

Save the Children and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus

A guide to the nexus approach¹

THE GUIDE

The purpose of this guide on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is to offer an overview of the main issues, options, and resources available in Save the Children, as well as examples of nexus-related approaches already being implemented.

The guide includes a list of frequently used terms in the policy and practice of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus across the aid sector. Given that discussions around the nexus are often imprecise, it is helpful to understand how these terms are used, the coherence with Save the Children's way of working, as well as their relevance for defining and putting in practice our nexus approach.

The nexus approach calls for a different way of working that relies on system-wide reforms but also on existing programmatic approaches and tools. The guide includes a section with examples of how the nexus approach is already been operationalised by country teams. The last section offers an insight into why and how the nexus approach could be relevant for Save the Children's priority sectors.

This guide is a collaborative effort led by Save the Children's Nexus Task Team, a group of colleagues from humanitarian and development teams, with policy and technical backgrounds, from Regional Offices, Country Offices, members, and SCI centre. If you want to learn more about the work of the Task Team, visit the nexus page on OneNet and join the [nexus community of practice on Workplace](#).

WHAT IS THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE NEXUS?

Although there is no commonly agreed definition of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, there are guidelines, approaches and initiatives that can help understand what a nexus approach would look like in practice. For example, in 2016, the World Humanitarian Summit called to transcend humanitarian-development divides and shift from delivering aid to ending needs. The [New Way of Working](#) -championed by the UN and the World Bank- proposes that humanitarian and development actors work collaboratively **towards collective outcomes**, taking into account their **comparative advantages**, to reduce need, risk and vulnerability over multiple years.

For the [OECD Development Assistance Committee](#) -the group of the world's main donors- the nexus refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actors, and the actions to strengthen collaboration, coherence and complementarity to capitalise on the comparative advantage of each of the three pillars. Coordination would involve joint risk-informed, gender-sensitive analysis of root causes and structural drivers of conflict, appropriate resourcing to empower leadership, and

¹ This is a live document produced by Save the Children's Nexus Task Team. The latest version of the guide can be found on OneNet. For questions and suggestions related to this guide, contact Christel Bultman christel.bultman@savethechildren.nl and Fernando Espada f.espada@savethechildren.org.uk

use political engagement and other tools to prevent crises, resolve conflicts and build peace. Programmes should prioritise prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding, and investing in development while ensuring humanitarian needs are met. Financing the nexus will require evidence-based financing strategies, as well as predictable, flexible, multi-year financing.

The [EU Council Conclusion on Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development Nexus](#) builds on the OECD-DAC recommendation and asks to strengthen the operational links between humanitarian action, development aid and conflict prevention, respecting humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law. For the EU, this could be achieved through multi-annual planning and programming cycles, joint risk and vulnerability analysis, joined-up planning, coordinated programmatic approaches where applicable, better understanding of the socio-economic, political and security contexts, and coordinated flexible multi-year financing.

For multi-mandate NGOs with humanitarian, development and, in some cases, peacebuilding programmes, the nexus approach is coherent with their mission and way of working. However, the adoption of a nexus approach across the aid sector presents multiple challenges at strategic, programmatic and, even, ethical levels.

Key resources:

ICVA & PHAP, [Demystifying the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus](#)

New York University, [The Triple Nexus in Practice: Toward a New Way of Working in Protracted and Repeated Crises](#)

Oxfam, [The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What does it mean for multi-mandated organizations?](#)

Sida, [Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Guidance Note for Sida](#)

CRITICISM

The humanitarian-development-peace nexus continues to be the focus of controversy. These are some issues raised by critics of the nexus approach.

Lack of novelty – the nexus approach is just a continuation of longstanding efforts to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development programmes, such as Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development or resilience.

Lack of clarity – there has been no common vernacular in terms of definitions and problems, both between and within sectors and actors. Even if the *what* is becoming clearer, the nexus approach fails to explain *how* collaboration and coherence between humanitarian, development and peace actors can be achieved in practice.

Top-down & donor-driven – the nexus approach does not challenge the current power dynamics in the aid sector. So far, the nexus has been championed by the UN, governments, and the World Bank, with limited opportunities for civil society organizations and local communities to define its roadmap and endgame.

Aid instrumentalization & humanitarian principles – the nexus approach does not provide an answer to concerns about aid instrumentalization and respect of humanitarian principles, International Humanitarian Law and human rights, or to the risk of insufficient prioritisation of protection.

