

3. DOUBLING THE LIVELIHOODS INVESTMENT IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS & COUNTRIES AT HIGH RISK

ACTION AREA	FOOD SYSTEMS RESILIENCE
SOLUTION CLUSTER	HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE (HDP) NEXUS
THEMATIC AREA	HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE NEXUS
SUBMITTED BY	UK

SUMMARY

Increase the targeting of livelihoods assistance to highly vulnerable areas, with the impact of doubling the livelihoods investment being made in conflict-affected contexts and countries at high risk of extreme weather events due to climate change, where recurring shocks are common. This will be achieved by combining:

- a. Support to sustain people's livelihoods during protracted conflict and extreme weather events, by building household resilience to shocks and protect the food system
- b. Parallel social assistance (encompasses humanitarian cash transfers and safety nets through social protection systems) to meet basic consumption needs as a prerequisite for supporting livelihoods
- c. Support overcoming the systemic barriers faced in accessing livelihoods (e.g. political economy, unequal ownership patterns, access to markets, disruptions to trade, inclusive value-chains), especially in conflict.

Action will fill a gap in livelihoods investments explicitly targeting vulnerable conflict and climate-affected populations as well as those addressing systemic as well as household barriers to livelihoods.

Outcome: Livelihoods investment being made in conflict-affected contexts and countries at high risk of extreme weather events due to climate change is doubled, sustaining livelihoods of vulnerable populations in conflict and climate change-affected contexts, building self-reliance and the resilience of people and food systems to future shocks and reducing acute and chronic food insecurity.

WHAT RISK, SHOCK, STRESS IS THE SOLUTION TRYING TO ADDRESS?

Conflict and climate-related shocks can exhaust coping capacities, deplete assets, destroy livelihoods, and undermine food systems, heightening risks of mortality and famine. This happens as assets are destroyed, stolen or looted, or sold off as emergency coping strategies, curtailing agricultural/livestock production. Destruction of livelihoods assets is often accompanied by mobility restrictions, limiting access to markets, credit and value chain services, veterinary/farm extension/basic services, disrupting trade and transport and impacting prices. To protect and sustain livelihoods, food production and consumption in the most vulnerable areas prone to conflict and climate-related shocks, the action proposes improving our joint targeting of existing livelihoods investments to conflict-affected contexts and countries at high risk of extreme weather events, with the impact of doubling the livelihoods investment being made in these contexts.

HOW THE SOLUTION IMPROVES/ENHANCES RESILIENCE OF FOOD SYSTEMS?

Is the solution relevant to the resilience track? Is it targeting one of these capacities?

It seeks to strengthen the resilience of individuals, households, and communities to protracted conflict and climate-related shocks. Addressing barriers to livelihoods and food systems will protect food production, consumption and basic needs and prevent the deterioration of households into higher phases of food insecurity.

In what realms of intervention is the solution designed to act on resilience?

It seeks to build the resilience of individuals, households and communities to shocks and also address systemic barriers to livelihoods in situations of conflict and extreme weather events (e.g. absence of market access, destruction of productive assets, disruption to transportation).

IS THE SOLUTION GAME-CHANGING? MEETING THE FOLLOWING THREE CRITERIA

Evidence (see below) demonstrates that livelihood investments, to date, are heavily targeted at more stable contexts, with some smaller-scale pilot interventions in conflict-affected contexts, where barriers to livelihoods are greatest, especially when overlaid with climate-related shocks. This also applies to cash transfers, which are a key way of meeting basic needs and supporting livelihoods and markets in conflicts. Despite evidence on the effectiveness of cash transfers in livelihoods protection, the most common modality used in humanitarian assistance in conflict situation continues to be direct food assistance. This proposal aims to deliver a commitment from donors to improve the targeting of their livelihoods investments, to ensure interventions flow to areas where the need is greatest.

Impact potential: Supporting livelihoods to be more resilient to conflict and extreme weather events is significantly more cost effective and impactful than the provision of in-kind humanitarian assistance year-on-year.

Sustainability: Supporting livelihoods in conflict-affected and vulnerable regions to be more resilient to shocks is a more sustainable approach than the alternative – which is provision of emergency humanitarian response once livelihoods have been destroyed. Improving our targeting of livelihoods investments to these areas should significantly reduce the need for unsustainable humanitarian response, and advance the resilience agenda.

Actionability: There is widespread awareness of the need to support livelihoods in fragile and conflict-affected states, and of the cost-effectiveness of doing so compared to humanitarian response. What has been lacking to date is a collective commitment by development actors to significantly increase the proportion of livelihoods assistance flowing to these areas. The UNFSS offers a unique opportunity to broker such a commitment by development donors, and Action Track 5 is the most appropriate track to propose this action, given its focus on advancing resilience.

HOW CAN THIS SOLUTION ADDRESS THE PROBLEM?

If individuals, households and communities are able to meet their basic needs and sustain livelihoods, maintaining agricultural/livestock production and their contribution to food-based industries during conflict and extreme weather events, then food systems and household consumption/assets will be protected and the resilience of people/food systems to future shocks strengthened. This can be achieved by sustaining and overcoming barriers (see above) to livelihoods during conflict and climate-related shocks, in parallel to meeting basic household consumption needs through regular cash transfers.

