

Accelerating food systems resilience in protracted crises: emerging lessons for a new aid architecture

Independent Dialogue for the Food Systems Summit - Meeting report

On 1 July NFP, FAO, and WUR-CDI organized an Independent Dialogue for the Food Systems Summit. The Dialogue brought together a community of practice from the FAO and WCDI-led FNS REPRO programme in the Horn of Africa and a community of practice facilitated by NFP, to exchange on and engage with the emerging Coalition on Conflict & Hunger of the Food Systems Summit.

Based on a learning trajectory, paper and game-changing solution the meeting examined if and how the aid architecture needs to change to address hunger in protracted crises, to identify concrete actions to come to more aligned and localized Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus interventions through a common understanding of food systems in protracted crises, and take more evidence-based, adaptive approaches.

The dialogue had three objectives:

1. Contribute to the Food Systems Summit process
2. Recommend key actions for the emerging Action Track 5 (proto-)coalition on Conflict & Hunger to take up
3. Finalize the draft paper on food systems resilience based on meeting inputs

The Dialogue built on previous actions of the group...

FAO, WUR-CDI and NFP submitted a Game Changing Solution (GCS) to Food Systems Summit Action Track 5 (FSS AT5), which was accepted and now part of the Conflict & Hunger/HDP nexus working group solution cluster. The GCS is called 'FNS-REPRO - Building Food System Resilience in Protracted Crisis/Fragile Settings' and argues that a food systems resilience approach should be operationalized specifically for protracted crises. This call to operationalize food systems resilience stems from a [regional learning exchange](#) organized by FNS-REPRO and NFP in November 2020 ([read the detailed meeting report here](#)). At the exchange practitioners, researchers, policymakers discussed what the added value of a food systems resilience approach could be to challenges in local resilience programming by looking at the REPRO case, and cases of CARE, Cordaid and ZOA in the REPRO focus countries (Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan).

At the November 2020 exchange, the objectives of the FSS AT5 were validated. Participants however found that the added value of food systems resilience as a concept and approach is not clear when examined from a local programming perspective. Participants found that much of current resilience programming in protracted crises could be seen as working towards elements of food systems resilience. The meeting concluded that for the concept of food systems resilience to add value in local contexts it should address the practical challenges currently faced by resilience programming in protracted crises. On the one hand this means that a food systems resilience approach still needs to be further operationalized, and in doing so can build on good practices from current resilience programming. On the other hand this means that it is precisely on these remaining challenges where the concept and approach of food systems resilience proves its added value.

To understand the added value of Food Systems Resilience and operationalize it

Building on the above conclusions a (draft) paper was produced, which identifies three key aspects of food systems resilience as an approach:

- Firstly, by bridging the timeline cycle of relief, recovery, resilience and development. Addressing the awareness that humanitarian assistance is not a solution to ending food crises.
- Secondly, by taking a food systems perspective – based on an understanding that issues cannot be dealt with in isolation and solutions for programming lie in cross-cutting humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) approaches that respond to dynamics of food system behaviour.

- Thirdly, by building on the increasing centrality of perceptions and existing resilience capacities of local communities and actors. Analyzing a food system and its resilience capacities together with local communities tends to break through aid siloes based on predefined policy objectives. While local actors are best placed to understand the interaction between emerging food systems dynamics and resilience capacities.

On some of these issues the food systems resilience programme FNS-REPRO already shows some emerging lessons. For instance, to take a (food) systems perspective in protracted crises, it is very important to have an adaptive, evidence-based approach. Yet it can be difficult to include partners in the necessary learning process, due to time pressures for delivering more 'pressing' tasks in programming. Similarly, to adapt a programme based on learning a donor that allows flexibility is required, which is not yet common, making coordination with partners on this more difficult. Also, to take a systems approach is it very important to get the right local actors on board, to benefit from their insights into the context and networks with local actors. Which, in the HDP space, is often limited by contracting modalities that focus on competition – rewarding the lowest bidder for pre-designed inputs and product packages.

Based on these and other insights the paper has three main recommendations:

- 1) Committing to the Grand Bargain localization agenda,
- 2) Reviewing funding strategies that balance flexibility and accountability for evidence-based HDP nexus/food systems programming that is co-created with local actors,
- 3) Developing a common framework for building food systems resilience in protracted crises for HDP actors.

