularly acute in fragile contexts, which already a decade ago had an average of 750 development interventions annually and 65 international donors engaged (Chandy and Linn 2011). According to the OECD, the HDP nexus recommendations are primarily motivated by the desire for more effective engagement and enhanced impact in fragile and conflict-affected places (OECD 2022a).

In general, development engagement in fragile and conflict-affected contexts tends to be more fragmented and volatile than in stable contexts due to the multitude of actors involved in peacebuilding, security, development efforts, and reconstruction (OECD 2020). In recent years, the involvement of China and Russia has added to the complexity and confusing division of labour among international actors (ibid.). The HDP Nexus recommendations are therefore an effort to reflect and readjust development cooperation in step with these added layers of complexity and the increased salience of fragile and conflict-affected states in 'the last mile' of poverty eradication (Chandy, Kato, Kharas 2015).

While the HDP Nexus recommendations respect the three different pillars' distinctiveness, the intention and ambition clearly push the envelope in terms of collaboration and integration. For example, while the three pillars should at a minimum complement each other, the HDP approach also aims for coordination and even *cohesion* – in practice challenging and attempting to overcome the existing differences between the pillars to achieve 'shared outcomes' or 'collective outcomes' (Development Initiatives 2019: 4, Oxfam 2019: 12). This requires development donors and actors to inter alia:

Undertake joint risk-informed, gender-sensitive analysis of *root causes and structural drivers of conflict*, as well as *positive factors of resilience* and the identification of collective outcomes incorporating humanitarian, development, and peace actions,

And:

Prioritize prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding, investing in development whenever possible, while ensuring immediate humanitarian needs continue to be met.

According to the UN Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) **'collective outcomes'** should be a joint endeavour, be context specific, draw on the comparative advantage of all actors,

and include aspects beyond analysis and planning, such as programming, implementation, and coordination (IASC 2020). This entails setting 'a concrete and measurable result' as this will more clearly enhance the connection between the three different pillars, identify different entry points and responsibilities, and highlight how funding and organizational structures need to fit.

Ideally, for the nexus approach to be effective, it needs therefore to be elevated beyond each 'pillar' and integrated and mainstreamed as a requirement for overall development policy – as it may apply to all contexts, even presumably stable ones (Ethiopia before November 2020, Kenya before the election violence in 2007, Mozambique before 2013). In the case of Norway, for example, there is a strong recognition of the need for nexus approaches in parts of the aid administration, e.g., the humanitarian sector (nexus insights features strongly in the Norwegian humanitarian strategy), the education sector, among civil society, and at certain regional desks (the Sahel and the Horn of Africa in particular). Nevertheless, it seems this recognition is not equally strong at the overall policy level or operationalized on all country levels, although the latter is a stated ambition. Equally, two significant evaluations of Norwegian development assistance to Somalia and South Sudan respectively, show a major weakness in the application of conflict sensitivity analysis (Norad 2020a, Norad 2020b).[9]

However, efforts to improve interlinkages within the bounds of one donor or one multilateral agency can only go so far. What matters is what happens on the ground in each context. Thus, in some respects the HDP recommendations are extremely comprehensive, urging all actors to undertake laborious 'joined-up' analysis, coordinated planning and programming across multilateral agencies, donors, local authorities, civil society actors, and indigenous groups. Indeed, it seems the vision embedded in the HDP Nexus moves beyond the 'humanitarian action' of serving millions of individuals towards 'humanitarian cooperation', which aims is to strengthen national capabilities and services (Slim 2022). Even so, the recommendations frequently emphasize the need to preserve and respect the 'space for principled humanitarian action' and therefore hesitate to confront existing barriers (OECD 2019). As such, they raise the ambition and depict a new vision for development cooperation in fragile contexts without actually changing the very structures from which these problems emanate.

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[9] One of the few major metastudies of evaluations and studies from fragile contexts (Zürcher 2022) found that assumptions guiding interventions often disregard the conflict potential of adding resources into a fragile context. Development donors undermine the dynamic created by transferring resources of any kind into an area of conflict and few other resources. The actors involved will usually attempt to control all available resources and weaken the influence of the government or the international society – often through violence or the threat of violence (ibid.) As the evaluation for South Sudan notes: "Development or humanitarian aid is precisely such a resource that has huge potential to create and fan conflict" (Norad 2020: 74).

