

Consultancy Report: Towards a Generic Definition of Collective Outcomes

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A: Introduction

This section outlines the background, purpose, and scope of this report. It also summarizes the main findings.

Background: Ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, in May 2016, The Secretary-General issued a report that aimed to lay-out an ambitious plan to transform the way humanitarian action is delivered, coordinated, and financed. One of the central themes for the report's "vision for change" was the need to transcend long-standing conventional thinking, silos, mandates and other attitudinal, institutional, and funding obstacles. To this end, the report urged "the international aid system, including the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and donors to commit to working in a new paradigm marked by three fundamental shifts: (a) reinforce, do not replace, national and local systems; (b) anticipate, do not wait, for crises; (c) transcend the humanitarian-development divide by working towards collective outcomes, based on comparative advantage and over multi-year time frames".

At the WHS itself, the latter fundamental shift -- the notion of "collective outcomes" -- was placed at the center of the UN's commitment to implement a new way of working by strengthening collaboration between humanitarian and development action. Moreover, the concept of collective outcomes is often cited as the core transformational aspect that sets it aside from past attempts to link relief to development, or bridge the humanitarian-development divide. Since WHS, both policy discussions and field operations in over 15 country contexts have grappled with how to implement this transformative approach in a way that lives up to the spirit of the SG's report, while staying true to the pragmatic realities in the field. As a result, the implementation, understanding, and even expectations for what and how collective outcomes has varied widely in their interpretation of the original policy thrust envisaged in the SG report.

Purpose: The Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Team (TT) for the humanitarian and development nexus (HDN TT) was created by IASC Principals to recognize the significant shift that needs to take place in the way humanitarian and development actors work with one another, especially for protracted crises. This consultancy report is commissioned by WHO as co-chair of the Task Team to inform the work of the HDN TT, and by extension the IASC, in advancing a common understanding of elements of the humanitarian and development nexus. In doing so, the objective of this report is to provide an analytical foundation that contributes to further policy work around developing a generic operational definition of COs, ultimately leading to clearer and more concise technical guidance to field operations engaged in implementing actions to strengthen the humanitarian development nexus.

Scope: This report presents its findings in a 2-step approach [methods are described in Annex]:

1. Formulates a **proposed generic definition** based on a literature review of existing documentation and research produced by various stakeholders including, UN, NGOs, and donors related to defining

“collective outcomes” (COs); and examines the points of convergence and divergence in relation on core features of collective outcomes.

2. Conducts a reality check of the proposed definition (step 1) through key informant interviews (KIIs) with practitioners and sector-specific deep-dives to propose a **revised generic definition** and identifies **components of the definition that require further exploration**.

Summary of Major Findings and Key Messages On Collective Outcomes:

1. THE WHAT:

- a. Key informant interviews with UN agency representatives underscored both complexity and divergent opinions on what a collective outcome *is*. **Responses highlight wide differences in meaning both between and within agencies, with the acknowledgement that at least one major UN agency there is “No institutional position on collective outcomes”.**
- b. However, a review of the literature illustrates some **shared positions on what are *perceived to be essential key features of collective outcomes and factors that can best support collective outcomes to be effective***. These include the need for collective outcomes to be a) context specific; b) over-multiple year time frames (although the timespan differs among respondents); and c) leverage comparative advantages.
- c. While considered ‘ideal’, **addressing root causes as a core feature of a collective outcome presented the greatest contention among informants**. While there is agreement that COs may be designed to address critical issues such as food security or access to basic services, the extent to which they can be framed to address the root causes, such as conflict and state fragility, through perhaps a CO on Protection, is not clear.

2. THE HOW:

- a. **There is a general view that tools are not yet in place to effectively measure COs**. While there is now a surge in discussions around collectively agreeing and articulating COs, there is less attention on mechanisms to measure progress against them. Concern was raised that COs may become another onerous reporting requirement. It is timely to carefully consider contextualized qualitative evaluation frameworks as a fresh approach to accompany COs.
- b. There is a risk that COs become a UN centric process focused on UN tools such as the UNDAF and the HRP, with relatively less regard for non-UN entities. The power structures and dynamics in the HCT do not currently adequately reflect the distribution of burden when it comes to implementation and who is doing the work. To have a meaningful discussion about collective outcomes, **there needs to be a meaningful examination of equity in decision making and leadership structures**.