Risks of working with peace and security actors – working in collaboration with peace and security actors presents ethical and operational risks in fragile and conflict affected countries. It could be perceived as politicising intervention, potentially undermining its effectiveness, reducing access to affected people and the security of aid workers and communities.

Lack of appropriate funding – while the nexus emphasizes multi-year goals and timeframes, many donors (including those that are supportive of the nexus agenda) still fund programmes and plan their budgets and disbursements on an annual basis. Existing funding mechanisms do not have an instrument for humanitarian-development initiatives. Funding is often inflexible, related to a specific plan or programme and this does not reinforce a nexus approach.² In addition, the “nexus contexts” by definition are volatile, requiring more flexible funding mechanisms and plans, as the situation may rapidly change. There are also concerns that funding the nexus might shift resources from urgent humanitarian needs to development activities. The COVID-19 pandemic put donor flexibility to the test – at times with good success- but there are doubts about the continuation and expansion of those measures.³

Key resources:

Marc Dubois, [The Cost of Coherence](#)

Hugo Slim, [Nexus thinking in humanitarian policy](#)

VOICE, [NGO Perspectives on the EU's Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#)

² ICVA (2018); The Nexus Explained. Online:

https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA_Nexus_briefing_paper%20%28Low%20Res%29.pdf.

³ See Save the Children (2020): Save the Children and the COVID-19 pandemic: What can we learn from the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. Discussion paper.

KEY TERMS

Being familiar with the key terms associated with the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is not only helpful to understand the approach but also its relevance for Save the Children. This section includes definitions and insights into what makes those terms relevant for us. Most of the links to the internal references are only accessible to Save the Children staff. Missing links will be added as soon as they are available on OneNet or SharePoint.

Collective outcomes

According to the IASC, a collective outcome is a jointly envisioned result with the aim of addressing and reducing needs, risks and vulnerabilities, requiring the combined effort of humanitarian, development and peace communities and other actors as appropriate. To be effective, the collective outcome should be context specific, engage the comparative advantage of all actors and draw on multi-year timeframes. They should be developed through joint (or joined-up) analysis, complementary planning and programming, effective leadership and coordination, refined financing beyond project-based funding and sequencing in formulation and implementation. Examples of collective outcomes in a country could include: 15% reduction in child mortality by 2023; 50% of IDPs no longer require humanitarian assistance in [location/province] by 2025; 90% of people in need have access to functioning basic social services including water, sanitation and education by 2022.

Relevance for Save the Children: Working towards collective outcomes resonates with Save the Children's breakthroughs, which include the contribution of both humanitarian and development programmes. The Global Results Framework and the Country Strategic Plans could benefit from the experience of formulating collective outcomes that strive to be inclusive of all relevant actors at country level. This would help Save the Children strengthen the integration of humanitarian action as a core activity -even during non-emergency phases- at global and Country Office level, as well as opening the space for including peacebuilding outcomes and activities.

Key resources:

OCHA, [Collective Outcomes. Operationalising the New Way of Working](#)

IASC, [Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes](#)

IASC, [Collective Outcomes Progress Mapping](#)

Save the Children, [Global Results Framework](#)

Comparative advantage

The term comparative advantage proposes that capacity and expertise, not only organisational mandates, should determine the division of labour among actors working with a nexus approach in a specific context. Reducing needs, risk and vulnerability is best delivered by the best placed actors. However, agreeing and coordinating the contribution of different types of actors towards collective outcomes requires clarity as to who does what and according to what criteria. The lack of spaces for coordination among humanitarian, development and peace actors at country level, and difficulties in establishing clear lines of accountability, have led to limited progress in this area. While there is a potential benefit in ensuring coherence of the work of all relevant actors in a context, there are also concerns about the risks involved in that process (e.g. instrumentalization of aid, loss of independence of humanitarian action, etc.).

To implement the principle of comparative advantage and overcome related challenges, [the IASC and the UN Sustainable Development Group](#) call for development action to be more responsive, more risk focused, and more flexible through context-adaptable programming, including a stronger focus on presence and impact in communities and a flexible approach in terms of working with fragile/transitional institutions; for peace actors to be more preventively focussed on engaging national stakeholders and more risk tolerant, in support of addressing root causes of conflicts and crises; and for humanitarian actors to clearly indicate what needs they strive to address and the actions required by relevant stakeholders to support a phase-out of humanitarian aid, focusing on ensuring that people can gain sustainable access to services and protection and transferring service delivery to non-humanitarian assistance providers and/or institutions over time.