Now the group engages the FSS Conflict & Hunger / HDP nexus Coalition...

Through the complex process of the five Food Systems Summit Action Tracks, coalitions are currently emerging. Each Action Track is divided into Action Areas, which are then subdivided into Solution Clusters (bringing together all submitted Game-Changing Solutions submitted, via an open process). In Action Track 5, the Action Area on Food Systems Resilience was created. Based on the submitted Solutions by organizations globally, a cluster around the Humanitarian-Development-Nexus emerged as one of three clusters for this Area (see image below).

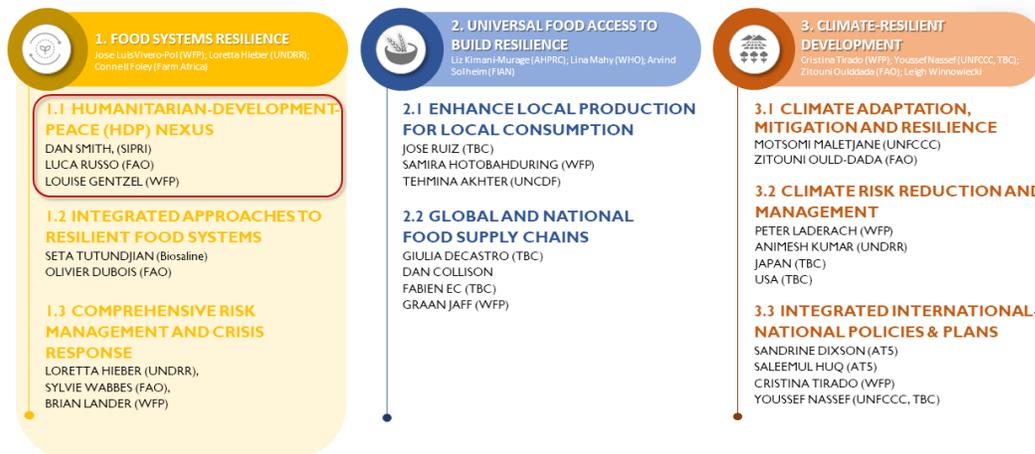
This cluster brings together solutions focused on the HDP nexus in a working group that has been aggregating, mapping, and vetting the various solutions. Most recently the group has focused on developing pitch documents that articulate its vision, based on which a coalition can be organized. As this process moves from a technical stage to an organizing stage it will focus firstly on getting UN member

states on board. Their support is seen as crucial to make sure the coalition on this topic will survive and thrive moving forward.

The emerging (or proto-)coalition on Conflict & Hunger / HDP nexus is the only group in the Food Systems Summit process with an explicit link to conflict. It tries to achieve three things in its current vision:

- 1) Creating structures for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to food systems resilience,

ACTION TRACK 5 – Action areas & solution clusters



that can be replicated in different contexts;

- 2) Supporting operations and collaboration throughout the entire cycle of anticipation, prevention, early action, response and recovery;
- 3) Championing solutions that make food systems more (conflict-)resilient and enhance the prospects for peace.

It is currently developing a further vision around the functions that are needed to realize these goals at country, regional and global level. This vision focuses on strengthened analysis and evidence-base, support to programming for HDP nexus actors, resourcing to make sure the approaches can be implemented and advocating for this, and making sure the right partnerships are in place through enabling platforms such as the Global Network Against Food Crises.

Such coalitions and their agendas will be one of the main ways in which the Food Systems Summit agenda is implemented after the Summit in September. Therefore the emerging coalition now focuses on getting member state co-chairs that will back the proposed approach and solutions. To achieve this it is looking to strongly articulate the potential of this coalition and its solutions, and back this up with evidence from the ground.

Summary of the Q&A session

How can people contribute to the Coalition?

In the immediate term, the coalition moves into a member state driven process, so a lot will depend on how the new (member state) co-chairs of the coalition will want to structure the process. In the medium to long-term what matters is how the agenda of this group is implemented at country level. After the Food Systems Summit is over in September we need continued support for the agenda and insight into how to implement it. In this framework the learning agenda and discussion on how to move beyond the rhetoric of food systems resilience to understand what it means in practice is fundamental.

