

Country Brief on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Results Group 4

CONTEXT



The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) faces a myriad

of challenges ranging from staggering humanitarian need and chronic under-development to political instability and protracted armed conflict in the Eastern part of the country. Humanitarian, development and peace actors are all present in the country

to support the Government and the population. Given the DRC's multifaceted challenges on the one hand, and the country's enormous potential to strengthen coherence and effectiveness of different actors and flows of assistance, on the other, discussions to implement a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach in DRC began in 2018.

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IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

THE NEXUS APPROACH

The HDP nexus approach in the DRC is an inclusive, collective process that is aimed at reducing humanitarian needs, risks and vulnerabilities in the medium and longer term while addressing underlying causes of crises and underdevelopment. It also works towards better coordination and complementarity between the three pillars. Key stakeholders

include the Government, the UN and other international organizations, as well as national and international NGOs and donors. The approach is guided by four collective outcomes in the areas of food insecurity and malnutrition, access to basic social services, forced displacement and gender-based violence.

The five provinces of Greater Kasai (Kasai, Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental, Lomami, Sankuru) and the Tanganyika province were prioritized due to an improvement in the security situation, the withdrawal of MONUSCO from these areas and the gradual transfer of the Mission's activities to relevant partners.

OPERATIONALIZING THE NEXUS

KEY STEPS



1. Leadership and capacity

The Government and the DSRSG/RC/HC guide and coordinate the implementation of the HDP nexus approach, with technical support from the Nexus Core Team (Government, donors, national and international NGOs, UN) and the support of the Nexus Donor Group (consisting of international development partners). All stakeholder groups are using existing coordination platforms.



2. Joint analysis and sharing of analyses

The four collective outcomes were agreed based on a shared risk and vulnerability analysis facilitated by the OECD/INCAF. Furthermore, different types of analysis (political, conflict, security, human rights, humanitarian needs) are regularly elaborated by different actors and shared widely. Conflict analyses have been conducted for the Grand Kasai and Tanganyika regions. Analysis has also been conducted for the Humanitarian Needs Overview and provincial development plans.



3. Collective outcomes

As a subsequent step to the shared risk and vulnerability analysis, key stakeholders were convened in a workshop in October 2019 to review the greatest areas of humanitarian need and vulnerability and to articulate and agree on collective outcomes. The workshop was timed around the beginning or renewal of several key strategic planning processes at the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020.

Collective Outcomes



Food insecurity and malnutrition

By 2024, the number of people living in situations of food insecurity has been reduced by 20% and the prevalence of wasting has been reduced and maintained at less than 5%.



Gender-based violence

By 2024, the number of vulnerable people receiving quality inclusive basic services has increased by at least 15%.



Population displacement

By 2024, the number of people in forced displacement situations has been reduced by at least 20%.



Access to basic social services

By 2024, the prevalence of gender-based violence has been reduced by at least 10%.



4. Joined-up planning and programming

At the national level, the collective outcomes have been integrated into the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP), the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), the International and Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS), as well as the renewal of the DRC's eligibility to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The collective outcomes are also being mainstreamed into provincial development plans. Finally, MONUSCO and the UNCT are jointly building a framework of joint interventions based on some of the medium and long-term objectives of the collective outcomes.



5. Financing

A Nexus Donor Group in country, chaired by Sweden, provides a forum for donors to achieve common definitions of the nexus, coordinate and ensure communication between donors across the pillars of the HDP nexus. The aim is for donors to integrate the collective outcomes into their bilateral strategies. Funding is provided in accordance with the three plans that guide the work in the three pillars of the nexus, namely the HRP, the NSDP and the ISSSS. The donor group aims to create convergence among implementing organisations in the prioritized territories to achieve higher level results and contribute to the collective outcomes. In addition, the World Bank has recently opened an office in Kananga (Kasai Central) for closer oversight of its operations.



Photo: OCHA/Wassy Kambale

LESSONS LEARNT

GOOD PRACTICES



Involvement of bilateral donors from the beginning of the nexus implementation process has enabled some donors to include the collective outcomes into their own strategies and has in some cases supported greater alignment of funding streams. Donor interest has also facilitated the constitution of consortia between international entities and national and local civil society.



