

Strengthening the humanitarian assistance and food system development nexus in protracted conflict areas

Scoping paper

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Two recent international agreements have marked a shift in approaches taken by international donors and other organizations to food security and development in areas of long-lasting conflict:

- First, [Resolution 2417](#), adopted by the United Nations Security Council in May 2018, condemns the use of starvation as a method of warfare. This resolution thereby acknowledges the link between food security and human security in protracted conflict areas (PCAs). Moreover, the resolution aims to prevent denial of access to humanitarian assistance (HA) in these areas.
- Second, the [Grand Bargain](#), signed by 18 countries and 16 organizations in May 2016, encompasses 10 measures for more efficient and effective financing of HA. The 10th commitment is to “enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors”, thereby focussing on long-term and sustainable solutions.

These two agreements, underlined by the Netherlands ([MFA, 2018](#)), show a recognition of the synergy between short-term humanitarian and long-term development objectives at the international level. Regarding food security, this encompasses meeting direct food needs in crisis areas without constraining local markets and stimulating local food systems to provide adequate food supplies in the short and long term.

This paper addresses the question: What promising initiatives stimulating resilient food systems within the context of humanitarian assistance could be supported in PCAs? The paper is based on policy notes, impact evaluations and interviews with key stakeholders on lessons learned from implemented programmes. This paper is no systematic review; given the limited amount of interventions studied, it should be read as a scoping paper. The small number of interviews also contain a bias in organizations consulted (particularly ZOA), as a result of limited time and resources, and using a snowballing method.

The main conclusion of this paper is that integrated programmes combining interventions aimed at improving food systems and eliminating structural constraints are most likely to be (cost) effective. These approaches need to be context-sensitive, multisectoral and implemented in partnership with local organizations. We identified four focus areas for integrating and improving the HA and food systems development nexus. Moreover, we outline recommendations for (further) improving coordination and implementation. The key messages are outlined in box 1 below. The paper is structured around these messages.

Box 1: Summary of messages

1. Support programmes that build on existing agricultural practices in PCAs
2. Support the integration with programmes reducing constraints to agricultural production
 - 2.1. Reduce financial instability at the household and community level
 - 2.2. Promote flexible interventions and programming to adapt to climate variability
 - 2.3. Improve tenure security to induce long-term, sustainable investments
 - 2.4. Invest in social protection to reduce cash/credit constraints and increase stability
3. Improve coordination and cooperation between key stakeholders in PCAs
 - 3.1. Develop and implement programmes in cooperation with local communities
 - 3.2. Providing flexibility in funding is key to linking HA and (food systems) development
 - 3.3. Capitalize on existing partnerships and improve them
 - 3.4. Invest in quality monitoring, evaluation and learning

1. Support programmes that build on existing agricultural practices in PCAs

PCAs are more vulnerable to challenges: the possible rise of conflict, migrant flows, the economic impact of conflict on food prices, the stress of climate variability, unresolved land disputes and lack of social protection are only some of the potential factors contributing to risk averseness of farmers and investors and, thereby, lack of investments in food systems ([Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011](#)).

Besides being directly linked to food production, agriculture is important for boosting economies and alleviating poverty in PCAs ([McKechnie et al., 2018](#); [Maxwell et al., 2008](#)). Several interventions aimed at directly improving agricultural production can be promoted, (partly) replicated or in other ways learned from. In some regions, like the Kayin state in Myanmar (see box 2), farming is the only occupation possible for the local population (pers. com. 2018). A focus on how to incorporate local knowledge in agricultural practices, particularly given the long history of adaptation to changing circumstances in human security, can improve the effectiveness of agricultural interventions and engage communities.

Introducing new techniques and skills alongside upscaling the current practices can be done in several ways. First, organizing smallholder farmers and associated businesses gives them access to the formal economy and boosts domestic markets at the local and regional level (pers. com. 2018). Another successful intervention is to improve crop production levels by enhancing access to innovative agricultural inputs and newly developed techniques in so called cash crops. Examples are training smallholder farmers on selecting the best seeds in Burundi (see box 5) and boosting (cash) crops in Sudan and Myanmar (see box 2 and box 4). Allowing a learning process through multi-staged programmes is essential. As outlined in box 2, smallholder farmers adopted new techniques because the first group of farmers that were willing to take the risk to work with international NGOs and jump in on the opportunity of implementing new techniques showed their successful harvest to the community, creating a positive snowballing effect. The case of Burundi (box 3) also shows the importance of changing mindsets in PCAs, particularly for women in rural areas ([INCLUDE Platform, 2016a](#); [2016b](#)).

