

Triple Nexus Implementation and Implications for Durable Solutions for Internal Displacement: On Paper and in Practice

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ABSTRACT

What does or does not work in implementing the humanitarian–development–peace-building (HDP) triple nexus to address protracted and repeated crises? And what implications does this have for durable solutions for the internally displaced? This article seeks to address these questions by, first, highlighting conceptual linkages between the triple nexus and durable solutions for internally displaced persons and, second, analysing emerging effective practices and challenges in nexus implementation to date and their relation to the issue of durable solutions with respect to the centrality of context and communities; national and local ownership; coordination and analysis; and funding. Findings here indicate that there are both conceptual and practical linkages between the triple nexus and durable solutions, with the latter potentially able to help in shaping the collective outcomes of the former, as internal displacement is a hallmark of protracted crises and resolving it involves addressing needs and governance gaps across the nexus.

KEYWORDS: durable solutions, internal displacement, triple nexus, protracted crises, humanitarian–development–peace nexus

1. INTRODUCTION

The links between the humanitarian–development–peacebuilding (HDP) triple nexus and durable solutions for internal displacement seem, on paper at least, to be relatively complementary; how they intersect in practice is only now coming to light. The analysis presented here then detailing these connections and how broader nexus implementation to date has unfolded in relation to solutions for internally displaced

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persons (IDPs) is a new and original contribution to the field of internal displacement.

The HDP triple nexus is the term used to capture the interlinkages between the humanitarian, development, and peace sectors.¹ While concerns related to how humanitarian, development, and peace sectors intersect have existed for a considerable time, the HDP nexus itself as it is now conceptualised results from the agreement at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) that resolving protracted crises requires not only meeting people's immediate humanitarian needs but also reducing risk and vulnerability.² Because instability is a significant driver of vulnerability, the United Nations (UN) Security Council and General Assembly that same year further recognised that development, peace and security, and human rights pillars need to work in an integrated manner to prioritise prevention, address root causes of conflict, and support institutions for sustainable peace and development.³ The triple nexus approach in practice then seeks to transcend the humanitarian–development–peace divide, reinforce national and local systems, and anticipate crises.⁴ Its associated New Ways of Working (NWoW) details how actors involved in designing and implementing individual country plans go about adapting this approach. Specifically, through setting out and working towards (i) collective outcomes (ii) over multi-year timeframes, (iii) based on comparative advantage.⁵

Many of the above conceptual underpinnings of the triple nexus approach are also foundational to durable solutions to internal displacement.⁶ Indeed, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement highlight the imperative to address people's immediate protection and humanitarian needs during displacement while also enshrining the necessity to prevent or mitigate such forced movement in the first place and to ensure non-recurrence through durable solutions,⁷ both of which are predicated on the ability of states to reduce risk and vulnerability. The IASC's Framework on Durable Solutions for Internal Displacement builds on this and details the manner in

- 1 M. Caparini & A. Reagan, "Connecting the Dots on the Triple Nexus", *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)*, 29 Nov. 2019, available at: [https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2019/connecting-dots-triple-nexus#:~:text=The%20concept%20'triple%20nexus'%20is,and%20move%20towards%20sustainable%20peace](https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2019/connecting-dots-triple-nexus#:~:text=The%20concept%20'triple%20nexus'%20is,and%20move%20towards%20sustainable%20peace.). (last visited 5 Jul. 2020).
- 2 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), *World Humanitarian Summit Commitment to Action: Transcending Humanitarian-Development Divides*, Istanbul, IASC, 2016, available at: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/whs_commitment_to_action_-_transcending_humanitarian-development_divides_1.pdf (last visited 1 Jul. 2020).
- 3 See, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016)*, UN Doc. S/RES/2282, 26 Apr. 2016; United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, UN Doc. A/RES/70/262, 12 May 2016.
- 4 Centre on International Cooperation (CIC), *The Triple Nexus in Practice: Toward a New Way of Working in Protracted and Repeated Crises*, New York, CIC, 2019, 1–2.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 R. Duthie, *Contributing to Durable Solutions: Transitional Justice and the Integration and Reintegration of Displaced Persons*, Research Brief, New York, International Centre for Transitional Justice, Jun. 2013, 4; UNGA, *One Humanity: Shared Responsibility. Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit*, UN Doc. A/70/709, 2 Feb. 2016, para 81; W. Kälin & C. Entwisle Chapuisat, *Breaking the Impasse: Reducing Protracted Internal Displacement as a Collective Outcome*, New York/Geneva, OCHA, 2017, 5–6.
- 7 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, 11 Feb. 1998.

which IDPs must be enabled to determine how they seek to sustainably resolve their displacement either through return, local integration, or resettlement and the rights' attainment necessary to do so.⁸ These run the gamut from immediate needs to longer-term citizenship rights which often require more structural, cultural, and institutional change⁹ – and may take years if not decades to fully achieve.¹⁰

More recently, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons' thematic focus and the multi-stakeholder GP20 Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People¹¹ coincide in identifying IDP participation, national laws and policies on internal displacement, data and analysis on internal displacement, and addressing protracted displacement and supporting solutions as priority areas. These priorities also mesh well with those of the triple nexus to transcend sector divides, reinforce national and local systems, and anticipate crises.