Relevance for Save the Children: As a global child-rights organisation, co-lead of the Global Education Cluster and active participant in aid coordination structures at international, regional and country level, the principle of comparative advantage is coherent with our ethos, theory of change and way of working. However, a division of labour based on comparative advantage must always respect humanitarian principles and priorities and acknowledge the central role of national and local actors in delivering more timely, appropriate, and effective outcomes for children and their communities and better fulfil their rights. The Country Strategy Plan Process includes a capability assessment in the situation analysis step where our Country Offices have to consider what is Save the Children best at or has the potential to be best at relative to the situation for children, as well as our operational and thematic capability. The new SCI and SCA Localisation Policy outlines our organisational commitment to localisation in all contexts, partnership principles, local leadership, strengthening of prevention and national and local preparedness, funding models and commitment to uphold child's rights. By working in a nexus approach, Save the Children should seek to contribute to our localisation commitments through activities that build and strengthen local systems and resilience.

Save the Children resources: [Country Strategy Planning](#) and Localisation Policy

Flexibility

Improving organisational and programmatic flexibility (defined as the range and speed within which an organisation can respond to changes in its operating environment) is a central demand of the nexus approach. Humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors are being asked to review their own organisational structures and processes so that they are better able to adapt to expected changes, through *anticipatory* strategies, and to unexpected changes, through *adaptive* strategies, in the contexts where they operate. Examples of how flexibility can be translated in practice include redirecting assistance or expanding to include new target groups, rapidly changing activities and programmes depending on needs and risks, lengthening and shortening planned timeframes for different types of activities, making changes to an original plan and intervention based on new information, rapidly scaling up and down activities and, ultimately, strategic flexibility at institutional and system level to be able to anticipate and adapt.

Key resource: ALNAP, [Ready to Change? Building flexibility into the triple nexus](#)

Needs, risk and vulnerability

According to the UN Secretary-General's five core responsibilities outlined in the [Agenda for Humanity](#), the risk and vulnerabilities brought about by conflict and climate-induced disasters are the biggest threats to human development in fragile settings, as well as responsible for an intensification of needs from the interplay between rapid and unplanned urbanization, health challenges and economic shocks. However, the type, level and extent of need, risk and vulnerability is highly varied and context specific. Collective outcomes should therefore be based on assessed priority areas and include the engagement with affected people to understand their shifting needs, priorities and suggested solutions. Needs, risk and vulnerability are concepts strongly correlated with resilience.

Relevance for Save the Children: Prioritising contextually relevant interventions that incorporate solutions built on longer term analysis will allow Save the Children to better understand the specific risks and vulnerabilities of each context, as well as their expected evolution, and therefore better protect and strengthen children's rights and resilience. This will require stronger context analysis and continuous monitoring (e.g. CAFU), paying particular attention to changes identified in child rights situation analysis, with the aim of facilitating adaptive programming. Children themselves should participate in these activities; context analysis which is both centred on and informed by children will not only provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges they face but will also ensure our response is directly accountable to children.

Save the Children resources:

[Child Rights Situation Analysis](#)

[Child-sensitive Climate Risk Index](#) (tool under development)

Peace

Bridging the gap between humanitarian and development assistance has long been an objective for the aid sector, including for multi-mandate organisations such as Save the Children. However, adding a peace pillar to the nexus approach is a controversial step for those who believe it is a threat to humanitarian principles and that aid should always remain independent from peace and security objectives and actors. The arguments for a triple nexus are: humanitarian, development and peace actors and activities all have a role to play in the protection, well-being, and resilience of people in protracted crisis contexts; humanitarian, development and peace actors have a bigger and more lasting impact when they pull together in the same direction instead of operating in silos; for people living in protracted crisis contexts, the distinction between humanitarian, development and peace is artificial; fragmentation based on the way donors and aid actors organise resources and planning undermines their capacity to meet the interconnected needs of vulnerable people.

