









# Advancing Nexus in Yemen: Breaking the Silos - a follow-up to the ICVA findings

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Council (DRC). Others are the Generations Without Qat (GWQ), Medical Mercy Foundation (MMF), Welthungerhilfe (WHH), We Do Organization for Development, Relief and Development Peer Foundation (RDP), SELAH Foundation for Development, Vision Hope International (VHI) Yemen, just to mention a few.

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I must as well mention all those who have contributed their time, resources, as well as physical and mental capital, both during the research process and in the subsequent preparation of this report.

Together, we stand to celebrate the outcome of the research process by way of this report!

Johnson K. Ndichu,

(Signed):

Research Team Leader.

(Nairobi - Kenya)

"Through my research, I found that the solution to Yemen's humanitarian and development challenges, as well as peacebuilding efforts, lies in adopting the Nexus approach, and despite global commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals, especially the principle of leaving no one behind, we are moving in the direction of deviating from the principles of sustainability, all observations from our humanitarian interventions, whether from local, international or United Nations organizations, show that we are stuck in an endless vicious circle, which prevents us from achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It's time to rise up and shift away from the traditional approach to humanitarian aid. Many United Nations studies support this opinion."

Dr. Aisha Thawab

# **Abbreviations & Acronyms**

ADO Abs Development Organization for Woman and Child
ALNAP Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in
Humanitarian Action
ARDD Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development, ARDD
BFDBuilding Foundation for Development
CAPSEAHCommon Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse and
Sexual Harassment
CBPFsCountry-Based Pooled Funds
CGIAR Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CO Collective Outcome
CoPN The Global Community of Practice on the NEXUS
CSO Civil Society Organization
DAC Development Assistance Committee
DRC Danish Refugee Council
FBO Faith-Based Organization
FGM Female Genital Mutilation
GWQ Generations Without Qat

HCT Humanitarian Country Team
HDPG Humanitarian Development Partners Group
HDPN Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
HPF Humanitarian Partners Forum
IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IBC Issue Based Coalition
ICVA International Council of Voluntary Agencies
INGOs International Non-governmental Organizations
IOM International Organization for Migration
KIIs Key Informant Interviews
KPIs Key Programme Indicators
MENA Middle East and North Africa
MMF Medical Mercy Foundation
NDEO Nabd Development and Evolution Organization
NGO Non-governmental Organization
NNGOsNational Non-governmental Organizations
NRC Norwegian Refugee Council
NWoW New Way of Working
ODA Official Development Assistance

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
Palestinian NGOs Network
. Relief and Development Peer Foundation
Sector Gender Focal Point Network
Strategic Solutions Committee
. United Nations
Vision Hope International (Yemen)
Welthungerhilfe
World Health Organization
Women-Led Organization
. Women, Peace and Security
Women Rights Organization

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#### 1.0 Executive Summary

People's diverse needs and priorities continue to grow amidst continuing global crises in the form of protracted inter- and intra- country conflicts, a multitude of emergencies – and now – the compounding effects of the climate crises. It is also instructive to note that ad hoc emergencies as was the case with the COVID-19 Pandemic, also leave devastating and long-term effects likely to undermine people's development, peace and stability if appropriate mitigating and remedial measures are not put in place. The COVID-19 pandemic has indeed taught us that, occasionally the world will be hit by a devastating catastrophe resulting in unprecedented human suffering and weakened development, especially if no sustainable and mitigating measures are instituted to keep these calamities at bay. With advancing technology, conflicts could become more lethal, costly and protracted (this is already apparent in some of the on-going wars around the world!), occasioning serious humanitarian disasters in form of lost and maimed lives, destruction of property, and unprecedented population movements. This only serves to undermine peace and development in the victim countries – and the world

generally. Indeed, Yemen has been a long victim of such disasters with unprecedented suffering for the citizenry.

The humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) or triple nexus approach, hitherto largely a more abstract concept but getting clearer by the day, continues to dominate the global scene and to trigger an interesting yet progressive debate. This represents a New Way of Working (NWoW) that goes beyond the rather fragmented and actor-oriented and individualized approach, and fosters localization, resilience, stability, sustainable progress and collective outcomes. The approach also optimizes actors' comparative advantages and strengths. This growing debate continues to build on, and to enrich, the available body of knowledge and actors in different countries and locations of the world are increasingly becoming enjoined and active participants in this subject. It is in this context - and as an overriding objective - that this research study has been conducted to understand the overall thinking, practice and trajectory in Yemen, and to provide useful recommendations particularly based on (and building upon) a review of the preceding ICVA study, "Advancing Nexus in the MENA Region, Breaking the

Silos: Research and Documentation of the State of Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus in the MENA Region" and an archetype of endeavours on the subject.

In conducting the study, feedback responses obtained through a circulated questionnaire template were received from 70 diverse entities that included non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – indeed the vast majority with up to 65% of all participating actors - civil society organizations (CSOs), women-rights organizations (WROs) and women-led organizations (WLOs). Others were NGO networks/ coalitions, Government agencies, informal community groups and faith-based organizations (FBOs). All these, some operating in particular localities in Yemen and others nationally (and indeed regionally and or internationally), represented actors across the Triple Nexus and varied sectors. These included, for example, PASMH for Humanitarian Action, Mercy Humanitarian Foundation, Bina Insan Foundation for Development, Wujood Foundation for Development & Peace, International Rescue Committee, Medair, Adventist Development, Relief Agency and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, the Women Leadership Network, UNDP, and GoY INGO Coordination Group. Others were Peace and Development Association, United Nations Human Settlement Programme, German

Yemen Centre for Peace and Development e.V., Happy Family Association, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and Localisation İnitiative Yemen.

Actors within the Triple Nexus framework in Yemen – as indeed has been established by ICVA for the MENA Region - have identified opportunities for collaboration covering critical areas such as shared learning and communications, co-creation of programs across the Nexus pillars, joint planning and analysis, mutual capacity strengthening, joint resource mobilization (both institutional and programmatic), advocacy and research. In so doing, a number of coordination platforms and initiatives – i.e., in-country, MENA-based or, indeed, global - have emerged, and these are now formal structures enabling the furtherance of the Triple Nexus agenda. Notable among these include, for example, the Women's Organizations Leadership Network. Indeed, Triple Nexus partners' collaboration now extends to include activities such as context and conflict analyses, needs assessments, among others.

Various methodologies – both qualitative and quantitative - have been deployed in the study, including but not limited to review of available literature, examination of relevant case studies, interaction with a number of actors especially within Yemen, and obtaining feedback in form

of a questionnaire from a pool of selected organizations working across the HDP nexus pillars in and around Yemen.

For the purpose of credible reference materials, ABS Development Organization for Woman and Child (ADO) were able to graciously assemble and provide these resources from some of the "top and progressive voices" on the Nexus approach in the MENA Region. And, keeping the 'fire burning' among these actors is critical to help improve and entrench understanding of this framework as a step towards effectively meeting people's needs, mitigating attendant risks and vulnerabilities and working for durable peace.

The research study has been designed and administered in such a way as to also better understand some of the HDP tools, mechanisms and or initiatives like working groups in use among actors in Yemen; this has included, for example, delving into the operationalization of tools like the recently-launched Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation,

Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment (CAPSEAH)<sup>1</sup> and the workings of the Nexus Initiative Working Group in Yemen respectively.

Among the key recommendations resulting from this research study include the following: -

- (i) It is important for the actors within the triple Nexus to continue to foster strategic collaborative endeavours and to the extent possible avoid working in silos as such a collective action inculcates more impactful results, shared learning, sustained outcomes and operational effectiveness;
- (ii) Most of the participating actors (77.3%) consider they are well-prepared and/or positioned to foster the Triple Nexus approach in Yemen, and thus require commensurate opportunities and capacity to develop the necessary policies and frameworks;
- (iii) For the Donors, they need to be strategically coordinated and remain patient with and supportive of the actors (and indeed demonstrate flexibility) as the latter work to foster the requisite capacity to be able to better comprehend and operationalize the triple Nexus;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> capseah.safeguardingsupporthub.org

(iv) In the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 'leaving no one behind', an effective Nexus approach needs to be inclusive of all actors (communities, state, and non-state actors), to ensure holistic addressing of people's diverse needs across the Nexus pillars.