In sum, although the HDP recommendations attempt to solve the problems discussed in the first part, the approach also leaves a number of questions and challenges unanswered:

- How should one relate to illegitimate governments/authorities?
- How is it possible to resolve the conflicting goals between security and stabilization interventions and the development agenda?
- Humanitarian actors are still operating in parallel to authorities and remain hesitant to engage more with peace efforts and national development efforts, despite a broader range of needs and increased complexity.
- In long-term complex emergencies with illegitimate governments, humanitarian actors are often stretched and asked to do too much as development agencies are restricted by domestic politics and foreign policy priorities.
- Some local actors and agencies best placed to access and assist in crises are not eligible for humanitarian funding due to the humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence.
- Many of the world's biggest humanitarian organizations are viewed as 'Western' in an increasingly multipolar world (not neutral nor independent), and therefore may struggle to obtain access and effectively serve populations.
- How is it possible to reconcile domestic political sensitivity and national interests with development priorities and context sensitivity in matters of security, stabilization, and refugees in fragile contexts (e.g., if sanctions exacerbate crises and only allow for short-term humanitarian aid)?
- What is the best way to reduce the political impetus and continued fragmentation of the development community when it comes to foreign aid policies and development finance?[10]
- How can we make sure that more coordination actually improves effectiveness and does not create excessive bureaucracy?

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[10] An updated figure from the World Bank shows that the share of countries (not just fragile contexts) with more than 60 donors has increased from 55 per cent in 2009 to 78 per cent in 2019: https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/insights-proliferation-and-fragmentation-boost-aid-effectiveness-during-crises

International milestones leading up to the HDP nexus approach

The HDP nexus approach has emerged as part of a transition, or rather an *evolution*, in the conceptual framework of development assistance in crisis and conflict settings. The approach incorporates insights, principles, and 'lessons learned' from decades of development cooperation on issues such as support of national systems, local ownership, donor coordination, conflict sensitivity, do-no-harm, early warning, prevention, resilience, risk reduction and fragility (see appendix 1 for concepts and definitions). As such, the nexus approach should be seen as the logical extension and accumulation of several initiatives and normative developments already adopted within the development community.

- The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (2011): donors are committed to strengthening nationally owned plans and initiatives to support transitions from conflict and fragility.
- *Saving Lives Today and Tomorrow* (2014): UNOCHA: proactive humanitarian engagement.
- Agenda 2030: common goals for sustainable development, centres on the most vulnerable and furthest behind (LNOB), raises the standard for collaboration and long-term solutions in development.
- Sendai framework (2015): prevent or reduce the risk of disasters, strengthen resilience and 'build back better'.
- Grand Bargain (2016): pooled multi-year funding, greater support to national providers (localization), reduce earmarking of contributions, alignment, enhance collaboration between humanitarian and development actors, joint assessments.
- UN New Way of Working (2017): strengthen, not replacing national systems; collective outcomes for humanitarian and development actors, anticipate, not wait for crises.
- Pathways for Peace (2018): milestone report from the UN and the World Bank confirming the economic and normative case for prevention.
- OECD DAC HDP nexus (2019): a new standard for development engagement in conflict settings. Builds on and develops the HUM-DEV nexus by including the PEACE pillar. Emphasizes complementarity: all pillars are distinct yet must support each other.

...and not so recent developments from the 1980s and 1990s like the 'Relief-to-Development Continuum', 'Linking Relief Resilience and Development', 'Disaster Risk Reduction' (DRR) and the World Bank's reinvigorated interest in reconstruction, state capacity and conflict towards the end of the 1990s (Fitzpatrick et al. 2021).

The concept of nexus is confusingly similar to UN's 'new way of working' (NWoW), which highlights **reinforcing** (as opposed to replacing) national and local systems, **transcending** the humanitarian-development divide by working towards collective outcomes, and **anticipating** (as opposed to waiting for) crises. The NWoW was first launched in relation to the 'the 'Grand Bargain' adopted at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.