3. THE WHO:

- a. The most notable divergence among interviews relates to the **actors that form the “collective”**; despite term emerging from the humanitarian-development nexus discourse and the findings of the literature review, there was not a common position across informants that COs by their nature had to incorporate both humanitarian and development actors. **The idea of collective outcomes for the humanitarian sector was raised**.
- b. There is disagreement around the degree to which the role of national governments should be a key feature of collective outcomes. While others noted that there can be concerns among humanitarian actors as to the neutrality of the government and the risk of politicization, other highlighted that collective outcomes must be owned by national authorities.
- c. While national, regional and local authorities are regularly referenced as key stakeholders, **they may not share the same perspectives as affected communities** in relation to collective outcomes—including the problem statement that guides them or how to address them—especially in fragile state settings. **Ensuring an inclusive approach to designing COs in a way that facilitates participation of affected people**, was highlighted as a necessary key feature of Cos that currently doesn’t feature in discussions.

Anatomy of a Collective Outcome



Participation: COs must include an **inclusive** approach that ensures participation of affected communities in their design.



Measurability: collective outcomes need to be measurable, and pitched at the impact level. Not output.



Root Causes: can collective outcomes explicitly address **root causes** of risks and vulnerabilities?

What

a jointly envisioned ^Aresult ^B

Why

with the aim of addressing needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities ^C,

How

requiring the ^Dcombined effort

Who

of ^Eboth humanitarian and development communities and other actors ^Fas appropriate.



Humanitarian COs? divergent views among some actors as to whether it was critical to have *both* humanitarian and development actors to be considered a CO



Modularity of Stakeholders: The most notable divergence among interviews relates to the actors that form the "collective"



Principled Action: there is a need to draw careful line within the nexus which protects principled humanitarian action



Comparative Advantage: to be truly transformative implementation of CO should be determined using criteria that go beyond mandates



Missing Feature from CO Discussions

B: Understanding Collective Outcomes

This section builds a proposed generic definition based on a literature review.

1. What is a Collective Outcome?

Through either an explicit or implicit association, collective outcomes are an integral part of the Humanitarian Development (Peacebuilding) Nexus or HD(P)N. While there is “currently no shared definition of [collective] outcomes”ⁱ, a review of the literature identifies a common position between the various stakeholders (UN agencies, NGO / Red Cross, donors, multi-organizational platforms and consortia). In order to establish the key concepts presented in this section a literature review was conducted drawing on over 55 purposeful and objective samples of publicly available documents related to HDPN. Through this literature review a working definition of a **collective outcome** was compiled as:

**a jointly envisioned^A result^B
with the aim of addressing needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities^C,
requiring the combined effort^D
of both humanitarian and development communities
and other actors^E as appropriate.ⁱⁱ**

Each of the five main elements in the definition above are detailed by stakeholder group in Table 1 below.

Table 1: CO Definition Elements Supported by Stakeholder Literatureⁱⁱⁱ

Among respective set of documents: ●●● most (>80%) ●● half or more ● a few	Consortium (10 docs)	UN (19 docs)	Other (6 docs)	NGO / RCRC (10 docs)	Other (8 docs)	Donors (2 docs)
A. Jointly envisioned refers to the <i>shared position, vision and when appropriate co-organization</i> of COs. Consortia are the most insistent here. It can take different forms with varying degrees of collaboration between communities of practice, depending on what is appropriate per outcome and context.	●●●	●●	●●	●●	●●	●●
B. Result refers to a collective <i>effect</i> of efforts beyond individual project output. While 20 documents and several stakeholders—Consortia in particular—, link collective outcomes to advancing the 2030 Agenda and achieving SDGs ^{iv} this is not universal nor central to most CO descriptions.	●●●	●●	●●	●●	●	●●
C. Addressing needs, reducing risk ^v , etc. <i>establishes the scope</i> of a CO, emphasizing longer-term objectives, which should not be conflated with—or negatively impact— ‘live saving’ assistance. While this definition component has the least convincing support overall, there was strong understanding that this distinction is important for safeguarding lifesaving assistance.	●●	●●	●●	●	●●	●●
D. Combined effort refers to the importance of relevant actors <i>working together</i> to achieve the result. This ‘effort’ can take many different forms as appropriate, ranging from exchanging information and aligning initiatives to committees or task teams to joint programming or joint funding.	●●●	●●	●●●	●●	●	●●