### 12.0 Reflecting on the Key Recommendations

Actors operating within the HDP nexus in Yemen need to continue to nurture strategic collaborative endeavours and refrain from working in silos as collective action fosters more impactful results, shared learning, sustained outcomes and operational effectiveness. Indeed, optimizing coordination – more so in a country like Yemen which's prone to fragility and conflict - among actors across the HDP Nexus remains the cardinal principle of the Nexus! This – while still perceived as insufficient at the global level - is necessary to foster a common understanding and a shared vision across the Nexus. Unfortunately, this has been problematic in some of the MENA countries (especially between government and the aid sector), going by the preceding ICVA Study. In their report, ICVA observed that, "Competition between government and the humanitarian aid community, lack of coordination between humanitarian

and development actors, and internal political challenges faced by officials and civil society organisations, have made it difficult to adhere to HDP nexus objectives." It is also vital to highlight the impact of governance challenges (i.e., the North-South dichotomy) in countries like Yemen, as these have weighty implications in furtherance of an effective Nexus framework.

"Nexus actors in Yemen need requisite policies and framework to ensure clear direction and sustainability of their efforts and actions......

☐ Most of the actors (77.3%) consider they are well-prepared and/or positioned to foster the Nexus in Yemen, and thus require commensurate learning opportunities and capacity to develop the requisite policies and framework to ensure clear direction and sustainability of their efforts and actions.

There is general consensus among actors in Yemen for the donors to have a paradigm shift away from siloed yearly funding rounds to a more predictable, flexible, multi-year financing (what ICVA calls 'quality funding,' which unfortunately "is applied only by a very small pool of donors") that spotlights, integrates and brings together humanitarian, development and peace stakeholders. Fortunately, and through work supported

by the European Union, a notable Consulting firm<sup>2</sup> has echoed these sentiments, indicating that, "Many donors (including) multilateral development banks have already made steps towards this type of funding through pooled funds and other new funding instruments that aim to provide implementing partners with more flexibility, and adaptability than was previously possible, though significant work remains to be done to reflect a genuine shift in approach."

- Continuing efforts need to be taken especially by lead agencies like the UN to ensure actors become better acquainted with the phenomenon of collective outcomes and thus establish commensurate frameworks for their operationalization. This is an imperative as IASC have explained, for the purpose "To determine the most promising entry points and triggers to start the HDPN approach around collective outcomes, to identify the most appropriate planning process for the HDPN, to assess the willingness of key stakeholders to participate, and to understand what barriers to change may exist."
- It is important to take deliberate efforts to understand the extent to which actors in Yemen indeed understand the Nexus and what may have contributed to this level of improved awareness and clarity (if indeed this is the case). Learning from the experiences of more

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Altai Consulting: Case Study, Operationalising the 'triple nexus' (2022)

progressive countries like Jordan may be helpful, as ICVA have indicated the country has made progress in evolving appropriate structures to foster the Nexus to be mainstreamed in humanitarian-development endeavours.

Donors need to be flexible in their funding mandates to accommodate the needs of diverse organizations/actors, as the latter gradually transition to better understanding and operationalization of the Nexus approach. Overall, stakeholders acknowledge the existing challenges and constraints.

#### 3.0 The Research Objectives

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The research will be used as follow up study for the analysis and as a key document to support advocacy efforts with donors, NGOs and governments to more effectively link humanitarian and development aid programming and financing streams....

The overall objective of this research is the following:

3.01 Map out how HDP nexus approaches are being operationalized in selected countries; document policy changes and situational changes that demonstrate NEXUS approach linked to coordination bodies, key actors such as UN and NGO fora, national authorities etc. Linked specifically to quality funding and localisation;

3.02 Identify good practice and good examples and make them accessible to humanitarian, development and peace actors and to

develop and as a guiding tool;

3.03Identify recommendations, targeted at specific accountable actors, towards addressing the silos and bridging among the humanitarian, development and peace and looking at how

humanitarian, development, and peace building HDP nexus approaches can be integrated, operationalized, and advanced by ensuring the acceptance and inclusion of the local civil society;

3.04 According to the Grand Bargain 2.0, there are two enabling strategies: Quality Funding & Localisation and these are both directly tied into the commitment of NEXUS. The objective of this research is to assess the relationship between quality funding and role of local actors and the NEXUS approach, and identify recommendations on what must improve in order for these factors to merge together. This research will look at the existing funding opportunities across the nexus for institutional capacity strengthening of local actors and the existing opportunities for cross-fertilization between humanitarian work and development programs.

In a summary, the research will be used as follow up study for the analysis and key document to support advocacy efforts with donors, NGOs and governments to more effectively link humanitarian and development aid programming and financing streams. It will also be used to encourage cross learning on best practices and on how to address the "humanitarian/development divide" utilizing a longer-term resilience approach.

#### 4.0 Discussion and Key Findings

The key findings are based on a raft of questions that were responded to by the participating organizations and agencies through the online questionnaire as well as complementary interactive meetings in some of the instances. These provide quite some insightful perspectives and are good bases for furthering the Nexus approach in Yemen, and the MENA Region generally. The main findings – indicative of systematic progress towards uptake and operationalization of the approach among diverse actors in Yemen - are as follows: -

i) Representation of the Participating Respondent Organizations/Entities: -There was diversity and a good mix of the respondent organizations, with the vast majority being NGOs (local and international) and accounting for 65.2%, followed by CSOs (40.6%) and WLOs (20.3%) respectively. Others included WROs (11.6%), NGO Networks/Alliances (10.1%), Government agencies/actors (7.2%), informal community groups/structures (2.9%) and others (4.3%). One FBO participated in the survey translating into 1.4% of the overall responses. This is all graphically represented as follows: -

#### Type of the Organization

69 responses

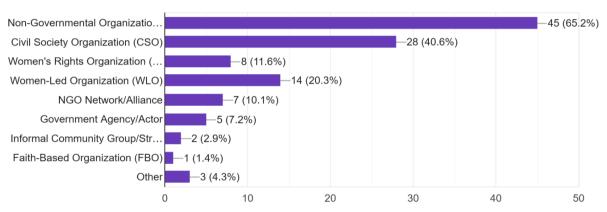


Diagram 1: The range of respondent organizations/initiatives participating in the research study

It is instructive to note that this compares favourably with ICVA's findings as demonstrated through a comprehensive survey for the MENA Region as a whooping 88%, being NNGOs (45%) and INGOs (43%), were the dominant participating organizations, with the other being the NGO Fora (12%). In the case of ICVA's study, participation was also manifested by way of respondents' perception about the Nexus contribution hitherto, particular areas of concern considered to be impeding progress and the extent of uptake and or operationalization of the approach in the actors' day-to-day work. It is expected that, as more Nexus opportunities and corresponding capacities emerge representation among all actors will become favourable.

ii) Awareness/Understanding of the Triple Nexus: - Most of the respondent organizations (i.e., 70%) indicated they fairly understood/had clarity about the triple nexus approach. The number of those who indicated to the contrary and or were not sure was about the same, that is, 14.3% and 15.7% respectively. This is graphically represented as follows: -

Do you consider that your organization fairly understands (i.e. has clarity about) the triple nexus approach?

70 responses

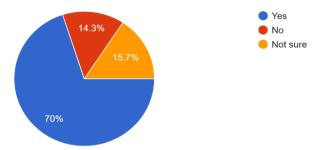


Diagram 2: Respondents' general understanding of the triple nexus approach

"Indeed, ICVA established that respondents had expressed the need to demystify this approach as well as make the language simpler to overcome the ambiguity surrounding the understanding of the Nexus."

