Policy Brief #01

we World
Member of ChildFund Alliance

GUIDANCE ON THE NEXUS

Delivering Nexus Mechanisms through the Community Protection Approach

SUMMARY

The **Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus** (further *the Nexus*) refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and, depending on the context, peace related actions. The need to operationalize and bridge the divide between Humanitarian, Development, and Peace-related actions is a direct commitment of the *Grand Bargain* resulting from the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit[1]. The Nexus approach builds upon international policy dialogues, frameworks and agreements.[2]

The **objective** of this guidance is to demonstrate how WeWorld's **Community Protection Approach (CPA)** integrates operational aspects of the Nexus. It further illustrates how each main Nexus operational aspect can be practically adapted through the CPA and how its implementation contributes to the delivery of the Nexus mechanisms in a geographic area.

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[1] The Grand Bargain is an agreement between some of the largest donors and aid providers to get more means into hands of people in need. Its origins are in the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the United Nations Secretary-General, Too Important to Fail: addressing the humanitarian financing gap, January 2016. Find out more at: www.interagencystandingcommittee. org/grand-bargain.

[2] OECD, DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, OECD/LEGAL/5019, 2019.
The Global Compact on Refugees was affirmed on 17 December 2018 by the United Nations General Assembly after 2 years of extensive consultations. It seeks to enhance humanitarian responses while providing a basis for the early activation of development cooperation to provide additional support with direct benefits for host communities and refugees. See https://www. unhcr.org/the-global-compact-on-refugees.html.
The New Way of Working was set up by the United Nations and the World Bank to deliver the nexus approach. See World Humanitarian Summit, Commitment to Action, May 2016. See also OCHA, Collective Outcomes: Operationalizing the New Way of Working, April 2018.
Council of the European Union Conclusions on the Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises, Council Conclusions, 22 January 2018.
Council of the European Union, Operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development Nexus, Council conclusions, 19 May 2017.

[3] See Council of the European Union, Operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development Nexus, Council conclusions, 19 May 2017; OCHA, Collective Outcomes: Operationalizing the New Way of Working, April 2018; OCHA, New Way of Working, 2017.

01. NEXUS DELIVERY MECHANISMS

Nexus delivery mechanisms is a set of durable and coherent mechanisms necessary for the Nexus approach to be operationally effective in the same geographical area among the actors working across the Nexus.

There are several *operational aspects* of the Nexus agreed upon by the international community. However, the main 3 operational aspects are[3]:

#1. Joint Context Analysis
#2. Collective Outcomes
#3. Comparative Advantage

WeWorld sees the following operational aspect as a *must* for operationalizing the Nexus and, for the purpose of this guidance, adds it as a 4th main Nexus operational aspect:

#4. Exit Strategy

The operational aspects of the Nexus are aligned with the organization's *Nexus principles*. For the list of WeWorld's Nexus principles, please refer to the Annex 1.

> Nexus **operational aspects** refers to the features of an intervention in the same territory implemented by actors working across the Nexus.

Nexus delivery mechanisms incorporate Nexus operational aspects and principles.

The Nexus *delivery mechanisms* are[4]:

#1. Localization
#2. Complementarity
#3. Coordination
#4. Flexibility

#1. LOCALIZATION

Humanitarian and development interventions by international organizations have often excluded locally-led CSOs and responders from decision-making processes, citing a lack of capacity and organizational discipline to design, plan and lead on projects. This is simply untrue, as such local entities have greater contextual knowledge of the territory and direct connections to communities they often are part of as well.[1] Thus, context analyses and collective outcomes should be developed together with local actors, building responses upon locally available resources and initiatives. The communities should also drive or actively take part in monitoring, evaluation and learning. The implementation of activities should respect the principle of *reinforce not substitute* and prioritize the strengthening of local responders, the establishment of *early warning systems* for violations of International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law, and planning investments in the capacity-building of local leadership to prepare, respond, and coordinate in their given context.