Among respective set of documents:

- most (>80%)
- half or more
- a few

	Consortium (10 docs)	UN (19 docs)	Other (6 docs)	NGO / RCRC (10 docs)	Other (8 docs)	Donors (2 docs)
E. Both humanitarian <u>and</u> development communities and other actors highlights the who, the <i>principal communities involved</i> in any context while also allowing for the inclusion of other actors as appropriate. Donors are the most adamant of the focus on both humanitarian and development actors. Though select actors (UN in particular) specifically include “peacebuilding” communities, the reviewed literature more commonly refers to humanitarian and development actors, mentioning “other actors” as or where “relevant” and “appropriate”.	●●	●●	●●	●●	●●	●●●●

At the most basic level, collective outcomes refer to collaboration between development and humanitarian “communities of practice” in support of “transcending” these “silos” to reduce need and improve resilience.^{vi} However, there needs to be a more concrete conceptualization to put collective outcomes into action, which the above definition has proposed. Consortia, followed closely by the UN agencies, appear to have the strongest support for the definitional phrases. Joint crafting of a position, as seen by the documents authored by a consortium, seems to have forged some consensus on the definition elements (i.e. they are much more likely to reflect the elements explicitly). Multi-organizational platforms and NGO/ Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) actors have produced documents that, despite specific mention of CO, pay the least attention to the above-mentioned definitional elements (this does not pertain to those NGOs included on the consortia).

2. What makes collective outcomes effective?

The **definition presented above does not automatically imply that a collective outcome will be effective** in achieving the desired result of reducing needs and vulnerabilities. Beyond the question of SDGs, various stakeholders from different stakeholder groups expand on this definition with additional features, criteria and/or “enabling” factors. Yet as a relatively new concept, there have been no comprehensive evidence-based assessments as to what makes a collective outcome effective.^{vii} A review of the literature does, however, illustrate **shared positions on what are perceived to be essential key features of collective outcomes and factors that can best support collective outcomes to be effective.**

The **most prominent key features of effectiveness**, listed in order of highest prominence in the literature include:

- They should have **multi-year time frames**^{viii} that support “analysing, strategizing and planning operations that build over several years to achieve context-specific and, at times, dynamic targets.”^{ix} For several actors, the ideal collective outcome is bound to what can be achieved in 3-5 years.^x It has been noted, however, that it may not be possible or appropriate to adopt multi-year approaches from the outset, and that context (particularly for conflict settings) will play a role in determining when a multi-year time can be introduced.^{xi} Nearly all of the consortia documents and more than half of the UN and donor documents examined stressed the need for longer time frames.
- Collective outcomes should be **context specific**.^{xii} Though not an exhaustive list, the literature indicates four main considerations: a) the comparative advantage of actors in a given context (see below); b) context appropriate resource mobilization; c) the role of peacebuilding actors in the nexus for a particular context; and d) consideration of humanitarian principles and appropriateness of collective outcomes in a given context, especially conflict settings. At least 24 of the 35 documents mentioning COs highlighted the importance of context, and in particular Consortia and UN.
- Collective outcomes should consider the **comparative advantage** of the actors involved.^{xiii} Comparative advantage refers to the capacity and/or expertise of an individual, group or institution being “best

placed to act” in order to produce a collective outcome; this is not necessarily determined by an organization’s mandate and may vary between contexts.^{xiv} Up to 13 of the 35 documents examined explicitly highlighted the importance of seeking comparative advantages.