This contrasts sharply with the ICVA-led study as this had established that, "Throughout the MENA region, the level of awareness about the objectives and intentions of the HDP nexus is relatively low, there is general perception that HDP is too complex and theoretical or difficult to implement." Indeed, ICVA established that respondents had expressed the need to demystify this approach as well as make the language simpler to overcome the ambiguity

surrounding the understanding of the Nexus. Other concerns highlighted related to the actual roles and responsibilities of the participating Nexus actors. Nonetheless, among the three Nexus pillars, the respondent organizations expressed that the Peace pillar required further clarity (at 33%), followed by both the Development and Humanitarian pillars (with a shared tally of 24.6%). Those who felt apparently satisfied and thus required no further clarity of the Nexus comprised 17.4%. Closely tied to the level of actors' understanding of the Nexus is the extent to which actors feel obligated to further the approach. A whopping 71.4% felt their organizations were under an obligation to promote Nexus, while 21.4% felt not compelled to

advance the approach. The need for collaboration, collective action and realization of long-term resilience, and the aspiration to realize collective outcomes amidst complex challenges may explain the actors' urge to promote the Nexus. Yet some actors felt that this makes the work integrative among all sectors for the beneficiaries and fosters sustainability.

iii) Nature of Nexus-related Frameworks: - There is an apparent dearth of clear frameworks – especially in form of policy, guideline or strategy - for operationalization of the Nexus approach in Yemen! For the ICVA-led study, and particularly at the MENA Region country-levels, participating organizations seemed to be unaware of the existence of Nexus policies (i.e., 40%), while those who indicted 'I don't know' or 'Somewhat', and thus uncertain about the implementation of the approach at their respective countries comprised 64%. Coincidentally, nearly the same tallies obtained among the actors in the Yemen study: About 64% indicated unavailability of policy, guideline or strategy related to implementation/

operationalization of the triple nexus or resilience. Graphically, this is represented as follows:

Does your organization have an existing policy/ guideline/ strategy on implementation/ operationalization of the triple nexus, resilience...?

69 responses

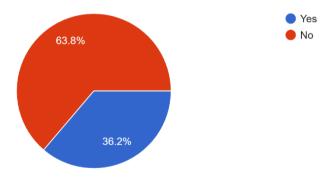
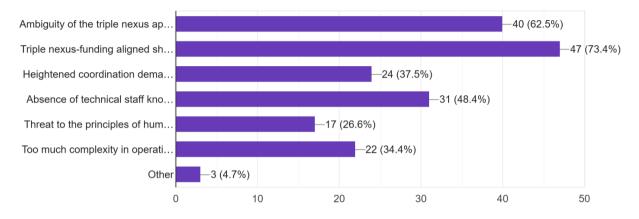


Diagram 3: Yemeni-based actors' existence (or otherwise) of Nexus, resilience policy/guideline/strategy

For those actors with some existing guiding framework, they considered that such a structure "typically outline best practices, coordination mechanisms, and funding strategies to ensure a cohesive response to crises."

Nonetheless, those organizations indicating they had participated in some form of Nexus initiatives - for example, programs, activities, coordination, meetings – tallied with those who indicated to the contrary.

iv) Challenges of Nexus Operationalization: - Actors were able to identify particular challenges they encountered in Nexus operationalization ranging from ambiguity of the approach in practice to overriding complexity in implementation. The foremost and dominant challenge was Triple Nexus funding-aligned shortfalls. This is summarized graphically as follows: -



 ${\it Diagram~4: The~range~of~actors' challenges~in~operationalization~of~the~Nexus~approach}$ 

For the ICVA-led study, most MENA region actors lamented the absence of quality funding for their work. In this case, ICVA interpreted quality funding to mean "multi-year, flexible, predictable, and unearmarked or softly earmarked funding." Indeed, as one Iraq NNGO

represented was quoted as saying by ICVA, in certain instances, 'one-year funding is seen as a luxury, while four to six-month funding seem to be the norm."

v) The Phenomenon of Collective Outcomes: - The Majority of the respondents appeared

#### IASC (2020 ) Definition of Collective Outcomes

(Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes):

A collective outcome (CO) is a jointly envisioned result with the aim of addressing and reducing needs, risks and vulnerabilities, requiring the combined effort of humanitarian, development and peace communities and other actors as appropriate.

oblivious of the concept of Collective Outcomes (CO). The phenomenon of collective outcomes underlies the UN's New Way of Working, and indeed the UN can be credited for having developed collective outcomes in a number of countries. A case in point is the Sudan Collective Outcomes Conveners Group

workshop conducted in July 2018 comprising close to 60 humanitarian, development and

peace actors, to agree on a set of collective outcomes. IASC have counselled that for the concept of CO to be feasible, it needs to be context specific, harness the comparative advantage of all actors and should draw on multiyear timeframes. For the case of Yemen, the Research Study identified that only about 15% of the respondent organizations were aware of collective outcomes, while those unaware or representing "may be" accounted for up to 85%. This is not surprising as the ICVA-led study also identified lack of coherence in some countries like Jordan on matters collective outcomes. ICVA observed that, "Despite significant progress in Jordan, the state of HDP nexus implementation is still not systematic nor standardised.... there are no collective outcomes formulated for the humanitarian assistance." Gladly, efforts continue - including by prominent agencies like the UN - to foster understanding of the phenomenon of collective outcomes; as an example, UN-IASC produced the Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes report<sup>3</sup> in June 2020, for the purpose "to ensure

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> https://interagencystandingcommittee.org

- a common understanding of analysis, funding and financial strategies and effective coordination initiatives" as regards the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.
- Available Nexus Coordination Mechanisms/Platforms in Yemen: The research study also vi) established that those actors participating in coordination mechanisms/platforms in Yemen were half of those who either did not participate and or were not sure of such opportunities. This may be attributed to a number of factors, perhaps including being aware of such coordination opportunities. A multi-stakeholder Regional Dialogue Report dated 13 December 2023 and titled, "Leaving no one behind - exploring the NEXUS approach in Yemen" exposes some of the available mechanisms and or platforms available for Triple Nexus coordination in Yemen, and within the Arab States.

The objective of this particular Nexus dialogue event was threefold, namely, to discuss:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> https://www.icvanetwork.org/uploads/2024/01/Report-CoP-HDPNexus.pdf

- (a) To highlight experiences and lessons learned b) How the existing local-level HDPN interventions could be best supported by the UN system (c) How guidance could be more effective.
  - According to the report, the participating Nexus coordination mechanisms highlighted were as follows, and comprised UN agencies (e.g., UNDP and IOM), INGOs (e.g., Care International), and local organizations (e.g., Abs Development Organization for woman and child, ADO): -
    - The Global Community of Practice on the NEXUS (CoPN);
    - The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on HDPN;
    - Issue Based Coalition (IBC) on HDPN for the Arab States.

For the CoPN, IASC<sup>5</sup> have - for example - explained that, "CoPN will provide support and guidance on ways to implement the elements necessary to strengthen collaboration across humanitarian, development and peace actors who have agreed to work together to solve problems of common concern, share knowledge, and cultivate best practices."

The Issue Based Coalition on HDPN is a peer-to-peer platform for information exchange, advocacy and policy discourse as well as collaboration on building and strengthening matters of mutual concern.

One of the outstanding and active Nexus structures in Yemen is the Yemen Nexus Initiative<sup>6</sup> that has an express mandate to "......establish a cohesive platform that promotes the

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<sup>5 &</sup>lt;u>https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-strengthening-humanitariandevelopment-nexus-focus-protracted-contexts/documents-68</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> <u>https://yemenexus.org/</u>

integration of humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts in Yemen," including enhancing the implementation of nexus, fostering capacity of local actors, communities and authorities to be better stewards of the approach as well as promoting coordination and collaboration among stakeholders. The Initiative has endeavoured to be inclusive and brings together local authorities, national NGOs, international NGOs, community leaders, and the private sector. On matters Nexus, the initiative has been deliberate as to, for example, conduct a service mapping in Yemen "to map the organizations that follow the Nexus approach in its projects, (establish) where they are, the sectors, presence as well as if they have experience in humanitarian and development projects ......."

ICVA in their preceding study identified other coordination mechanisms and or platforms in the MENA region, for example, the Humanitarian Development Partners Group (HDPG), Humanitarian Partners Forum (HPF), Strategic Solutions Committee (SSC), and "a series of task teams for localisation, Humanitarian-development nexus and policy engagement/advocacy." ICVA also identified that Clusters and Technical Working Group meetings were particularly common and active within the humanitarian pillar, (and were) "reasonably well structured, although they are not aligned with the HDP nexus considerations."

Overall, the multi-stakeholder Regional Dialogue Report corroborated the preceding ICVA study in highlighting the critical role that diverse partners were making to share experiences and work towards effective coordination on matters touching on the Nexus. Nonetheless, there is consensus that more work needs to be done to align existing coordination mechanisms with the Nexus requirements, more so for a country like Yemen with widespread collaboration challenges also due to existing administrative restrictions.