The breakdown in trust in societies and institutions, and the lack of social cohesion on community as well as societal level, maintains a circle of violence and mistrust that is counterproductive to peace and development. In addition to those arguments, many NGOs already use approaches such as conflict sensitivity, reconciliation, social cohesion, or mediation at community level without compromising their principles. It is furthermore increasingly recognized that integrating mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) across all sectors of programming in the humanitarian and development nexus can contribute to saving lives and increases the resilience and agency of people and communities

to participate in the rebuilding of peaceful societies⁴ Human functioning and resilience is determined by a number of factors, among them navigation skills, employability and non-violent conflict resolution. These factors are best addressed through a multi-disciplinary approach including MHPSS. This approach is also relevant to the prevention of vulnerability to anti-social behaviour, violence and grooming into criminal activity.

Relevance for Save the Children: According to an internal survey, only a minority of Save the Children staff have some sort of regular collaboration with peace activities and actors. On the other hand, most colleagues would like to understand how Save the Children could contribute to peace in the countries where we operate, the tools available and learn from the existing experience in some of our Country Offices, including our experience of supporting children to participate in peace processes. The nexus offers Save the Children an opportunity to take stock of our knowledge and experience in this area, seek to establish partnerships with NGOs with experience in peacebuilding, and build our capacity to make a positive contribution to peace (for example, prioritising community-based MHPSS interventions, social cohesion and conflict prevention activities, using conflict sensitivity to inform our work, or advocating for the inclusion of child protection advisors in peacekeeping missions) without compromising our values and mission. As a child rights-based organisation, Save the Children approaches peace within a rights-based paradigm, putting children at the centre, irrespective of security priorities and agendas.

Save the Children resources:

[Children and young people as actors in peace processes and peace building](#)

[Conflict Sensitivity Brief](#)

[MHPSS Cross-sectoral Strategic Framework in Humanitarian Settings](#)

SCI Procedure, Civil Military & ANSA Engagement

Nexus initiative case studies from [Colombia](#), [Iraq](#) and [Mali](#)

Thematic brief on peace in the nexus approach (forthcoming)

External resources:

Mercy Corps, [Peace and Conflict Sector: Approach](#)

Christian Aid, [Tackling Violence, Building Peace](#)

Stanley Center, [Coming Together: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Peacebuilding](#)

UN, [Pathways for Peace](#)

Protracted crisis

No single characteristic identifies a protracted crisis and there is no commonly agreed definition. However, protracted crises typically refer to environments in which a significant proportion of the population is vulnerable to death, disease or livelihood disruption over a long period of time. Protracted crises are often driven by conflict and recurrent natural disasters, but they are also characterised by a combination of acute and long-term issues or needs such as crisis longevity, weak or a breakdown in governance, malnutrition and food insecurity, disease, unsustainable livelihood

⁴ [UN SG report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, 2020](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/sg_report_on_peacebuilding_and_sustaining_peace.a.74.976-s.2020.773.200904.e_4.pdf)
https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/sg_report_on_peacebuilding_and_sustaining_peace.a.74.976-s.2020.773.200904.e_4.pdf

systems and chronic poverty. It is these contexts that face the most significant barriers to achieving the SDGs and ensuring no one is left behind by 2030.

Relevance for Save the Children: The number of settings characterised by conflict- and climate-driven protracted emergencies continues to rise and will increasingly determine not only where Save the Children operates but also how. It is in these contexts where children are most vulnerable and at most risk of being left behind. This calls for using the nexus to rethink how we approach our work in protracted contexts beyond typical humanitarian categorisations (such as conflict, food insecurity, etc.), considering the interplay of different and overlapping crises, and whether the current humanitarian categorisation framework fits the long-term nature of those protracted contexts.

Key resources:

OECD, [States of Fragility](#)

World Bank, [Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020-2025](#)

Save the Children, Lebanon: Economic Collapse, Interrelated Crises, Briefing Note October 2020

Resilience

Resilience has different interpretations and angles within the three individual pillars of the triple nexus, which can make communication and collaboration difficult. However, there are natural complementarities between nexus and resilience thinking. For the OECD Development Assistance Committee, resilience refers to the ability of households, communities, and nations to absorb and recover from shocks, whilst positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term stresses, change and uncertainty. When resilience thinking is based upon a systems approach, it seeks to understand the types and drivers of risks and identify the capacities of the system needed in both the immediate and longer term in order to cope with them. These system capacities are framed around absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities. Resilience building therefore addresses emergency needs, the root causes of risk and vulnerability, and the interlinkages between them. It is synonymous with nexus work that depends on the expertise and collaboration between humanitarian, development and peace actors. When resilience thinking is focused on individuals, we speak of children and adolescents' wellbeing and individual resilience. MHPSS work is critical for achieving the above aspects of resilience and ultimately peace and development. In this case we define resilience as the ability to overcome adversity and positively adapt after challenging or difficult experiences. Children's resilience relates not only to their innate strengths and coping capacities, but also to the pattern of risk and protective factors in their social and cultural environments.