Ownership of countries is still lacking, engagement with people and existing structures (e.g. programmes, FSL clusters, universities) is limited. Why has the process so far not been more inclusive?

This is a valid and important point. To put it into perspective, the Food Systems Summit has a very broad scope which initially did not include fragility, conflict, crises and the HDP nexus. So the inclusion of this topic is already an achievement. But the process has been complex and very messy since it was organized in such an open way. Indeed it has been very UN system driven and could have for instance included policymakers at country level earlier. It is key now to shape it into something that is useful. For this it is important to understand that the summit is not the end point, but a kick-off for a much longer process – implementing an action plan for the next decade. It is not too late to include these structures, the follow up after the Summit is critical.

Where do you see the involvement of business in this coalition?

Throughout the summit there has been a lot of private sector engagement. Perhaps less so in this Action Track because of the focus of its solutions. But in the summit process there are levers of change: human rights, gender, finance, private sector that are cross-cutting. Those are going to be key goals for engagement in the next steps of the process. Through the solutions the Coalition should interact with the private sector.

And delivered an action agenda

The different aspects of the meeting (Game-Changing Solution, paper, Coalition on Conflict & Hunger) came together in a panel discussion that kicked off further group discussion. From these aspects, key ingredients for panellists and groups to reflect on were: 1) the need for evidence-based, adaptive approaches, 2) for common understanding between the aid sector and local communities on food systems dynamics, 3) creating coherence and complementarity in the HDP nexus.

Would recommendations of the paper, to implement the Grand Bargain, to develop a common regulatory and guiding framework for food systems resilience, and to enable flexibility through adapted funding and accountability frameworks bring the change needed? Are systems approaches the answer to the problems of protracted crises, and does that mean we need a changed aid architecture to enable this? Or do the challenges of protracted crises lie elsewhere? What does this mean for what the Coalition on Conflict & Hunger can achieve?

Key insights from the panel discussion with Paul van de Logt (NL MoFA), Luca Russo (FAO), Gerrit-Jan van Uffelen (WUR-CDI)

Panellists reflected on key challenges in the current aid architecture for the implementation of this agenda, and key elements for this group and the emerging coalition on Conflict & Hunger to bring it forward.

Improving the aid architecture for protracted crises:

- Due to the different rationales and reasons for humanitarian and development aid it is still very hard to make the two meet. One opportunity to bridge the two lies in better prediction of where and when crises will hit. If that understanding goes together with insight into food systems dynamics, for instance where food comes from and where it will need to come from in the future, longer term planning and more systemic approaches may be possible. However, mobilizing support for such anticipatory action is still more difficult than mobilizing it when a crisis has already hit.
- Understanding that the aid architecture for protracted crises would need to improve for humanitarian and development efforts to align has been there for a long time. In that time there has already been change in this direction. Currently there is agreement among some like-minded donors that a much better coordinated approach is necessary. The Food Systems Summit and the concept of food systems is an opportunity to achieve this.
- Policymakers and practitioners can work together better to both have the overview of how a system works and what is needed, and connect that to an understanding of how food systems

work from the perspective of local people. The current aid architecture is not yet conducive to understanding the performance of food systems from a local level, and identifying where resilience of systems needs to be built from there.

Ways forward for data- and evidence-based working:

- Data aspect of AT5 Conflict & Hunger proto-coalition is appealing to donors. Yet donors also need data presented in a more neutral way than is currently the case, so that they can really rely on the data. Methodical approach is sometimes too thin to support claims made. The coalition and the Platforms it proposes can be places where that can be worked out: what data is necessary for donors and aid organizations to act early?
- When talking about independent analysis, better data that is more grounded and rapidly delivered. The investment in this compared to the actual costs of humanitarian assistance is minimal. The [Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit](#) in Somalia for instance costs 3-4 million per year, but informs 1 billion of aid per year. If better analysis can increase efficiency of this aid only by 10% the investment will be more than worth it.
- Currently much analysis focuses on what is the current situation, what are current needs, how many people do we talk about and what does that mean for food provisioning. Understanding of how food systems have changed and how this resulted in food insecurity is limited. Differences between resilience in regions could be taken better into account, as well as cross-border aspects of food systems – for people living in these areas they are one and the same system. Some accountability in the aid system should shift from addressing needs, towards addressing resilience of food systems (indirectly addressing needs and preventing them from arising).