Box 2: Strengthening agriculture in Kayin state, Myanmar (source: Jose Molina, ZOA)

Title: Improved economic and nutritional outcomes of poor rural people in Myanmar (Jul. 2016–Jun. 2019)

Partners: CDN-ZOA, Cordaid and World Concern, funded by the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust fund (LIFT)

Region: Thandaunggyi township, Kayin state, Myanmar

Description: Internal conflicts between the military government regime, state army opposition groups and ethnic minorities are cause for ongoing conflict in Myanmar (in differing regions). The project targets 5,000 smallholder farmer households and people living (including displaced persons who have recently returned) in an area that is recovering from active conflict. It aims to assist the rural poor to improve their position in agricultural value chains through promoting improved agricultural practices, supporting land and irrigation investment, and facilitating sustainable access to markets, credit, and other inputs resulting in increased incomes for farming households. Furthermore, it aims to improve nutrition, health, and water and sanitation practices through social behaviour change communication interventions and investments in water, sanitation, and home gardens.

Key messages:

- Building on what is and has been available in agriculture in the country has been successfully taken up by the local community. Strengthening and upscaling known practices, like cash crops, stimulates the economy and motivates the local community.
- Besides the need and moral obligation to assist in food insecure areas in conflict, a focus on more relatively stable areas (where the interventions are welcome) can increase the potential of implementing sustainable programmes and successfully bridge humanitarian aid and development interventions; local authorities and governments are able to address issues such as food security here, rather than prioritizing state security only. This increases potential for successful implementation and support from local stakeholders.
- Focus on the bigger picture: international aid will be more welcome in more stable areas and actively hampered in conflict areas, intervening in more stable areas increases odds for sustainable programme implementation.
- Strengthening more stable regions will have a positive effect on the migration of people from conflict regions (thereby not migrating to neighbouring countries).

Box 3: Encouraging households' future visions in the PAPAB project (source: André Yanogo, ZOA)

Title: Projet d'Appui à la Production Agricole au Burundi (2015–2019)

Partners: ZOA-IFDC (main client), Alterra Wageningen UR, Oxfam Novib and local organizations

Regions: 14 communities in 6 provinces of Burundi

Description: The PAPAB project implemented activities to promote market-oriented, climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural techniques; e.g. by training farmers on selecting seeds and farming new crops. Furthermore, they work on building household capacity by setting up future visions and integrating this with a business plan for a sustainable future.

Key messages:

- A shift in mindset from immediate needs to future prospects is needed for households that have been reliant on HA, in order to overcome their potential dependency on aid from international donors.
- Introducing diversity in the crops and new systems promotes resilience to diseases newly present because of climate change.
- By intervening on household levels stimulating developing their vision, insights on finance, social structures and gender roles are improved.
- Financial capacity on a household level is improved by developing groups in the community based on equal economic powers, which increases social cohesion and enables extending loans to each other.

2. Support the integration with programmes reducing constraints to agricultural production

In PCAs, the conditions for investments in agricultural production are often inadequate (c.f. [Maxwell et al., 2008](#)). A rise of conflict and the influx of migrants are only some of the potential factors contributing to risk averseness and, thereby, lack of investments in food systems. While the impact of conflict and migration cannot always be mitigated, programmes that integrate interventions aimed at improving food systems with those aimed at other constraints can increase effectiveness. Four key factors hindering long-term investments in agriculture that are of particular interest for protracted conflict situations were identified in this study: the economic impact of conflict on food prices, the stress of climate variability, unresolved land disputes and lack of social protection. Food systems programmes that integrate an alleviation of these constraints need to be context-sensitive, multisectoral and implemented in partnership with local organizations to be cost-efficient, as will be illustrated in this chapter.

