

Expert Group Meeting

Operationalizing the Triple Nexus Approach in conflict and fragile settings: Reinforcing national Institutions and Governance systems to respond to and resolve humanitarian crises in ways that lay the foundation for sustainable development and peacebuilding

1-2nd December 2021,

Rotana - Amman

Hybrid

Background:

No doubt that the role of humanitarian interventions in a region afflicted by protracted conflict, structural institutional fragility, and emerging challenges, is of paramount importance to save lives and maintain at best a minimum level of resilience. Nevertheless, these interventions, by themselves, cannot put the recipient country on the path to sustainable development and peace. This is because they do not take place in a holistic approach that links them to development and peacebuilding, failing thus to address the root causes of conflict, which are overwhelmingly structural as they relate to governance deficits and institutional weakness. Serious reforms and improvements within the humanitarian system are vitally needed if that system is to keep pace with the multiplication and increased duration of emergencies around the world, and in the Arab region, in particular. At the same time, while reforms are a must within the humanitarian system, **achieving durable solutions will require better ways of working not only among humanitarians, but among and between humanitarians and their counterparts in the development and peacebuilding communities**; all delivering as one for the benefit of the recipient countries.

What is more, closer coordination, better policy coherence, and synergies among institutions **at the national level** are key elements for enhanced effectiveness. The reality is that a “whole-of-government” approach for response and recovery, is still lacking. Resolving protracted crises requires such an approach; yet in most affected countries, there are no national systems for crisis response and recovery that span financial, personnel, and procurement systems and specify the relative roles of the center of government, line ministries, emergency agencies, and subnational authorities. Most crisis and conflict-affected governments still lack the institutional capacity and resources to provide the necessary public services to their constituencies through existing public systems and institutions. Lest these institutions receive substantial support, they will keep facing challenges, recently compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. There are two main challenges in this regard:

- With few exceptions, many donors and aid agencies continue to bypass country systems and institutions while providing assistance, **including in cases in which national or local actors have sufficient absorptive capacity and accountability and humanitarian principles are not at risk**. What changes are needed at both international and national levels such that it becomes less of a challenge for international actors to work with and through responsible country systems in a coherent manner?
- In contexts where it is not appropriate to work directly with or through existing national systems and institutions, there is frequently still **no holistic plan or approach to ensure that aid interventions do not perpetuate institutional weaknesses but rather lay the foundation for national ownership of**

crisis response and recovery in future. How can stronger links between humanitarian, development, and peace actors ensure that aid provides at least the nucleus for an eventual transition from internationally- to nationally-led responses?

Given these challenges, and building on previous work by ESCWA on governance and institutional development in crisis contexts and conflict-affected countries, this EGM focuses on the concept of the Triple Nexus approach and explores concrete ways on how to operationalize this approach in conflict and fragile settings in the Arab region. It focuses mainly on reinforcing national Institutions and Governance systems to move beyond humanitarian aid dependency towards sustainable development and peacebuilding. It also aims at exploring new ways of working within challenging contexts, namely within protracted conflicts and fragile settings, or recurring crisis situations.

This EGM will focus on enhancing institutional capacities and synergies among national actors. It will explore inter alia the following issues:

- How to incorporate **collective outcomes** related to supporting national institutions into strategic plans on the basis of a **shared analysis**.
- How to bridge the **cultural divide** separating the three dimensions: humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding interventions to assist national institutions to move gradually from aid dependency to development and peace.
- How to plan **transition strategies**, as most assistance plans and programs lack clear benchmarks for transitioning away from relief to development and from international to national ownership.
- How to build **country-level platforms** that bring together all key national and international stakeholders under a common decision-making umbrella within the triple nexus approach – i.e., how to strengthen the nexus coordination capacities of national institutions in relation both to themselves as well as international actors.
- How to integrate the triple nexus approach into the **funding arrangements** of international actors and the **budgets and fiscal policies** developed by national / local governments, such that they adequately resource localized, triple-nexus responses and durable solutions to crises.
- How best to support national institutions to implement **multisectoral approaches** that address challenges across the triple nexus at the programmatic/service delivery level.

Objectives:

This EGM has three main objectives:

1. Assess opportunities and challenges of putting into practice the triple nexus approach in selected conflict-affected countries and LDCs
2. Develop guiding principles for governments (and relevant stakeholders) on operationalizing the triple nexus approach
3. Build institutional capacities of governments for the implementation of the triple nexus approach in conflict and post-conflict / recovery phases.

Targeted countries:

Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Mauritania, Iraq, Libya, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria.