Despite the ascendence of the HDP nexus and a range of normative frameworks, top-level recognition, strategies and policy documents, the concept – and its ramifications – remain ambiguous to many. The term nexus is both poorly understood and implemented across the development sector (OECD 2018; Center on International Cooperation 2019). The OECD DAC has therefore called for a 'jargon-free and practice-oriented messaging' for the nexus principles to reach a broader audience (OECD 2022a: 14).

Below we list some examples of 'nexus work' to illustrate what it may entail in practice:

Linking up with national systems: Bypassing national systems has been a default position for humanitarian action (just 2.5 per cent of humanitarian funding is directly channelled to national governments) (Center on International Cooperation 2019:17).[11] An improved collaboration between the humanitarian pillar and the development pillar, with a clear link to government systems, seems to have emerged in countries where there is strong government leadership (high capacity and political will) or where insecurity is high ('forcing' collaboration). Wherever governments are able to assume a greater responsibility for emergency preparedness (as in most high-income countries) the HDP linkages are strengthened (Center on International Cooperation 2019). Linking humanitarian action and national social protection programmes is one important way of strengthening 'resilience' and long-term capacity for dealing with shocks. Parallel structures and institutions will be dissolved or fluctuate with international attention, but building on, preserving or 'shadowing' existing national systems will only strengthen national capabilities (ibid.).

Cash transfer is just one example: cash as part of humanitarian assistance has more long-term and spill-over effects as it ends up stimulating local markets (Drury 2022). Cash is increasingly used as part of humanitarian assistance. Aligning cash transfers with national social protection systems, where they exist (avoiding duplication), or establishing systems

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[11] This looks even worse on the civil society side: only 0.4 of international humanitarian assistance is channelled through national or local NGOs (ibid: 15).

that can later be scaled up to national social protection systems, or letting the government at least set the standards and regulations if and when national systems lack implementation capacity, are all examples of good nexus work. If humanitarian actors always intervene with the goal of *sustainably* reducing needs, perhaps we can build or strengthen permanent national systems through emergency interventions.

Refugees, IDPs and host communities: The issue of IDPs and refugees is a core question within the nexus discourse as it calls for short-term interventions, long-term development efforts, and peace-related activities (in both the countries refugees flee from and in the host community). A few countries in the global South are hosting most of the displaced people in the world. Supporting these countries in line with the Global Compact on Refugees would be a significant contribution to achieving nexus goals. Welcoming refugee children in national educational systems, letting IDPs cultivate the land and access markets, providing extra funding directly to affected local administrations, including the needs of IDPs in national policy planning, and providing national authorities with funds for the resettling and integration of IDPs and refugees are all examples of nexus work. The European Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) attempts to ensure protection, livelihoods, and self-reliance of both refugees and host communities through national systems in Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq. Colombia's historic Temporary Protection Status initiative has granted 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees a special ten-year permission to enter the labour market and access all rights and services within Colombia except the right to vote (UNHCR 2021). By signing up to the programme, refugees are documented, which increases transparency and strengthens Colombia's ability integrate the diverse group of refugees and target the most vulnerable. In short, the initiative moves millions of refugees and migrants from the informal and irregular sphere over into the formal economy and simultaneously reduces the presence of the humanitarian apparatus as people are allowed to move freely and integrate into the society. Uganda's development of specific sector plans to reduce tensions and strengthen social cohesion in displacement-affected districts through the integration of more than one million refugees in national systems and services is another promising example. A final example is Ethiopia's Refugee Proclamation, which ushered in a fundamental revision of the management of refugees: from a practice of decampment, confinement and spatial unfreedom to integration and freedom by allowing asylum seekers to move and settle freely, work, and access national services (ibid.).