2.1. Reduce financial instability at the household and community level

To break the link between food insecurity and conflict, it is important for households and communities to be able to respond to economic changes ([McKechnie et al., 2018](#)). Households face financial instability through factors such as fluctuating food prices, unstable incomes and natural disasters. Reducing instability can positively influence local markets and can thus contribute to both immediate needs and long-term development ([Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011](#)). Assessments of the effectiveness of interventions to improve livelihoods and food security in PCAs should therefore contain a study of the functioning of local and national markets (pers. com., 2018).

Governments of fragile states can have the means to reduce the financial vulnerability of communities and households by controlling domestic food prices through lowering taxes, increasing subsidies and controlling import and export ([Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011](#)). However, controlling market and input prices by the government can also result in a lack of incentive for farmers to sell to the market, as the profit margins may be very small (pers. com., 2018). Local authorities and NGOs can encourage professional development and formation of cooperative groups (like in Sudan, see box 4). An important component is the registration of land and business. This intervention is implemented by ZOA in several PCAs (such as in Burundi). In Sudan, farmers are formalizing their existence by association registration, making it possible for them to approach the formal sector (banks for microloans, insurance companies, input suppliers and more). Through such programmes, implemented by organizations like ZOA and their partners, there is increased opportunity for these farmers to collaborate with the local authorities and a

mobilized private sector, and enable access of these groups and individuals to the formal market (e.g. through tenure security, see box 5).

The positive economic outcomes of the improved agricultural practices furthermore resulted in increased trust by banks, who are now showing signs of willingness to provide loans to smallholder farmers to increase their production (pers. com., 2018). Overall, becoming part of a more formalized market results in improved collaboration with the local government and the private sector in Burundi (pers. com., 2018).

Box 4: Promoting 'agricultural production by smallholders in Gedaref' (source: Lisa Wijkel, ZOA)

Title: Sudan Food Security Programme (SFSP)

Partners: ZOA, with ZENAB for women in development (ZWD) and state authorities for technical support

Region: Republic of the Sudan: East and West Galabat Localities in Gedaref State

Description: Multi-year community-based programme on increased productivity and income for rural smallholders. Activities included support for farmers organizing associations, linking farmers to the local authorities and private sector (input suppliers and businesses, insurance institutes, microfinance institutes, formal market for sales) training in collective marketing and bargaining, improved practices, phased subsidy provision for agricultural packages.

Key messages:

- Programmes drawing from a community-based approach, linking the community to local stakeholders and the private sector has shown to have lasting effects.
- Organizing smallholder farmers into (registered) associations increases confidence and strengthens farmers on a community level, building capacity for them to lobby and link with private sector organizations and governmental organizations on market conditions and prices. Participating in these activities formalize smallholder farmer associations.
- Short-term results in profit (in this case the increased crop production as a result of the use of improved seeds and techniques) can overcome initial scepticism from the local population around implementing new techniques.
- The microfinance phased subsidy approach enabled smallholders with limited resources to be linked to the private sector and formal institutions. The subsidy method gradually allowed the farmers to improve their yield and income. This provided an approach where smallholders were able to move from relief to rehabilitation and development in a limited resources situation, thus forming a bridge from humanitarian to development programming. The increasing financial capacity of the farmers made that over time they could invest in agricultural packages themselves which led to increased ownership over their business.

2.2. Promote flexible interventions and programming to adapt to climate variability

Many PCAs have a history of being subjected to natural disasters and climate change. Programmes need to take this into account and be able to adapt in order to avoid being too negatively affected by climate instability. Emergency aid programmes that run parallel to existing development assistance in the region can be successful in this. An example of this flexibility can be found in the North Darfur region in Sudan where, since the start of El Niño in 2015, the region has been dealing with consecutive dry years. Short term relief interventions were provided by ZOA in northern Darfur as a response. Because of the organization's presence in the region implementing development work, they could register the need for additional support. For three to four months annually, these interventions provide relief through unconditional cash transfers and provision of livestock food for vulnerable households (pers. com., 2018). This support ensured continuation of the market and prevented development programmes in the area from failing because of environmental challenges.

