

Terms Of Reference
Research Consultancy
HDP NEXUS Project, South Sudan 2024

July 2024

1. Background and Rationale

World Vision Germany (WVG) seeks a deeper understanding about challenges and good practices in the implementation of the HDP-Nexus (or respectively CHAPEAU) approach in order to improve programming strength and organizational learning. Doing so, WVG attempts to not only measure impact, but also (and in connection with impact evaluation efforts) contribute to the more theory-driven research on the topic. This research consultancy follows upon the separately contracted endline evaluation of a project funded under the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) and a (separately contracted) mid-term evaluation of a project in South Sudan (Northern Bahr el Ghazal) funded by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development Transitional Aid (BMZ ÜH).

In order to achieve this, the purpose of this research project is to (1) analyse evaluation data of the two aforementioned evaluations to shed light on the research questions (see below under section 4) and to (2) triangulate the findings through a literature review as well as a limited number of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The research should be conducted and presented in the context of current literature on the HDP Nexus. A transdisciplinary research design should be employed to generate knowledge from and for the perspectives of humanitarian practice, academic inquiry and policy.

2. Aims and Objectives

Against the aforementioned background, this study aims to achieve the following:

1. Contribute to the evidence base on and for NEXUS programming through a research output that helps to establish World Vision as a key factor in the field
2. Contribute to further shaping and informing WVG's HDP Nexus programming
3. Assess how well the Chapeau linkage between the two projects (GFFO and BMZ -ÜH) was implemented

3. Problem Statement and Research Gap

The HDP Nexus has become a programmatic and strategic paradigm endorsed by several institutional humanitarian and development aid donors, particularly since the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. It aims to increasingly interlink the three sectors synergistically to increase aid effectiveness and efficiency. To date, strategic and operational challenges and issues abound, for instance, in terms of funding, strategic, operational and funding-related considerations, it is still too often hindered by separate and siloed ways of thinking and working. While the potential of better coordination between the three fields of relief, development and peace programming is evident, a broad research and evidence base on the HDP Nexus, particularly in operational contexts, is still lacking. In the context of local and regional Nexus programming, it is therefore relevant to inquire how projects set up to operationalise the Nexus succeed in or fail at connecting over the boundaries of relief, development and peace interventions.

Since 2022, World Vision has been running two projects in South Sudan which were designed as Nexus projects under the Chapeau approach of the GFFO, incorporating elements of World Vision's own Nexus-related Fragile Contexts Programming Approach ([FCPA](#)). The knowledge gap to be addressed in the research emerges around the degree of interaction between the two projects, specifically considering how they were adapted to changing circumstances, reviewing usage of distinct tools of the FCPA, as well as discussing existing assumptions and common practices of the Chapeau Approach and

HDP Nexus. Furthermore, it is hoped that the research can shed light on how essential concepts of the FCPA / Nexus are understood, interpreted and applied locally, and what wider lessons for the aid sector can be drawn from World Vision's experience.

4. Assessment Methodology and Research Questions

This research project draws from two data sources. Firstly, the separate evaluation data of the two projects shall be analysed. This data will be collected by a different team at an earlier stage. In addition to this raw data, it is hoped that the evaluation report will be finalised and available as a resource to the research project. Secondly, based on an initial review of the evaluation data, the researcher should conduct approximately 10-15 KIIs and 1-2 FGDs with local and regional stakeholders and WV staff in South Sudan. These are expected to take place in Juba as well as the project region (Northern Bahr el Ghazal).

The final research questions should be defined together with the WVG advisory team, based on the following **indicative** list, using the OECD DAC recommendations on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus ¹ and FCPA framework as context. Gender equality, disability and social inclusion should be employed as cross-sectional analytical lenses.