Various components of programming are likely to be required in these contexts:

1. **Increase livelihoods investments targeting vulnerable conflict and climate-affected populations.** This would include activities to strengthen and address barriers to livelihoods, including: supporting market access and value-chain functioning, engaging traders, farmers and herders, supporting access to land/public services, provision of technical training, provision of veterinary health and extension services, provision of input and output storage, access to finance and investments in transportation. This will require, a priori, a commitment from donors to better target existing livelihoods assistance and investment.
2. **Social assistance through, or in parallel to, livelihood programming.** Livelihood programmes operating in contexts where regular climate or conflict-related shocks occur will need to ensure that basic needs of households are met. In these contexts, there is likely to be a need to supplement productive livelihoods programming with regular cash transfers to smooth consumption – either in parallel (through safety nets programmes or humanitarian cash transfers targeting the same households) or directly as a component of livelihoods programmes.
3. **Address systemic barriers to livelihoods and build peace:** Support local and national actors to address barriers faced in accessing property and natural resources through a conflict sensitive approach. For example, supporting policies on property rights, as well as building capacities of communities/societies to address property and land disputes.
4. **Collaboration between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding agencies across the nexus** Supporting (and addressing systemic barriers to) the livelihoods of vulnerable people in contexts where conflict and climate-related shocks are commonplace (led by development actors) in parallel to efforts to meet basic consumption needs (often led by humanitarian or government actors), requires collaboration between humanitarian, development and peace actors. Joined up assessments and planning will be key.

WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE GENERATED IN THE FIELD OR IN ACADEMIA TO SUPPORT THIS IDEA?

- **The gap in livelihood programming targeting populations vulnerable to climate and conflict-related shocks** is demonstrated through qualitative evidence in forthcoming [SPARC/ODI](#) evidence review on 'what works in supporting livelihoods in conflict' (forthcoming). In-kind humanitarian assistance is often the predominant form of aid in conflict¹
- **When livelihoods programmes delivered by development and private sector actors have targeted conflict-affected areas, positive outcomes have been recorded, especially when the Theory of Change is adapted to the realities of working in conflict.** Evidence from [Nigeria](#). The challenge to address now is the scale and duration of responses.
- **Those livelihoods interventions are most impactful when combined with regular cash transfers to smooth consumption and meet basic needs.** Forthcoming SPARC/ODI report (see above), BASIC reviews on linkages between cash and social protection (Yemen and North-East Nigeria).²

HOW WILL YOUR GOVERNMENT SUPPORT THIS IDEA?

FCDO has clear and established priorities on supporting livelihoods, on the [triple nexus](#), cash programming³ and linkages to social protection⁴, working collaboratively with other donors through the Grand Bargain cash working group and Cash Learning Partnership. The World Bank is another key champion of safety nets and livelihoods in conflicts.

¹ In each of the 10 countries studied with a Humanitarian Response Plan in place, food assistance comprises the largest share of assistance.

² See for example

³ UK's approach to cash and voucher transfer programmes in crises (internal document, 2018)

⁴ Better Assistance in Crises. See <https://www.ids.ac.uk/programme-and-centre/better-assistance-in-crises-basic-research/>

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEADING THIS SOLUTION & ADVOCATING FOR A COALITION OF THE WILLING?

Yes, jointly with other donors

IS THIS A NEW CONCEPT OR HAVE YOU ALREADY DISCUSSED IT WITH OTHER MEMBER STATES OR PARTNER?

A scale-up of livelihoods investments targeting populations vulnerable to climate and conflict-related shocks has been discussed with development donors in several for a, particularly in light of worsening food security figures and the impact of Covid-19 on food systems. However, the UNFSS offers the opportunity to forge a commitment to improve targeting among development donors.

IS THIS SOLUTION APPLICABLE AT GLOBAL LEVEL (WITH ADAPTATIONS TO SPECIFIC LOCAL CONTEXTS) OR IS IT MEANT TO BE APPLIED IN SPECIFIC CONTEXTS OR PARTICULAR COUNTRIES?⁵

It focuses on protracted and recurring crisis contexts with regular climate and conflict-related shocks

FINANCIAL SOURCES THAT ARE CURRENTLY SUPPORTING (OR MAY PROVIDE SUPPORT) TO THIS IDEA. ADDITIONAL OPTIONS TO EXPLORE TO RAISE FUNDS (PUBLIC, PRIVATE FUNDS, INNOVATIVE FINANCING MECHANISM)?

Via World Bank IDA, funds from other donors prioritizing cash, safety nets, resilience and livelihoods.

HOW DOES THIS SOLUTION CONTRIBUTE TO (A) EMPOWER WOMEN AND COMBAT GENDER INEQUALITIES, AND (B) THE FULFILMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ESPECIALLY THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND THE RIGHT TO WATER, (C) MAKE USE OF INNOVATIONS (TECHNOLOGIES, INSTITUTIONS, PROCESSES)?

Support to livelihoods will seek to address gender-specific barriers, risks and unequal access to property and assets, as well as making use of the most appropriate innovations for the context. In improving the resilience of the most vulnerable to shocks, it advances the fulfilment of human rights, the right to food and water.

⁵ (e.g., urban areas, arid areas, tropics, places at risk of monsoon), related to development level (e.g., high-income countries, countries with high levels of literacy) or key food system indicators (e.g., countries with high burden of foodborne disease, countries with high levels of obesity), or situational (e.g., conflict settings).