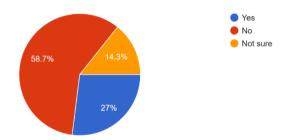
vii) Actors' Nexus Environment Perspectives: - Majority of the respondents (74.4%) indicated they felt there was an enabling environment for application of Nexus in a programmatic way in Yemen, while those who felt their organizations made references to actions and or funding

dedicated to the Nexus in producing donor reports were about 43%; those who did not and or were not sure if their organizations captured these actions or funding accounted for 57%.

viii) Staff Capacity Development as a Catalyst of Nexus Operationalization: - Staff with the necessary knowledge, skills and commitment are required to effectively drive the Nexus approach in Yemen. Such staff need to be able to, for example, facilitate the implementation and contextualization of collective outcomes to help improve affected people's resilience and scale down humanitarian needs. Our study established that there is a dearth of staff with requisite Nexus capacity in Yemen, as only 27% of the respondent organizations indicated they had staff dedicated to the triple nexus programmes, actions or initiatives.

Are there staff within your organization expressly dedicated to the triple nexus programmes/actions/ initiatives?

63 responses



Incidentally, it was still about the same case on matters staff participation in capacity-building Diagram 5: Staff devoted to Nexus programmes, actions or initiatives in Yemen initiatives. Staff within the respondent organizations who had attended some form of capacity building initiative on the triple Nexus in the last 2 years accounted for only 22%, with a whooping 78% either not having such opportunities, or unsure if such an initiative happened. Suffice to say that as actors transition to making the triple Nexus work more effectively, deliberate and concerted efforts need to be taken to gradually build the capacities of

participating staff. Fortunately, this is in tandem with the vision and aspirations of majority of the respondent organizations, as they indicated optimism in ensuring preparedness to help drive the Nexus agenda in Yemen.

ix)Gender vis a vis Nexus: - On matters gender in operationalizing the Nexus, especially women's contribution and participation as central actors, the bulk of the respondent organizations answered to the affirmative (indeed up to 81%). Instruments like the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) recognized the critical role of women in helping to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. The role, and critical imperative of gender across the Nexus pillars cannot be gainsaid! Engendering the Nexus: Mainstreaming Gender in the Triple Nexus, a Case Study from Mali<sup>7</sup> has this to say, "The implementation and dissemination of WPS agenda is a central strategy......, together with the strengthening of resilience and the

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 $<sup>^{7}\ \</sup>underline{\text{https://realityofaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Engendering-the-nexus.pdf}}$ 

promotion of human security, especially in its economic, food, security and health dimensions, with a focus on rights and gender justice."

x) The Place of Climate Change in the Triple Nexus: - It is encouraging to note that majority of

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It is now clear that climate change is exacerbating fragility and humanitarian crises and contributing to undermining development and peace.

the respondent organizations in Yemen (i.e., 61%), considered and or integrated climate action/climate-related shocks in operationalizing the Nexus approach. Whilst the earlier ICVA MENA study did not expressly focus on this aspect (and has almost no mention of it), it is now clear that climate change is exacerbating fragility and humanitarian crises and contributing

to undermining development and peace. From a humanitarian perspective, available data point to prospects of immense spike of humanitarian needs in the near future, largely attributable to climate change. It is also the case that conflicts and climate shocks have become more recurrent and intense, and are giving rise to - and aggravating - vulnerabilities, poverty and inequality.

A number of agencies, including funding agencies, mechanisms and initiatives, are now increasingly incorporating the climate change agenda in their work and across the triple nexus programs and activities. One such example is the Climate and Care Initiative Fund.<sup>8</sup> In explaining the critical nexus of the climate vis a vis care work, the initiative observes that, "Climate change and care work are deeply intertwined. Climate change increases the need for paid and unpaid care work, mostly done by women. It reduces access to natural resources like water and firewood, while mitigation activities such as waste management and biodiversity care also fall on unpaid female labor."

In terms of hampering caregivers' contribution towards matters related to climate decision-making, the Fund observes that, "This burden limits caregivers' participation in climate decision-making and in green jobs that contribute to just transitions. By integrating climate and care action, we have the chance to build resilient, sustainable systems towards just societies."

<sup>8</sup> https://climateandcareinitiative.org/fund/

### 5.0 The HDP Interface

Various actors across diverse sectors and from different geographical locations have corroborated the imperative to work within the HDP Nexus, as in community hotspots affected by hunger and conflict and as a more holistic and sustainable way of working. As an example, UNFAO and WFP have in their report<sup>9</sup>, made a recommendation to agencies to, "Continue to support the humanitarian development-peace nexus by leveraging humanitarian and resilience programming in hotspots of hunger and organized violence, including in hard-to-reach locations, for more proactive contributions to peace." And as though this is not enough, the two UN agencies have emphasized the need to "Ensure that interventions include a consistent approach focused on intentionality, long-term planning, complementarity, local focus and scale." This implies that even where interventions have the immediate objective to alleviate suffering and save life as in emergency response, and often precipitated by conflict and civil strife (with notable and apparent countries including Yemen, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Special Report 2022 FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) to the Republic of South Sudan 21 June 2023

and Syria), we must not lose sight of the critical need to plan ahead (i.e., have a developmental perspective) and indeed ensure that programs continue to reach increasing numbers of needy populations.

Actors within the Triple Nexus framework in Yemen - and the MENA Region generally - have continued to demonstrate remarkable efforts to deepen their understanding and collective action in this relatively new phenomenon and way of working. Indeed, the inspiring number and diversity of the entities participating in this research study is testament of this commitment, and one can confidently assert that, if this momentum continues, the approach will continue to gain significant traction and clarity, thus enabling the onboarding of a considerable number of actors.

The diverse Triple Nexus initiatives and efforts in Yemen and the MENA Region have provided a sound basis upon which to conduct this research study, with the express review of the preceding ICVA study, "Advancing Nexus in the MENA Region, Breaking the Silos: Research and Documentation of the State of Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus in the MENA Region."

# 5.0.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Research and Documentation Study, *Advancing Nexus in Yemen:* Breaking the Silos as a follow-up to the ICVA findings, are to as follows: -

- 5.0.1.1 Mapping of operationalization of the HDP nexus approaches in select countries & related matters;
- 5.0.1.2 Identification of good practice and good examples and how to effectively make them accessible to humanitarian, development and peace actors and to develop a guiding tool;
- 5.0.1.3 Identify recommendations, targeted at specific accountable actors, towards addressing the silos and bridging among the humanitarian, development and peace and looking at how humanitarian, development, and peace building HDP nexus approaches can be integrated, operationalized, and advanced by ensuring the acceptance and inclusion of the local civil society;

5.0.1.4 Following from the Grand Bargain 2.0, on enabling strategies i.e., Quality Funding & Localisation that are both directly tied into the Nexus commitment, assess the relationship between quality funding and role of local actors and the Nexus approach, and identify recommendations on what must improve in order for these factors to merge together; delve into the existing funding opportunities across the nexus for institutional capacity strengthening of local actors and the existing opportunities for cross-fertilization between humanitarian work and development.

## 6.0 Methodology

## 6.01 The Research Questions

The Research Study sought to answer the following specific questions aligned to the three (3) research study objectives under 1.1.3 above:

- (i) What opportunities/options exist among actors in Yemen to advance the triple nexus approach?
- (ii) What particular challenges/issues impede effective operationalization of the nexus approach in Yemen?
- (iii) How can funding earmarked for, or specifically targeted at, the actors in Yemen be better designed to advance the triple nexus approach and foster localization?

In framing the 3 research questions, there was deliberate intention to ensure clarity and relevance of the issue at hand, propensity for its research through primary and secondary sources, and feasibility within the timeframe assigned and considering the potential constraints. In addition, we envisioned that these interesting questions would help to build on

the ICVA-led discourse and body of knowledge, and aid in stimulating meaningful discussions and insights on the triple nexus in Yemen in particular. Suffice to say that the three research questions above align with – and sought to further – the previous ICVA-led study as they lay emphasis on aspects like trailing progress towards operationalization of the Nexus in Yemen, determining Nexus-related policy and situational changes, and exposing promising good practice and good examples available to Humanitarian, Development and Peace actors.

# 6.02 Data Collection Methods, Research Design & Analysis

The Research Study adopted both qualitative as well quantitative methods for data collection. Qualitative data for the study was premised on a wide-ranging review of appropriate literature, including the one provided by ADO and including profiled case studies, both prior to – and during – the conduct of the Research exercise. The Research Team conducted a desk review of the assortment of related literature as well as a survey, interviews and compilation of field

notes based on discussions with randomly-selected stakeholders. Still, the Team conducted focus group discussions and case study profiling as a means to arrive at the desired outcome.

