



BREAKING BOUNDARIES: LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS' ENGAGEMENT IN THE HUMANITARIAN- DEVELOPMENT-PEACE NEXUS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There has been increased focus in the international system on the role of local and national actors (LNAs) in the humanitarian–development–peace (HDP) nexus because of their connections to communities and their focus on holistic needs and vulnerabilities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark et al., 2023). Yet, often, LNAs' experiences are absent in how the nexus is framed, implemented and evaluated (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023). At the same time, international approaches to the HDP nexus have been criticised as lacking concrete examples of integrated and holistic programming (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023; IASC, 2024).

This report brings the voices of LNAs into the HDP nexus discussion. It highlights their perspectives and experiences in designing and implementing programmes that straddle the three systems, drawing on survey data and key informant interviews (KIIs) with LNAs across 22 countries. The report provides key insights to understand those experiences and puts forward recommendations for how the international system can better recognise and support the nexus-style work of LNAs.

The analysis is distilled into five **key takeaways**:

- 1** LNAs conceive of and implement the HDP nexus approach differently from the international system, employing programming approaches that combine longer-term and shorter-term priorities. These often do not use the same language of the HDP nexus but serve similar aims.
- 2** LNAs' nexus-style programming is borne out of their interactions with communities and communities' holistic needs and vulnerabilities, rather than being driven by international policies and frameworks. Community inputs may not fit traditional intervention designs or sit neatly within development/peace/humanitarian boundaries.
- 3** The nexus work of LNAs often includes a focus on community engagement, peace programming and gender inclusion – which the international system struggles to incorporate.
- 4** LNAs are finding ways to fund and implement nexus-style programming, despite limited access to non-siloed and quality funding, and donors/funders' rigid due diligence processes.
- 5** Positive results are evident from LNAs' efforts, but the impacts of LNAs' nexus-style programmes are not yet measured systematically.

The international system has had mixed success in promoting and implementing nexus approaches, yet LNAs have found practical ways to operationalise such approaches through their proximity to communities and their understanding of communities' needs. This report aligns with existing, well-understood recommendations to include LNAs in international coordination structures, to ensure they have access to equitable and flexible funding, and to strengthen their capacity (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark et al., 2023; IASC, 2024). The international system can capitalise on three opportunities to better support LNAs' role in HDP nexus programming:

01

Showcase and learn from LNAs' work on the HDP nexus.

- Better understand LNAs' nuanced language and practical conceptualisation of the nexus to learn what is working in practice.
- Build a global evidence base of good practices and lessons on locally led nexus programming, including effective strategies/approaches/mechanisms that address peace and gender objectives.
- Share and showcase the work of LNAs, creating opportunities to exchange learning and collaborate with others at regional and international levels.

02

Involve LNAs in the design and measurement of results of HDP nexus programming.

- Bring LNAs on board when designing both global and local nexus strategies and programmes, in particular building on LNAs' inclusion of peace and gender aspects.
- Engage LNAs to co-design monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks and tools to systematically capture the results of locally led nexus approaches.
- Expand how programmes define and measure success to encourage approaches that recognise complexity and uses integrated or cross-sectoral outcomes and metrics reflecting the quality of relationships and other process indicators.

03

Put more funding in the hands of LNAs for nexus programming.

- Include LNAs in funding discussions for HDP nexus programming and provide more longer-term and flexible funding to directly enable LNAs' work.
- Bolster funding and overheads to strengthen the capacities and sustainability of organisations that work closely with communities to indirectly enable LNAs' work.

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ACRONYMS

CSO	civil society organisation
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GBV	gender-based violence
HDP	humanitarian–development–peace
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	internally displaced people
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
LNA	local and national actor
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NNGO	national non-governmental organisation
sclr	survivor and community-led response
SRHR	sexual and reproductive health and rights
UN	United Nations



1. INTRODUCTION

 “En tant qu’une organisation locale, nous sommes en étroite collaboration avec notre communauté locale. En cas de crise, nous subissons les memes effets avec cette communauté et nous sommes en premiere ligne pour apporte les premiers secours avant meme les organisations internationales. A la fin de la crise nous sommes toujours present dans la communauté pour continuer avec les activités de développement ou la transition urgence-post-urgence-développement.”

[As a local organisation, we work closely with our local community. In the event of a crisis, we experience the same effects as this community and we are in the front line to provide first aid even before the international organisations. At the end of the crisis, we are always present in the community to continue with development activities or the transition from emergency to post-crisis to development.]

~ Civil society organisation (CSO), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 

Local and national actors (LNAs) play a key role in supporting communities to address their needs and vulnerabilities. They are often the first responders to emergencies and the last to leave communities affected by crisis, remaining long after international actors have departed. As such, many LNAs are well positioned to engage in what the international system calls the humanitarian–development–peace (HDP) nexus approach. This approach emphasises the importance of a holistic response to address the systemic drivers of increasingly complex crises, through interlinkages and coordinated efforts between actors working within those three sectors (IASC, 2020).

The HDP nexus is a natural space for LNAs to demonstrate their strengths, yet most activities and literature on the nexus – including policy recommendations and outcomes – focus more on the international system. This includes, especially, the United Nations (UN) coordination structures, which focus on collective outcomes that are often articulated in Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, or through the creation of nexus working groups or task forces. Recent reports and evaluations on the HDP nexus approach, however, suggest that the international system struggles to practically define or implement HDP nexus programming beyond coordination mechanisms (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023; IASC, 2024). Effective implementation of the nexus approach has been hampered by many challenges, not least limited coordination among stakeholders, heightened by a lack of common understanding of the nexus approach among different actors (IASC, 2024).

At the local level, many LNAs have reported implementing programmes that link short-term and long-term objectives to respond to the diverse needs and priorities of communities affected by complex crises. But LNAs have not always had the opportunity to engage effectively and meaningfully in national-level structures and processes (ibid.). Additionally, they are not well represented in the existing evidence base on the nexus approach (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023). Despite these limitations, LNAs have found practical ways to operationalise the nexus approach in their ways of working with communities (Danish Refugee Council, n.d.; IASC, 2024) – this ALNAP report asks how LNAs are doing this and what we can learn from their approaches.