Key actions for the Conflict & Hunger Coalition:

- AT5 Conflict & Hunger coalition should link up better to what is already going on in countries in terms of planning. If the data and analytical centres are there, make sure that people at local level are aware of how to get the data and can act on it. Link these activities up to ongoing country level planning.
- A key challenge today is not just to do better external intervention, but more so to move some of the aid infrastructure to national public investment. The main aspect of this is to make sure that such national investment is shaped in a way that it addresses fragility. For this a strategic alliance between key donors, analysts and different actors working in humanitarian, development, and peace fields is needed to deliver concerted support to governments. The Global Network Against Food Crises is trying to achieve this.

Key insights from the group discussions

Based on the different paper recommendations, the group split up into five discussion groups. Each group started with a statement for a vision of 2030, to discuss and propose actions to reach this goal. Groups

discussed their agreement with the statements, expected challenges, what they and others could do to move towards this goal – ultimately working towards an action agenda for the Conflict & Hunger coalition. See the annex for full reports of the discussion groups.

Five statements - towards an action agenda

1. In 2030 all humanitarian-development-peace nexus programming for protracted crises takes an evidence-based, adaptive programming approach, as required in volatile and dynamic local contexts.

A first group, discussing the need for evidence-based, adaptive approaches noted that to do this right long-term, trust-based, local involvement is necessary. This is necessary for all voices to be included in the face of power structures, which cannot be just solved by spending larger amounts of money as the statement may suggest. Often learning agendas are also set by donors, while local partners should be given a chance to set the agenda. Moreover, learning based approaches are also difficult to implement if (humanitarian) access is restricted in conflict areas.

The Coalition on Conflict and Hunger should work on:

1. **Long-term commitment to invest in a regions capacity** to develop local ability to work with an evidence-based approach i.e., making the process sustainable.
2. **Emphasis on linking peacekeeping, humanitarian, and development** in food systems resilience programmes i.e., the nexus approach, especially linking peace actors at country level with the humanitarian and development work.
3. **Unlocking the power of data science** as an important tool: Integrating learning knowledge development by learning from mistakes and adapting interventions.

2. In 2030 the majority of funding for protracted crises is guided by food systems resilience analysis, which is co-created with local stakeholders and actors.

A second group discussed the need for investment in protracted crises to be guided by food systems resilience analysis, co-created with local actors. Some participants agreed that communities are best placed to articulate their own resilience strategies, that true localization is very important, that a clear structure for the analysis should be in place and funding available. Other participants questioned whether there really is an interest locally to build resilient food systems, asking who sets this agenda? It may also be difficult for communities to fully have the system perspective for which they will need to rely partly on research organizations. This could simplify complex realities. Another risk seen was that a food systems resilience approach was not clear enough yet, which may result in repackaged old ways in new approaches. Furthermore, taking very flexible approaches may not be possible for donors to support due to restrictions they face with funding.

The Coalition on Conflict and Hunger should work on:

1. **Ensuring that all FSR work is done bottom up** with local actors on board. This could be achieved, e.g. through making collaboration with local actors a requirement for receiving funds in the first place. Involving and creating buy-in from local governments
2. **Advocate for flexible and long-term funding** mechanisms based on evidence (adaptive programming). This needs to go hand in hand with mechanisms that enable evidence-based programming: Required is developing, testing, validating and improving mainstreamed Food System Resilience Assessment tools / frameworks
3. **Bringing different actors together** (private sector, NGOs, UN, governments, higher education and research (ideally in co-ordinated N-S-S partnerships). Building a platform of agencies that work on FSR. Mainstreaming approaches and sharing of best practices (preventing that the wheel is reinvented).

3. In 2030 80% of donor funding to protracted crises is pooled, and inter-donor HDP nexus strategies are founded on and guided by food systems resilience analysis.

The third group discussed the need for pooled funding and inter-donor HDP nexus strategies through food systems resilience analysis. On the one hand participants agreed because this would help improve the enabling environment, to better meet the demand of communities - as long as such an analysis does not lead to a one-size-fits-all approach. If this is a national level analysis, how does this balance with need for detail at local level, and the need to let local actors contribute? They questioned how realistic pooled funding was. It has been tried in some countries, but there will always be individual interests and this call has been there since the Paris Agreements. Such an approach should also work with existing in country mechanisms such as the UN clusters and not create new platforms. Finally, beyond having this analysis participants wondered how it would be ensured that it was used by different stakeholders at different levels. Its complexity may be a trade-off to participation.