Analysis and planning: Analyses and assessments abound across the three HDP pillars. This overload and fragmentation of information is not conducive to the goals of the nexus approach. However, some very important tools for joint analysis, planning, and coordination have emerged in recent years. One example is the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in countries like Uganda and Ethiopia which brings together humanitarian actors, development actors, national government actors and civil society actors (Center on International Cooperation 2019). Another example is the joint approach from the European Union, the World Bank, and the United Nations called the Recovery and Peacebuilding

Assessment (RPBA), which is trying to identify and address 'immediate and medium-term recovery and peacebuilding requirements while laying the foundations for the elaboration of a longer-term recovery' (EU, World Bank, UN: 2017). The plan covers a range of sectors and offers an 'agreed upon strategic, prioritized and sequenced recovery and peacebuilding plan' (ibid: 12). Other examples are the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and Common Country Assessments (CCA). A better alignment of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework has also helped to rationalize and coalesce the nexus actors. In general, the World Bank has, over the years, established a closer relationship with humanitarian assistance providers, for example through the IDA Conflict Response Window. The EU's Integrated Approach for Security and Peace (ISP) aims at gathering all mechanisms and tools available in one context, from security and defence to development and diplomatic efforts, in one document in order to enhance coherence. One evaluation found that the successful implementation of nexus approaches does not necessarily need separate or specific 'nexus programs' but contextual Fingerspitzengefühl and decentralized room for manoeuvre (FAO, DI, NRC 2021).

Importantly, in addition to these joined-up tools for planning and analysis, there are also interesting trends in developing more adaptable country strategies with 'crisis modifiers', such as the previous UN Cooperation Framework (UNCF) in South Sudan which developed a non-linear theory of change and put emphasis on anticipating possible setbacks and rapid contingency plans. In this regard, the application of 'anticipatory cash transfers' in Bangladesh is an interesting example (Pople et al. 2021). The World Food Programme provided cash transfers to households along the Jamuna River forecasted to experience extreme floods. This novel approach made sure vulnerable households received support seven days before the flooding peaked, which allowed them to prepare and 'cushion' some of the impact (the humanitarian cash response to the last severe flooding in 2019 came 100 days after the peak). The treated households were 36 per cent less likely to go a day without eating during the flood and experienced significantly higher consumption and well-being, including less costly borrowing after the crisis.

So what?

The nexus approach and new innovative ways of financing, coordination, and programming are quickly gaining ground across the development sector. The EU, the World Bank, UN agencies, NGOs, and several donors are reforming their methodology to varying degrees and attempting to team up with national governments and local authorities to find better tools and solutions for the changing contextual reality.[12] On the other hand, reduced fiscal space and restrictive measures to avoid further economic meltdown in light of the Russian war on Ukraine have sharpened budgetary competition and turf wars between different pillars in development. Ultimately, however, donors shape the incentives of actors across the development sector, and in a time in which the macro-economic context makes the budgetary and organizational structure of development cooperation even less conducive to cross-pillar collaboration, it will be down to donors like Norway to shape funding and policy in line with the goal of the nexus approach.

However, the success of the HDP Nexus depends not just on the international development apparatus but also on national governments and elites. Thus, while the vision inherent in the HDP Nexus may be a great idea, change and reform are contingent on the reconciliation of the interests of elites and institutions scattered across districts, countries, and different domains. The nexus approach is fundamentally context-dependent, and thus in the hands of groups with direct influence within a territory. Notably, low levels of trust between external actors and governments, and governments' own priorities (if those do not match nexus recommendations) remain important bottlenecks to HDP Nexus work (OECD 2022a). Therefore, while circumstances are indeed evolving – which often opens a space for disruption and change – we cannot speak of a 'grand bargain' until the elites running the state apparatus, the donors, international agencies, and NGOs have a genuine interest in acting collectively.

The 'nexus' issue represents a vast and intractable problem with entrenched positions and misaligned incentives which needs to be broken down into manageable pieces. The intertwined 'whole' in its entirety is a daunting challenge just to comprehend, and facing it head on often lead to confusion and nibbling around the edges. A more manageable approach may be to focus on one or several of the following 'inroads' to the issue – all of which still requiring answers to tough questions:

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[12] As of November 2021, seven UN agencies are adherents to the DAC Recommendations on the HDP Nexus: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Hugh Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat).

- **The context**: How can Norway and other donors contribute to complementarity and coherence working towards collective outcomes in fragile settings? How can we nudge the international engagement towards resilience and addressing root causes of conflicts? Orchestrating all actors within a given context is an extremely ambitious task and should be handled by national authorities or the coordination offices of the UN. It will include sharing of data, experiences, and joint analysis; convergence of efforts around pressing needs; high-level dialogue between donors, multilaterals, and the government; common principles; and pooled and multi-year funding that encourages collaboration and allows for adaptivity and long-term commitment.