We present the findings of recent research into how LNAs engage in work that links humanitarian, development and peace programming. By centering on the perspectives and experiences of LNAs, this report sheds light on how LNAs conceive of and implement holistic approaches to respond to the evolving needs and priorities of communities. Armed with a better understanding of LNAs' locally led solutions, international actors can then engage with and support LNAs' holistic efforts more effectively and meaningfully. These lessons from LNAs contribute evidence and learning that is relevant to policy and practice on localisation and the HDP nexus.

The study asks:

1. How do LNAs conceive of work that links shorter- and longer-term programming outside of international framings of the HDP nexus?
2. How do LNAs engage with communities in their nexus work?
3. How are LNAs accessing and using funding from different sources to implement their holistic work across the three pillars of the nexus?
4. How are LNAs measuring the results of their joined-up programming?
5. What can we learn from the experience of LNAs on locally led action across the nexus, and how could international actors support these bottom-up approaches?

The report draws mainly from a survey of 125 LNAs (the great majority of which are national and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and CSOs) from 22 countries conducted between July and October 2023, plus follow-up in-depth interviews with a selection of those respondents (see [Annex 1](#) for the methodology and limitations). The analysis provides a snapshot of LNAs' ways of working across the nexus, which may enable other stakeholders to better navigate the HDP nexus and transition to more bottom-up, sustainable and holistic solutions in contexts that are fragile and affected by crisis.

This report is envisioned as a useful learning resource for a wide range of actors who are working on, or have a strong interest in, the HDP nexus and/or localisation. Our primary audience, however, is policy and operational decision-makers from international NGOs (INGOs), UN agencies and donor organisations who support or are considering supporting locally led holistic approaches to programming.

Box 1: A caveat on language

We use the term LNAs to refer to non-state 'organizations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO' (IASC, 2018:2).


This study aims to shed light on more organic, context-specific approaches to HDP nexus programming from the perspectives of LNAs. In doing so, language is incredibly important, and it is therefore a key limitation of this report that the interviews were primarily conducted in English, with the survey translated into French and Spanish. English – and to some degree French as well – is the dominant language of the international aid system. Local and national actors therefore tend to adopt similar jargon when explaining or self-translating their work into English, even when this language may be a poor reflection of the rich and culturally specific concepts and practices in which they engage. Where possible, the research for this report attempted to solicit concrete, specific examples and descriptions of programming to avoid a reliance on broader English terminology or jargon; however, there remains a fundamental constraint to translating local practices and concepts into English.

The report is divided into two further sections:

- **Section 2** explores how LNAs conceive of and implement work that links humanitarian, development and peace programming.
- **Section 3** presents key lessons from LNAs' experience of HDP nexus programming and ways forward to support LNAs to implement their holistic approach more effectively.



2. UNDERSTANDING LNAs' ENGAGEMENT IN THE HDP NEXUS

 "And on the ground, the people are also asking for flexibility. And flexibility means that there should be a lot of opportunity for supporting the solution ... but it should be more based on the need of the people. And the definition may be different for everyone. But what we see on the ground, we know that it's not only about the development, it's not only about the humanitarian."

~ National NGO (NNGO), Afghanistan 

Following the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Recommendation on the HDP Nexus (OECD, 2022), the approach has gained significant traction – particularly among international organisations. However, the application and implementation of programming across the three dimensions of the nexus remain limited (IASC, 2024; Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023). In contrast, most LNAs surveyed for this study reported practical examples of holistic, multi-dimensional programming. While their conceptions of what counts as 'working across the nexus' varies, a common feature of LNAs' work is a focus on engaging communities to address their needs, vulnerabilities and priorities, as well as a focus on gender and peace-building – elements that the international system struggles to incorporate in the implementation of the nexus approach (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023). A greater understanding of how locally led programmes are implemented and measured could bridge the gap between the international system's higher-level plans for HDP nexus approaches and practical implementation locally.

2.1 LNAs' CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE HDP NEXUS APPROACH



Across the survey and interviews, many LNAs used 'multidimensional', 'holistic', 'interconnected', 'connected', 'joined', 'integrated', 'multi-faceted' and 'comprehensive' to describe their work that links humanitarian, development and peace objectives. These words, limited by the need to communicate in English, hint at a more cohesive approach to programming that is primarily anchored in the recognition that communities' needs and vulnerabilities of communities are an intertwining of short-term and longer-term priorities.

Box 2. Local concepts around the nexus approach*

In the Philippines, certain cultural practices and concepts such as *bayanihan*, *kapamagagopa*, *tinabangay*, *tiklos* and *pagkakaloob* (CDP, 2024) closely relate to the HDP nexus approach. These practices refer to a system of community mutual aid or self-help, where community members and leaders come together voluntarily in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation to address needs during crises, to contribute to community development or to find local solutions to address conflict.

In Yemen, several Arabic phrases are used to describe work that links short-term emergency response with long-term sustainable development and peace-building goals:

- **لم يكتمل إلا جهنلا (Al-Nahj Al-Mutakamil)**, which translates to 'the integrated approach', emphasises the holistic nature of programming where immediate humanitarian needs are addressed while simultaneously building foundations for long-term resilience and development.
- **تمادتس ملأ ةي من تلأ (Al-Tanmiyah Al-Mustadamah)**, which means 'sustainable development', refers to solutions that not only solve urgent issues but that are also durable and self-sustaining to ensure that communities thrive beyond an immediate crisis.
- **مالسلأ و يومن تلأ و يناسن إلا لم علأ (Al-Amal Al-Insani wal-Tanmawi wal-Salaam)**, which translates to 'humanitarian, development and peace work', denotes the integration of these three pillars and highlights that efforts in humanitarian relief must be tied to long-term development goals while fostering peace and social cohesion.

*Based on KIs with LNAs from Philippines and Yemen.

Our discussions with LNAs suggest that they often work seamlessly across the three dimensions, in contrast to the way international actors tend to work with the siloed systems. While some LNAs align themselves more as humanitarian or development organisations, the examples they provided in the survey indicate programming that cuts across the three dimensions of the nexus. CSOs and other local organisations who work closely with communities seldom identified themselves as either humanitarian, development or peace actors, instead designing programmes that span the HDP spectrum with the needs of communities in mind. This holistic way of working and design of programmes is something the international system should consider as an incentive for less siloed engagement on the nexus.