Draft Agenda

Wednesday 1 December 2021	
<i>10:00- 16:00</i>	
10:00 – 10:10	<p>Opening remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UN-ESCWA ▪ CIC-NYU <p>Goal: to frame what the nexus is and why it's important, including for national public institutions.</p>
10:10 – 11: 45	<p>Session (1): Exploring the Triple Nexus approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of the current state of play. - Attempting development in contexts of conflict and fragility. - What is new in nexus approaches? <p>Moderator: Youness Abouyoub</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Leah Zamore, CIC NYU - Mr. Ralf Südhoff, Director, Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA) - Ms. Maha EL Rawi, Director General of the Human Development Directorate, Ministry of Planning (Iraq) - Ms. Ola Sidani, Senior Economist & SDGs Expert, Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Lebanon) - Mr. Moussa Mohamad Othman, Director of Planning Department, Ministry of Planning (Somalia)
11:45 – 12:00	Break
12:00 – 13:30	<p>Session (2): Reinforcing, not replacing, national and local systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the mechanisms of the peace-development-humanitarian nexus as it relates to supporting national and local institutions? - How to build institutional resilience in fragile context? How to manage and overcome institutional duplication in times of conflict? - How can development support become a tool for strengthening national governance and institutional structures in crisis-affected contexts? - What are some of the opportunities and challenges facing public institutions as they endeavor to coordinate across the HDP nexus? <p>Moderator: Leah Zamore</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Clarisse Pasztory, Deputy Head of Presence, OSCE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Al-Hawri, Undersecretary, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (Yemen) - Mr. Mutasim makawi mohamed, Deputy Director of the Arab Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (Sudan) - Mr. Samer Abdeljaber, Representative & Country Director, World Food Programme in Palestine - Ms. Wathba Al-Tayyar, Expert in Consultation and Management development <p>An open discussion with the participants on the key questions raised above</p>
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Break
14:30 – 16:00	<p>Session (3): Triple Nexus, conflict prevention and Peace-building</p> <p>Moderator: Karam Karam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do/should nexus approaches differ between conflict- and non-conflict affected contexts? - What are the implications for humanitarian principles when it comes to the nexus in conflict-affected countries? - How can the triple nexus lead to more preventative and anticipatory approaches? <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Rami Khouri, American University of Beirut, Director of Global Engagement; adjunct professor of journalism; Senior Public Policy Fellow, the Harvard Kennedy School. - Ms. Marina Caparini, Senior Researcher and Director of the Governance and Society Programme, SIPRI - Ms. Gloria Nguya - Expert in urban displacement regarding governance aid, network and displacement trajectories, IDP womens' employment opportunities, and livelihoods in camps in eastern Congo (Democratic Republic). - Mr. Ghassan El-Kahlout, Head of the MA Program in Conflict Management and Humanitarian Action, Doha Institute
Thursday 2 December 2021	
09:00 – 10:30	<p>Session (4): Financing the Triple Nexus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Macroeconomic/fiscal challenges and opportunities for financing the nexus at the national level. - Good practices and challenges related to transferring funding from national to municipal/frontline institutions. - Challenges and opportunities for localizing international/ODA financing to support nationally led nexus approaches. <p>Moderator: Karam Karam</p>

	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Al-Hawri, Undersecretary, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (Yemen) - Ms. Pallavi Rai, Transition/Nexus Adviser, Office of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan - Ms. Nada Aldossary, Director of the General department for Media and strategic communication, The Saudi Development and Reconstruction Program for Yemen - QFFD (TBC) - Islamic Bank Group (TBC)
<p>10:30 – 12:00</p>	<p>Session (5): Towards achieving Human Security: transcending the humanitarian–development divide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the best ways to transcend the humanitarian–development(–peace) divide by working toward collective outcomes, over multiyear timeframes? - How to capitalize on the respective comparative advantages? - What are the best practices, the related challenges and constraints? - How inclusive should the process be? - How should competing priorities be reconciled? - At what level should outcomes be focused, i.e. area-based; subnational, national? - What kinds of mechanisms are needed to incentivize collaboration around collective outcomes over the medium and long terms? - How can accountability best be secured? - How can affected populations be best served and what are the optimal ways to achieve human security of targeted populations? <p>Moderator: Leah Zamore</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Nina Stuurman, Regional Emergency and Post Crisis Specialist for Middle East and North Africa, IOM - Mr. Ali Adralan, Regional Adviser and Head of Health Systems in Emergencies Lab, Department of Universal Health Coverage/Health Systems, World Health Organization, Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean - Mr. Omar Al-Aqel, Operations Officer, The World Bank - OCHA (TBC)
<p>12:00 – 12: 30</p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>12:30 -13:30</p>	<p>Closing session: Elements of a manual / framework on how to operationalize the triple nexus</p> <p>Moderator: Youness Abouyoub & Karam Karam</p> <p>Recommendations and the way forward</p>