Moreover, on the ground, as internal displacement is a hallmark of emerging and protracted crises,¹² the pursuit of durable solutions will invariably intersect with the implementation of the HDP nexus approach. Yet how well they are integrated in practice remains to be seen, as it is still too early in the process of HDP nexus implementation to fully evaluate outcomes. However, drawing on the few, recent, larger-scale assessments of the operationalisation of the HDP nexus to date, it is possible to identify certain apparently effective practices and other issues to take into account when focusing on, coordinating, and tracking durable solutions under this rubric.

2. HDP NEXUS IN PRACTICE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR DURABLE SOLUTIONS

One of the main findings from reviews of HDP nexus implementation is that, while still slow, there does seem to be progress and uptake of this new way of working among national governments, the UN, and donors, particularly when compared to other attempts to integrate these distinct sectors (e.g. Disaster Risk Reduction, Linking Relief Rehabilitation, and Development, and the Resilience Agenda, among others).¹³ In part, this is due to the fact that this new iteration moves beyond merely programmatic or conceptual approaches to promoting more concrete structural shifts

8 IASC, *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, Washington, D.C., Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 2010.

9 Duthie, *Contributing to Durable Solutions*, 4; Kälin & Entwisle, *Breaking the Impasse*, 44–45; R. Guiu & N. Siddiqui, *Cities as a Refuge, Cities as a Home: The Relationship between Place and Perceptions of Integration Among Urban Displaced Populations in Iraq*, Background Paper to the *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019*, Geneva, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), May 2019, 18.

10 E. Ferris & N.M. Birkeland, "Local Integration of IDPs in Protracted Displacement: Some Observations", in E. Ferris (ed.), *Resolving Internal Displacement: Prospects for Local Integration*, Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution-London School of Economics Project on Internal Displacement, 2011, 6.

11 GP20, *20th Anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: A Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018-2020*, Geneva, Global Protection Cluster, 23 May 2018, available at: https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/20180523-gp20-plan-of-action-final.pdf (last visited 1 Jul. 2020).

12 IDMC, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019*, Geneva, IDMC, May 2019, vi.

13 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 26; E. Fanning & J. Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What does It Mean for Multi-Mandated Organisations?*, Discussion Paper, Oxford, Oxfam, Jul. 2019, 3; L. Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Lessons Learned from*

across the aid system.¹⁴ Findings around context, national (and local) ownership, coordination and analysis, and funding will be detailed below along with implications for durable solutions to internal displacement, particularly in relation to IDP participation, national and local policies, data, and promoting solutions.

2.1. Centrality of context and communities

First and foremost, any HDP nexus approach must resonate with the dynamics of the situation on the ground, based on an analysis of the social, economic, cultural and political context.¹⁵ Thus, nexus priorities, configuration, and financing will invariably be different not only due to the specificities of a given context, but also depending on when and why engagement starts (e.g. during conflict, post-conflict, contexts which are fragile but have not experienced recent conflict, during disaster, after disaster, etc.) in the first place and how these dynamics evolve over time. While regular coordination across sectors is needed if actors are working towards collective outcomes per the triple nexus NWoW, the predominance or role of a certain sector during a given response may change, and may change often, as the context does. For example, within a conflict setting, humanitarian and peace actors may come to the fore in terms of intervention and coordination and as the context shifts towards a post-conflict environment, development actors may then begin to play a larger role as humanitarian actors step back within this approach. This may not always follow a linear trajectory. Despite this, most international agency plans and programmes lack clear transition or responsible disengagement strategies that take these ebbs and flows into account.¹⁶ Nigeria, Somalia, and Democratic Republic of Congo are exceptions in part because their general instability and security conditions limited the scope of areas to access safely, particularly for development actors, thus enabling greater coordination between humanitarian and development actors.¹⁷ These examples seem to indicate that more constrained and contained environments in a sense force collaboration since different actors must rely on one another more closely to carry out their respective work.

Such crisis contexts also tend to be defined by situations of protracted internal displacement. Commonly observed features of protracted internal displacement in these contexts include: the politicisation of solutions and substantial barriers to them, multiple waves and patterns of displacement, increasing neglect of IDPs, changing needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs over time, different intentions and preferences of IDPs for how to resolve their displacement, and their invisibility in urban areas.¹⁸ While the implications of the diverse geographies of displacement (i.e. urban

Colombia, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and Turkey, Geneva, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2019, 18.

14 Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 3.

15 Red Cross EU Office and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *The European Union Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, Position Paper, Brussels, Red Cross EU Office and ICRC, Dec. 2018, 8.

16 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 21.