Three additional features were proposed within documents from multiple stakeholders, though appeared less prominently in the literature in terms of the number of references than those listed above. They include:

- Collective outcomes should be **measurable**.^{xv}
- Collective outcomes, like humanitarian action, should be **entirely need-based and prioritized**, a leading factor for consideration of greatest risk and vulnerability of people in a given context.^{xvi}
- They should specifically **address the root causes of a crisis** as part of their approach.^{xvii}

3. What factors enable effective COs?

Factors identified in the literature described as “*enabling*” effective collective outcomes align closely with four specific areas outlined in the World Humanitarian Summit’s “Commitments to Action” in support of the cooperation between humanitarian and development actors and the New Way of Working, which promotes the strengthening of the nexus: **analysis, planning, leadership and coordination, and financing**:

- **Joint analysis** helps define context-specific collective outcomes and a shared problem statement that the collective outcome(s) aim to address.^{xviii} A joint analysis can be conducted in different ways, but it should incorporate data from development and humanitarian communities in a given context and other actors as appropriate. Ideally the analysis should “identify risks, assess causes of fragility, coping capacities and resilience at different levels”.^{xix}
- **Joint or co-planning**^{xx} is designed to build on the foundations of joint analysis and problem statements. Joint analysis aims to “answer the fundamental question of ‘what does it take to achieve collective outcomes?’”^{xxi} There is no consensus on whether the act of co-planning must result in a singular shared plan or if multiple plans harmonized at any appropriate moment are also acceptable.
- Implementing collective outcomes requires **empowered and effective leadership and coordination**.^{xxii} For UN agencies this is particularly focused on empowering the Resident Coordinator / Humanitarian Coordinator in leading the development and monitoring of collective outcomes.
- Collective outcomes can be supported by multi-year **financing over project-based funding**, which reduces fragmentation.^{xxiii}

In the literature, the term ‘programming’ was not specifically discussed.

Proposed Generic Definition of Collective Outcomes

A collective outcome is a jointly envisioned result with the aim of addressing needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities, requiring the combined effort of both humanitarian and development communities and other actors as appropriate. To be effective, the CO should be context specific, engage the comparative advantage of all actors and draw on multi-year timeframes. They can be further *enabled* by joint analysis, co-planning, empowered and effective leadership/coordination and refined *financing* beyond project-based funding.

4. To what extent are practitioners comfortable with the proposed generic CO definition?

Less than 10% of survey respondents (N=3 out of 31) disagreed with the definition of CO above. While the majority agreeing varied widely in degree (i.e., an average of only 29% agreed strongly), disagreement came only from NGOs (two disagreed, one strongly) and UNHCR (17% of the 6 disagreed strongly), with one respondent explaining that they “do not think that there should be a formal definition. Such a step means that

we lose the plain English meaning and that we invite the creation of a process to determine and then to track Collective Outcomes.”). See Table 2.

Table 2: Agreement with CO Definition (E-Survey Results)

BY ORG/TYPE	N	AGREEMENT on CO DEFINITION				AGREEMENT on PARTS OF CO DEFINITION (Mean score; 3=highest)							
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	AGREE	DISAGREE	"jointly envisioned"	"result"	"with aim of addressing needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities"	"requiring the combined effort"	"of both hum. and dev. communities"	"and other actors as appropriate"
WHO	5	60%	40%	0%	0%	100%	0%	2.80	2.40	2.60	3.00	2.80	2.80
OCHA	3	33%	67%	0%	0%	100%	0%	1.67	2.33	1.67	2.00	2.33	1.67
UNDP	3	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	2.33	1.67	2.33	1.67	1.33	2.33
WFP	3	33%	67%	0%	0%	100%	0%	1.67	2.00	1.67	2.00	1.33	2.33
FAO	2	50%	50%	0%	0%	100%	0%	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.50	2.50	3.00
IOM	1	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	3.00	2.00	3.00	0.00	3.00	3.00
OHCHR	1	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00
UNICEF	1	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	1.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
UNHCR	6	33%	50%	0%	17%	83%	17%	1.83	1.33	1.83	1.67	1.50	2.00
UN OTHER	2	0%	50%	50%	0%	50%	50%	2.00	2.50	1.50	3.00	2.00	1.50
NGO	4	25%	50%	25%	0%	75%	25%	2.50	1.75	2.50	1.25	1.25	1.25
Total	31	29%	61%	6%	3%	90%	10%	2.16	1.97	2.10	2.00	1.87	2.16
*SHADING: Rows 14 and below are compared Horizontally (vs. 3-13, vertically)													
Variation between UN and NGO								15%	-21%	18%	-59%	-58%	-89%
(% difference, with NGOs being more + or -)													
Variation between HUM and Mixed/Dev								-2%	15%	10%	18%	23%	-2%
(% difference, with HUM being more + or -)													
BY PROFILE	N												
Humanitarian	14	50%	43%	7%	0%	93%	7%	2.14	2.14	2.21	2.21	2.14	2.14
Mixed OR DEV	17	6%	88%	3%	3%	94%	6%	2.18	1.82	2.00	1.82	1.65	2.18