Tentative Research Questions

Concept

1. To what extent was the Theory of Change of the projects operationalized in the sense of the HDP Nexus (general), the Chapeau Approach (specific GFFO / BMZ approach to Nexus) , and the FCPA (specific WVI approach to Nexus)?
2. To what extent does the conceptual understanding of local staff concerning fragility and other key notions of the Nexus match those held in donor countries?
3. How and to what extent did the projects complement and coordinate with each other across the three pillars of the H-D-P spectrum?

Implementation

4. Was there any interaction with other stakeholders in the area to work towards a coordinated and cohesive approach and if so, how can it be characterised?
5. How and to what degree did the projects adapt in line with changing circumstances? What were positive examples? What were missed opportunities?
6. What tools and approaches (steering and monitoring, but potentially also others) for adaptation and HDP coordination proved effective and why?

Effectiveness, Sustainability, Inclusion, Do-No-Harm

7. How and to what extent were the needs, views and interests of the local community, authorities and other stakeholders considered in adapting the project and in monitoring the context of the project's implementation & general situation?
8. To what extent was the FCPA approach integrated into both projects?
9. To what extent and how did the FCPA approach build the agile management capacity of World Vision program staff?
10. Did the HDP Nexus / FCPA approach increase risk of any harm in the context of the two projects, and if so, which harm?

¹ Cf. Executive Summary, points 4.-9., <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/2f620ca5-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/2f620ca5-en>.

11. Did the HDP Nexus / FCPA approach add anything towards growing accountability between communities and WV within the project, and if so, how?
12. Did the HDP Nexus / FCPA approach increase sustainability of the project's efforts, and if so, how?
13. How did the two approaches, HDP Nexus and FCPA, work in synergy or otherwise in contributing to projects' (GFFO and BMZ) realization if their goals? What lessons can be learnt for future similar projects?

5. Outputs & Deliverables

The expected deliverables and milestones will include:

1. Review of the TORs and (if required) proposal of changes to improve research design
2. Kick-off meeting (in-person or via Zoom)
3. Inception Report (including research plan, methodology, primary and secondary data collection plan, stakeholder engagement and analysis timeline) ten days after the start of the consultancy
4. 1st draft of the research paper (including literature review)
5. Final research paper of approximately 30-40 pages; including final section focusing on policy-related and strategic recommendations concerning the HDP Nexus (excluding additional annexes)
6. Notes and transcription of primary data collection
7. 5-page executive summary
8. Presentation workshop to WV staff (90 mins, in-person or via Zoom).

Language for all outputs is English.

WV Germany legally owns all collected data, and the consultant is expected to hand over all data sets and notes of the interviews to the organization. The Consultant shall maintain confidentiality and protect all information provided to him/her by WVG, its employees, and beneficiaries. The consultant may only disclose such information to the extent necessary to perform the assignment.

6. Tentative Timeframe

The consultant or consultancy is expected to provide the detailed timeline of all the Research activities until the end of the contract. The approximate number of estimated working days is 20-25 days, 5-7 of which are estimated to be spent in the project country.

Task	Tentative Timing
Start of Consultancy	2 Sep 2024
Inception Report	19 Sep2024
Literature and Secondary Data Review	30 Sep 2024
Field Work	10 th Oct2024
Project Reports Review and Validation	20 Oct 2024
Submission of all Deliverables	Latest 10 Nov 2024

7. Child Protection, Data Confidentiality and other Ethical considerations

The consultant, along with all enumerators and sub-contractors, will be required to sign and follow World Vision International’s child protection standards and protocols of behaviour, which will be provided to the research team selected.

The consultant must obtain consent from respondents ahead of any data collection exercise that involves surveys, FGD and KII. All primary data collected by this evaluation process is to remain confidential and not be shared with third parties. The deliverables and materials linked to this assignment are confidential and remain the property of WV.