The Coalition on Conflict and Hunger should work on:

1. High level commitment from member states to commit to **pooling majority of funding** in protracted crises
2. More developed **methodologies and processes of scoping for food systems resilience research**
3. **More involvement and capacitation of local stakeholders** from diverse backgrounds, sectors and expertise with experience and knowledge of specific contexts

4. In 2030 all funding to interventions in protracted crises allows flexibility, to allow for and facilitate integrated humanitarian-development-peace intervention.

The fourth group focused on the need for flexibility to facilitate humanitarian-development-peace interventions. Participants agreed that it was a way to engage with a changing context to maximize outcomes in crisis areas. However they also felt that with shifting targets there would be less accountability, and that it would risk losing the meaning of emergency programming if they are mixed with longer term development programming. Moreover, coordination issues, and lack of information may make flexibility difficult to implement in practice. Therefore it may be necessary to have clear pathways and plans ready in place, to switch approaches in different scenarios to structure how flexibility is implemented.

The Coalition on Conflict and Hunger should work on:

1. **Information and data** – equipping practitioners to monitor situations as they conduct their activities, and investing in gathering accurate real-time data to inform flexible planning and programming. For example, who are the target groups, how are their needs changing, when is the critical moment to switch approach and which approach is most appropriate?
2. **Dialogue** – more exchanges are needed between different types of donor, practitioner and local actors, to help operationalize flexibility, facilitate 'handovers' / smooth transitions between phases or activities, and understand the needs, constraints and responsibilities of different stakeholders.
3. **Leadership** – an entity to provide the bigger picture / longer-term view, integrate the different aspects of flexible programming and put them all firmly on the agenda (including the aspect of environment and natural resources in both humanitarian and development work).

5. In 2030 all humanitarian, development, peace organizations as well as funders intervening in protracted crises adhere to a common set of principles for engagement with food systems in protracted crises.

The fifth group discussed the need for common principles between humanitarian, development and peace organizations and funders to engage food systems in protracted crises. Though alignment through common principles in the HDP nexus was supported, the group noted that currently approaches differ a lot between organizations. There is no such thing as the Grand Bargain yet for development organizations. Common principles for these different actors would also be difficult to achieve in areas facing severe crisis, like active conflict. Alignment of interventions would need to cross national borders, so a regional perspective would be key in this. Moreover, in the case of conflict there is already limited coherence even within the foreign policies of donors (for instance on hard security versus development), which further complicates this.

The Coalition on Conflict and Hunger should work on:

1. **Transparency** – If there is a real desire for cooperation through a common set of principles a lot more is possible. Actors should start by broadly sharing data they have available. For instance, share what you are planning in more detail so that coordination can take place. This should also include UN agencies.
2. **Connecting to existing mechanisms and institutions** - Connect to existing mechanisms for NGO coordination, like the Food Security and Livelihood Clusters, local/national universities and research institutes, to develop strong coordination and a joint approach.
3. **Involving national governments** - By involving national governments of countries affected by protracted crises, or religious organizations (and bond/trust between these and government) where government is absent. Governments can build coalitions like DRA, which has promoted alignment. But also in Ethiopia, the government got ten donors to work together on the Social Safety Net programme, this clear desire for external partners to work together helped alignment.

The way forward

As one participant remarked, the theory and insight on food systems resilience for protracted crises is all there, the challenge now lies in making it work – making it operational. Food systems resilience is a relatively new approach. Relatively, because it builds on the rich experience of humanitarian and development work in crisis areas, especially good practices that have been developed in resilience and disaster risk reduction approaches. The newly added (localized) food systems lens guiding this approach inherently brings the cross-sectoral perspective that is needed for humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus alignment.

Yet as the remarks towards the emerging Conflict & Hunger coalition about connecting to country ownership and national structures show a local resilience perspective also risks depoliticizing crisis. This is in line with common heard critiques of resilience approaches, which some see as emphasizing individual and community responsibility to the detriment of more rights-based perspectives that emphasize the role of governance. What may be key for future exchange is thus to better understand and operationalize how the peace component of the HDP nexus links to a food systems approach.