Relevance for Save the Children: Resilience has been identified as one of Save the Children's three main cross-cutting topics for its 2030 global strategy. For Save the Children, resilience refers to the ability of children, their families, and the wider systems to protect and safeguard all children against stresses and shocks.

Save the Children resources:

[Reducing Risks, Enhancing Resilience](#)

[Economic Resilience Approach for Save the Children – minimum package](#)

[Toward Resilience: a guide to Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation](#)

Nexus initiative case studies from [Iraq](#), [Malawi](#) and [Uganda](#)

External resources:

OECD, [Guidelines for Resilience Systems Analysis](#)

European Commission, [Resilience Compendium](#)

APPROACHES TO OPERATIONALISE THE NEXUS APPROACH IN SAVE THE CHILDREN

The humanitarian-development-peace nexus draws on longstanding practices of multi-mandated organisations. This section presents multiple examples of approaches, tools and guidelines developed by Save the Children that could guide the implementation of the nexus approach across the organisation.

Accountability to Affected Communities

Promoting accountability to children and other communities throughout our work supports a nexus approach. Through the core elements of AAP (information sharing and two-way communication, participation and response to community feedback), Save the Children can learn directly from affected children and adults about how their needs, priorities and suggested solutions are changing, and better understand how to adapt our interventions to ensure relevance.

Save the Children resource: [Accountability to Children and Communities Toolkit](#)

Area-based approaches

Area-based approaches have gained in traction in recent years as they seek to address needs holistically within a community or location, by providing multisector assistance through the participation of affected communities and local actors. Area-based approaches offer a platform for deepened local engagement, stronger and more integrated subnational coordination, context-centred needs analysis, demand-driven planning, alignment across sectors, and improved coordination with development, peacebuilding and refugee programmes. Save the Children is testing the area-based approach in north-east Syria focusing on a two-stage process: an area-based assessment in north-east Syria to inform participatory programme design in collaboration with local stakeholders, communities and the broader response community; and a nexus case study based on lessons learned from the area-based assessment.

Key resources:

Save the Children, North-East Syria Case Study for the nexus initiative (forthcoming)

Center for Global Development, [Inclusive Coordination: Building an Area-Based Humanitarian Coordination Model](#)

Child-sensitive Social Protection and Cash and Voucher Assistance

Child-sensitive social protection programmes are being implemented by Save the Children in both development and humanitarian contexts drawing on multi-sectoral analysis of vulnerabilities. These programmes must be adaptable to be able to respond to rapid or slow onset crises, as well as in protracted contexts. This requires coordinated child-sensitive humanitarian responses in situation where social protection systems do not exist or cannot be adapted to respond to acute needs. In context with existing social protection systems, Save the Children aims to support national and local authorities, local NGOs and other stakeholders to improve their coverage, impact and child-focus. As the response to the COVID-19 pandemic is showing, Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) can play a key role in supporting social protection, allowing for stronger coordination between humanitarian actors and government social protection bodies (e.g. Ethiopia), filling the gaps in governments' social

protection responses to COVID-19 (e.g. Pakistan), allowing continuity of existing social protection delivery during crises through improving preparedness (e.g. Somaliland), supporting the capacity of governments in social protection (e.g. Nigeria), and encouraging social accountability in social protection programming (e.g. Zambia).

Key resources:

Save the Children, [Child-sensitive Social Protection position paper](#)

Collaborative Cash Delivery Network, [Responding to the COVID-10 crisis: Linking humanitarian cash and social protection in practice](#)

Conflict Sensitivity Programming

Save the Children's [Context Analysis and Foresight Unit](#) has tools and resources available to support those interested in applying conflict sensitivity in their planning and programmes. The Conflict Sensitivity Working Group is working on developing our approach to conflict sensitivity, based around the project management methodology.