Upon deploying the survey questions virtually through Google Forms, the survey answers (i.e., feedback) were then translated from the participating respondents into numerical data, often graphically, to determine general patterns and perspectives.

The rationale for using the archival study was premised on cost-effectiveness, time consciousness as well as diversity and richness of the reference materials.

Archival material as provided by ADO were in form of published reports, articles and grey literature on Nexus in Yemen and or the MENA region, and these can be accessed on the following link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oRaFpFiuGfvOrZdBEzN484Eno74povb4?usp=sharing

The Consultant also identified additional complementary material, both to help enrich data collection and analysis as well as in research design. It is upon these material and research architecture that the, qualitative survey, interviews, focus groups discussions and stakeholder discussions were then conducted.

# 6.03 Unpacking the Desk Review Process

Introduction: - A brief desk review approach was deployed to try and understand what different actors have done in the past as regards the nexus approach, to enable discerning and delineation of crucial lessons helpful to the research study and context in Yemen, and building upon the work done by ICVA to advance the nexus approach in the MENA Region.

The review happened through an examination of the assorted documents provided by ADO at the commencement of the research process in form of the foregoing link, with the Consultant delving into complementary and relevant materials, including design and deployment of Google Forms-generated questionnaire.

Rationale: - The purpose of the desk review was to isolate the general scope and some of the

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The review happened through an examination of the assorted documents provided by the Research Study anchor organization (ADO) at the commencement of and during - the research process and in form of the following link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oRaFpFiuGfv OrZdBEzN484Eno74povb4?usp=sharing key domain areas, achievements, capacities, structures, gaps and lessons learnt from a number of randomly selected nexus-oriented actors and formations particularly in the MENA region. The idea was to help reflect on the successes, opportunities and challenges for purposes of building upon the follow up

research study by ICVA to better understand the current stage of implementation of NEXUS approach in Yemen and how localisation can be interconnected with NEXUS to create a holistic approach whilst overcoming the underlying silos among the actors.

- Scope: The key findings following from the desk review process were subsequently compiled based on a review of the following documents all fairly recent materials spanning no more than three years also complemented by additional and related grey literature: -
- (i) IASC Questionnaire for Local/National Actors on Linking Humanitarian, Development and Peace Programming, 2023;
- (ii) Promoting Resilience through Application of Triple Nexus in the Gaza Strip, West Bank, Area C and East Jerusalem, PNGO 2023;
- (iii) Advancing Nexus in the MENA Region, Breaking the Silos: Research and Documentation of the State of Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus in the MENA Region (ICVA, July 2022);
- (iv) The Operationalization of the Triple Nexus, Challenges and Opportunities: The Case of Palestine (PNGO Network, 2021);
- (v) The Nexus in Practice: The Long Journey to Impact (NRC, October 2023);

- (vi) IASC Guidance Note: Advancing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Approach through IASC Global Clusters (IASC, December 2023);
- (vii) IASC Questionnaire for Local/National Actors on Linking Humanitarian, Development and Peace Programming (IASC, 2023);
- (viii) Working Across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What can we Learn from Evaluations? (ALNAP, 2023);
- (ix) Bridging Humanitarian to Development to Peace Triple Nexus Study (PNGO, 2021).
  - Additional materials identified by the Consultant for the desk review exercise included the following: -
- (i) Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Guide, capseah.safeguardingsupporthub.org

(ii) Assessing Climate Action Interventions along the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: A Methodology Tailored for Evaluating Contributions to Resilience in Destination Areas (CGIAR FOCUS Climate Security, 2023).

6.04 Interpreting the Nexus Approach: - For the purpose of the desk review and to ensure coherence in understanding the triple nexus approach, ICVA's succinct definition was adopted, namely "Triple Nexus or HDP Nexus is the intersection of humanitarian, development and peace activities in humanitarian work." ICVA have aptly related the concept and genesis to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey and the subsequent efforts on the same by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

Through progressive "Guidance Notes", and whilst making reference to the Guidance Note No. 2020 (IASC Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes<sup>10</sup>), IASC have – from early on -

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> IASC. (2020). Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes. <a href="https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standingcommittee/un-iasc-light-guidance-collective-outcomes">https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standingcommittee.org/in

inferred to fracturing the attendant silos by making reference to "collective efforts" and "collective outcomes" among the HDP actors. Indeed, ICVA's pioneering call to "all" the HDP actors for "complementary, aligned and well-coordinated action" is demonstrable of their pioneering intention and vision for actors working on any HDP area/s to collaborate and work together (what IASC have referred to as "joined-up efforts) for optimal impact. And IASC goes on to put a caveat that this working together should not be misconstrued to mean amalgamation of activities and or integration of roles.

In helping to better understand the Nexus concept, the PNGOs have - in addition to making reference to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit – also invoked other frameworks and or mechanisms such as the Sustainable Development Goals, that is, "the UNs New Way of Working" (NWoW). PNGOs makes reference to the aspiration among the UN agencies working across the HDP pillars to work more collaboratively to optimize sectoral complementarity benefits.

6.05 Context Coverage: - It is instructive to note that the bulk of the NEXUS actors in the MENA region have study experiences of the operationalization of the approach in volatile, fragile and crises-protracted countries with documented cases of rights abuses such as Libya and Afghanistan. For example, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)<sup>11</sup> zeroed in on Libya, Iraq, Cameroon (albeit not part of the MENA region), Somalia and Afghanistan. For example, in one of their Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, The US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human and Labour<sup>12</sup> have described Cameroon's rights dispensation as follows, "The most important human rights problems in the country were security force abuses.....particularly of detainees and prisoners; denial of fair and speedy public trial; and restrictions on freedom of assembly." Perhaps, it will be interesting to understand what and how particular bottlenecks related to human rights violations continue to impact the NEXUS approach. These are also countries with other shared and cross-cutting challenges such as high

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), The Nexus in Practice: The Long Journey to Impact (October 2023)

<sup>12</sup> https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/186385.pdf

corruption and limited government capacity, also the reason for the urgent imperative to link localization to the advancement of the Nexus approach to ensure complementary efforts to address people's myriad needs! These countries generally rank adversely on Transparency International's Corruption Index<sup>13</sup> with the lowest being Cameroon at 140/180. Luckily for Yemen, specific efforts towards localization to improve quality of support can be discerned, for example, in the context of humanitarian response. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has been instrumental in driving the localization agenda in the country, and commensurate practical actions have entailed the following: -

- (i) Production of the 2024-2026 Localization Strategy and Action Plan 14;
- (ii) Creation of an HCT consultative position paper blending the humanitarian response and its action plan;

<sup>13</sup> https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/somalia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The Strategy, with clear indicators and timelines, expressly states that the ".....focus is to advance the localization agenda within the humanitarian community and to take practical steps to localize the Yemen response through advancing the leadership roles of national /local humanitarian organizations."

# (iii) Establishment of a localization task force co-led by OCHA and NNGOs;

"IASC have, for example, isolated and emphasized the role that Clusters can play to connect, and build on, humanitarian work to "longer-term solutions" by optimizing their rich networks.

(iv) Follow-up capacity assessments initiated among a myriad of partners across Yemen, via the Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) – as an instrument of localization.

Whilst ICVA in their former study also gave credence to capacity strengthening of NNGOs, local authorities and beneficiary communities as

agents of localization, it does not acknowledge the potential effects of local dynamics and complications as those related to politics, independence and neutrality.

6.06 Role of the Different Actors: - It is also important in delving into the intersection between Nexus and localization to delineate and understand the role of the various actors in pursuit of the advancement of the approach in Yemen. IASC have, for example, isolated and emphasized the role that Clusters can play to connect, and build on, humanitarian work to "longer-term

solutions" by optimizing their rich networks. On progress towards localization IASC have particularly underscored the role that Clusters can play to nurture collaboration between INGOs and NNGOs. They have counselled that, "Where feasible, clusters should foster coleadership with national NGOs, including the promotion of localization and partnerships between international and national actors." They have as well highlighted the role the Clusters can play to make certain that processes become reachable to local actors (for example, IDP Community Leaders), with the latter being active participants (IASC guidance on localization 15). Suffice to say that, as one of the IASC recommendations to break the silos and advance the Nexus approach - and for optimal results - stakeholders can have a working framework to delineate their respective work and modalities for decision-making."