Protection of personally Identifiable Information (PII) shall be ensured: Any technologies, digital platforms, or other methods employed should include sufficient data security and privacy protocols to ensure that PII is protected.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Phase	Responsible	Role
Planning	Consultant	Review TOR, produce and present inception report
		Lead kick-off Meeting
		Conduct literature review & Review of project documentation
	WVSSDN	Review inception report
		Input to TOR preparation
	WVG	Convene kick-off meeting
		Review inception report
		Review literature report
		Research TOR preparation
		Provide project documentation
Data Collection	Consultant	Produce and share data collection and stakeholder engagement plan including all logistical concerns
		Arrange flight to Juba
		Produce data collection tools in timely manner for review
		If needed, train data collection facilitators
		Arrange research permit
		Conduct KIIs and FGDs
	WVSSDN	Arrange flights Juba – Aweel and accommodation in Juba and Aweel
		Arrange accommodation in Juba and Aweel
		Arrange ground transport in Juba and Aweel
		Assist with research permit
		Review data collection tools
	WVG	If needed, assist with hiring translator and data collection assistants
		Review data collection tools
Reporting	Consultant	Process and analyse data
		Produce main report

		Arrange at least one round of review of main report with WVG and WVSSDN
		Produce 5-page summary
		Make notes and raw data available to WVG and WVSSDN
	WVSSDN	Review report
	WVG	Review report
Validation and Learning	Consultant	Present findings in 90-min Workshop
		Share Workshop PPT
	WVSSDN	Attend virtual workshop
	WVG	Attend virtual workshop

9. Conflict of Interest

The service provider must be impartial and independent from all aspects of management or financial interests in the entity being monitored. During the tenancy period, the evaluator should not be employed by or have any financial or close business relationships with any of the entities being assessed. The service provider should declare any potential conflicts of interest which may affect or compromise their ability to conduct neutral and independent service.

Such conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

- Business interests in a community included in the study.
- Financial, family, political and business affiliation with local authorities included in the study

In such a scenario or similar, the service provider is expected to declare the conflict of interest to the contractor who will present to WV GER. Declaration of conflict of interest will not be viewed negatively but will be considered in the programming of activities. Failure to declare a conflict of interest may be considered and may lead to a review of the expected deliverables from the service provider, thus with a possible negative impact on the contract of the service provider.

10. Qualifications and Expertise of the Consultant/Principal Researcher

- Registered legally in the European Union
- A minimum of 5 years of demonstrated professional experience as a researcher and/or development cooperation consultant in development cooperation and humanitarian aid
- Previous experience in conducting similar research assignments, including literature reviews, primary data collection and networking experience within the scope of the assignment
- Have proven experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative multi-sectoral needs assessment studies and have access to technical expertise related to sectors under study
- Hold a minimum educational qualification equivalent to an MA in a relevant field; PhD is desirable
- Extensive knowledge of HDP Nexus themes, debates and issues is desirable and would be seen as an asset

11. Application

The consultant should submit a proposal to the following email address:

Ekkardt.sonntag@wveu.org

Subject Line:

“Proposal Research Consultancy HDP NEXUS Project South Sudan 2024”

The proposal should include the following:

- Cover Letter
- Capacity statement detailing the consultant’s ability to deliver such work within the given timeframe, including an overview of relevant work and technical experience
- At least two samples of previous relevant work undertaken, including at least one study that was 100% led by the consultant / consultancy
- Contact details for 2 references for similar assignments done not more than five years ago
- CVs of the consultant / consultancy team
- A financial offer with a detailed break-down and explanations about the line items
- Any appendices the consultant considers relevant to the application.

12. Assessment Criteria

The proposal will be evaluated against a combination of technical and financial criteria (combined scoring method). The maximum score is 100%, out of which technical criteria are weighted at 70% and financial criteria at 30%. Applications will be assessed with particular focus on

- Overall methodology
- Subject matter expertise (proven knowledge in HDP Nexus programming, research and policy)
- Years of experience in relevant research subject(s)
- Regional and country experience
- Relevant academic background

13. Management of the Assignment and Deadline

Researchers’ primary focal point will be WVG’s Senior Researcher International Programmes. World Vision International South Sudan will coordinate the field level operations.

The deadline for proposals is 25. August 2024, 23:59 CET