"Local [organisations] and CSOs always need to work [in a] holistic approach based on the ground situation. CSOs could not divide as humanitarian or development."

~ NNGO, Myanmar



Three common threads run across LNA's nexus programming: (1) nexus programming is a by-product of LNAs' community-focused work; (2) the way in which LNAs combine their focus on longer-term and shorter-term priorities varies widely; (3) LNA nexus programming tends to emphasise peace and gender. We discuss each thread in turn.

2.1.1 LNAs' ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES

International agency approaches to the HDP nexus remain high-level, theoretical and disconnected from communities (IASC, 2024). In comparison, our evidence shows that communities are the starting point for, and they explain why, LNAs engage in nexus-style work. A key feature of LNAs' work ethos is their belief that engaging with communities creates ownership and eventually leads to longer-term and more sustainable results. Programmes that facilitate community-based dialogue and mediation have led to positive results in promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation because they have built trust and social cohesion, and they have enabled inclusive decision-making.

 "...[our organisation] emphasises community engagement by involving affected communities in decision-making processes, ensuring programmes are not only relevant but also sustainable within the local context."

~ LNA, Somalia



 "A diagnostic is carried out to identify the needs of communities, with the involvement of all stakeholders at grassroots level. This enables short- and long-term needs to be defined."

~ LNA, Mali




The majority of LNAs reported engaging with community stakeholders, including vulnerable groups, through consultations, meetings, focus group discussions and interviews to analyse risks, vulnerabilities and underlying drivers of fragility. They also engage these stakeholders when designing programmes. This participatory style has been crucial to achieving a combination of humanitarian, development and peace outcomes. According to the LNAs we consulted, the HDP divide does not exist in communities, as they often think and act with different framings, including in how they identify their needs and priorities and devise solutions to their concerns. For example, an NNGO in the Philippines uses survivor- and community-led response (sclr) in their humanitarian work, which they described as a 'nexus approach in action', noting how communities naturally use a more holistic approach to respond to their needs when given the freedom and agency to initiate and plan their own action. After the Marawi siege in the Philippines, this same NNGO provided microgrants to help communities address their own needs. What's more, through the collective support of the organisation and other local CSOs, internally displaced people (IDPs) understood and appreciated their rights, and they took action to lobby and advocate for the protection of these rights. Their lobbying efforts contributed to the passage of the Marawi Victims' Compensation Act.

 "...[our] approach is inspired by the field and community practices ... informed by the real-life needs, experiences and insights of the communities we serve, ensuring that our interventions are practical, inclusive and grounded in the realities of those most affected."

~ CSO, Yemen




Engaging communities also helps LNAs better understand the evolving needs and priorities of people affected by crisis, so they can adapt their approaches across the three dimensions as contexts shift. Due to the fluid nature of humanitarian crises and conflict, many LNAs emphasised the importance of flexible and adaptive programming to remain effective and relevant. For instance, a women-led organisation in Yemen initially aimed to distribute hygiene kits and water tanks to displaced people. This created tension between people who have been displaced and the host communities, since the displaced received clean water while water from the host community's well was causing diarrhoea. The organisation facilitated a discussion between the two groups and a solution was identified that benefited everyone: building a water purification station for the village that was managed by a committee from the displaced and host communities to ensure equitable access to clean water.

 "Before carrying out a programme, the organisation carries out community consultations to identify existing problems in the communities and possible solutions. In the process of implementing the programme, the beneficiaries are held responsible for the goals set with the implementer and at the end of each year accountability meetings are held involving the beneficiaries and the government."

~ LNA, Mozambique



Community stakeholders, including elders and local authorities, are also involved in programme M&E among the great majority of LNAs. Most respondents (92.7%) considered community perceptions (usually captured through surveys and focus group discussions) as important inputs to assess the effectiveness and impact of their programme. Many LNAs described this as a participatory process, with outputs feeding into plans and strategies to improve or adjust programming approaches. Communities also engage in M&E through feedback mechanisms (usually through surveys, focus group discussions, feedback meetings and hotlines), sharing their views and perceptions of a programme and raising concerns.

 "We engage in regular community assessments, involving the active participation of community members to gauge the effectiveness of our programmes, understand their needs, and gather direct feedback."

~ CSO, Iraq




2.1.2 DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO NEXUS-STYLE PROGRAMMING

The vast majority of surveyed LNAs engage in a wide range of programming approaches that they characterise as a HDP nexus approach. Given their varied nature, these programmes are difficult to categorise and may not necessarily fit neatly into international frameworks or contribute to agreed collective outcomes.

Many LNAs work on one problem or issue initially and then transition to address other relevant vulnerabilities as the context and priorities evolve. For example, an

NGO in Mozambique first implemented a water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) project that began distributing water using trucks. They then transitioned to more durable solutions such as building small water systems or water supply sources when the emergency stabilised. The shift in focus between the nexus dimensions can happen in both directions – from addressing short- to long-term needs and from development to humanitarian response. This transition is often a dynamic process, driven by the evolving needs and realities of communities rather than by top-down policies and international frameworks.

 “As you go higher in the aid structure, the divide between the humanitarian and development sectors becomes more pronounced, with operations often confined to rigid frameworks. However, at the community level, there are no such divisions. Everything is interconnected.”

~ NNGO, Philippines 

Some LNAs adopt an integrated programming approach where humanitarian initiatives are combined and implemented at the same time as development and/or peace-building initiatives or vice versa, implementing peace-building activities in humanitarian contexts. For example, a women-led organisation in Yemen provided emergency response to infectious diseases among displaced populations through rehabilitation of the local health centre with a reproductive health department. This addressed immediate health concerns and also raised awareness among mothers and girls in the community about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Other LNAs implement multiple projects covering the different nexus dimensions in the same community, for example, providing emergency response alongside peace and conflict resolution projects. And others link the nexus dimensions through short-term goods provision and longer-term supply-building or they deliver emergency response then progress onto development. [Table 1](#) provides some more examples of LNAs' holistic programming.