NB: Dev=1, Mixed=16

While the definition above is less rigid to gain buy-in from multiple stakeholders, key informant interviews with UN agency representatives underscored both complexity and divergent opinions on what a collective outcome is. Despite the view of select informants (N=2) that the meaning of COs has been commonly agreed among agencies, informant responses highlight wide differences in meaning both *between* and *within* agencies, with the acknowledgment that within at least one major UN agency there is “No institutional position on collective outcomes”^{xxiv}. In general, however, the mean difference in agreement between NGOs and UN is less than 25%, with no real difference between humanitarian and mixed/development profiles (Source: e-survey).

5. To what extent are practitioners comfortable with each component of the proposed generic CO definition?

Components: “jointly envisioned” and “result”

Triangulated findings suggest that there is general agreement of COs as something “jointly envisioned” (2.16 mean out of maximum 3.0), with the “aim of addressing needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities” (2.1 mean). These both have very little divergence between UN/NGOs and between hum/dev profiles. While the requirement of a “combined effort” yields a mean agreement of 2.0, what the result is and *who* is included in that combination both appear very open to debate. In particular, with respect to result, what, if any, wider commitments should be linked to the results (e.g. SDGs) also remains a contested space.

Among interviewees there were divergent perspectives as to the **centrality of the SDGs** in formulating COs, echoing the finding from the literature. While over one third of informants (N=7) spoke to the criticality of linking COs to the SDGs, the same number of informants did not agree and argued that while the COs could be linked to the SDGs, this was not, in their view, a requirement. In particular, several respondents from one UN agency highlighted that, from their perspective, collective outcomes should be focused on human rights, not on SDGs as the ‘big picture’. Naturally, the degree to which collective outcomes can be considered to be reflective of a combined effort or joint vision, closely

relates to the discussion of ‘who’ is engaged in the process. This interlinkage is expanded on further below.

Component: “combined effort” and “of both humanitarian and development communities”

The most notable divergence among interviews relates to the **actors that form the “collective”**; despite term emerging from the humanitarian-development nexus discourse and the findings of the literature review, there was not a common position across informants that COs by their nature had to incorporate both humanitarian and development actors. More than one third of informants (N=7) held the view that “collective” did not specifically require the inclusion of development actors but could reflect several different humanitarian actors working collectively to common outcomes. This was particularly prominent among informants working with refugee populations. The e-survey reinforces this particular divergence in understanding, which yielded the weakest overall agreement (1.87 average out of maximum 3, see Table 1 above). NGO respondents were also not unanimously convinced of the need for both humanitarian and development actors (89% less on average than UN respondents); humanitarian actors were slightly (23%) more likely to agree on needing both types of actors than respondents with mixed/development profiles.

Component: “and other actors as appropriate”

While gaining overall agreement (2.16) the component “and other actors as appropriate” resulted in the most marked division between NGOs and UN entities, with NGOs 89% more likely to be in agreement.

Opinions on the composition of the “collective” of actors vary widely and were further explored with specific combinations (See Table 3). As the most highly rated, “At least 1 major actor from each of 5 groups: NGOs, UN, Donors, Private Sector, National Governments” gained the approval of only 35% of e-survey respondents.