17 *Ibid.*, 28.

18 A. Bilak et al., *Global Overview 2015: People Internally Displaced by Conflict and Violence*, Geneva, IDMC, May 2015, 64–69.

versus rural and camp versus non-camp settings) require further investigation,¹⁹ it remains fair to say that IDPs often face hostile environments in both their places of origin and during displacement.²⁰ These environments may also affect hosting communities as well given some of their more structural elements, including high levels of poverty, weak institutional functioning and pervasive security risks, among others.²¹

Indeed, the protracted nature of these displacement situations may reflect more fundamental “crises of citizenship”²² due to the continued marginalisation of IDPs. In particular, the inability of IDPs to secure even basic protection of their human rights, including economic, social, and cultural rights,²³ ends up preventing or severely limiting their expression of equal citizenship in relation to their hosting communities. The exercise of such citizenship is at the heart of progress towards durable solutions, be it return, local integration, or resettlement. This expression also spans HDP nexus aims. In particular, meeting people’s needs, mitigating vulnerabilities, and moving towards sustainable peace,²⁴ while in displacement contexts also ensuring no one is left behind,²⁵ entail at their core securing the recognition and protection of rights for all.

As such, both the HDP nexus and the IDP durable solutions framework rightly emphasise the need to place the experiences of local people and communities at the centre of their planning and interventions. As a result, a detailed understanding of how these stakeholders conceive of their circumstances and navigate them, as well as their own goals and aspirations, is intrinsic to any contextualised approach, including goal-setting and outcomes.²⁶ This entails better delineating how both displaced and hosting communities view themselves in context,²⁷ capturing their perceptions of what legitimacy means with respect to governance and different levels of state and non-state authority,²⁸ grasping and addressing linguistic barriers,²⁹ and uncovering

- 19 R. Davis et al., *Comparing the Experiences of Internally Displaced Persons in Urban vs. Rural Areas: Findings from a Longitudinal Study in Iraq, 2015-2017*, Background Paper to the *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019*, Geneva, IDMC, May 2019.
- 20 International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Returns Working Group (RWG), & Social Inquiry, *Reasons to Remain: Categorising Protracted Displacement in Iraq*, Erbil, IOM, Nov. 2018, 2.
- 21 Guiu & Siddiqui, *Cities as a Refuge, Cities as a Home*, 18; Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) and Social Inquiry, *Communities of Return: Physical and Social Drivers of Human Mobility*, Gazientep, HNAP, Jul. 2020, 7.
- 22 K. Long, *Permanent Crisis? Unlocking the Protracted Displacement of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons*, Policy Paper, Oxford, Refugees Studies Centre, IDMC, Norwegian Refugee Council, and Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oct. 2011, 6.
- 23 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, “Expert Seminar on Protracted IDP Situations”, Geneva, UNHCR, 21–22 Jun. 2007, 3.
- 24 Caparini & Reagan, “Connecting the Dots on the Triple Nexus”.
- 25 UNGA, *One Humanity*, paras 80–84.
- 26 D. MacGuire, “The Relationship Between National Normative Frameworks on Internal Displacement and the Reduction of Displacement”, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 30(2), 2018, 269–286; Red Cross EU Office and ICRC, *The European Union Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, 8.
- 27 IOM, RWG, & Social Inquiry, *Reasons to Remain (Part 2): Determinants of IDP Integration into Host Communities in Iraq*, Erbil, IOM, 2019, 8.
- 28 Z.A. Saleem & J.M. Skelton, *Mosul and Basra after the Protests: The Roots of Government Failure and Popular Discontent*, Institute of Regional and International Studies (IRIS) Working Paper, Sulaimani, American University of Iraq Sulaimani, Jul. 2019, 3.
- 29 E. Kemp, “Language and the Guiding Principles”, *Forced Migration Review*, 59, 2018, 17–20.

what if any international or national assistance they do receive.³⁰ Understanding these realities from the ‘bottom-up’ brings IDPs’ knowledge to the fore and may help to address certain operational and technical challenges in implementing the HDP nexus approach in contexts of internal displacement.³¹

2.2. National and local ownership

One of the most important early findings related to operationalising the HDP nexus is that government leadership is a critical factor for success, whether or not state systems and infrastructure are used in the short-term for implementation.³² Often this means that national governments have adopted (or should adopt) dedicated laws to deal with protracted humanitarian crises as well as consider including humanitarian crises and conflict drivers into national development or peace planning and analysis.³³ Furthermore, linking humanitarian assistance with the national welfare state, either by coupling aid to it or through building its capacity, is also critical in helping connect humanitarian, development, and social protection components over time.³⁴ The emphasis here is not on reinventing the wheel but building on existing resources in order to reinforce capacities and resilience at national and local levels. Much of how well this works in terms of the inclusion of vulnerable populations, however, is predicated on the degree of understanding and commitment governments have to humanitarian principles and human rights-based approaches³⁵ – a condition that varies by contexts and authorities, many of whom may be complicit in, if not the outright causes of, the fragility being addressed.³⁶ It may be necessary then to further understand formal and informal bureaucracies of the state to better identify actors who could constructively engage in such transformational processes at all levels.³⁷