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> IASC. 2021. Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms. <a href="https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/operational-response/iasc-guidance-strengthening">https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/operational-response/iasc-guidance-strengthening</a> participation-representation-and-leadership-local-and-national-actors

Clusters are also well-placed to map and mobilize diverse resources (e.g., through bilateral funding, CBPFs and resilience funds) and to canvass with donors including on prioritization and flexibility of funding across the HDP pillars; IASC also highlight the central role that Clusters can play in making the case for bridging funds for enhanced outcomes among the Nexus across and actions.

On developmental-oriented funding, IASC have laid the case for working with Governments' sectoral ministries whilst ensuring commensurate capacity-building, including on how to mobilize such resources. Too, IASC have identified other probable areas where the Clusters can play a pivotal role in promoting the Nexus approach, also furthering the localization agenda, as including the following: -

- ☐ HDP-focussed community assessments as on needs and vulnerabilities;
- ☐ Contributing to enriching the available tools as on common HDP priority areas;
- Appraising as to whether the context is favourable for finding solutions to the root causes through collaboration;

- ☐ Identifying opportunities for stakeholder collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the HDP pillars and actions;
- □ Collaboration on the entire sphere of data (i.e., data usage, data indicators, risk analysis, national data.....) delineating which actor is using which type of data across the HDP pillars/actions, and spotlighting areas of mutual interest;
- □ Collaborative planning as to include stakeholder-wide capacity assessments across the HDP pillars;
- ☐ Engendering localization in to the planning process by ensuring community engagement.

Further areas for advancing the HDP approach by making use of the Cluster mechanism to also engender localization (in addition to nurturing joint technical teams) include in collaborative interventions, as in optimizing complementary partner efforts and furthering programme conflict- and gender- sensitivity; this also entails collaborative monitoring and reporting, for example, defining programme indicators and KPIs.

6.07 Donors in Yemen Found to Have Explicit Nexus Approach Mission/Agenda: -The general observation is that albeit the bulk of the donors having explicit Nexus policy

commitments, this has not been translated into concrete action, even at the coordination level. For example, NRC's report alluded to on the preceding page reads as follows, "There was an absence of systemic coordination between development and humanitarian donors in all examined contexts." Obviously, coordination platforms offer a rich opportunity to advance the Nexus approach and advocate for enhanced localization, with commensurate and target funding for people's diverse needs across the Nexus pillars. Yet, as NRC observed in the report, "At times, even development and humanitarian programmes funded by the same donor government appeared uncoordinated and opportunities for coherence and layered interventions were missed."

It is also evident – as the Swedish Government<sup>16</sup> (as a donor, indeed a significant contributor to official development assistance, ODA) have experienced - that there is no 'one-size-fits-all,' but rather, contexts vary and operationalization of the Nexus needs to be adapted as such. To put this into perspective, Sweden's experience shows that, "While its guidelines are still evolving, it has developed a growing and diverse portfolio of practical experience in working

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> https://devinit.org/media/documents/Donors-at-the-triple-nexus Lessons-from-Sweden.pdf

at the nexus, rightly developed according to the situation and opportunities in specific contexts, rather than by a top-down blueprint."

6.08 Complementary Concepts and Mechanisms Associated with and or Promoting the Nexus Approach: - Meanwhile, it is also instructive to note that, some actors have as well delved into other pertinent concepts and or mechanisms – and as part of good practice - that correlate with and or advance the nexus approach. As an example, the PNGOs in collaboration with ActionAid Palestine have conducted a research study (*report no. ii, pg. 5*) spotlighting local actors' work in resilience-building within their programming and to provide a roadmap on how to integrate resilience building. The localized study, that produced a key deliverable in form of a Risk Registry Model - also considered how actors address the critical subject of risk – as a prerequisite for resilience building - within their operations, and with an eye on four thematic areas, namely: Education, Protection, Shelter and Food Security. While this subject of risk is an imperative for actors across the HDP Nexus, PNGOs in particular called out the dearth of capacity among NGOs (associated with challenges like poor resource levels), thus inability to effectively address it, and "......to adopt risk analysis and recording."

6.09 The Nexus and Cross-cutting Issues: - Whereas there was no explicit mention of cross-cutting issues by ICVA in their prior study, emerging best practice in operationalizing the Nexus point to deliberate integration of cross-cutting issues like addressing sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), also as part of collaborative durable efforts.

A case in point is the inclusion of female genital mutilation (FGM) in Somalia's 2023 humanitarian response plan as part efforts towards bolstering the capacity of community members and key stakeholders to avert, mitigate and respond to prevailing and or potential protection risks. Indeed, this was done with explicit indicators and targets with clear disaggregation for boys, girls, men and women. FGM, child marriage and PSEA may be relevant Nexus issues in Yemen.

#### 7.0 Limitations

The Research Study was not without limitations. The reliance on self-reported data, primarily through the virtually circulated questionnaire, might introduce biases or omit critical on-the-

"The focus on desk reviews further narrows the scope, excluding valuable insights that could have been gained through field-level research or longitudinal assessments. ground realities. Additionally, the absence of direct engagement with government authorities and affected communities may limit the comprehensiveness of the findings. The focus on desk reviews

further narrows the scope, excluding valuable insights that could have been gained through field-level research or longitudinal assessments. Other operational impediments, for example, respondents' access to reliable internet may have undermined the effectiveness of the research exercise. In particular, there were cases of data collection limitations owing to operational and or country-administrative impediments, which at times hampered timeliness of participant

availability. To a lesser degree, there were instances of language barriers (between English and Arabic), but translation was done to overcome this limitation.

The subject of Triple Nexus, being a relatively new concept, implied that some of the respondents were not quite clear in their responses and this required skill and clarity in posing the various questions; this explains the reason why in a number of instances respondents indicated 'not sure' to some of the questions asked. In these cases, it was not quite apparent if indeed the answers given implied a lack of knowledge on the part of the respondent, or indeed, if it was as a result of the way the question was framed, stated and or asked.

### ----CASE STUDIES----

(These case studies illustrate the different ways in which actors can operationalize the Nexus, ranging from sector-specific thematic areas to varying locations and contexts)

## (a) Case Study i: Nexus Coordination – The Experience of Yemen and the Region

► Concerted Localization Efforts to Address the Health Outbreak in the Abs District

## Background

The Health Safety Council in Yemen's Abs District was established as a multi-stakeholder effort to tackle pressing health concerns, including the outbreaks of Rift Valley Fever and Malaria. These diseases pose significant health risks to the local population, exacerbated by environmental factors, poor sanitation, and limited healthcare resources. Recognizing the need for a coordinated response, local authorities, health organizations, and community leaders formed the Health Safety Council to improve disease management and health outcomes in the district.

# Objectives

The Council's primary goals are to:

- Monitor and respond to health threats through early detection and reporting.
- Raise community awareness about Rift Valley Fever, malaria, and preventive health practices.
- Implement sanctions and regulations to enforce public health measures.
- Coordinate pesticide campaigns to reduce disease vectors such as mosquitoes.

Council Composition-coordination: Shared Roles

The Health Safety Council comprises diverse stakeholders, each bringing a unique perspective and set of responsibilities:

- 1. ADO (Abs District Organization): A local non-governmental organization actively involved in community health initiatives, ADO plays a critical role in coordinating Council activities, providing health education, and mobilizing resources for campaigns.
- 2. Health Centre in Abs District: The district's health center is responsible for reporting cases of Rift Valley Fever and malaria, conducting early detection screenings, and providing medical treatment and support to affected individuals. It also supplies medical expertise to guide council decisions on disease control strategies.
- 3. Head of Government (Local Authority): Representing the local government, the head provides policy support and ensures enforcement of health regulations, including sanctions for non-compliance with public health guidelines. The authority's involvement adds legitimacy and authority to the Council's actions.
- 4. Men's Association: A community-based group that plays a vital role in community outreach and awareness-raising activities. The association engages local men in understanding health risks and prevention measures, and collaborates in implementing Council-driven health initiatives.

### Council Member Tasks

Each member of the Health Safety Council is assigned specific tasks to support a comprehensive response to Rift Valley Fever and malaria, namely:

- Reporting: The health center and ADO are tasked with consistent disease surveillance, reporting new cases, and monitoring trends to allow for timely interventions.
- Early Detection: The health center conducts screenings for early signs of infection, aiming to identify and treat cases promptly, reducing the risk of outbreaks.
- Awareness: ADO and the Men's Association lead awareness campaigns to educate the community on preventive measures, such as eliminating stagnant water to reduce mosquito breeding grounds and understanding symptoms for early medical intervention.
- Implementation of Sanctions: The head of government oversees the enforcement of health regulations, including penalties for practices that increase health risks, such as improper waste disposal and failure to follow vector control guidelines.

