

# »»» The humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus: challenges in implementation

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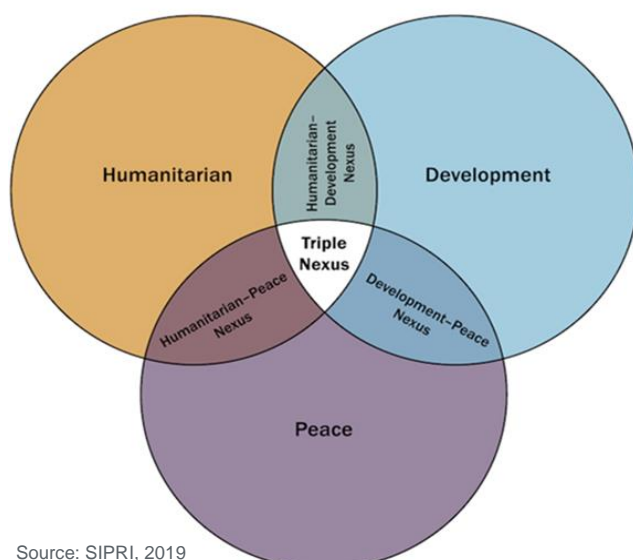
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Today's crises are increasingly long-lasting, recurring, complex and interdependent. Against this background, and in view of the growing gap between humanitarian needs and the resources provided, Ban Ki-Moon, the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, called for a paradigm shift and a new way of working to make the international system more efficient and effective at the Humanitarian World Summit in 2016. As a result, the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus concept was created, the development of which is critically examined below.

## Target: improved interlinking of the various instruments

The interlinking of humanitarian aid and long-term development cooperation had already started to be implemented in the 1990s through the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) approach. What is particularly new in terms of the triple nexus concept is the inclusion of the peace dimension. Humanitarians as well as development and peace actors are called upon to better

## Triple nexus



Source: SIPRI, 2019

coordinate their work in order to more effectively promote the transformation of crises and conflicts into sustainable peace.

In the past, different mandates, approaches and funding logic as well as a lack of cooperation mechanisms among the stakeholders have led to the poor integration of interventions and often compromised efficiency and effectiveness as a result.

## Challenges: a broad strategy, lack of incentives and a poor mutual understanding

Despite the awareness of the relevance of the concept and initial successes, implementation still poses major challenges for the stakeholders involved. Effective and efficient cooperation beyond institutional borders requires an adjustment to internal structures, processes and procedures that have often evolved over decades. Within the institutions and the nexus system, there is also a lack of incentive structures to encourage cooperation. Furthermore, there is no in-depth understanding of the work and functioning of the other stakeholder groups. Last but not least, there is a lack

of joint analysis and scenario planning to define the focus of coherent programmes that map all aspects of the HDP nexus. Despite OECD DAC recommendations, the rather broad concept leaves plenty of room for interpretation and leads to the various actors having a different understanding of how the actual implementation of the HDP nexus is to take place.

## Possible solutions: greater coordination, more changes of perspective and dedicated cooperation at all levels

The following measures appear appropriate for ensuring that the individual actors have a greater focus on a common, overarching system of objectives:

- Ask “win-win questions” more consistently: Which forms of cooperation create added value for the stakeholders? How can new structures to incentivise cooperation be created or existing ones adapted?
- Measures at national policy level: for example, better cross-departmental/internal coordination, the development of joint analyses and country strategies with nexus potential, and overcoming bureaucratic obstacles.
- Improved national and international coordination at a local level to ensure greater coherence (for example, through stronger mandates for coordination).
- Establish cross-donor platforms for sharing analyses and data.
- Encourage staff changes, job shadowing and exchange formats among the various stakeholder groups to foster changes of perspective.
- Building on existing best practices, develop more specific guidance on implementing the HDP nexus at a higher level (for example, the OECD).

Implementing the HPD nexus is a long-term task that requires substantial changes to the system. However, taking into account the above-mentioned proposals will enable further improvements in terms of more sustainable impacts and a more efficient use of funds in the context of crises, violence and fragility. ■