> ***Early warning systems** – the set of capacities needed to provide timely and meaningful information to enable individuals and communities threatened by hazards to act in sufficient time and in an appropriate manner to reduce the possibility of personal injury, loss of life and livelihoods, damage to property and the environment, and to prepare for effective response[5].*

#2. COMPLEMENTARITY

All interventions in all sectors should abide by the humanitarian principles and contribute to long-term development and durable solutions. Responses should integrate protection risks and associated needs, and work in collaboration with communities to ensure respect for people's rights, their safety and dignity. Further, they should include measures for ensuring long-standing

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[3] See Council of the European Union, Operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development Nexus, Council conclusions, 19 May 2017; OCHA, Collective Outcomes: Operationalizing the New Way of Working, April 2018; OCHA, New Way of Working, 2017.
[4] Nexus approach refers to the aim of strengthening collaboration, coherence and *complementarity [...] in order to reduce overall vulnerability and the number of unmet needs, strengthen risk management capacities and address root causes of conflict." (OECD*

DAC, 2019). To learn more, refer to the above mentioned sources of international policy dialogues, frameworks and agreements.
[1] Guidance: Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leaddership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordiantion Mechanisms, IASC Results Group 1 on Operation Response, IASC, 2021.
[5] Reliefweb Glossary of Humanitarian Terms, Reliefweb, 2008.

impacts and strengthening the self-reliance of targeted communities, such as scaling up governance schemes for humanitarian assets and supporting locally driven models of service provision and management. The process of

> The **CPA** is an action-oriented approach and methodology enabling to design and monitor integrated protection programming by collecting, combining and analysing quantitative and qualitative data which implementing actors can use to tailor humanitarian, development, and peace interventions. It places people at the center and builds upon contextualization and growing community participation and ownership.

strengthening local development actors should be done in parallel to humanitarian assistance, thus adopting the continuum approach of the Nexus, favouring at all times the best-placed actors.

#3. COORDINATION

The framework the Nexus creates should streamline the coordination between humanitarian, development, and peace actors. It must build upon comprehensive and tailored plans engaging different actors based on their expertise and capacities and achieve a truly multi-stakeholder approach. Stakeholders should be able to access data and *collective outcomes*, ensure transfer and sharing of knowledge that might serve complementary actions while coordinating and seizing synergies through existing mechanisms and supporting the role of civil society organisations.

#4. FLEXIBILITY

There is a need to employ longer timeframes in programming (3 – 5 years) including localized context analyses and operational plans. Programmes and projects should encompass a long-term vision with sustainable outcomes, even when they have a short time frame. This would enable the layering of short to long-term programs and projects that rely on diversified funding streams. These longer frames of action should be adaptable to changing context and needs, flexible to embed different humanitarian and development actions and actors respectively.

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[6] Based on Council of the European Union, Operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development Nexus, Council conclusions, 19 May 2017.

The CPA implementation between 2013 and 2021 has provided effective solutions to required Nexus operational aspects. Per each Nexus operational aspect, the following chapters outline the CPA solutions and how do they contribute to advance the mechanisms needed to effectively implement multi-stakeholder actions under a Nexus framework.

02. DELIVERING THE NEXUS MECHANISMS THROUGH THE CPA

OPERATIONAL ASPECT #1:
Joint Context Analysis

> Systematic ***joint context analyses*** carry out effective and efficient ways of working that analyse factors of fragility, vulnerability and conflict, as well as the local/national capacities to address risks and vulnerabilities. *Where possible, joint context analyses should support country-driven response planning and allow for flexible funding* and feature participatory mechanisms of analysis and monitoring[6].

CPA PROGRAMMING

Adaptable and Shared Context Analysis Guides the Planning of Interventions

The context analysis is an area based shared responsibility: jointly agreed, bottom-up and embedded in specific project/programme-oriented data collection and monitoring. The collection of quantitative and qualitative data is based on community perspectives of the coercive environment. The analysis allows identifying and monitoring the needs of target populations. It contributes to ensuring an evidence-based approach to drafting tailored response plans that address multi-sector humanitarian needs, protection risks and development challenges in complementarity. The response plans constitute a point of reference for initiatives carried out in the target area by various actors, including local duty-bearers, through different funding lines and donor programmes. They also attract the efforts of multiple actors to work in a complementary manner.