Insofar as the aid architecture can be adapted to better facilitate external support for building resilient food systems – the core question for this Dialogue - the meeting had a rich harvest of concrete suggestions for the Coalition on Conflict & Hunger to take up. On the basis of these, engagement with the emerging Coalition can continue during and after the Food Systems Summit process. Moreover, many actions have been defined that organizations can take up outside of this coalition. The organizers are committed to continue working on these alongside the community involved.

Annex: Group discussion reports

Group 1. Evidence-based, adaptive programming in the HDP nexus

"in 2030 all humanitarian-development-peace nexus programming for protracted crises takes an evidence-based, adaptive programming approach, as required in volatile and dynamic local contexts"

What actions in next 3 years will have greatest impact on the Discussion topic?
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Long-term commitment to invest in a regions capacity to develop local ability to work with an evidence-based approach i.e., making the process sustainable.2. Emphasis on linking peacekeeping, humanitarian, and development in food systems resilience programmes i.e., the nexus approach, especially linking peace actors at country level with the humanitarian and development work.3. Unlocking the power of data science as an important tool: Integrating learning knowledge development by learning from mistakes and adapting interventions.
How will it be possible to tell if these actions are being successful?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Long-term funding structures for food systems resilience developed and adapted to joint multi-year food systems interventions.● Existence of country level platforms working in the HDP nexus approach: Creating/building on existing platforms for actors to come together, identify their principles of engagement, and discuss food systems resilience interventions and ways to scale up.
What are the divergences that are revealed and how to manage them?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● There is the challenge of making sure that all voices are represented in the face of power structures. This requires trust-building which often takes time, and such an issue can't necessarily be solved with money.● Challenge of humanitarian excesses such as in Yemen where all countries moving out makes it difficult for humanitarian workers to work in these areas.● Important to highlight the difference between co-creation and extensive learning. Co-creation happens when there are opportunities to do things as planned or differently while extensive learning is more that they are a part of setting the learning agenda, which is often already set by donors. Therefore, local partners should be given a chance to create or change the learning agenda.

- There is also a gap in the learning agenda across implementing partners.
- The 17 SDGs have given us a common language and a common goal which is important for setting the base for co-creation. Incubator spaces are therefore helpful, and they create innovation spaces which are helpful in reaching these common goals.
- We should also be aware of local power structures that stand in the way of co-creation and give a chance for an agenda set by locals, especially inclusion of women and youth.
- There is a challenge of inequalities regarding data access by local communities, which can be solved by empowering the local communities to use and generate data and evidence and interlink it with local knowledge and local knowledge systems.
- Where local data is not of the best quality, we can use reputable organizations to help. Also, by these communities generating more data, it keeps improving and being refined.

What contributions will our organisations make?

- Local training and capacity building for sustainable generation, use and application of the evidence for learning and informing programming.
- Making adaptive programming design part of programme theory of change i.e., part of the initial programme design
- To influence the knowledge of local actors to combine evidence with local knowledge to inform sustainable pathways for food systems resilience interventions, not only learning technical skills but also how to implement it well.
- Making sure the current engagement programme has data science implemented by having incubation spaces for innovation and co-creation which will take longer term commitments.
- Donors should take a longer-term perspective of funding and allow space for mistakes, which are also part of the learning process.
- Strategic actors should be involved in design, especially government actors.

Group 2. Food systems resilience analysis, co-created with local actors, guides funding

“in 2030 the majority of funding for protracted crises is guided by food systems resilience analysis, which is co-created with local stakeholders and actors”

What actions in next 3 years will have greatest impact on the Discussion topic?

1. Ensuring that all FSR work is done bottom up with local actors on board. This could be achieved, e.g. through making collaboration with local actors a requirement for receiving funds in the first place. Involving and creating buy-in from local governments

2. Advocate for flexible and long-term funding mechanisms based on evidence (adaptive programming). This needs to go hand in hand with mechanisms that enable evidence-based programming: Required is developing, testing, validating and improving mainstreamed Food System Resilience Assessment tools / frameworks
3. Bringing different actors together (private sector, NGOs, UN, governments, higher education and research (ideally in co-ordinated N-S-S partnerships). Building a platform of agencies that work on FSR. Mainstreaming approaches and sharing of best practices (preventing that the wheel is reinvented).