 “We have food and medicine delivery programmes, as well as health and blood pressure check-ups for vulnerable populations with whom we also work in accompaniment sessions, psychological consultations and training and recreational programmes. Other training programmes focus on the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the consolidation of peace in vulnerable sectors through community interventions, taking over public spaces and promoting the empowerment of communities for their integral development.”

~ CSO, Venezuela 

Table 1. Approaches and examples of holistic programming

APPROACH	EXAMPLES OF PROGRAMMING
Integrated programming	<p>NGO, Mozambique: A seven-year programme implemented activities to mitigate the effects of climate change, including food security, livelihoods, water and sanitation, and good governance.</p> <p>NGO, South Sudan: A programme was implemented in different sectors, such as food security and livelihoods, to meet the immediate needs of people affected by crisis while also putting in place mechanisms to enhance peace and build resilience among the community.</p>
Work on emergency and then progress to development	<p>NGO, Mozambique: Water was distributed using trucks and, as the situation stabilised, activities were integrated to build more durable and sustainable systems or water supply sources.</p> <p>NGO, Niger: Relief was provided through conditional and unconditional food and nutritional assistance over a relatively short period, followed by resilience-building activities over three to five years.</p>
Short-term goods provision and longer-term supply-building for a single sector	<p>Women-led organisation, Yemen: A project was implemented that included a humanitarian aid component through cash support, a development component through capacity-building of fishermen on fish farming skills and establishing fish farms, and conflict resolution between fishermen.</p> <p>NGO, Venezuela: A project with a two-phased strategy was implemented combining the provision of food baskets (for immediate response to nutritional needs) with the distribution of fishing and agriculture kits that include capacity-building sessions on sustainable production (to increase resilience related to food productivity to respond to long-term needs).</p>
Implementing different projects across different pillars in the same community	<p>Women-led organisation, Iraq: Immediate assistance was provided to address basic needs, including legal and psychological support and mental health services, while simultaneously empowering women to take on leadership roles and participate in decision-making processes within their communities.</p> <p>NNGO, Philippines: Using the sclr approach, micro-grants were provided to address the different needs of groups in a community, which may include provision of basic needs such as food, water and sanitation or shelter, initiatives that prioritise (early) recovery or resilience actions, or in areas affected by conflict, peace-building efforts and advocacy for IDP rights protection for the displaced population.</p>

2.1.3 A FOCUS ON PEACE AND GENDER

PEACE

Many of the surveyed LNAs operate in fragile, conflict and violence (FCV) contexts,¹ such as in Afghanistan, DRC, Iraq, Lebanon, Mozambique, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Ukraine, Venezuela and Yemen. They reported being strongly engaged in peace programming alongside their humanitarian and/or development work. In contrast, many international actors struggle to integrate peace into the HDP nexus and is an area they need to strengthen (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023).

LNAs' integration of peace programming varies across contexts and ranges from activities that focus on peace-building (e.g., local mediation and cross-border dialogue); to community projects that seek peace promotion, conflict resolution and social cohesion; to implementing a do-no-harm approach in their programming. Several LNAs that implement a joined-up approach to programming in fragile contexts believe peace to be either a foundation for sustainable development or vice versa.

For example, an NGO operating in Burundi reported working with local authorities and community leaders to build their capacities in conflict prevention, management and resolution to promote community reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. These efforts were carried out alongside those that considered both development and humanitarian needs –including sustainable livelihoods (training in agricultural practices, income-generating activities and microfinance support), infrastructure development (schools and health centres), and emergency food and water distribution to communities affected by drought and conflict. **Box 3** provides other examples of programming that includes peace.



“A comprehensive approach that includes not only the satisfaction of basic needs but also strengthens the ability of clients to solve problems independently, is a prerequisite for building peace and overcoming the consequences of conflict.”

~ NGO, Ukraine



Box 3. Examples of holistic programming that integrates peace

- A CSO in Colombia responds to climate-induced emergencies by supporting humanitarian transport, temporary shelter, food vouchers, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and SRHR; incorporates long-term objectives such as resilience-building; and, where applicable, works on conflict prevention and resolution through, for example, dialogue, mediation and reconciliation in communities affected by conflict.

¹ See the World Bank's list of fragile and conflict-affected situations at <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/3d4356ac2aee9f0b2db90ae9ce49f639-0090082024/original/FCList-FY06toFY24.pdf>

- A CSO in Venezuela provides food, medicine and health services for vulnerable populations and conducts trainings on peaceful conflict resolution and peace consolidation.
- A peace-building project led by an NGO in Ethiopia promotes stability and strengthens basic service delivery for host communities, refugees and other displaced populations, while also undertaking development projects such as supporting community-level dialogues through 'community cohesion facilitators', conducting community-based psychosocial therapy, establishing peace clubs in schools and providing livelihoods support.
- An NNGO in the Philippines supports IDPs in communities affected by conflict by providing micro-grants through the sclr approach. The grants are used to address the priority needs of communities, enabling their leadership skills and enhancing their capacity to implement, manage and monitor their actions. At the same time, the organisation supports IDP leaders and CSO convergence members to lobby for the passage of a law for just compensation.

While LNAs' embeddedness and understanding of local contexts allows them to navigate the complex spaces, they do face challenges engaging with communities, especially those in contexts that are fragile or affected by conflict and violence. Nearly half (41% or 52/125) of LNAs reported experiencing risks to principled humanitarian action as a result of linking their efforts with peace/conflict programming. There are security risks for LNA staff, concerns around helping individuals linked to armed groups, and difficulty in maintaining neutrality and independence (including, for instance, when working with de facto governments). LNAs have navigated these risks through strong stakeholder engagement and communication, setting clearly defined roles within teams and through information-sharing on humanitarian principles.

GENDER

Despite increased attention on the importance of gender, peace and security, limited progress has been made by the international system to incorporate and mainstream gender in policy and implementation of nexus approaches (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023). However, the survey data suggests that LNAs engage in programming that addresses gender and inclusion. Only 14 of the 125 surveyed LNAs (11%) are women-led and women's rights organisations, yet the great majority of LNAs consider gender and inclusion as key elements of successful and sustained multi-dimensional programmes. Working with and empowering vulnerable and often marginalised groups such as women and youth – for example in GBV prevention – is seen to contribute to long-term resilience and peace.