Anticipating such weather-related shocks is an important example for how adaptability to shocks can be the focus of programming, also known as resilience building. Such programming can function as an important bridge to move from humanitarian aid to development support. One example in areas affected by drought is to provide farmers with weather index insurance (i.e. providing insurance against crop failure under a minimum amount of rainfall). As uninsured risk is a severe constraint for farmers, providing insurance in times of drought can overcome risk-averseness of farmers. Experiments in northern Ghana ([Karlán et al., 2014](#)) and Tigray, Ethiopia ([INCLUDE Platform, 2017](#)) show how farmers need to be alleviated from these risk

constraints in parallel with interventions to reduce cash/credit constraints. When one of the two constraints persist, investments in both can have little results. Yet, as shown by Karlan et al. (2014), when these conditions are in place, demand for index insurance can be high, agricultural production can significantly increase and riskier production choices are made.

2.3. Improve tenure security to induce long-term, sustainable investments

A major source for abstained investments in agriculture is land insecurity. Land insecurity, food insecurity and conflict are interrelated and often mutually reinforcing, particularly in the case of weak institutions (e.g. Betge, 2018; van Leeuwen, 2010). Hence, improving land rights has been a key focus in the food security policy of the Netherlands Embassy in Burundi (2015). Land conflicts are often very context-specific and take a long time to settle. For this reason, organizations often operate at a small scale to overcome these disputes. In Burundi however, ZOA's programme has enabled the registration of more than 40,000 plots through close cooperation with local partners. Several issues persist, such as the inclusion of women and the availability of a functioning spatial data infrastructure at the provincial level. Several general conclusions can be drawn from evaluations of these interventions (see box 5), but some remain dependent on contextual factors such as the quality of local government institutions and the origin and severity of land disputes.

Box 5: Land tenure registration in DRC, Burundi and Uganda (source: David Betge, ZOA)

Title: Addressing land rights in the African Great Lakes Region (no official title)

Partners: ZOA with War Child, VNGi, IRC, SfCG (DRC), Mi-Parec (Burundi) and ARLPI (Uganda)

Regions: North and South-Kivu, DRC; Bujumbura, Burundi; Nwoya, Uganda

Description: All projects involve conflict resolution on land right disputes and land registration through participatory processes, such as the *Cadres de Dialogue et Mediation* (CDMs) in DRC. Additional activities include participatory mapping (of land) including technology transfers (using GPS), community-based sociotherapy, civil society engagement, improving governance of local institutions, capacity building of local partners, providing agricultural assets and training, and water irrigation. All activities are designed and implemented in collaboration with local partners (listed above).

Key messages:

- Positive results, such as large amounts of land registered, an increase in land transactions and perceived land tenure security, point to the success of this integrated, participatory approach.
- The involvement of local actors, including traditional authorities, helps to overcome the clash between formal and customary law. Improving capacity of local governments can increase project effectiveness.
- These projects require (gender-sensitive) stakeholder and risk analyses and a thorough understanding of the local political economy of land rights. A participatory approach, including and empowering local partners, is essential.
- The success of these projects is highly dependent on trust building and thus require a long-term focus.
- Land right interventions affect social structures and therefore need flexibility to adapt to changes in context.

2.4. Invest in social protection to reduce cash/credit constraints and increase stability

Social protection interventions, such as providing cash or food transfers are a common instrument in emergency situations (c.f. Maxwell et al., 2008). Yet, apart from providing relief, social protection can also transform food systems through the alleviation of credit constraints, food shortages and other factors such as increased educational achievements or improved health at the household level (e.g. FAO, 2017a). It can also have an anticipating and stabilizing effect in humanitarian contexts, both on households and institutions that provide security, justice and jobs. The Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia for instance provides cash transfers, public works and food aid in times of shortages to approximately 8 million Ethiopians (WFP, 2018). In Nepal, increasing expenditures on a comprehensive national programme including unconditional cash transfers, public works and maternity benefits (amongst others) have helped to stabilize the contract between state and society after the end of conflict 2006 (World Bank, 2011). A diverse set of programmes, e.g. through cash or food-for-work programmes, creating jobs and improving livelihoods has been shown to promote peace and reconciliation in multiple

operations ([Brinkman & Hendrix, 2011](#)). Save the Children uses cash transfer programming whenever possible in all their projects under the Dutch Relief Alliance (pers. com., 2018). In their programming, Save the Children recommends involving the local community in setting up the intervention by discussing their needs for food, healthcare, education and shelter, and carefully considering the location of cash distribution points or cash-for-work sites, such that the programme is accessible to the most vulnerable populations and households ([Thompson, 2012](#)). Social protection is therefore increasingly recognized and incorporated in humanitarian assistance programming ([FAO, 2017b](#)).