LOCALIZATION

CPA methodology aims to ensure the communities' participation[7] and ownership, increasingly involving them in the decision-making process concerning how aid is provided, which interventions are the most necessary and how they are implemented. It raises the communities' awareness about their rights and provides its members with instruments to make safe and informed decisions and understand the rights-holders and duty-bearers dynamics. Communities, better linked with local and national authorities, lead on unique, territorial planning frameworks. The territory becomes a dynamic entity, geared to ensure integrated protection analysis, and contributing to shape complementary strategies for stable exchanges, cooperation and coordination among different stakeholders. This enhanced the accountability of local authorities, and allowed investment in social capital and local leadership.

COMPLEMENTARITY

The CPA Context Analysis fosters complementarity in three main ways:

- It is *multi-sectorial*. It analyses the protection risks and resulting needs of the community in 12 sectors, the correlation among sectors' data, and provides a set of composite indexes and indicators on Integrated Protection. Multi-level qualitative data is processed to verify and illustrate the quantitative, through tools adaptable to each context and actor.
- It is *multi-scale*, comprising short-, medium-, and long-term needs.
- It enables efficient ways for the *prioritization of interventions* employing *Safety and Dignity Framework*[8] and the ICRC *Egg Protection Framework*.[9]

COORDINATION

The CPA Context Analysis yields outputs that enhance the possibility for coordination with other actors to ground its multi-stakeholder approach.

The data collection generates automatically an *Integrated Protection System of Indicators* (IPSI), aligned and benchmarked to international standards. The data can be disaggregated at different administrative levels, population groups and by relevant variables. It supports comparative analysis using a wide range of visual and descriptive tools.

The *CPA Platform* is a unique online instrument designed and tested to specifically ensure data sharing and joint analysis of multiple actors. It automatically compiles and analyses data, as well as generates reports and visualizations adapted to each actor or organization's needs. It is fully compliant with the *EU's General Data Protection Regulation*[10] and follows the *ICRC Handbook on Data Protection.*[11] The CPA Platform can:

- Standardize processing and analysis with real time monitoring of results
- Allow comparability of data across different regions in a timely, adaptable manner
- Automate and customize project reporting
- Allow the full management of referrals, producing automated results and visualizations
- Reduce the amount of time between assessments and the delivery of services, providing organizations effective time to engage with communities.

FLEXIBILITY

The CPA joint context analysis serves as the *basis for a comprehensive programmatic approach* which also allows donors to integrate a degree of *flexibility in programming*. It can be applied for multiple humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding-oriented projects, carried out by multiple actors, with diverse timeframes, drawing on different financial streams – all dedicated to targeting communities and territory in synergy, all within a single programmatic framework. Multiple *projects* can benefit from a unique *embedded monitoring mechanism* (both outcome and output based) that can be used to adjust single programming towards durable collective outcomes.

[7] The CPA process of participation is developed based on Airnsten's Ladder of Citizen Participation. Arnstein Sherry R., "A Ladder of Citizen Participation", JAIP, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 1969, pp. 216-224.
[8] To learn more about the *Safety and Dignity Framework* visit cpainitiative.org and read *Safety and Dignity Framework Analysis*, WeWorld, 2019

[9] Strengthening Protection in War, ICRC, 2001.
[10] See https://gdpr.eu
[11] Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Action, ICRC, 2020.

OPERATIONAL ASPECT #2:
Collective Outcomes

> A ***collective outcome*** is a commonly agreed measureable result or impact in reducing people's needs, risks and vulnerabilities, whilst increasing their resilience, requiring the combined effort of different actors. A collective outcome can be described as the result that all relevant actors want to achieve over a multi-year period of 3 - 5 years.[12]

LOCALIZATION

In CPA programming the multi-sector plans of action – PRPs – encompass each protection risk and resulting needs identified through the method of the *narrative community perspective.* Proposed actions by communities are complemented by a specific protection analysis on 12 interrelated sectors. The PRPs are translated into the local language and handed over to community representatives upon a specific risk analysis. *The community owns its PRP* and uses it to directly address duty-bearers and other stakeholders in the achievement of meaningful access to services. The PRPs create the opportunity to subvert the classic top-down approach of the aid cycle and put an empowered community as a basis of a unified programming approach.