 "As part of our commitment to supporting women and girls, we provide immediate assistance to address their basic needs, including legal and psychological support, as well as mental health services. Simultaneously, we actively work on empowering women to take on leadership roles and participate in decision-making processes within their communities. This multi-faceted approach ensures that we not only address their immediate concerns but also empower women to thrive and become more resilient in the long term, contributing to their well-being and progress."

~ Women-led organisation, Iraq



Holistic programming that incorporates gender often seeks to change long-standing norms and traditions which limit vulnerable and marginalised groups such as women and girls from participating meaningfully in community processes. For instance, a women-led organisation working in a region of Iraq affected by conflict integrated vocational and income-generating opportunities for women in their humanitarian response. This helped promote women's economic empowerment and challenged traditional gendered roles in the community. These efforts contributed to sustained improvements in social cohesion and a more equitable community.

Box 4 provides more examples.

Box 4. Examples of holistic programming that integrates gender

- A women's rights organisation in DRC supports communities affected by or displaced by war to address their gender-specific needs and SRHR in times of humanitarian crisis, ensuring that women's menstrual hygiene is managed.
 - An NGO in Somalia provides immediate life-saving support such as food, shelter, water and healthcare, while engaging communities in decision-making processes and tailoring interventions to address the specific vulnerabilities of women and girls.
 - An Iraqi NGO works on issues of peace and conflict transformation, empowering women and women's organisations working on these issues in their local communities through coordination and dialogues with local governments and community peace committees.
 - In Yemen, an NGO implements emergency response, facilitates peace-building and supports resilience-building, including through empowerment programmes for youth and women.
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2.2 FINANCING LNAs' WORK ON NEXUS APPROACHES

Financing is a key sticking point for the HDP nexus, with fragmented and siloed funding persistently blocking effective implementation (Grønkjær, 2023; Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023; IASC, 2024). Yet our evidence reveals that LNAs are implementing programmes that connect humanitarian, development and peace objectives. So how are they funding their work?

It is unclear from the survey data whether funding received by the LNAs from various sources was intended for their interconnected work or only for a particular dimension of the nexus; however, our discussions with LNAs indicate that most funding received has been allocated for the latter. Exceptions to this are where LNAs have been able to integrate resilience-building or social cohesion activities in their humanitarian projects or when crisis modifiers have been integrated into their development projects. One LNA has integrated humanitarian components (such as responding to natural hazards) into their development programmes funded by existing development-oriented donors, and they have added peace-building

components (such as training on conflict resolution) to their humanitarian and multi-sector programmes.

A few LNAs have received direct funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and German donors, but in most cases it is unlikely that funding flows directly from institutional donors to LNAs. Instead, funding passes through intermediaries, mostly INGOs, as sub-grants. This type of funding flow is evident among surveyed LNAs in Ethiopia, Colombia and Somalia. Several interviewees appealed for intermediary organisations to practice more equitable partnerships as, often, they receive a small percentage of grants but are responsible for a high number of deliverables. Two other LNAs commended some donors who require INGOs to work with local partners and to allocate a certain percentage of grants for the local partner.

 "The donors and the NGOs have big fears. They have not built that confidence in the local organisations to trust them enough with their resources. So, it is just not easy for any donor to give direct funds to a local organisation because they just don't trust. And so, for a local organisation to benefit from donor funds, then it must partner with an INGO. There, you get your chances, and I think that is what has helped us to access funding."

~ Women-led organisation, Uganda 

 "Equitable partnerships are essential in funding. Establishing long-term collaborations strengthens our relationship with development partners who provide humanitarian support. A sustained partnership ensures continuity and shared responsibility, particularly during major crises, where we work together to access funding effectively."

~ NNGO, Philippines 

Box 5. Who is funding LNAs' nexus work?

The most frequently cited source of funding for LNAs' multi-dimensional work is the UN, with some respondents having accessed funds from UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and the UN Office for Project Services' (UNOPS) Nexus Response Mechanism. Next comes funding from institutional donors and INGOs, and a few mention international financial institutions (IFIs).

Sources of funding for LNAs' nexus-style work (based on self-reports).

UN

The World Food Programme (WFP) was cited most frequently by LNAs. Other agencies mentioned are the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, UN Women, and CordAid.

INGOs	Oxfam was cited most, followed by Care International (with fewer than half as many mentions) and Diakonia. Others include Save the Children, Plan International, World Vision, Action Contre la Faim (ACF), International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Action Aid (AA). Networks such as the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR), the Start Network and Charter4Change were also identified as funders.
Institutional donors	United States (via USAID/Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance or the State Department); Germany (via the German Federal Foreign Office, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)); and European instruments (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), European Union and European Commission), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), SDC, and Global Affairs Canada (GAC).
IFIs	World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB).

Some LNAs have leveraged funds through diverse sources to implement more comprehensive programmes with communities. An NGO in Somalia, for example, leverages funds from different donors for various projects that complement its annual/three-year strategy. The LNA noted: "... if we get some funders for the food security response, and still there is a need for water or sanitation or other needs, then you have to look at other funders, and still the community has no sustainable sufficiency for their basic needs. You have to diversify even the donors ... to respond to different needs of the community."



"... multifaceted financial support allows us to address various aspects of our initiatives and ensures a well-rounded approach to our projects."

~ LNA, Colombia



Relatedly, several LNAs cited long-standing relationships with donors and INGOs as enabling funding for their interconnected work. One interviewee shared their overall organisational strategy (one to three years) that outlines multi-dimensional programmes with their existing donors to secure funding for various initiatives. Innovation in programme design to link short-term and long-term objectives has helped an NGO in Pakistan obtain funding for holistic work.




"It depends on how you pitch your idea and how you link it with your development work. I think it is more important that rather than going standalone for such project ... mainstreaming it within your programming is more important. And I think one of the reasons is that it is [the donor's] priority agenda as well. So that is maybe one of the reasons that we were luckier to get acceptance and more funding."