• Pesticide Campaign: The Council organizes and coordinates pesticide spraying campaigns to reduce the mosquito population, a primary vector for malaria and other diseases. This campaign is a joint effort between the local government, ADO, and health center staff, who ensure the safe application of pesticides in high-risk areas.

### **Key Outcomes**

Since its establishment, the Health Safety Council has made significant strides in:

- Reducing malaria incidence through increased community awareness and regular pesticide spraying.
- Enhancing early detection and treatment of Rift Valley Fever cases by improving coordination between the health center and ADO.
- Strengthening the community's role in disease prevention, with the Men's Association actively involving local leaders and residents in health initiatives.

In conclusion, the Health Safety Council in Abs District serves as an effective model for tackling public health challenges through strong local partnerships and community involvement. It demonstrates how coordinated, multi-stakeholder collaboration can significantly enhance public health risk management. By integrating early detection, awareness campaigns, and targeted vector control efforts, the Council is helping to reduce the incidence of Rift Valley Fever and malaria, thereby strengthening health outcomes and resilience in the community. Despite its successes, ongoing challenges remain, particularly in securing sustainable funding for pesticide campaigns and ensuring consistent compliance with health regulations.



By integrating early detection, awareness campaigns, and targeted vector control efforts, the Council is helping to reduce the incidence of Rift Valley Fever and malaria, thereby strengthening health outcomes and resilience in the community

## 8.0 (b) Case Study ii: The Experience of Nexus Integrated programming

► Nexus integrated programming through enhancing Public Service Capacities to Support Vulnerable Populations in Hajjah, Yemen

Yemen & Region Context: Yemen, Hajjah Governorate

- Health challenges
- Water Scarcity & WASH Challenges
- Conflict Impact
- Road and infrastructure problems
- Climate & Environmental Impact

Context: Yemen has faced years of conflict, resulting in significant infrastructure destruction, economic challenges, and a humanitarian crisis affecting millions. In the governorate of

Hajjah, vulnerable communities in Abs, Hajja City, Najra, Mustaba, and Al Mihabisha districts struggle to access basic services such as healthcare, water, sanitation, and education. This case study outlines a development response initiative focused on strengthening public service capacities through a multi-sectoral, integrated approach.

Objective: To improve the quality and resilience of public services in order to respond more effectively to the needs of the most vulnerable populations in Hajjah, while promoting social cohesion and sustainable, community-led development.

Project Overview: The project, supported by the Local Resilience and Recovery Fund (L2RF) and UNDP-SEIRY funding, is implemented by the Abs Development Organization for Woman and Child (ADO) in partnership with local authorities and affected communities. The project aims to strengthen institutional capacities across several public service areas, promoting a holistic and community-centered approach to development.

Response: Community Engagement and Local Ownership

The activities are focused on the Participatory Approach: The project prioritizes active community involvement in planning and decision-making, recognizing that local insight is essential for designing sustainable solutions. This approach fosters trust and empowers local stakeholders, ensuring that interventions address real needs while promoting accountability. Together with Building Local Capacity: By involving local leaders and residents, the program supports capacity-building initiatives that enable communities to manage and maintain project outcomes. This approach contributes to long-term sustainability and fosters resilience within the community.

To enhance the Nexus application in programmatic way an Integrated Multi-Sectoral Interventions has been developed and focused on health, WASH, education and infrastructure.

Health intervention: To expand healthcare access, the program undertook significant infrastructure improvements including the Renovated Al Dhenoobah Health Center, rehabilitated and equipped the kidney dialysis center in Abs city, refurbished a clinic in the Burgaa sub-district and expanded Al Mihabisha Hospital to better serve rural communities.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH): Critical WASH activities were carried out, including: Rehabilitating the internal sanitation network in South Hajjah and Installing a water network in Al Aman city to improve water access and hygiene standards.

**Education**: The project supported education by rehabilitating Al Najah Basic School in Al Mihabisha, providing students with improved facilities and a conducive learning environment.

**Infrastructure**: To boost economic activity and ease of transport, the project focused on essential road infrastructure: paved and improved the 1,500-meter Al Mezaab Al Gararah road and rehabilitated the main road between Al Sayaf and Ban Rasam sub-districts, incorporating drainage and paving solutions to enhance road durability and access.

Quality programming in the nexus approach is achieved by applying core principles such as conflict sensitivity, resilience building, and sustainability, all while adhering to the Do-No-Harm principle. Ensuring equal access to essential resources like water, healthcare, and

education helps reduce resource-driven tensions. By bridging service gaps and promoting resource-sharing between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities, the project fosters social cohesion and indirectly mitigates local conflicts. The project was also designed to adhere to Do-No-Harm principles by minimizing potential tensions and avoiding any exacerbation of existing conflicts, which promotes stability and cooperation within the community.

To enhance program quality further, the project activities emphasize resilience and sustainability by strengthening the capacities of local authorities. By working closely with them, the project develops their skills in monitoring, maintaining, and expanding services, fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring that these improvements last over time. Additionally, creating and rehabilitating vital infrastructure reduces the need for ongoing emergency humanitarian interventions, supporting self-reliance and enabling long-term development. This approach ultimately strengthens the local community's resilience and paves the way for sustainable, positive impacts.

**Outcome:** This project demonstrated a high-quality, integrated, community-led approach that resulted in the following results:

- **Improved Social Cohesion**: Equitable access to essential services, especially for IDPs and vulnerable groups, helped reduce potential resource conflicts, contributing to social stability.
- Increased Public Service Resilience: Strengthening local service delivery capacities allowed for sustained access to healthcare, education, water, and transportation, even amid challenges.
- Enhanced Local Authority Capacity: Local authorities were empowered as key stakeholders, gaining skills in service delivery and infrastructure maintenance. This capacity-building effort was crucial for the resilience and sustainability of the project.
- Sustainable Community Development: By promoting local ownership and accountability, the project ensures that communities can continue to benefit from these improvements long-term, supporting resilience in the face of future challenges.

**In Conclusion**: This case study illustrates how a coordinated, Nexus-oriented approach can deliver sustainable improvements in public services. Through multi-sectoral interventions, community engagement, and capacity-building, the project enhanced resilience, promoted social cohesion, and empowered local authorities, contributing to a more stable and self-sustaining environment in Hajjah.

# 8.0 (c) Case Study iii: Promising Practices in Funding the Nexus, a Comparative Case for Somalia

Funding Nexus has remained a challenge for most actors including in Yemen. Yet, for effective operationalization of the Nexus, this remains a critical imperative and a lifeline for the Nexus. Indeed, ICVA have in their prior study highlighted this imperative indicating that, ""Flexible multiyear quality funding is the cornerstone of HDP nexus. This is key to build programming that reflect the voices of the people concerned, support the building of trust among partners and enable a shift from development to humanitarian programming and vice versa as the context changes.

On the funding prospects for enhancing actors' capacity, the Council continues thus, "Quality funding will enhance leadership by local actors, while making sure that organisationally they are better equipped to respond to the various risks, challenges faced and ensure quality of programming."

## Understanding the practice in Somalia

The Nexus Consortium Somalia<sup>17</sup> has over the years gradually worked to build capacity for

"Gargaar Relief for Development Organization (GREDO), an indigenous "national humanitarian and development organization" — and among the seven local actors (and two INGOs, Oxfam and Save the Children International) who are members of the Consortium - with over 30 years working in Somalia has been a direct recipient of Nexus funding......"

access to direct funding. In its formative years, the Consortium relied on the support of INGOs, with Oxfam acting as the Fund Manager for larger funds, whilst fostering members' capacities. However, in the course of time Nexus developed measurable capacity and acquired financial autonomy, whilst ensuring smaller funding continued to

be managed by member organizations. This gradual and systematic modality worked as a masterstroke, allowing the Nexus to obtain, absorb and demonstrate capacity to handle donor funds, and acquiring the much-needed trust which's important among donors. This helped to challenge the perception that local actors cannot receive and manage funds on their own.