What these findings confirm with respect to resolving internal displacement is that national and local policies or including internal displacement and durable solutions may be key to ensuring IDPs and solutions are embedded into integrated HDP nexus planning and interventions.³⁸ Having such policies in place, particularly when based on the Guiding Principles, helps in limiting the arbitrary provision of assistance to those displaced based on agency mandate rather than appropriate need and approach.³⁹ National IDP laws in Colombia and Ukraine and specific national and sub-national plans and policies in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo are some examples of this specific focus on displacement in

30 G. Nguya, “Livelihood Strategies of Internally Displaced Persons in Urban Eastern DRC”, PhD dissertation, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2019; J. Bryant, *The Humanitarian Response in Iraq: Support Beyond International Assistance in Mosul*, Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper, London, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Jul. 2019.

31 Nguya, “Livelihood Strategies”.

32 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, xii.

33 *Ibid.*, 5–6; Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 22.

34 *Ibid.*, 9–12.

35 *Ibid.*, 69.

36 R. Mansour & P. Salisbury, *Between Order and Chaos: A New Approach to Stalled State Transformation in Iraq and Yemen*, Research Paper, London, Chatham House, Sep. 2019, 4.

37 *Ibid.*

38 IDMC, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020*, Geneva, IDMC, Apr. 2020, 72–73.

39 Kälin & Entwisle Chapuisat, *Breaking the Impasse*, 77.

contexts that have humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding needs. Even with enactment of laws and policies, however, adherence to the Guiding Principles and IASC Framework with respect to who states do and do not define as IDPs, what they consider durable solutions to be, and how well prevent or non-recurrence of displacement is connected to more structural reforms, is variable across contexts.⁴⁰ Regular and consistent engagement of national and subnational authorities by nexus actors may help in ensuring better legislation and implementation,⁴¹ as would inclusion of displaced populations in these processes.⁴² A successful example of this type of engagement in reframing national priorities and legislation to align with the Guiding Principles and IASC Framework can be found in Somalia. Aided by consistent engagement and advocacy of various humanitarian and development organisations, the government shifted its thinking (and related policies) away from return as the only option for durable solutions and instead began to recognise local integration as not only a viable solution but also IDPs' preferred option in many cases.⁴³ The government launched a Durable Solutions Initiative in 2016, which it leads, and a regional durable solutions secretariat led by civil society to put its new policy angle into practice.⁴⁴

2.3. Coordination and analysis

With respect to coordination, key recommendations around HDP nexus implementation emphasise the need to clarify roles and responsibilities between UN agencies to know who sets policy guidelines and who is designated for providing technical guidance to UN presences in the country.⁴⁵ It is also important for governments to understand nexus implementation and coordination within their own operations at national and subnational levels and for all involved to know who their counterparts are. A suggested best practice in this regard is for the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration to prioritise establishing a coherent UN-led planning discussion with governments as the standard approach to avoid duplication of plans, programmes, and funding instruments at the country level; this would also ensure more accountability for nexus implementation.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the nexus requires UN country leadership not only to have multidisciplinary backgrounds to further bridge silos but have access to advisors with specific expertise in different aspects of nexus implementation, including development and peacebuilding.⁴⁷ Finally, there is a need to ensure that collective outcomes are strategic, specific, and developed in a more inclusive manner, with indicators monitored across humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding dimensions and

40 MacGuire, "The Relationship Between National Normative Frameworks".

41 IDMC, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020*, 70–73.

42 MacGuire, "The Relationship Between National Normative Frameworks", 285.

43 IDMC, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020*, 70.

44 *Ibid.*

45 Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 23.

46 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 71.

47 *Ibid.*, 72; Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 22.

complemented through context monitoring tools.⁴⁸ These should be pegged to broader governance indicators.

The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework is perhaps where nexus programming is most advanced, as in Lebanon or Chad, though it is not specifically coordinated with other nexus initiatives and runs in parallel to the NWoW.⁴⁹ Thus, while responses pertaining to refugees is well connected through its own nexus approach, they tend to operate separately from wider country strategies in terms of overall nexus coordination and NWoW. Resolution of internal displacement may be difficult to delink from broader national plans given that IDPs are within their own countries and durable solutions are often contingent on broader reforms therein. This being said, durable solutions may help in providing a framework within which the HDP nexus can be organised into more cohesive, less duplicative, and more proactive plans, depending on context.