COMPLEMENTARITY

PRPs leads to the complementarity of actions because:

- *It is multi-sectorial.* It includes actions per each sector where relevant protection problems have been articulated in consultation with the community, allowing for a variety of actors to immediately comprehend the realities at hand and act accordingly without overlap.
- *It is multi-scale* – actions are organized according to the scales of the ICRC's *Egg Protection Framework.*[13] The framework is effective in isolating specific activities that can be included in individual project, while contributing to an integrated territorial strategy.
- *It empowers communities* building their capacity and self-reliance through advocacy training to reach out to duty-bearers and lobby for their needs reported in the PRP.

Plans of Action Delivered in the Form of Collective Outcomes

Protection Response Plans (PRPs) include activities that tackle multi-sectorial humanitarian needs, protection risks and developmental instances together, in a multidimensional approach envisaged as a contiguous intervention rather than simple succession of consequential interventions of relief, rehabilitation and development. A community's perspectives and proposals are integrated into the plans of action to take full advantage of existing local capacities and limit the reliance on substitutive actions. The plans are evidence-based, include measurable benchmarks and progress tracking. They represent a community-owned programmatic framework that can be referenced by local institutions, INGOs, and donors as a unified planning modality grounding multi-stakeholder engagement for complementary and coordinated projects.

COORDINATION

PRPs strengthen governance synergies for enhancing a prompt responsiveness for duty-bearers towards right-holders' needs, and support the establishment of safe channels for mobilization and transfer of responsibilities to duty-bearers.

- PRPs are *multi-stakeholder* – they recognize the roles of stakeholders and the authorities as duty-bearers and represent a road map for a coordinated engagement of different actors and programmes.
- *PRPs* do not reflect only the activities of a single organization but *outline a set of actions* to address the coercive environment in a specific community.

FLEXIBILITY

PRPs foster flexibility in two main ways:

- PRPs timeframe is meant to achieve the *long-term approach* of *collective outcomes* (3-5 years) without ignoring emergency needs.
- PRP strategies are adjustable through the evidence-based mechanisms provided by the *context analysis*, and thus are adaptable to evolving contexts and communities' needs.

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12 Based on OCHA, New Way of Working, 2017.
13 Protection in War, ICRC, 2001.

12 OCHA, New Way of Working, 2017.
13 Protection in War, ICRC, 2001.

OPERATIONAL ASPECT #3:
Comparative Advantage

*A **comparative advantage** is the capacity of one individual, group or institution to meet needs and contribute to risk and vulnerability reduction, over the capacity of another actor.*[14] *Comparative advantage may be based on cultural acceptance, trust and familiarity with local populations and knowledge of local circumstances, technical expertise, implementing capacities, speed, cost, international reputation and compliance with international standards, predictability, past performances,* among others.[15]

LOCALIZATION
The presence of *local implementers* – CBOs and CSOs – is mapped through a stakeholder analysis.

- The intervention outcomes are contextualized based on the environment of duty-bearers and stakeholders.
- *Local leadership is strengthened* so that a community can carry out the activities of coordination, advocacy and lobbying themselves.
- Through the *strengthening of local responders*, members of the community are not substituted anymore by external actors in many activities such as the one carried out through the establishment of *early warning system* mechanisms for human rights violations.
- The community, through the process of capacity building, is able to identify best-placed actors among national or local authorities, INGOs, or other stakeholders to link up with them for the implementation of each activity.

COMPLEMENTARITY

The CPA puts in place a structured, innovative, and bottom-up way to coordinate actors in a complementary manner and based on *comparative advantage*:

- *Donors* base their understanding of the needs of communities on evidence-based local planning facilitated through the CPA and inform their development programs and policies in the same geographical areas to allocate funds more efficiently.

CPA PROGRAMMING

Activities Are Carried Out Based on the Comparative Advantages of Actors Involved

Humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding activities are carried out based on comparative advantages *of the relevant actors, while it is assumed that the first actors responsible towards communities are the respective duty-bearers and that substitution of local capacities has to be minimal. The multi-stakeholder engagement mechanism triggered by the CPA has encouraged humanitarian and development actors to carefully examine their own position, to determine when it is strategic to leave the chance to a better-placed local actor. Strategies and plans of action should seize synergies through existing coordination mechanisms and support an increasing role of local CSOs and CBOs.*

- *INGOs* working in the same geographical areas can work together to plan projects around the PRPs owned by the communities.
- *Clusters* and other *UN-sponsored coordination mechanisms* are informed of the results of the CPA and have a benchmark for further interventions.