Joint needs assessments

There has been significant progress in joint humanitarian needs assessments, one of the Grand Bargain commitments (endorsed by Save the Children). In addition to providing single, comprehensive, cross-sectoral and impartial assessment of needs, there is a recognition of the role of development partners and local authorities in conducting risk and vulnerability analysis with humanitarian actors as means to agree collective outcomes. The [Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework](#) (JIA) provides country teams with such a participatory and inclusive framework that will not only inform the Humanitarian Needs Overview and the Humanitarian Response Plans from 2021, but will also support the nexus approach, allowing to develop area-based approaches and provide the baseline for a joint analysis of context, risks and vulnerabilities together with development actors and local authorities. Country Offices should prioritise their participation in the JIA process at country level and ensuring the input from development teams.

Key resources:

[Join Intersectoral Analysis Framework](#)

IASC, [Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes](#).

Key Considerations for Advancing the Triple Nexus in the Middle East and Eastern Europe: Guidance for Country Offices

This tool, produced by Save the Children Middle East and Eastern Europe Regional Office, outlines five steps for Country Offices to consider when defining their approach to the nexus: ensure up-to-date contextual and needs analysis, define collective outcomes, identify our comparative advantage, design a non-sequential approach to addressing needs, ensure adequate technical and financial resourcing and monitoring of impact. The steps can be applied for strategic planning, such as developing a Country Strategic Plan and its overall implementation, or as a checklist for how to align individual projects or programmes with this approach in a principled manner.

Localisation

The synergies between the nexus approach and localisation are strong. In fact, it could be argued that in order to be successful the nexus approach should strive to build and strengthen local systems and leadership, promoting and supporting transparency and accountability. The comparative advantages of national and local actors in delivering more timely, appropriate, and effective outcomes for children and their communities -recognised in *SC localisation policy*- is a clear example of the interdependency between the two agendas. Localisation could be a useful reference for designing nexus interventions. In other words, when looking at options to operationalise (or not) the nexus approach, ask how they contribute to our localisation commitments. In addition, we will continue to promote locally-led development, where children and communities are meaningfully involved in the design and implementation of interventions – whether in peacebuilding, emergency responses or longer-term development efforts. In the best case this will include children’s voices in local governance and decisions around community priorities as well as the approaches that should be taken to address them.

Multi-sectoral programmes to address child recruitment and use and support reintegration for Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (CAAFAG)

Addressing the recruitment and use of children by armed groups and supporting their reintegration and recovery requires work across all three of the nexus pillars. SCI Middle East and Eastern Europe (MEEE) Regional Office has developed a framework that complements Save the Children’s Field-Friendly Guidelines on Addressing Child Recruitment and Use by applying a broad programmatic lens that links prevention and response to child recruitment and use with enhanced adolescents’ wellbeing by targeting six wellbeing dimensions (physical and mental health; safety and protection; learning; engagement in social, cultural and civic activity; and transition to work) over a period of at least five years. The framework proposes recommended activities at each level of the MEEE socio-ecological model for adolescents (individual adolescent, family support, engagement of peers and community, institutional systems strengthening and addressing social norms) over four phases - preparedness (at the onset of any conflict), initial humanitarian response, transition to recovery and longer-term reintegration - with an explicit recognition that much of the work at the different levels requires continued, sustained support in order to collectively contribute to a change across all adolescent wellbeing domains.

Save the Children resources:

Prevention and Response to Child Recruitment and Use: A Programming Framework for Adolescents in the Middle East and Eastern Europe region (forthcoming)

Operationalizing the Nexus: How does a Nexus project looks like

This tool, produced by Save the Children Italy, includes guiding questions to help operationalise the nexus following the OECD-DAC recommendation. This guide aims to be a first step towards translating the key propositions of the nexus approach and is part of ongoing efforts to incorporate new thinking and learning from field implementation. The guide is mostly focussed on the humanitarian and development components of the nexus, with limited engagement with the peace pillar.

Political Economy Analysis Guidance (PEA)

Political Economy Analysis can help us understand the political, economic and conflict dynamics of particular situations, how they interact and how actors respond. PEA can help uncover the various

interests and incentives at play and help identify our entry-points for influence and change. Understanding this context enables practitioners to think and work in a politically ‘smart’ way, draw on local expertise and political experience, and promote locally sustainable solutions.

Key resources:

National School of Government International, [The Beginner’s Guide to Political Economy Analysis](#)
Development Leadership Programme, [Everyday Political Analysis](#)

Safe Back to School

The Covid-19 crisis has seen unprecedented disruption to education. More than half a billion children worldwide are still out of school and up to 50 million are at risk of never returning. Save the Children’s Safe Back to School (SB2S) programme aims to support the return of 150 million of the most marginalised and deprived children back into school/learning across more than 60 countries. As a priority for the majority of our country offices, SB2S will provide technical assistance, advocacy support and access to flexible funding for integrated multi-sectoral approaches across the spectrum of nexus contexts. All programmes taking place under SB2S will be guided by rights-based approach principles, strengthening children’s participation, accountability and non-discrimination.