In some cases, durable solutions seem to be folded into broader country plans. In Somalia, for example, several working groups under the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility have been created focusing on HDP nexus-related issues, including one for durable solutions for IDPs.⁵⁰ In other cases, the triple nexus may be significantly and specifically oriented around resolving internal displacement. This appears to be the situation in Iraq given that the most recent UN intervention in the country stemmed from the displacement crisis ensuing from the ISIL conflict with national and subnational authorities having developed departments and policies over time linked to internal displacement, its resolution, and coordination which engage with humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, and crisis response aspects.⁵¹ Given this, UN coordination also has numerous mechanisms that span nexus components, including relatively recently established peacebuilding working and coordination groups, and that simultaneously and specifically link to durable solutions in which national and subnational authorities also participate.⁵² These mechanisms came into place over time and despite relatively proactive government and international engagement as well as data, analysis, and reporting on displacement and obstacles to durable solutions that flag issues connected to nexus domains, initiatives are still not yet sufficiently connected and lack a consolidated strategic approach to humanitarian, development, and peace work.⁵³

Some of the gaps in connecting and consolidating approaches found in Iraq and elsewhere relate to who “owns” what parts of a given response⁵⁴ as well as a lack of

48 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 45–47; Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, vi; Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 14.

49 Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 20.

50 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 30.

51 United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons on her visit to Iraq*, UN Doc. A/HRC/44/41/Add.1, 13 May 2020, paras. 6 and 12–17.

52 This includes the Humanitarian Cluster system, Returns Working Group as well as both a Peace and Reconciliation Working Group and Coordination Group, country-level Durable Solutions Working Group, subnational Governorate Return Committees, and a Special Advisor for Durable Solutions within the Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator’s Office, among others.

53 *Ibid.*, para. 69.

54 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, x.

clarity on definitions and how certain pieces fit together, particularly as they involve more sensitive or political context dynamics, such as obstacles to durable solutions. This holds especially true for the peace component of the nexus in general. The character of what peace and peacebuilding are and whether it is appropriate to link them into the nexus remains a sticking point.⁵⁵ While the need to include displacement-affected communities in peacebuilding initiatives is imperative for achieving durable solutions,⁵⁶ what this entails on the ground often depends on the actors tasked with it. There seems to be some polarisation around what the best approach to take is from community-based, transformative processes to more state-centric ones.⁵⁷ The reality is that some combination of the two is likely necessary over time to achieve durable outcomes as:

Grassroots-level, locally-led coexistence activities may indeed be best positioned to make a concrete contribution to opening up durable solutions. However, an exclusive focus on interpersonal or local-level reconciliation may side-line important questions about political reconciliation and how trust may be fostered between displaced populations and the state institutions complicit in their abuse.⁵⁸

This gets even murkier when an ill-defined understanding of the peace component of the nexus intersects with security issues and yet another vaguely defined and poorly understood concept on the ground: stabilisation. While the UN does not have a specific definition for stabilisation,⁵⁹ it is nominally a “combination of civilian and military approaches with a focus on re-establishing state authority [...] this includes provision of ‘legitimate’ state authority, institution-building, and delivery of key state services. It is supported by the use of military force, bordering on counter-insurgency, and predominantly aimed against non-state actors.”⁶⁰ Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Iraq, for example, have substantial internal displacement and have a stabilisation component engaged in some form of early peacebuilding or social cohesion included within their broader UN country missions. Such configurations have allowed for the separation of humanitarian space from, for example, military elements linked to counter-insurgency or counterterrorism, and at the same time enabled, among others, larger-scale reconstruction to take place. They have also generated conceptual confusion that hindered coordination, diverted funds and

55 L. Redvers & B. Parker, “Searching for the Nexus: Give Peace a Chance”, *The New Humanitarian*, 13 May 2020, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2020/05/13/triple-nexus-peace-development-security-humanitarian-policy> (last visited 1 Jul. 2020).

56 P. Vernon, S. O’Callaghan & K. Holloway, *Achieving Durable Solutions by Including Displacement-Affected Communities in Peacebuilding*, HPG Policy Brief 77, London, ODI, May 2020.

57 Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 37.

58 M. Bradley, *Displacement, Transitional Justice and Reconciliation: Assumptions, Challenges and Lessons*, Forced Migration Policy Briefing 9, Oxford, Refugee Studies Centre, Apr. 2012, 10.

59 A. Gorur, *Defining the Boundaries of UN Stabilisation Missions*, Washington, D.C., Stimpson Center, Dec. 2016, 9.

60 D. Curran & P. Holtom, “Resonating, Rejecting, Reinterpreting: Mapping the Stabilisation Discourse in the United Nations Security Council, 2000-14”, *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 4(1), 2015, 4.

programmes intended for peacebuilding elsewhere, and required partnerships with host governments engaged in conflict that may be viewed by some as limiting the UN's impartiality and shrinking the political space for broader participation and inclusive and transformative peacebuilding.⁶¹ In this view, stability is not the result of an overall transformation, but rather the precondition for it.⁶²