In themselves, social protection programmes are seldom a simple solution because they depend on other institutions such as social services and functioning markets. Yet, when embedded in a (conflict-sensitive) integrated programme they can be (cost) effective ([INCLUDE Platform, 2018](#)). Yet, so far, programmes such as social insurance and universal pensions have a low coverage rate in conflict-affected countries and mostly benefit the non-poor ([Ovadiya et al., 2015](#)). Countries with low administrative capacity (such as South Sudan and DRC) therefore currently lack the institutional conditions for rolling out national safety nets. Conflict-affected countries that score relatively better on both factors, such as Burundi and Yemen, are more suitable for transformative social protection systems. Transferring cash through mobile technology has been promising in countries with low capacity, such as in Somalia and Haiti ([Ovadiya et al., 2015](#)). An example of a comprehensive programme in a PCA can be found in Yemen (see box 6). This example reconfirms the importance of local ownership of the programme (see section 3.1), flexible funding and integrated programmes. In addition, building on existing informal institutions can also make programmes more successful and efficient. This is shown by a successful school feeding programme in Togo, where selected village women who were already known for their preparation and selling of food on local markets were mobilized ([Andrews et al., 2011](#)).

Box 6: Social protection in conflict-affected Yemen (source: [Al-Iryani et al. 2015](#); [Ovadiya et al., 2015](#))

Title: Yemeni Social Fund for Development (1997 – ongoing)

Partners: Yemeni Government. Donors include: World Bank, DFiD, KfW, EU, Islamic Development Bank, NL.

Regions: National programme in Yemen

Description: Installed as a fund to combat poverty and increase social safety nets, the SPD has evolved towards a large social fund focused on four components: i) community development; ii) capacity building; iii) SME development; and iv) public works programme. Its projects relate to water management, health, agriculture, environmental protection, and roads building amongst others. The [Rainfed Agriculture and Livestock Project](#) (RALP) formed and trained small farmer groups in rural areas and provided subsidies for agricultural inputs.

Key messages:

- The public works programme had a large stabilizing effect during the economic shock of 2010–2011, and prevented households from selling assets and incurring debt
- The RALP had significant positive impacts on food production, including processing and marketing
- Key factors for success are the ownership of stakeholders within these projects, trust based on its perceived political neutrality, flexible funding and beneficiaries who, in return, provided support and protection to the programme.
- The success in Yemen also shows the importance of political will. Even despite limited capacity and resources, political will has led the programme in Yemen to expand to 1.5 million households during the crisis in 2011.

3. Improve coordination and cooperation between key stakeholders in PCAs

Integrating a focus on HA and food systems development requires collaboration by the many actors that are already present in both fields. As both Resolution 2417 and the Grand Bargain call for increased cooperation at various levels, this chapter outlines some lessons that can be learned. The most important message is that cooperation in new settings or with new stakeholders is an iterative process, where the following lessons can help to make cooperation and coordination more efficient.

3.1. A community-based approach

Implementation of programmes aiming for sustainable system changes will only be successful when the local authorities and communities are on board. A big part of the problem with donor coordination in fragile states contexts is that foreign, military and political objectives coexist with developmental ones, which makes it much more difficult for donors and local authorities to agree on the interventions to be implemented.