Timing the articulation of collective outcomes with the beginning of key planning processes has allowed for the collective outcomes to be effectively reflected in the various planning documents and allowed for the development of adequate strategies and programmes that contribute to the achievement of collective outcomes in those plans.



Inclusion of national counterparts at local/provincial and central/ministerial level from the beginning of the HDP nexus process in 2019 has ensured an inclusive process beyond the UN. Going forward, it will be important to further enhance information sharing to include all interested actors in the process and to ensure that local NGOs/civil society are also represented in the dialogue at national level. At provincial level, it will be important to include all stakeholders from the early stages, for analysis, planning and implementation of the nexus approach.



Dedicated staffing was an important success factor in the early stages of implementing the nexus approach in the DRC. Several donors are currently in the process of committing additional funding for coordination. A post under the Humanitarian-Development-Peace-building and Partnership Facility (HDPP) Facility is currently under recruitment to enhance coordination between the UN and the World Bank. A nexus advisor team will be recruited within the Resident Coordinator Office.

CHALLENGES



The restructuring of government at the national and provincial level has hampered **coordination with authorities**. To ensure continuity, a representative of the Presidency has joined the Nexus Core Team before representatives from other ministries could be nominated.



There is lack of a shared understanding of the concept of the HDP nexus and its operationalization. While the IASC and other organizations have issued relevant guidance on operationalizing the nexus, some organizations still perceive the HDP nexus approach as a resource mobilization tool, a way to promote their own mandate or organization versus the promotion of a collective approach. There is a need to reinforce communications towards all stakeholders, share existing guidance, explain the common vision and ensure a strong push from the highest level. High staff turnover among international and government partners necessitates continuous knowledge sharing.



Operationalization of the collective outcomes is challenged by lack of know-how on how to coordinate all relevant actors, given the sheer number of actors in the DRC. More guidance is needed on creating inclusive coordination platforms that allow for crossover between actors and on mainstreaming collective outcomes through existing processes, rather than creating a 'meta plan' around them.



Mobilizing national NGOs at the national level has been challenging, given the large number of national NGOs and limited coordination among them, while at the provincial level, provincial authorities and civil society are engaging in the process. Going forward, improving representation at the national level will be a point to enhance.



Lack of dedicated financial resources. Setting up a coordination system, common tools (such as for common mapping between humanitarian, development and peace actors, workshops, reports, monitoring etc.) requires financing. Currently, all relies on already existing human resources and activities.



Difficulties in coordinating between humanitarian, development, and peace actors. While coordination structures for each of the pillars exist at least at the national level - humanitarian coordination mechanisms being the largest and most regular -, there remain challenges in co-ordination and dialogue between humanitarian, development, and peace actors. Further discussions and understanding between all actors to fully appreciate the different approaches are required. National authorities should play a key role at the center of the coordination.



SPOTLIGHT ON **PEACE**

Conflict analyses at the provincial or sub-provincial level have shown clear linkages between development and maintaining stability in a post-conflict setting. Several PBF projects implemented presently are conflict sensitive programmes, designed through a conflict analysis. There are a number of interesting tools being developed:

- MONUSCO's Stabilization and Peacebuilding Marker (SPM), a self-rating tool for technical and financial partners intervening in and on conflict.
- A series of context-specific guidance notes on conflict sensitivity with a focus on integrating conflict sensitive programming along the HDP nexus in DRC.



SPOTLIGHT ON **LOCAL ACTORS**

The collective outcomes are aligned with the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and some provincial development plans such as the one of Kasai Central. At strategic and planning level, the workshop of October 2019 involved national actors including governmental and non-governmental and central and local actors. At the provincial level, provincial authorities and civil society/national NGOs are engaging in the process, including during the April 2021 workshop for the operationalization of the Nexus approach in Kasai and Kasai Central. Going forward, it will be important to empower local actors, institutions and services (state and non-state) on humanitarian, development and peace issues and project implementation to ensure continuity.



SPOTLIGHT ON **GENDER**

Networks of female human rights defenders and local women NGOs are being consulted and, when possible, involved in the implementation of the nexus approach at national and provincial levels.



Photo: OCHA/Wassy Kambale