COORDINATION

- The implementation of the activities individuated in the PRPs relies on the *comparative advantage* of different available stakeholders.
- Community leaders are trained on how to advocate for their rights and organize social campaigns to implement their PRPs, including them within national and regional strategies of development.

FLEXIBILITY

The CPA's approach is adapted to each organization's timeframe and project management cycle, and it can be as well guided by the progress of the community, allowing for a continuous review of best-placed actors to intervene.

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[14] OCHA, New Way of Working, 2017.

[15] Center on International Cooperation, After the World Humanitarian Summit. Better Humanitarian-Development Cooperation for Sustainable Results on the Ground, 2016.

OPERATIONAL ASPECT #4:
Exit Strategy

CPA PROGRAMMING

Exit Strategy Is Drafted in the Early Stage of Implementation – It Is Contextualized and Flexible

The exit strategy *is the underlying pathway of a territorial plan, specifically conceived to foresee the phasing out of direct assistance by INGOs. The exit strategy should be adjusted to the progress made by the community. After exiting, the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors maintain a link with the targeted community as well as its local authorities in case there is need once again for an urgent response.*

LOCALIZATION

In the CPA programming, when the process of implementation by an external actor comes to an end as a result of addressing immediate and long-term needs, the responsibilities of monitoring ongoing activities and planning are handed over to the community and local actors, while the duty-bearers adopt the key role in assuring the safety and dignity of the community through its commitments. This cooperation on the ground is made possible through a specific component of the CPA programming dedicated to advocacy training for community representatives and capacity building for authorities at the local and national levels, as well as the communities' involvement in all decision-making processes from the onset.

COMPLEMENTARITY

The overarching aim of the CPA is to *increase communities' agency* and enable its members to claim their rights and ensure their protection in a *safe* and *dignified* manner. Any or multiple actors can continue a CPA process if the context requires, with data-sharing and transparency of past processes ensuring accountability to the affected population. The exit strategy becomes an underlying pathway that is led by the community and local actors, and adjusted to changing conditions.

COORDINATION

The CPA programmatic outputs like the PRPs and the Protection Community Profiles prompt complementarities among stakeholders and ease the transition from material assistance to early recovery and development of the communities. The evidence-based outcome and output monitoring can be used independently or jointly by any actor in the territory, to devise transition of assistance (e.g. humanitarian to development), or further multi-level governance actions to reinforce the localization and role of communities, authorities and other local actors.

FLEXIBILITY

The exit strategy is drafted in the early stages of planning implementation, and adapts to contextual determinants, factors and changing conditions. Specifically:

- It is elaborated with the communities and local actors
- It is contextualized to a particular setting and a community
- It is revised yearly
- It is evidence-based and results-driven. It is built and supported from the yearly monitoring of changes
- It is adjusted to the level of community empowerment and risks mitigation that the community has achieved.

ANNEX 1. NEXUS PRINCIPLES

By **Nexus principles**, WeWorld refers to fundamental Nexus components ensuring that the Nexus operationalization adheres to internationally made commitments and the best interests of targeted populations. To ensure adherence to the Nexus principles, they should be interwoven through operational aspects, methods and actions, as well as collective outcomes of the Nexus operationalization.

WeWorld's Nexus Principles

#1. Localization

Localization is not only the involvement and transfer of responsibilities to local actors. Local actors become agents of strategies and programs.

#2. Programmatic engagement

Engagement with local actors is purposeful and based on a programmatic approach leveraging the intervention of the best-placed actor.

#3. Adaptable and shared context analysis

The Context analysis is an area-based shared responsibility: jointly agreed, bottom-up, and embedded in specific project/program oriented data collection and monitoring.

#4. Adaptable management

Management of activities is guided by a programmatic and adaptable approach formulated with Dignity and Safety objectives.

#5. Programmatic engagement

Engagement with local actors is purposeful and based on a programmatic approach leveraging the intervention of the best-placed actor.

#6. Exit strategies

A-priori programmatic road maps transitioning out from provision of assistance and services are embedded in any Nexus strategy. Duty-bearers' responsibility is achieved through population's agency.

#7. Bottom-up conflict sensitivity

Peace initiatives are bottom-up, based on community driven approaches to address driving factors and root causes of the population needs and risks.