~ NNGO, Pakistan




However, smaller, newer local organisations have struggled even to access calls for proposals from donors, to comply with the numerous donor requirements and to write grant proposals due to limited capacity. In line with calls from other research on locally led action (Danish Refugee Council, n.d.; Barter, 2024; OECD, 2024), LNAs appealed for increased trust, and for flexible and long-term funding from donors that can be used for nexus-style programming and also to strengthen organisational capacities and systems to address compliance gaps.

 “Donors should have the trust in us as local actors that we have the capacity to deliver and to manage the resources appropriately. The fears and their lack of trust is the biggest block. The will is there, but there is the fear and lack of trust that actually the local actors or organisations will just mismanage their funds. So that fear is what they need to deal with. And for a local organisation to increase their chances of accessing funding, one of the key things is to ensure that you have the policies, you have established systems and you are compliant. That gives the partners confidence and trust to work with us.”

~ CSO/women-led organisation, Uganda 


Among surveyed LNAs, 26% (33/125) reported implementing holistic programmes using funds raised through their own initiatives and through the support of other actors. Of these, 17 are mobilising funds through membership fees, donations from individuals abroad, member contributions (for networks/associations), income-generating activities, voluntary work by members and others from the private sector (through corporate social responsibility, corporate foundations), and philanthropic institutions. Others leverage funds from partnerships with local institutions (NNGOs, government, academia). Indeed, evaluations underscore the relevance of engaging the private sector and non-traditional actors as long-term partners (Morinière and Morrison-Métois, 2023). One Somalian CSO receiving philanthropic funding for their sclr work noted, “None of the INGOs are able to understand this request of linking emergency response programming to wider development work”. Two LNAs funded by the private sector and philanthropic organisations reiterated that flexibility and less stringent requirements are key factors that have enabled them to fund interconnected programming, compared to the rigid systems and processes of traditional donors.

 “In philanthropy, based on our experience, it’s straightforward. They don’t have a lot of technicalities. They don’t like that. They are more succinct. And they are very fast in processing because they are not that bureaucratic ... and their requirements are simple compared to traditional donors. So the experience is different from the big agencies that are very bureaucratic.”

~ NNGO, Philippines 

LNAs in Iraq, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Somalia have engaged in consortia to access funding from institutional donors. According to a women-led organisation, having strong ties with other like-minded organisations (both local and international) and the willingness of various actors to work together has allowed collective access to resources and expertise. It has also provided a space to share and learn to improve their comprehensive programming. This is similar to the


experience of CSOs in West Africa (Danish Refugee Council, n.d.) and it is particularly important given that traditional siloed funding has been a persistent barrier to translating the nexus approach into practice (IASC, 2024).

 “The form and the things that they require for us to just apply for any grant, it’s very tedious. And [you need to have] someone to do that effort and lead that effort. And from the start of 2023, we were very encouraged to work as a consortium, which is something I think has worked very well in Iraq and sharing that experience with multiple NGOs and local NGOs. These partnerships enable us to leverage a wide range of expertise, resources and local knowledge, allowing us to create holistic and sustainable programmes that make a positive impact in crisis-affected communities.”

~ Women-led organisation, Iraq 

In Afghanistan, programme components implemented by consortium partners address short- and longer-term community needs, depending on their expertise. One partner provides agricultural support, another supports aid distribution and a third works on peace-building through dialogues and training. Programme participants can benefit from the different components. An NGO respondent also underscored that a consortium can protect local organisations in contexts like Afghanistan, supporting one another when faced with operational challenges. Accordingly, developing terms of reference among consortium partners early on can ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities, and establish accountability and financial mechanisms.

2.3. MEASURING THE RESULTS OF LNAs' NEXUS PROGRAMMING

 “...using the [sclr] approach in our humanitarian work, we have seen that when communities are given agency and empowering support at the right time, they proactively initiate resilience actions. Like in conflict situations, people are not solely focused on survival or receiving humanitarian aid; their priority is finding ways to rise immediately from the crisis, recover quickly, and build long-term resilience. Given the opportunity, they seek solutions not only for immediate recovery but also for addressing the root causes of their crisis. This how we see the HDP nexus in action on the ground.”

~ NNGO, Philippines 

There is some confusion at the international level over whether to focus on measuring impact for communities or on nexus coordination processes (IASC, 2024). Our own findings suggest LNAs focus on the former. However, the survey and interviews do not reveal much about the process of measuring and reporting higher-level outcomes and impacts of nexus-style programmes among LNAs. In some cases, this is still relatively nascent.

The majority were not explicit about tailoring their M&E approaches to nexus programming; instead, a few organisations measure different dimensions of the nexus in their work. Where donors only fund a particular dimension, it can be difficult to track progress or results that cut across the HDP dimensions. One LNA recognised this constraint and is keen to track the overall impact of their work across their programmes more purposively.

Most LNAs track activities and outputs using standard M&E approaches. Interestingly, while many LNAs consult and engage communities in needs assessment for programme design, M&E processes are still often donor-driven. Some LNAs use outcome or results monitoring, with results-based monitoring cited as an approach too. Theories of change are used as well, which implies some clearer exploration of underlying risk and longer-term change processes. See [Box 6](#) for a summary of the monitoring approaches reported by LNAs.

 “Different donors have different monitoring practices. It’s not integrated and it’s an issue for the local partners to practice monitoring. It’s difficult still to measure the actual real change or the outcomes of the work that you’re doing. Most of the indicators came from the national level and not from the field level. That’s why the indicators didn’t reflect the actual changes.”

~ NNGO, Myanmar



Box 6. M&E approaches used by LNAs

Activity and output monitoring approaches:


- Qualitative methods (meetings, field visits, focus groups, interviews, case studies, success stories)
- Quantitative methods (surveys, questionnaires)

Outcome and results monitoring approaches:

- Outcome mapping and harvesting, most significant change stories
- End of project or impact evaluations

Despite the confusion at the international level about what and how to measure the impact of HDP nexus approaches (IASC, 2024), our analysis shows indications of positive results coming out of holistic programming efforts among LNAs. [Table 2](#) summarises a few examples of these positive outcomes. Many of these results speak of empowerment of community members, including vulnerable groups such as women, girls and youth. Investing in local capabilities has been a vital element of LNAs’ nexus-style initiatives, allowing people affected by crisis to transition towards resilience and self-reliance. Whether this be to achieve resilient livelihoods, climate change adaptation, land rights, women’s economic empowerment or peace-building, LNAs are helping to strengthen community members’ knowledge and skills so they can define their own needs and priorities.