====Advancing Nexus in Yemen: Breaking the Silos as a follow-up to the ICVA findings====

<sup>17</sup> https://nexusom.org

Nexus was indeed mandated to administer funds to the tune of 400,000 to 500,000 dollars through her membership till such as time that the Consortium became duly registered. As capacity gradually developed, the Consortium created a 3-year (2021-2023) multi-year strategy, indeed aspiring to ensure that individual members had commensurate capacity – including that of fund absorption - as that of international organizations.

Nexus has since become more structured, under the direct stewardship of a Steering Committee (and espousing values like transparency) under the stewardship of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), indeed now ensuring that funds can be directly channelled to local actors as opposed to them being largely subcontractors of international partners. As an example, Gargaar Relief for Development Organization (GREDO)<sup>18</sup>, an indigenous "national humanitarian and development organization" – and among the seven local actors (and two INGOs, Oxfam and Save the Children International) who are members of the Consortium - with over 30 years working in Somalia has been a direct recipient of Nexus funding. The Nexus Consortium's steering committee undertakes roles

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<sup>18</sup> https://gredosom.org

related, but not limited, to effective governance and coordination, whilst leading efforts focused on localization.

The Nexus Consortium Somalia, therefore, exemplifies a promising financial practice that transcends traditional models and can provide useful lessons, particularly for local/national actors in Yemen!.

#### 9.0 Conclusion

The findings of this research reveal a complex mix of progress, challenges, and opportunities

"Research is an opportunity to further explore territory that needs more attention and develop some answers and possibilities that can solve an issue forward."

-Polly Ford-Jones

in operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus in Yemen. While there is evidence of growing progress, interest and willingness among various actors to adopt the approach, significant systemic and contextual barriers persist, requiring deliberate and coordinated action to ensure success. This section delves into the results, providing explanations and discussing their implications, while also highlighting study limitations.

The case for the triple nexus still remains a divergent topic with actors bearing conflicting views and positions. There are those actors – not only in Yemen but indeed globally - who demonstrate outright caution in its endorsement and operationalization, and others more 'progressive ones' that have sanctioned and operationalized it. As an example, the Centre for

Humanitarian Action (CHA)<sup>19</sup> has noted that, "Local perceptions of the Triple Nexus also vary. For example, local faith-based organisations in South Sudan appreciate the re-integration of all three elements, whose previous separation they regarded as artificial." Among the reasons given for actors' suspicion and caution of the Triple Nexus, as highlighted by CHA, include the fact that, ".....it might increase the instrumentalisation of humanitarian action and contribute to a further shrinking of humanitarian space, because it might give, for example, state actors a dominant role in organisations' programmes and policies."

One of the notable findings following from the research is the diversity of participating actors, with NGOs (65.2%), CSOs (40.6%), and WLOs (20.3%) forming the bulk of respondents. This diversity underscores the broad engagement of stakeholders in the Nexus discourse. However, it also highlights the challenges of achieving institutional coherence. For instance, 64% of respondents reported a lack of Nexus-related policies or frameworks in Yemen, reflecting a systemic gap that hinders structured collaboration and operational alignment

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA), The Triple Nexus in Practice: Challenges and Options for Multi-mandated Organisations (October 2020).

(EUTF SLC 2021 Case study – Triple Nexus). This is consistent with findings from the ICVA study, where actors across the MENA region cited the absence of clear frameworks as a key impediment to Nexus implementation.

The understanding of the Nexus approach among stakeholders is another critical area of concern. While 70% of respondents indicated they "somewhat understood" the concept, 30% either lacked clarity or expressed confusion. This mirrors findings from the broader MENA region as per ICVA's study, where Nexus concepts—particularly the "Peace" pillar—are often perceived as abstract or overly theoretical. For example, 33% of respondents in Yemen called for further clarity on the Peace component, which they considered the least understood among the Nexus pillars. This knowledge gap is compounded by the absence of tailored capacity-building efforts, which are essential for demystifying the Nexus approach and translating it into actionable strategies.

Funding remains a significant challenge. ICVA found that 44% of respondents believed funding was predominantly limited to emergency relief projects, while only 10% reported access to long-term funding. Flexible and predictable funding was even scarcer, at 8% and

9%, respectively. These figures are consistent with regional trends, where short-term, project-based funding cycles have been identified as a major obstacle to sustainable Nexus implementation (EUTF SLC 2021 Case Study – Triple nexus). The lack of quality funding hampers multi-sectoral collaboration and also undermines efforts to address root causes of vulnerability and build resilience. These results show similar trends with our findings where those organizations in Yemen perceiving to have quality and or flexible multi-year funding related to the triple Nexus – out of 68 respondents - accounted for 23%, while those without and or not sure about the availability of such resources were 77%.

Localization emerged as another critical issue. Despite growing recognition of the importance of involving local actors, only 11% of respondents believed that local NGOs (LNGOs) had equal access to funding. This imbalance highlights the need for a deliberate shift toward empowering local organizations through capacity-building, equitable partnerships, and direct funding mechanisms. As noted in the ICVA study, localization is central to the success of the Nexus approach, yet it remains underfunded and underprioritized across the region.

Staff with commensurate capacities for effective operationalization of the Nexus approach in Yemen remain an impeding factor, albeit formations like the Yemen Nexus Initiative are doing a commendable job to foster relevant trainings and help to bridge this gap.

"Actors in Yemen reported frustration over the dominance of international actors in decision-making processes, despite local organizations being more attuned to community needs and dynamics

Coordination, while showing some progress, still requires significant improvement. Although coordination platforms such as clusters and working groups are in place, they are not yet optimized for joint planning or collective analysis (EUTF SLC 2021 Case Study – Triple nexus). Only 52% of respondents reported any level of joint analysis or experience sharing, and 73% believed that inclusive planning was not being undertaken. This reflects a missed opportunity to leverage the comparative strengths of different actors to achieve collective outcomes. Moreover, the reliance on ad hoc

initiatives rather than systemic efforts further limits the potential for meaningful collaboration, and this has been corroborated by the ICVA-led study!

The findings also underline the importance of addressing systemic inequalities in funding access and participation. Actors in Yemen reported frustration over the dominance of international actors in decision-making processes, despite local organizations being more attuned to community needs and dynamics. For example, the lack of a mechanism to pool resources and share leadership responsibilities between INGOs and LNGOs has created a significant bottleneck in operationalizing the Nexus. Addressing this would require donors to prioritize partnerships with local actors, ensuring that they receive adequate resources and training to take the lead on Nexus-aligned programming.

Furthermore, the lack of institutionalized learning mechanisms has stifled the replication of good practices. With 70% of respondents indicating that good practices are not promoted within the Nexus community, there is a clear need for platforms that enable knowledge-sharing and collective learning. Creating repositories of case studies, organizing cross-sectoral workshops, and establishing peer-learning networks could help bridge this gap. Such

initiatives would not only enhance institutional memory but also strengthen the implementation of Nexus-aligned strategies in Yemen, which's in tandem with ICVA's study.

The implications of these findings are far-reaching. Without clear policies, sustainable funding mechanisms, and a concerted effort to build local capacity, the Nexus approach risks remaining a theoretical framework with limited practical impact. The lack of clarity and institutionalization creates inefficiencies that perpetuate silos, undermining the holistic and integrated nature of the Nexus. At the same time, the willingness of 71.4% of respondents to engage with Nexus principles presents an opportunity to drive transformative change. Investments in capacity-building, awareness campaigns, and flexible funding models could help bridge the current gaps and hasten progress toward collective outcomes.

In conclusion, the findings underscore the urgent need for actionable strategies to address gaps in policy, funding, and institutional capacity. A deliberate focus on collective outcomes, equitable partnerships, and sustained investments will be essential to unlocking the potential of the Nexus approach in Yemen. Tailored efforts to enhance local actors' capacities and

ensure the alignment of donor priorities with Nexus principles will play a pivotal role in driving progress and achieving sustainable impact.

## 10.0 Appendices (available on request | Email: <a href="mailto:hdpnexusyemen@gmail.com">hdpnexusyemen@gmail.com</a>)

- 10.1 Google Documents Questionnaire ("Questionnaire for HDP Actors on Advancing the Nexus Approach in Yemen")
- 10.2 Listing of Participating/Respondent Organizations
- 10.3 Sample letters/emails written to respondent organizations
- 10.4 Minutes of meetings conducted with actors on the Triple Nexus approach in Yemen