Internal displacement is entwined with stabilisation in Iraq as the number of IDP returns is one of the main benchmark indicators for its success.⁶³ An approach like this, while aligned with government priority, does not necessarily take into account what the displaced themselves wish to do. Furthermore, it overlooks the political, social, security, and economic landscape and manner in which IDP returns occur, to say nothing of the political nature of many of the obstacles faced by IDPs in returning.⁶⁴ Its segmented nature has meant that some of the most vulnerable IDPs whose continued displacement links to these entrenched dynamics have had more limited access to durable solutions for longer as the strategy did not enable better linkages to address them earlier.⁶⁵ The concern in not addressing such issues more quickly where possible is that it may contribute to or reinforce a single narrative of the conflict and its aftermath, producing a “victor’s justice” that entrenches long-standing grievances rather than seeking to resolve them.⁶⁶

This underscores the notion that stabilisation policy in its current iterations focuses on strengthening governments, without necessarily addressing governance, aiming efforts at helping governments cope with rather than ultimately resolve crises.⁶⁷ And, furthermore, puts it seemingly at odds with the transformational agendas⁶⁸ of UN peacebuilding, the triple nexus, and durable solutions in which they are increasingly embedded. The fact that while stabilisation has gained traction in UN parlance, UN policy towards peacebuilding seems to effectively ignore that

- 61 D. Curran & C.T. Hunt, “Stabilisation at the Expense of Peacebuilding in UN Peacekeeping Operations: More Than Just a Phase?”, *Global Governance*, 26, 2020, 48.
- 62 R. Belloni & I. Constantini, “From Liberal Statebuilding to Counterinsurgency and Stabilisation: The International Intervention in Iraq”, *Ethnopolitics*, 18(5), 2019, 519.
- 63 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Funding Facility for Stabilisation Annual Report 2016*, Baghdad, UNDP, 2016, 14. This also held true in Colombia where the government long saw returns as a political metric for its success in winning the war against non-state armed groups in rural areas, see B. Burson & D.J. Cantor (eds.), *Returns of Internally Displaced Persons in Armed Conflict: International Law and Its Application in Colombia*, Leiden, Brill|Nijhoff, 2018.
- 64 M. Bradley, “Durable Solutions and the Right of Return for IDPs: Evolving Interpretations”, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 30(2), 218–242; Belloni & Constantini, “From Liberal Statebuilding to Counterinsurgency and Stabilisation”, 519; B. Wille, “Iraq: Not a Homecoming”, *Human Rights Watch*, 14 Jun. 2019, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/06/14/iraq-not-homecoming#> (last visited 1 Jul. 2020); IOM, RWG, & Social Inquiry, *The Growing Role of Reconciliation in Return Movements: Snapshots from the Return Index*, Return Index Thematic Briefing Series 2, Erbil, IOM, Nov. 2019.
- 65 IOM, RWG, & Social Inquiry, *Reasons to Remain*, 22; HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur*, para. 69.
- 66 See, for example, Human Rights Watch, “Iraq: Impartial Justice Needed: New UN Investigation on ISIS Has Limited Mandate”, *Human Rights Watch*, 31 May 2018, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/31/iraq-impartial-justice-effort-needed> (last visited 5 Jul. 2020); M. Revkin, “Iraq’s Harsh Approach to Punishing Islamic State ‘Collaborators’ Stands to Have Counterproductive Consequences”, *Lawfare*, 11 Jun. 2018, available at: <https://www.lawfareblog.com/iraqs-harsh-approach-punishing-islamic-state-collaborators-stands-have-counterproductive> (last visited 5 Jul. 2020).
- 67 Belloni & Constantini, “From Liberal Statebuilding to Counterinsurgency and Stabilisation”, 518; Curran & Hunt, “Stabilisation at the Expense of Peacebuilding in UN Peacekeeping Operations”, 59.
- 68 Curran & Hunt, “Stabilisation at the Expense of Peacebuilding in UN Peacekeeping Operations”, 60.

stabilisation has become an activity that extends beyond the point when violent conflict has abated, and a deployment zone is said to be stabilised⁶⁹ may in part account for this mismatch of aims.

Thus, greater introspection among actors in each of the nexus domains (humanitarian, development, peace), on defining and improving on their concepts, mandates, and transitions, may be a necessary prerequisite⁷⁰ to further untangle how these pieces intersect, among themselves and with stabilisation and security actors, if the aim of the nexus operationalisation to establish unified, cohesive, and less linearly sequenced contextualised plans is to carry forward. Durable solutions themselves may be one way to help in supporting this, as it can be a cross-cutting framework for nexus components with increasingly better-delineated indicators to potentially collectively measure against.