Humanitarian respondents were 83% less inclined than mixed/dev actors to accept proposed combinations. Up to 42% of e-survey respondents (and 3 out of 4 NGOs) proposed their own combinations. These entries reflected earlier findings on the divergent views among some actors as to whether it was critical to have *both* humanitarian and development actors to be considered a “collective outcome” as well as making more explicit reference to “others”. In particular, three e-survey respondents highlighted the need to prioritize or emphasize the role of ‘national government’ in the collective, a finding reflected among interview informants.

Table 3: Agreement on Stakeholder Composition (E-Survey Results)

		AGREEMENT ON INCLUSION TO QUALIFY AS CO (% of row)				
		2 major actors: 1 hum., 1 dev.	At least 1 major actor from each of 3 groups: NGOs, UN, Donors	At least 1 major actor from each of 5 groups: NGOs, UN, Donors, Private Sector, Nat.Govs	Other	
BY ORG/TYPE	N					
WHO	5	20%	0%	60%	20%	
OCHA	3	33%	33%	33%	0%	
UNDP	3	33%	0%	0%	67%	
WFP	3	0%	0%	67%	33%	
FAO	2	0%	0%	50%	50%	
IOM	1	0%	100%	0%	0%	
OHCHR	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	
UNICEF	1	0%	0%	0%	100%	
UNHCR	6	0%	17%	33%	50%	
UN OTHER	2	0%	0%	50%	50%	
NGO	4	0%	25%	0%	75%	
Total	31	10%	13%	35%	42%	
		No NGOs	40%	No NGOs	51%	
		-65%	73%	31%	-85%	
BY PROFILE	N					
Humanitarian	14	7%	21%	43%	29%	
Mixed OR DEV	17	12%	6%	29%	53%	

NB: Dev=1, Mixed=16

Key informants also raised concerns that the role of national governments was not sufficiently highlighted in the proposed

definition (Part A). Many informants shared the perspective that the national government was an important stakeholder for COs (N=6) but that they were not being sufficiently engaged in the CO process (N=6); this included particular reference to potentially focusing too much on aligning the HRP and UNDAF without sufficient attention to national development plans. At the same time, it was acknowledged that the role of and point at which to engage the government may vary, depending on the context. As the literature also highlighted, there can be concerns among humanitarian actors as to the neutrality of the government and the risk of politicization. As an informant reflected for one context, the government embracing of the HDN approach may be linked to a political decision and effort to change negative international perceptions of the country and open up formerly limited development space^{xxv} or places where “the government is part of the problem”^{xxvi}. It was acknowledged, however, that while “In some complex fragile contexts, maybe the relationship is constrained, but that does not mean we should look [only] at COs [through the lens of] UNDAF and HRPs”^{xxvii}. One informant also observed how by expanding the humanitarian engagement with national governments through COs, “we’re opening a new world of complex problems for humanitarians, including corruption, under capacity within the government and I think that’s going to be a big issue in [certain countries] because some of the bigger projects like water pipelines etc. are projects normally executed by the government or a private contractor through a national contract and that’s a tricky areas for someone outside to oversee [such as humanitarian actors] and monitor and to explain why we should oversee and monitor if that was [national government] money given to a private company but we want to be involved because linked to one of our COs. So, there’s going to be a few complex challenges if we want to work with COs across the pillar system and I can think of more on the peace and security side where our cultures and ways of working are very different and [need a change of mind-set for this]”^{xxviii}.

C. Collective Outcomes in practice

1. What specific sectoral considerations are being explored?

The literature reviewed revealed specific sector and thematic interests for collective outcomes, with half of the documents (n=27) having a clear focus on sectoral considerations. Of these, however, the sector coverage was limited, with only four areas of focus identified: approach (coordination, financing, NWoW, New Deal); displacement (protracted, internal); health (general, child); and agriculture, drought and climate. The distribution is illustrated in the Table 4 below.