How will it be possible to tell if these actions are being successful?

Has not been extensively discussed in the group, only touched upon.

- But answers would tend towards: decision making closer to local context; seeing in long-term retrospective studies if / how interventions influenced outcomes; reduced need for international staff through better skilled locals to take over.

What are the divergences that are revealed and how to manage them?

- Lack of political will (Donors may themselves lack the flexibility to arrange funding on this basis since often the parliament has their own strict funding cycles that policy makers depend on. So indeed, political transformation is needed)
- Lack of skilled manpower
- Agencies competing over funds instead of collaborating
- A risk is to simplify complex reality and dynamics. Different shocks/stressors require targeted and specific interventions. This requires sound understanding on shock/stressor occurrence / impacts to build resilience (resilience: of what, to what, for whom, through what?)
- Donors should require greater coordination between humanitarian and development actors; layer funding so that humanitarian and development funding intentionally overlaps (because contexts can change), and donors should plan further out for humanitarian funding (we know which shocks/stresses are likely in each country... so even if funding is limited to 12-18 months, we can make a 5yr plan)

What contributions will our organisations make?

- Educational institutes in the HoA are committed to contribute to creating skilled manpower to conduct assessments and coordinate effectively
- Being reflective professionals who are committed to continuously learn
- influence implementation of extension policies and strategies

- Maintaining a setting up additional N-S-S partnerships
- Setting minimum standards and the rules of the game for food system analysis .. and make sure this creates the foundation for developing food system resilience pathways (what interventions are needed - and who is best place to do that)?

Group 3. Funding and contracting frameworks in a food systems HDP nexus approach

"In 2030 80% of donor funding to protracted crises is pooled, and inter-donor HDP nexus strategies are founded on and guided by food systems resilience analysis."

What actions in next 3 years will have greatest impact on the Discussion topic?

1. High level commitment from member states to commit to pooling majority of funding in protracted crises
2. More developed methodologies and processes of scoping for food systems resilience research
3. More involvement and capacitation of local stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, sectors and expertise with experience and knowledge of specific contexts

How will it be possible to tell if these actions are being successful?

- Percentages of pooled funding in areas such as Horn of Africa, Middle East, and other fragile settings will have increased.

What are the divergences that are revealed and how to manage them?

- Participants questioned how realistic it really is to have donors commit their funding in a pooled fashion to such a level. It was done in Myanmar through the multi-donor LIFT Fund, which was set up during the previous military regime due countries willingness to engage in development without setting up diplomatic ties with Myanmar's military. In other countries there are similar funds. However, there will may always be individual countries with own interests, relations and history that lead them to set up their own initiatives.
- To what extent does this approach lead to the setting up of new mechanisms/platforms. It is important to work with existing thematic mechanisms in-country such as UN Clusters – need to work with what is there not create new platforms from scratch
- How to define scope of food resilience analysis: how to balance level of detail needed at local level with larger national and international dynamics, and how to let local stakeholders actively play a role in this analysis and feel capacitated to contribute

- To have this analysis will be one thing, how to ensure the analysis is also shared and utilized by different stakeholders at different levels. Complexity of data collection and possibility of too abstract findings may be a trade-off to participation, even though we need all different stakeholders to contribute and act based on information/data collected.

What contributions will our organisations make?

- Involve women, youth in food system related programming
- Raise our voices for further localisation and embedding
- Endeavor to work with various stakeholders including private sector
- Commit to finding local ownership of creative solutions

Group 4. Flexibility in programming allows for integrated HDP nexus response

“in 2030 all funding to interventions in protracted crises allows flexibility, to allow for and facilitate integrated humanitarian-development-peace intervention”

What actions in next 3 years will have greatest impact on the Discussion topic?

1. **Information and data** – equipping practitioners to monitor situations as they conduct their activities, and investing in gathering accurate real-time data to inform flexible planning and programming. For example, who are the target groups, how are their needs changing, when is the critical moment to switch approach and which approach is most appropriate?
2. **Dialogue** – more exchanges are needed between different types of donor, practitioner and local actors, to help operationalize flexibility, facilitate ‘handovers’ / smooth transitions between phases or activities, and understand the needs, constraints and responsibilities of different stakeholders.
3. **Leadership** – an entity to provide the bigger picture / longer-term view, integrate the different aspects of flexible programming and put them all firmly on the agenda (including the aspect of environment and natural resources in both humanitarian and development work).