It is important for the international community and local actors to work together to ensure that M&E frameworks incorporate – as a starting point – bottom-up approaches to implementation and strong engagement with communities.

 “...our involvement goes beyond crisis response. While residing in these communities, we provide comprehensive psychosocial support, employing specialised methodologies to foster resilience and initiate long-term life projects. This holistic process includes active engagement with families, promoting entrepreneurship to bolster their resources. By doing so, we aim to empower families, creating a foundation that helps mitigate future risks for their children.”

~ NNGO, Philippines



Table 2. Emerging outcomes from LNAs' nexus-style programming

EMERGING OUTCOMES	EXAMPLES
Increased participation and engagement of women in household and community affairs	CSO, Colombia: Women accessed productive projects in rural areas marked by armed conflict, which had an impact on the family economy and women's financial autonomy. Likewise, women's advocacy and political participation was promoted on issues of interest, in which they are still active today.
Improved social cohesion	CSO, Venezuela: Young people, women and local organisations were supported as agents of change in their communities. Having received training, young people from vulnerable groups proposed advocacy actions for peace and co-existence in their environments and health days and food deliveries were carried out. Three years after the end of the project, young people are linked to the network of young peace-builders who are still active in their environments. Women from vulnerable groups received support in the community centre with the delivery of food, training and recreational activities. The same women have remained as volunteers in the programmes for children and adolescents and during community days.
Strengthened participation and leadership of women in conflict resolution and peace-building	Women-led organisation, Iraq: Post-conflict, more than one project was implemented that combined humanitarian assistance with peace-building activities. It engaged local women's groups to facilitate their participation in community-led conflict resolution efforts. As mediators and peace ambassadors, the women mitigated local tensions and contributed to long-lasting social cohesion. This strategy recognised the unique role of women in peace processes and their contributions to sustained peace.



3. LESSONS AND WAYS FORWARD



"As local partners, we have extensive knowledge of our context ... that can really help us to build better responses. We are here to stay; we are not moving anywhere. In the long run, it becomes very sustainable because we will be here and continuing to provide the services even when the INGOs are not there."

~ Women-led CSO, Uganda



The experience of LNAs and their leadership in implementing bottom-up solutions offers insights and lessons on programme implementation across the HDP nexus. However, in-depth exploration, better collaboration among actors, appropriate funding and more systematic results tracking are needed for this learning to be put into practice by other stakeholders.

We have distilled our findings into key takeaways and suggest ways forward for international actors to support LNAs in their holistic approaches to programming.

Key takeaway 1. LNAs conceive of and implement the HDP nexus approach differently to that of international actors, employing wide ranging programming approaches that seamlessly combine humanitarian, development and peace dimensions. Often, these approaches do not use the same language of the HDP nexus but serve similar aims. More meaningful engagement of LNAs in decision-making and implementation processes would enable learning around nexus-style programming.

Key takeaway 2. LNAs' nexus-style programming is borne out of their interactions with communities and communities' holistic needs and vulnerabilities, rather than being driven by international policies and frameworks. Most LNAs emphasise local ownership and work to address short-term needs while also achieving sustained, long-term results. This leads them to engage communities in analysing risks, vulnerabilities and drivers of fragility, as well as in programme design. In turn, ideas germinate from communities that do not fit pre-disposed intervention designs or sit neatly within development/peace/humanitarian boundaries. With their close proximity and strong affinity with communities, LNAs are well-placed to design and deliver bottom-up programming that is context-sensitive, relevant, efficient, effective and sustained.

Key takeaway 3. LNAs' work across the HDP nexus includes a strong attention to peace programming and gender inclusion. Many LNAs not only focus on community engagement, but also integrate peace programming and gender inclusion – three elements that the international system struggles to incorporate. Further exploration is needed of how LNAs incorporate these elements, but insights gained to date can help other actors navigate these complex components.

Key takeaway 4. LNAs are finding creative ways to fund and implement nexus-style programming. Resource constraints impede LNAs' ability to engage with communities to deliver nexus-style programming more effectively. A major barrier is siloed and non-flexible funding. Access to funding for localisation efforts is also limited by stringent donor requirements and rigid compliance processes, plus concerns around LNAs' capacity to manage direct funding. Flexible and multi-year/long-term funding is crucial for the successful implementation of locally led holistic programmes, but they remain elusive, if at all directly given, to LNAs.

Key takeaway 5. Positive results are emerging from the work of LNAs, but a gap remains in the systematic measurement of the impacts of their nexus-style programmes. While LNAs' holistic programmes are showing positive results for communities, work is needed to fully measure and document the long-term results of these joined-up programmes.



“The focus should not be on us but on the people. The moment we prioritize our own interests - our sustainability, our programming, we lose sight of what truly matters. We need to shift that mindset and ask: what is in the best interest of the people? Only then can we adapt and realign our programming to serve the affected people effectively.”

~ NNGO, Philippines



Many of the concerns and appeals expressed by our LNA participants are captured also in the recommendations of conferences and reports (see, for example, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark et al., 2023; IASC, 2024; OECD, 2024). This ALNAP research adds to the increasing calls to revisit and challenge the way aid is delivered and highlights the crucial role of locally led nexus-style solutions. International actors – donors, UN agencies, INGOs and other intermediary organisations – can capitalise on opportunities across three key areas to support LNAs to implement nexus-style programmes.

1. Showcase and learn from LNAs' work on the HDP nexus.

Better understand the language and practical concepts that LNAs use around the nexus. To understand what 'working across the HDP nexus' means in practice, international actors should take as their starting point LNAs' conceptualisation of the nexus and pay attention to the types of LNA programmes that bridge the three pillars. These may not be presented in the same language as that used in international frameworks. Understanding these nuances is important when developing nexus programming and transitioning to more bottom-up, sustainable and holistic solutions.