Sahel Strategy 2020-2024

Save the Children’s Sahel Strategy 2020-2024 proposes a holistic response combining coordinated interventions across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Humanitarian action will continue to address spikes of needs and emergencies, development programmes will ensure access to basic services to communities and address chronic fragilities, and peacebuilding activities will aim to prevent conflicts by strengthening good governance and social cohesion. The three actions will happen simultaneously but with different intensity according to the specificities of each location and the intensity of the conflict.

Systems-building approaches to programming

Save the Children seeks to use a systems-building approach in our programming, working with relevant authorities and national civil society partners. Coherently with the nexus approach, in humanitarian settings a systems-building approach must be considered as part of the recovery phase and linking with long-term development goals. We aim to shift from direct delivery to building social protection, child protection, education and health systems in our humanitarian and development programmes. This includes promoting child-centred social accountability when engaging in systems-strengthening efforts.

Save the Children resources:

[Health Systems Strengthening.](#)

[Strengthening Child Protection Systems: Guidance for Country Offices.](#)

SAVE THE CHILDREN'S SECTORS AND THE NEXUS APPROACH

Although the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is still a work in progress for the aid system, there are multiple examples of how Save the Children's sectors are already implementing different elements of this approach in our programmes.

Child protection

Although the Global Protection Cluster had identified working with development actors as a strategic priority, child protection – and protection in general – has received less attention as an area of nexus thinking or implementation. However, this gap is slowly starting to be closed. A shared and joint analysis of protection risks between humanitarian, development and peace actors forms the basis, and is a key enabler, of applying the nexus approach. Understanding and operationalising this shared responsibility ensures that children's protection is most effectively realised. It can lead to a more effective use of resources and sustainable outcomes, and importantly a more comprehensive analysis of the root causes and vulnerabilities for children and their families that influence children's wellbeing and protection. It also has wider reach in terms of accurately identifying local and national capacities, and how child protection systems at different levels can be reinforced and drawn upon. There are weaknesses and threats to be aware of in the context of child protection that speak to some of the general challenges outlined later in the document. However, a more integrated approach can support Save the Children's goal of protecting every child's right to be safe. A good example of work in this area is the Joining Forces for Africa, a three-year project led by a consortium of six NGOs (including SC) in five countries designed with a child protection focus during the COVID-19 crisis but with national and local systems strengthening objectives.

Key resources:

ODI, [Protection and the Nexus](#)

The Alliance, [Nexus and Child Protection](#)

[Joining Forces for Africa](#)

Child Rights Governance

The humanitarian-development-peace nexus agenda is reflected in Save the Children's Child Rights Governance (CRG) programming, with a focus on the systems surrounding aid and development assistance. Successful CRG programmes, in child rights reporting, public investment and social accountability rely on careful analysis of the child rights situation in each context, and necessarily focus on long-term collective outcomes. As a child rights organisation, Save the Children is committed to putting child rights at the centre of all we do, and building responsive governance structures, ensuring adequate resources, and promoting accountable systems play a central role in realising the rights of children in the long term. Although these will take different forms in different settings, the principles apply irrespective of the 'phase' of the crisis.

CRG programming is underpinned by the principles inherent in rights-based approaches, including participation, accountability and non-discrimination. These principles are key to the CRG common approaches, which can be used across the nexus to hold governments accountable for rights violations (Child Rights Reporting), ensure that national resources are allocated appropriately for children's needs (Public Investment in Children), and encourage collaboration with local authorities and service providers to improve quality and access to services (Child-centred Social Accountability). The three

common approaches provide a comprehensive toolkit to strengthen resilience and support localisation through increased accountability, improved collaboration, and well-resourced local & national support structures.