How will it be possible to tell if these actions are being successful?

- First, we must operationalise flexibility / food system resilience in order to be able to recognise it within programme proposals, organisation and activities. This includes having indicators for the full response cycle (anticipation, prevention, early action, response and

recovery). Thereafter, measuring flexibility within a project/programme would entail examining how they score in line with these different elements.

- It could also involve looking at to what extent budgets are made flexible (e.g. the portion set aside for flexibility and shifting activities) and how often flexibility is explicitly mentioned within proposals and ToRs.
- The number of dialogues held on this issue.

What are the divergences that are revealed and how to manage them?

- Whether emergencies should be left as emergencies. Not to lose the meaning of an emergency by mixing it in with broader development schemes.
- The trade-off between giving space to adapt projects in a way which maximises outcomes and fits current local context, and losing accountability due to shifting targets or losing site of the goal (distraction from the main objectives).
- Ideology versus reality. Coordination issues, side effects and insufficient information may make flexibility difficult in practice. Working in parallel and embedding M&E throughout the process rather than at the end could help with this.
- It is necessary to have clear pathways and plans in place for switching approaches in different scenarios, rather than just the flexibility to change however is felt at the time.

What contributions will our organisations make?

- The coalition is well placed to take up a leadership role, to gather awareness and momentum, to facilitate these dialogues between stakeholders, and to push forward the agenda for data and flexibility.

Group 5. Common principles for HDP engagement in protracted crises

"in 2030 all humanitarian, development, peace organizations as well as funders intervening in protracted crises adhere to a common set of principles for engagement with food systems in protracted crises"

What actions in next 3 years will have greatest impact on the Discussion topic?

1. **Transparency** – If there is a real desire for cooperation through a common set of principles a lot more is possible. Actors should start by broadly sharing data they have available. For instance, share what you are planning in more detail so that coordination can take place. This should also include UN agencies.

2. **Connecting to existing mechanisms and institutions** - Connect to existing mechanisms for NGO coordination, like the Food Security and Livelihood Clusters, local/national universities and research institutes, to develop strong coordination and a joint approach.
3. **Involving national governments** - By involving national governments of countries affected by protracted crises, or religious organizations (and bond/trust between these and government) where government is absent. Governments can build coalitions like DRA, which has promoted alignment. But also in Ethiopia, the government got ten donors to work together on the Social Safety Net programme, this clear desire for external partners to work together helped alignment.

How will it be possible to tell if these actions are being successful?

- National governments take the lead and push external donors and organizations to work together.
- FSL clusters develop common principles for food systems resilience analysis, that involves local institutions
- I/NGOs share plans and approaches for development oriented work through FSL Clusters or other mechanisms are developed to do this

What are the divergences that are revealed and how to manage them?

- Though participants found it a good idea to align HDP nexus interventions through a common set of principles they noted that currently the approaches taken by organizations are quite different. For humanitarian aid the sector tries to create alignment through the Grand Bargain, but there is no such thing yet for the development sector
- Participants also questioned the ability of organizations to always be in alignment. In some areas it is possible to align and determine the response, but in other areas of crisis this is not the case due to the severity of the crisis (for instance conflict).
- Participants also mentioned that in areas affected by conflict it may be difficult to create alignment based on community preferences as there groups may be in conflict with each other.
- It may also be difficult to create alignment as long as interventions are separated by national borders. In the Horn of Africa a regional perspective is key. If you take a food systems perspective you need to take into account Ethiopia even when working in Sudan and Somalia.
- Even within the same government it can be difficult to create coherence. For instance foreign policy and military strategy of one donor government may not be aligned with humanitarian, development, peace interventions implemented by its aid arm. As long as this coherence is not addressed in case of conflicts the hard security approach undermines development efforts.

- Furthermore, it may not even be possible to reach the areas where aligned intervention is needed in case of conflict.

What contributions will our organisations make?

- Share data on programme implementation, details of planning, in coordination structures

List of participants

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