- **The donor**: How can Norway best facilitate an even broader nexus sensitivity within its own system and development portfolio? How can we strengthen the interlinkages and synergies between humanitarian assistance and development collaboration in terms of analysis, coordination, funding and programming? How does the Norwegian engagement for peace and reconciliation come in as part of the 'nexus approach'? Should every sector and every embassy have a nexus lens to its portfolio? The EU has moved towards a single coherent country approach; Sweden is trying to develop its 'Team Sweden' approach to reach a common understanding and position in international settings. How can Norway move beyond improved collaboration and information sharing between the MFA, Norad, the embassies, and their respective partners and develop a truly joint analysis and collective outcomes? How could donors provide stronger incentives for a more holistic approach?

- **The implementing organization:** How do implementing agencies with mandates that stretch across the three pillars operationalize this holistic approach? How can multi-mandated organizations switch between and better link the apolitical needs-based approach of humanitarian assistance with the political and long-term approaches of development and peace activities? How can they better strengthen resilience and prevent development losses when the next crisis occurs? What are the biggest obstacles to operationalization? Are smaller NGOs with less clear division of labour better suited to the flexibility needed for a nexus approach (Fitzpatrick 2021)? How do multi-mandated organizations best position themselves in a financing structure that holds on to a strict separation between the three pillars? How do they best contribute to collaboration and coordination in an environment often characterized by competition and fragmentation?

- **An issue-based approach:** Choosing to focus on specific issues will lead to an even more precise discussion on how to solve nexus problems. Specifically, how to protect, help and integrate/resettle displaced people – both refugees and IDPs – is one prominent issue. The problem of displacement will need to be further deconstructed into specific questions of how to move from the apolitical realm of relief and encampment to the long-term processes of education, labour market

insertion, and livelihood creation. Other important issues include food security, education, and health.

A related aspect which will need careful consideration is **the temporal aspect.** One overarching issue is that development actors need to strike a delicate intertemporal balance between the humanitarian needs here and now and the far-reaching implications of peace, reconciliation, and environmental degradation. However, there are other temporal aspects as well, and although all temporal questions depend on the contextual developments, there are important questions to keep in mind: How long can a humanitarian crisis – and a humanitarian response – persist within the same context? Do humanitarians assist vulnerable populations only when they are in need? At what point do long-term development processes need to be embedded into the humanitarian response? When should humanitarian actors withdraw, or when do they slip 'into building states' (Barnett 2011: 3)? How fast should the transition from humanitarian response to recovery be? When should governments resume the responsibility of relief and protection? When do humanitarian actors cross the threshold and move into the development realm and align with national priorities? If needs persist, when is it time to redefine a situation as a 'nexus case' and move beyond compartmentalized thinking?

A way forward is to start envisioning alternative solutions to the existing system. If we start with the problems facing the population in a given context and, for a moment, leave aside the abstract questions around existing structures and modes of operation in the development and humanitarian system, what steps, what operational design, which modes of financing and collaboration would we choose? Perhaps the model we envisage could help us maximize synergies within the existing system. Simple, yet fundamental questions, like 'Why do we still do it this way?' and 'How can we do it differently?', are sometimes needed when our imagination and incentives are limited by existing financial, organizational, and cultural frameworks.

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Key terms and concepts

Coherence is 'the combining of differing entities, actions, or plans into a single, integrated whole with each entity moving in the same direction toward the same ultimate aims without inhibiting the other entities, but while each retains independent identities and agency' (Fitzpatrick et al. 2021: 13).

Collective outcomes refers to a commonly agreed measurable result or impact enhanced by the combined effort of different actors, within their respective mandates, to address and reduce people's unmet needs, risks and vulnerabilities, increasing their resilience and addressing the root causes of conflict (OECD 2019). As such it is a joint endeavour that is context specific, draws on the comparative advantage of all actors and includes more aspects than analysis and planning such as programming, implementation and coordination (IASC 2020).