Programmes in Myanmar (see box 2) and Yemen (see box 6) illustrate the importance of understanding of the cultural and political history of the context and the willingness of the (local) government. For example, the Rohingya ethnic minority people in Rakhine state are a group not recognized by the national government. Though 'morally justifiable' for international donors and organizations to provide relief for them, conflicting interests with the authorities will ascertain opposition and lack of sustainability of these programmes. In conflict areas like Rakhine state, where state security is the first (and only) priority, humanitarian organizations are hampered in providing aid the state is not interested in. Hence, as ZOA, Cordaid and World Concern show in their multi-sectoral programme (described in box 2), setting up programmes and interventions in areas affected by conflict or crisis that are relatively more stable is more effective when trying to bridge humanitarian interventions to development because of the a greater capacity and willingness of the local government to address e.g. improving food security rather than solely focusing on state security (pers. com., 2018).

Within this nexus, many programmes have shown positive outcomes when implementing a community-based approach. For instance, ZOA's Sudan Food Security Programme has shown success because the intervention was designed and implemented in cooperation with the local community. Organizing smallholder farmers, building capacity for them and the resulting snowballing effect of the success of the intervention to other people in and outside the community has increased social cohesion, which in turn helped to implement the programme. Other good examples of programmes focusing on community capacity building and social cohesion are ZOA's land rights programmes (see box 4) and Yemen's SFD (see section 2.4).

3.2. Providing flexibility in funding is key to linking HA and (food systems) development

A fundamental difference between HA and development programmes is the focus of HA on immediate relief for individuals and households, while development programmes often aim for long term change and support. This difference explains the complexity of implementing, coordinating and financing an integrated approach within the nexus ([Mosel & Levine, 2014](#)). Greater flexibility and adaptability of funds and programme activities in either (or both) HA and development programmes are needed to meet their corresponding needs and conditions.

A way to encourage such flexibility is to set up programmes that link relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD). Cordaid's project 'Pro-ACT' in South Sudan showed success in being adaptive and successful in this LRRD approach after a 2017 conflict in Fashoda county that affected resilience work in the region ([Brussels Briefings, 2018](#)). Cordaid responded with relief activities, recovering households and communities through cash transfers (used for restoration of community assets and to counteract negative coping strategies by households) and providing support through inputs. This example shows how an integrated LRRD approach can provide the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances in activities and their execution and—in this case—how this enables communities to bounce back after a crisis ([Brussels Briefings, 2018](#)).

3.3. Capitalize on existing partnerships and improve them

Forming consortiums between international organizations or trust funds between states (e.g. EU trust funds between EU member states) is a potentially successful approach to implementing sustainable programmes in the humanitarian-development assistance nexus. By collaborating on this international scale, there is incentive to have a more rapid, flexible and effective response by pooling resources and coordination. Furthermore, fragmentation of donor funding can potentially be overcome while creating a level-playing field between donors ([Jones & Mazzara, 2018](#)). Hence, the incentive of forming these consortiums and funds—especially considering the

acknowledged need for LRRD—is to fill the transition gap between HA and development ([Jones & Mazzara, 2018](#); [Mosel & Levine, 2014](#); [Voice, 2017](#)).

Examples include the Somalia Resilience Program (SOMREP) consortium and the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) ([Voice, 2017](#); [Brussels Briefings, 2018](#)). The DRA carries out integrated programmes with food security focus and, regarding flexibility during rapid onset crisis, has shown that a consortium of international NGOs can be effective in PCAs by: responding jointly (e.g. in addressing the needs of newly displaced individuals in South Sudan); working closely together with official bodies, which allows partners to avoid duplication of activities and strengthen existing services (e.g. in Nigeria); and building capacity in terms of programme sustainability by mobilizing volunteers (see box 7). The case of SOMREP shows that forming collaborations can be a tool to bridge flexibility and predictability gaps in financing. Predicting financial support from donors can lead to enabling a common programming approach and thus may contribute to increased potential for monitoring and evaluating programmes to increase sustainability ([Voice, 2017](#)).

However, the anticipated effect of consortiums and trust funds to alleviate responsibilities of individual organizations and implementing more sustainable programmes can only be successful if coordination between all partners is adequate (per. com., 2018; [Ramet, 2012](#)). An important consideration is whether field level coordination overall is more successful than coordination at the headquarters level, as concluded by Mosel & Levine ([2014](#)). Challenges are posed by differences in analytical tools and methodologies used, together with differences in decision making processes. On top of this, short term interventions have shown to be severely disadvantaged by a lack of efficient coordination ([Jones & Mazzara, 2018](#); pers. com. 2018). Coordination can be improved by consciously reflecting on whether implementation should be done by a trust fund or a consortium (pers. com., 2018).