As such, the increasing body of research exploring and contextualising the IASC Framework criteria on durable solutions taken together with in-depth context analysis and monitoring may be a way to contribute to more strategic and specific outcomes, which have links to humanitarian, development, and peace work while also ensuring resolving displacement is better incentivised.⁷¹ Development of global indicators for tracking durable solutions; inclusion and testing of objective and subjective measures on resolution of displacement; efforts at understanding which material and social factors influence return, integration, and/or their sustainability through indicator collection and statistical modelling; comparative analysis of displaced and hosting populations; and longitudinal, panel data studies examining durable solutions, decision-making, and the end of displacement,⁷² among others, are useful methodological and analytical frameworks to take into account to help collectively define what types of goals and priorities to set within nexus implementation (as well as how to measure progress against them), driven by displaced and hosting community views and experiences in a given context.

Many of these endeavours, however, are collected at the operational level (and not always in a coordinated or systematic manner),⁷³ rather than by national or sub-national authorities who may lack capacity or interest to collect robust internal displacement data. The International Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics have

69 *Ibid.*, 54.

70 E. Tronc, R. Grace & A. Nahikian, *Realities and Myths of the "Triple Nexus": Local Perspectives on Peacebuilding, Development, and Humanitarian Action in Mali*, Humanitarian Action at the Frontlines: Field Analysis Series, Cambridge, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Jun. 2019, 29.

71 IDMC, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020*, 80–86.

72 See, for example, The Interagency Durable Solutions Indicator Library, available at: <http://inform-durable-solutions-idp.org/indicators/> (last visited 21 Sep. 2020); Samuel Hall, *The Multi-Dimensional Integration Index: Pilot Results*, Kabul, Samuel Hall, 2017; R. Guiu & N. Siddiqui, *Why Has Nobody Come Back Here? Monitoring Physical and Social Conditions in Places of Origin to Understand IDP Return Patterns in Iraq*, Background Paper to the *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020*, Geneva, IDMC, Apr. 2020; HNAP & Social Inquiry, *Communities of Return*; Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS), *Progress Towards Durable Solutions in Abu Shouk and El Salam IDP Camps North Darfur, Sudan*, Geneva, JIPS, 2019; L. Rossi et al., "Iraqi IDPs Access to Durable Solutions: Results of Two Rounds of a Longitudinal Study", *International Migration*, 57(2), 2019, 48–64; Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS), *Annual Aspirations Survey to Inform Durable Solutions Programming*, ReDSS Factsheet, available at: <https://regionaldss.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ReDSS-1-pager-annual-aspirations-survey.pdf>.

73 Kälın & Entwisle Chapuisat, *Breaking the Impasse*, 66.

released statistical categories and recommendations for frameworks for IDPs, to encourage broader participation of IDP data collection, particularly from national statistical commissions, in this regard.⁷⁴ Regional efforts are also underway to aggregate data for decision-makers' use.⁷⁵ Linked to this, an important component that is often underfunded and overlooked is better support to policy analysis and recommendations in general within nexus implementation.⁷⁶ Given the growing plethora of data on durable solutions that can and is being collected at the ground level, it is also necessary to be able to connect this to national or local policies through both technical assistance and robust advocacy. This includes harmonising operational and official displacement data in order to develop relevant guidance, improve policies, and again better shape broader indicators, collective outcomes, and track progress against them.

Furthermore, perceptions surveys among affected populations across numerous dimensions (e.g. governance, rule of law, security, well-being, etc.) over time as well as more in-depth context and conflict analysis also contribute to better understanding of dynamics on the ground as they evolve due to changes in context as well as interventions by authorities, civil society, and international stakeholders,⁷⁷ including efforts towards durable solutions.

2.4. Funding

Changes in funding structures can further incentivise and bolster accountability with respect to HDP nexus implementation. To move in this direction, flexible, multi-year, country-level pooled funding should be considered as a means to further break down sector-based silos.⁷⁸ Multi-Partner Trust Funds could base disbursement on HDP nexus analyses and performance to incentivise nexus synergies through programming and strengthening of institutional capacity,⁷⁹ including local and national authorities and legitimate non-state actors.⁸⁰ It is imperative to also pass on multi-year funding to NGOs with clear guidelines as well to move beyond a programmatic approach to a strategic one.⁸¹ In addition, clear guidance under the conditions and circumstances under which funding can be provided to different recipients while respecting humanitarian principles should be created.⁸² This recommendation for guidance highlights the complexity of preventing the politicisation of aid and may be an attempt to address concerns of those humanitarian actors who advise against pooled funds for precisely this reason.⁸³

74 MacGuire, "The Relationship Between National Normative Frameworks", 289.

75 IDMC, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020*, 85.

76 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 50.

77 For example, United States Institute of Peace, Conflict and Stabilisation Monitoring Framework, available at: <https://www.usip.org/programs/conflict-and-stabilization-monitoring-framework> (last visited 5 Jul. 2020).

78 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 50; Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 22–23; Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 40.

79 Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, vi.

80 Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 15.

81 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 75.

82 *Ibid.*, xiv.