Collective outcomes are defined by UNOCHA as 'commonly agreed quantifiable and measurable result or impact in reducing people's needs, risks and vulnerabilities and increasing their resilience, requiring the combined effort of different actors' (OCHA 2017: 7). They are 'designed to cover UN humanitarian and peacebuilding activities, with flexibility to adapt to new developments through annual work plans' (Center on International Cooperation 2019: 71) and thus meant to mobilize various actors and stakeholders around a set of common priorities within a specific national context.

Comparative advantage refers to the demonstrated capacity and expertise (not limited solely to a mandate) of one individual, group or institution to meet needs (OECD 2019). It is also defined as 'the capacity and expertise of one individual, group or institution to meet needs and contribute to risk and vulnerability reduction, over the capacity of another actor' (OCHA 2017: 7)

Complementarity, according to Fitzpatrick et al. (2021: 13) and Barbelet (2019), harnesses the unique strengths and comparative advantages of all actors (often from all pillars) in such a way that the outcomes of each support the outcomes of the others to be more effective in achieving a collective outcome for the affected communities.

Conflict analysis is often the first step in conflict sensitivity (see below). It is a structured process of analysing the background and history of a conflict, the groups involved and their different perspectives, and identifying causes of conflict (structural, proximate, and triggers) (Conflict Sensitivity Consortium).

Conflict sensitivity entails analysing the conflict context in an attempt to understand the interaction between the intervention and the context and acting upon this understanding to minimize negative impacts and, where possible and appropriate, maximize positive impacts.

Fragility is the combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacities of the state, system and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks (OECD 2022). It may entail the loss of the monopoly on the legitimate use of force, inability to provide public services, and the lack of legitimate authority to make decisions (Fragile States Index).

Humanitarian principles (J-PAL and FCDO 2022: 6):

- **Humanity:** The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings wherever human suffering is found.
- **Impartiality:** Humanitarian action has no bias towards nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class, or political opinion. Humanitarian assistance is based on need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress.
- **Independence:** Humanitarian action is carried out independently of the political, economic, military, or other objectives that any actor may hold regarding areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.
- **Neutrality:** Humanitarian actors do not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Nexus refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions (OECD 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 2019).

Prevention is a long-term process of pre-empting triggers of violent conflict, reinforcing and steering a society's pathway toward peace (UN and the World Bank 2018). Prevention efforts must be inclusive to proactively address structural issues, patterns of exclusion and the grievances of people and communities. It requires shaping institutions so that people are incentivized to manage conflicts without violence.

Protracted crises are contexts where 'a significant proportion of the population is acutely vulnerable to death, disease and disruption of their livelihoods over a prolonged period of time' (Macrae and Harmer 2004:1). Also characterized by a combination of acute and long-term issues or needs such as conflict, natural hazards, a breakdown in governance,

malnutrition, disease, food insecurity, unsustainable livelihood systems and chronic poverty (Save the Children 2021).

Resilience is the ability of an individual, a community or a country to cope with, adapt and recover quickly from the impact of a disaster, violence or conflict. SIDA's definition adds to this the ability to 'positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term stresses, change and uncertainty' (SIDA 2020: 5).

Appendix 2: DAC Recommendations on the HDP Nexus, 11 principles

Coordination:
- Undertake joint risk-informed, gender-sensitive analysis of root causes and structural drivers of conflict, as well as positive factors of resilience and the identification of collective outcomes incorporating humanitarian, development and peace actions.
- Provide appropriate resourcing to empower leadership for cost-effective co-ordination across the humanitarian, development and peace architecture.
- Utilize political engagement and other tools, instruments and approaches at all levels to prevent crises, resolve conflicts and build peace.

Programming:
- Prioritize prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, investing in development whenever possible while ensuring immediate humanitarian needs continue to be met.
- Put people at the centre, tackling exclusion and promoting gender equality.
- Ensure that activities do no harm, are conflict sensitive to avoid unintended negative consequences and maximize positive effects across humanitarian, development and peace actions.
- Align joined-up programming with the risk environment.
- Strengthen national and local capacities.
- Invest in learning and evidence across humanitarian, development and peace actions.

Financing:
- Develop evidence-based humanitarian, development and peace financing strategies at global, regional, national and local levels, with effective layering and sequencing of the most appropriate financing flows.
- Use predictable, flexible, multi-year financing wherever possible.

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