Save the Children resources:

[CRG Common Approaches in Child Rights Reporting \(CRR\)](#)

[Public Investment in Children \(PiC\)](#)

[Child-centred Social Accountability \(CCSA\) \(to be endorsed in early 2021\)](#)

Climate change

Climate change is an intergenerational child rights crisis, the greatest threat to children's survival, learning and protection. We are currently heading towards a global temperature rise of 3 degrees by the end of the century. To meet the 1.5° C scenario of the Paris Agreement, the world needs to reduce emissions by 7.6 per cent each year until 2030. We have less than 10 years to act. Without addressing the climate crisis, the Sustainable Development Goals will not be met in 2030 and the most marginalised and vulnerable children and their families will be particularly impacted. As the biggest independent child rights organization, Save the Children has a unique role in protecting children from the harmful effects of climate change and to help them be the leaders of the climate movement. We need to support children and their families cope with climatic shocks, minimize their impact, and contribute to sustainable development pathways through climate change adaptation particularly in fragile and conflict affected countries. The humanitarian-development-peace nexus could play an instrumental role in building the coordinated and coherent actions that addressing climatic shocks and contributing to sustainable development in fragile and conflict affected countries require.

Key resources:

Save the Children, [Climate Change page on OneNet](#)

UNICEF, [“Unless we act now: the impact of Climate Change on children”](#)

Education

Education is a critical component of acute emergency response, but it is not a short-term intervention, and therefore requires nexus thinking. In protracted or recurrent crises, quality education supports the overarching humanitarian goal of saving lives and protecting the most vulnerable but also contributes to peace, security and sustainable development individually and across communities. Children need continuous access to quality education opportunities to stay safe and learn effectively. Therefore, coherent action between humanitarian-development-peace actors is needed so that children have uninterrupted access to an education that contributes to their wellbeing and enables them to reach their full potential. In a global context where forced displacement is growing and crises are increasingly protracted, it is widely understood that short-term, parallel or transitional education interventions are not adequate to address the needs of children, nor to ensure inclusive and sustainable development progress demanded of governments under the SDGs.

Save the Children works on education across contexts, addressing the nexus in a huge variety of ways in our programming, advocacy and sector coordination. Programming: We seek to work from day one of a crisis to ensure that children do not miss out of education and are protected and able to continue learning. Considering curriculum, accreditation of learning, recognition of teacher professional development and qualifications, and transition from non-formal acute programming into formal medium- to long-term opportunities are programmatic nexus issues our programme teams grapple

with. In terms of coordination, our Cluster Lead Agency role and co-leadership of the Education Cluster in the majority of humanitarian crises means we are well placed to influence coherence between humanitarian and development coordination groups across the programme cycle, from needs assessment and analysis, to strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation. Our prioritization of local civil society leadership and engagement in education coordination also contributes to nexus efforts, advocating for support to institutional capacity strengthening for front-line national/local organisations contributes to addressing humanitarian needs sustainably. Our well-recognized advocacy work has been seeking recognition of the need for long-term, multi-year funding that provides a seamless transition from the humanitarian through the development phase. We advocate with key donors such as ECW and ECHO to ensure immediate response needs are met and multi-year planning bringing in actors across the nexus is prioritized and resourced. Save the Children supported the Government of Uganda to develop the Education Response Plan for refugees and host communities (ERP). SCI established and leads the Uganda Education Consortium (U-EC) to help implement the ERP, which takes a nexus approach, shifting from humanitarian-based education activities towards education services and approaches for both refugee and host community children that are well integrated into the District and National plans of the Ministry of Education.

Key Resources:

ODI & GEC, [Elevating Education in Emergencies: Securing Uninterrupted Learning for Crisis-affected Children Framing Paper](#)

Ministry of Education of Uganda, [the Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda & A call to action from NGOs to the international community and the Uganda Education Response Programme](#)

Health & nutrition

To achieve the goal of ensuring that all young children receive the health and nutrition care and services they require to survive, Save the Children collaborates with a range of actors, including local governments, multilateral institutions, and grassroots organisations. The nexus approach is, therefore, already embedded in Save the Children's health and nutrition agenda. However, even though there has been remarkable progress in reducing child deaths over the last two decades, 16,000 children still die every day of preventable causes such as pneumonia, labour and childbirth complications, diarrhoea, and meningitis, while undernutrition contributes to 45% of all child deaths. New and more integrated ways of working are therefore still required in order to meet the health and nutrition commitments Save the Children has made to reach more children, particularly the most deprived and those in emergency contexts. Stronger and more aligned partnerships across sectors will be increasingly key in addressing the health and nutritional needs of children and their mothers, especially as conflict- and climate-related crises become more intense and protracted.

Save the Children resources: [Health and Nutrition Global Theme](#) & [Policy and Advocacy 2020 Annual Plan](#)

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