Build a global evidence base of good practices and lessons on locally led nexus programming. This evidence should highlight effective strategies, including how LNAs address peace and gender objectives. Resources could include lesson papers, an online repository of good practice examples, audio-visual materials and case studies, for example.

Share and showcase LNAs' work, creating opportunities to exchange learning and collaborate with others through, for example, locally led HDP nexus conferences at regional and international levels. Learning spaces dedicated to HDP nexus topics should actively include the perspectives and experiences of LNAs around community engagement, gender inclusion and peace considerations.



“In the past ... the type of the concept was requested by the donors based on their own need assessment. But let's allow local actors to do their own need assessment and that should come from the real need on the ground. Let's put money on the right direction. Let's put money the way that everyone should benefit from that. It is the time that we should not waste the money. And especially on the crisis countries, every dollar is a lot. And we must be accountable for every dollar that the people and the taxpayers are paying. And that's why let's design the activities based on the need of the people, based on the need on the ground and increase our access on the ground, increase our partnership with the local actors, especially with the women local actors. Be more flexible with their local women-led partners and do not ignore their needs.”

~ NNGO, Afghanistan



2. Involve LNAs in the design and measurement of results of HDP nexus programming.

Bring LNAs on board when designing both global and local HDP nexus strategies and programmes to ensure their knowledge and expertise is included. If the humanitarian system is serious about its commitment to placing people at the centre of its work, international actors need to actively enable nexus programming at community level that meets the holistic needs of communities and their desire for sustainable results. International actors should also build on LNAs' success at incorporating peace and gender in nexus programming.

Engage LNAs in co-designing M&E frameworks and tools to systematically measure, capture and understand the outcomes and impact of locally led nexus approaches. Methodologies such as Outcome Harvesting and Most Significant Change can build a picture of the range of results possible from work across the HDP nexus, looking in particular at the community level impact of the work of LNAs.

Expand how programmes define and measure success to encourage approaches that recognise complexity and uses integrated or cross-sectoral outcomes and metrics that reflect the quality of relationships and other process indicators.

Greater understanding of how locally led programmes are implemented and measured could bridge the gap between the international system's higher-level plans for HDP nexus approaches and practical implementation at the local level.

 “The other thing that the international community is responsible for is to include the local NGOs in decision-making ... and in the very first initial step of programme design. And before they design the project, they should ask the local NGOs, the local community, what are their needs? What do you want? And what is really a kind of programme that can be implemented in the country? We are asking for meaningful engagement at the policy and also the decision-making system. We know what is needed on the ground. We know how the international community can help us. What is missing is the more connections with the international actors, with the donors, and the more consultation. We are requesting our space, and our voices should be on the design of the programme.”

~ NNGO, Afghanistan



3. Put more funding in the hands of LNAs for nexus programming.

Include LNAs in funding discussions for HDP nexus programming and provide more longer-term and flexible funding to directly enable their work across the three pillars of the nexus.

Boosting funding and overheads to strengthen the capacities and sustainability of LNAs that work closely with communities, thereby indirectly enabling their work across the HDP nexus.

 “... as a local actor, we don’t see the financial contribution as only the way to work together. We need strategic partnerships. And when you call it strategic, it’s beyond the financial contributions, whatever we are bringing to the table, let’s come up to the table and share the capacities, skills, competencies, whatever we have. So how can you strengthen the existing work, how can you contribute to the existing work. We are not against the financials ... but how can we complement each other, how can we work coherently [based on] whatever the principles of humanitarian assistance and partnership principles are. So how can they come up alongside with us to serve the communities more efficiently and effectively?”

~ NNGO, Pakistan



ANNEX 1. METHODOLOGY

Primarily, this report draws on the responses from 125 LNAs gathered originally for the IASC Task Force 4's update of the 2021 mapping of good practices and approaches in operationalising the HDP nexus who were surveyed between July and October 2023. The survey tool was initially designed in English but was later translated to French and Spanish to respond to requests to address language barriers for LNAs. The survey data were analysed further to maximise the use of LNAs' responses. In-depth interviews with nine of the surveyed LNAs were carried out to explore relevant themes emerging from the survey, and to ask additional questions on their perspectives and experiences of engaging in nexus approaches.

Table A 1. Survey respondents by country

COUNTRY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS
Afghanistan	2
Burundi	1
Cameroon	2
Colombia	7
DRC	9
El Salvador	1
Ethiopia	9
Haiti	2
Iraq	2
Lebanon	2
Mali	5
Mozambique	5
Myanmar	7
Niger	5
Pakistan	17
Philippines	1
Somalia	12
South Sudan	7
Uganda	8

Ukraine	8
Venezuela	7
Yemen	6
Total	125

Table A 2. Survey respondents by type of organisation

TYPE OF ORGANISATION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS
CSO	20
Women-led CSO	2
Government actor	2
Women-led NGO network	1
NGO	76
NGO and CSO	2
NGO and CSO and NGO network	2
Women's rights organisation and women-led NGO	1
Other	9
Women-led organisation	9
Women's rights organisation	1
Grand Total	125

Table A 3. KII respondents

TYPE OF ORGANISATION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS
NNGO	5
CSO	1
Women-led CSO	1
Women-led organisation	2
Total	9

LIMITATIONS

The study has several limitations. First, it is primarily based on the experiences of local and national CSOs and NGOs working on the HDP nexus. Data collected does not represent the diversity of LNAs engaged in humanitarian, development and peace programming across different contexts and geographic areas. Second, our study relies on self-reported data only, which can be subject to various forms of bias. Third, while we had planned to speak to more LNAs to supplement survey data, only a few responded within our data collection timeframe. This limited the extent to

which we could unpack and dig deeper into LNAs' survey responses. Lastly, English was the primary language used in data collection, although the survey was also translated into French and Spanish. Responses tended to adopt similar jargon to that used by the international system, and therefore they may not fully capture the rich and culturally specific concepts and practices with which LNAs engage.

For these reasons, we recognise that the results have limited generalisability and inherent language bias. However, this report offers important insights on how LNAs conceive of and implement programming using the nexus approach, and this knowledge could help bridge the gaps identified in international-level discourse on the HDP nexus.

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