Box 7: Implemented joint responses by the Dutch Relief Alliance (source: pdf leaflets through <http://www.dutchrelief.org/joint-responses/>)

With funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign affairs, the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) has been providing complementary approaches between (I)NGOs in humanitarian response since 2016 in Africa and the Middle-East. Activities include providing basic and supplementary food, emergency food supplies (vouchers or cash for food), cash for work activities, awareness-raising sessions and trainings to improve the nutritional status. The following joint responses are being (or have been) carried out integrating Food Security & Livelihood (FSL) components.

Country	Organizations	Sectors	Duration
Central African Republic (CAR)	Cordaid (lead), ICCO and Kerk in Actie, Oxfam Novib, Plan Nederland, Save the Children, Tear, Stichting Vluchteling, War Child and World Vision	Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL); Nutrition; Protection; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	1 May 2015 – 31 Mar. 2017
Nigeria	Save the Children (lead), Stichting Vluchteling, ICCO and Kerk In Actie, Oxfam Novib and Tear	FSL; Protection; Health; WASH	16 May 2016 – 15 May 2017
South Sudan	Save the Children (lead), CARE, Cordaid, Dorcas, ICCO Cooperation, Oxfam Novib, Plan Nederland, Stichting Vluchteling, Tear, World Vision, War Child, Terre des Hommes & ZOA	Health, NFI/Shelter Nutrition, FSL, WASH and Protection	1 Jan. 2016 – 28 Feb. 2017
Somalia	CARE Nederland (lead), Dorcas, Save the Children, Tear, ZOA	FSL, WASH, Nutrition	1 Jul. 2016 – 31 Dec. 2016
Yemen	CARE Nederland (lead), Oxfam-Novib, Save the Children NL, Stichting Vluchteling/ the IRC and ZOA	Food Security and Shelter; Non-Food Items (NFI), WASH, Nutrition, Health.	1 Dec. 2015 – 30 Nov. 2016

3.4. Invest in quality monitoring, evaluation and learning

Several stakeholders have mentioned the lack of available data on earlier interventions in project areas as a hindrance. One explanation may be that HA often has smaller budgets allocated to monitoring and evaluation as compared to budgets in development programmes (pers. com., 2018). Short-term funding cuts out the potential of monitoring and evaluating programmes for long term implementation purposes. Reasons for failed attempts in evaluating programmes can be ascribed to the pressure to deliver fast, give high visibility to actions and show achievements of predefined outcomes and outputs—which, in many cases, is requested by donors and funders (pers. com., 2018; [Mosel & Levine, 2014](#)).

Interventions or programmes that are implemented in these changing and vulnerable regions and subjected to contextual changes need monitoring and evaluation to determine what works and what does not ([Mosel & Levine, 2014](#)). Often, humanitarian organizations engage in activities that have a more long-term impact than relief only, but often without an openly accessible record. The narrow window of monitoring and evaluation results in a lack of examination of the lasting effects or needs after short term interventions, subsequently less potential to identify synergies between programmes in this nexus, and less opportunity to bridge the gap between HA and development projects (pers. com., 2018; [Mosel & Levine, 2014](#)). Encouraging financing evaluations for increased learning on lasting effects of interventions and providing open access to existing impact evaluations can help programme designers to improve programme effectiveness and increase synergy between programmes in this nexus.

As partners within consortia like the DRA (see section 3.3) often operate in different areas, the main challenge is to exchange knowledge with partner organizations in other countries. To a small extent, knowledge can also be exchanged better within the alliance, particularly in areas such as South Sudan, where several partners are represented. Moreover, even when monitoring and evaluation does occur in HA, it is often done inadequately or not systematically, as compared to development projects. Devoting a fixed percentage of budget for large projects in HA may help to incentivize improvements (pers. com.). The Grand Bargain can be an important milestone for this, as goals 1,5,7 and particularly 9 call for improved collaboration in reporting, the exchange of knowledge and the acknowledgement of the importance of localized knowledge.

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