83 Red Cross EU Office & ICRC, *The European Union Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, 9.

The hope for adaptations in funding is to alleviate gaps wherein countries affected by crises often receive significantly less development funding than they would without the crisis; address national government concerns over cost-shifting; help in removing silos across sectors; mitigate donors circumventing national plans; and increase funding and investment to peace, among others.⁸⁴

While donors are beginning to adapt, on the ground, little has changed as yet.⁸⁵ Furthermore, when donor funds to UN agencies are longer-term and unearmarked, they are often not passed on to local, national, or international NGOs. This is also a concern for World Bank managed funds.⁸⁶ Country-based pooled funds are better in this latter regard; however, they still mostly fund relatively short-term projects.⁸⁷ Potential reasons for limited change on the ground to date may relate to the following challenges: difficulties in reconciling humanitarian and development funding cycles;⁸⁸ institutional silos within donor governments and rigid classification within the aid system;⁸⁹ geographic separations between humanitarian and development financing;⁹⁰ and donor funding that is still strongly organised around the humanitarian–development divide,⁹¹ with less focus on peacebuilding. All of this has implications for solutions to internal displacement because they require both top-down and bottom-up approaches, occur over a spectrum of time, and necessitate often non-linear and sometimes simultaneous sequencing of humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding interventions.⁹²

Another broader concern about financing the nexus links to the inclusion of security spending, concentrating or trapping resources to one side of a conflict, and/or forcing plans to align with donor foreign policy – all of which compromise humanitarian principles.⁹³ This also, as noted above, can create additional impediments for the implementation of inclusive, rights-based, and IDP-driven approaches to durable solutions.

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Taken altogether, there are both conceptual and practical linkages between the HDP nexus approach and durable solutions, with the latter potentially able to help in shaping the former, as resolving displacement involves addressing needs and governance

84 Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*; CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*.

85 Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 16.

86 *Ibid.*, 17.

87 *Ibid.*, 16.

88 European Commission, *Lives in Dignity: From Aid-dependence to Self-reliance*, COM(2016) 234, 26 Apr. 2016, 5.

89 CIC, *The Triple Nexus in Practice*, 50

90 *Ibid.*

91 W. Kálin, *Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons: An Essential Dimension of Peacebuilding*, Report, Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution, Aug. 2008, available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/durable-solutions-for-internally-displaced-persons-an-essential-dimension-of-peacebuilding/> (last visited 2 Sep. 2020).

92 Perret, *Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 1.

93 Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 18.

gaps across the nexus. In outlining the best practices documented so far in HDP nexus implementation, four main points are relevant to bear in mind which have implications for durable solutions.

First, that any response or plan must be based on context and an understanding of communities' experience. No two contexts are identical and approaches for nexus implementation and indeed durable solutions may not be linear or sequential but will vary depending on circumstances on the ground and government functioning. On this latter aspect, communities' views on what constitutes legitimacy in terms of governance and with different levels of state and non-state authority are critical.

This is important because the second point to bear in mind with both HDP nexus implementation and durable solutions is that national or subnational authority engagement helps drive any process. However, this is also dependent on how well authorities adhere to humanitarian principles and guidance for IDPs, particularly if certain actors are seen as part of the reason for fragility in the first place. Incentivising adherence as well as in-depth analysis and understanding of who transformational actors are within formal and informal bureaucracies is necessary.

Thirdly, while the HDP nexus inherently must be contextualised, there is also a need for a more standardised approach to developing country plans, for example, through a coherent UN-led planning discussion with governments; for more clarity in roles and responsibilities between agencies to know who sets overarching nexus policy guidelines and who is designated for providing technical guidance to UN presences in the country; and for UN country leadership not only to have multi-disciplinary but also to have access to advisors with specific expertise as well. These elements would also help in enabling greater reflection among nexus actors as well in defining and improving upon their own definitions, mandates, and interactions, particularly in light of intersections with stabilisation. This impacts the manner in which displacement is resolved (if at all).

At the same time, because durable solutions are cross-cutting and have increasingly delineated indicators, they can help in shaping collective outcomes to be more specific and strategic, which may also better support nexus linkages and conceptualisation. The need for harmonisation of operational and government data, and robust policy analysis and advocacy are also critical to ensuring uptake of adherence to Guiding Principles throughout.

Finally, flexible, longer-term funding is necessary both for nexus implementation and for durable solutions. While there seems to be a general consensus about this, change in this regard is also relatively slow. Of importance is the need to include different actors into these processes, including civil society and NGOs. The issues linked to the role security and foreign policy objectives play in funding as new donors are making themselves available to certain nexus domains will also need to be further addressed given the risk of compromising humanitarian principles and, indeed, rights-based approaches to resolving displacement.

While there remain both operational and conceptual concerns with regard to the triple nexus approach, progress is occurring in its implementation through adaptations at the country level and within the UN and donor community. At this juncture,

internal displacement and durable solutions are becoming more integral aspects of nexus implementation as internal displacement is a common feature of the protracted crises that the nexus approach is targeted for. Given the ongoing efforts to better define, document, and measure displacement and solutions, they may also be critical aspects to help flesh out how to improve nexus linkages and progress.