Table 4: Sector and Thematic Focus

SECTOR	No. of docs where referenced	Principal stakeholder(s)
Approach (Coordination, Financing, NWoW, New Deal)	13	Varied across all groups
Displacement	8	UN, NGOs
Health (General, Child)	3	UN, Multi-org
Agriculture, Drought and Climate (Food Security)	3	UN

In addition to country case studies, interviews were held with informants at HQ and field level with specific experience with COs in relation to General Coordination, Displacement, Health and Food Security. The following outlines the key findings in these areas.

1.1 Approach: Coordination Mechanisms

In several of the countries in which collective outcomes are being formulated, there has been considerable attention to and discussion of the coordination mechanisms to support them. In at least three of the country case studies highlighted—Sudan, Ukraine and Lebanon—questions are being raised regarding which coordination structures are most appropriate to support collective outcomes.

- In Sudan, one of the central features of the CO process to date has been the focus on coordination mechanisms. As one informant observed, “We need OCHA in Sudan, we need humanitarian

coordination here; there will be humanitarian issues here. The question we are asking here [are:] are the Clusters the right way to deal with that in a protracted crisis? Is the HRP the right way to deal with that? ... And I'm pretty sure that COs will have an impact on [the] UNDAF over time, because if they are collective they can't be UNDAF which is only UN [agencies] and [the] government. ... The beauty of the NWoW in Sudan, [is that] we are discussing things that were not discussable two years... Changing systems, changing coordination mechanisms [is now on the table] – rethinking the way we do business. The NWoW will have to be applied everywhere with COs in more and more countries, that might have an impact on coordination and so you have to have that discussion. Maybe structures will change, disappear, adapt...”^{.xxix}

- In Ukraine, discussions are also underway on what coordination mechanisms are most suited to COs: “we are having those bureaucratic discussions, [the HRP has a pillar] on early recovery – [this raises questions as to] ...use [of] that as a place to enter the humanitarian-development nexus or do we get rid of the HRP and fold it into the UNDAF or do we make another structure, at what level, national or sub-national? If sub-national, at what level, settlement or regional? Do we include only government zones or those out of government control?”^{.xxx} As another informant also observed in relation to Ukraine, “we have an established coordination mechanism with OCHA and we work more effectively, but we realized in development there isn't a similar mechanism and it is needed. ... There's a discussion on the best way to coordinate development actors – that's part of the HDN working group [in Ukraine]”^{.xxxi}
- Finally, in Lebanon, after “several years into the crisis response and people are more comfortable operating in the framework and pushing the boundaries of what's possible in terms of these COs to the point we are now going through a review of the coordination architecture to see what more we can to bridge the HDN and how far can we stretch on the development side”^{.xxxii}

There was also the perception among several informants (N=5) that coordination mechanisms in the humanitarian community are stronger than in the development community, which is seen as preferring bilateral engagement to wider group coordination. While this finding could be skewed by the emphasis on humanitarian and multi-mandate organizations within the KII sample, among those interviewed the perception was that with the OCHA/HRP system, humanitarians were more accustomed to coordination. As one informant explained, “You don't have well-coordinated development aid, because some of it is between donor and the government and no-one is invited to participate or influence that allocation of the aid to COs”^{.xxxiii} This perspective may influence attention to coordination mechanisms as part of the collective outcomes process.

The effectiveness of any new coordination mechanisms has still yet to be evaluated, and while select informants (N=3) felt this attention was unnecessary and that the existing coordination mechanisms were sufficient, these examples highlight the perceived importance of discussing which coordination mechanisms are most appropriate for collective outcomes in a given context and being open to potentially changing structures to accommodate a new approach.

1.2 Displacement

Displacement, and refugees in particular, was highlighted as requiring specific consideration in relation to COs. This special consideration was framed in two ways: a) underlying guidance for refugee-related COs; and b) differences in the context of refugee response.

Regarding the issue of guidance, one group of informants (N=4) explained how displacement-related COs should “ideally” be “guided by the NY Declaration Annex 1 [the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework]. ... Whenever COs look at sectors that aren't displacement specific it would be important to apply the NY Declaration. If you go through the key pillars, a lot of what defines a CO are sitting in the NY Declaration”^{.xxxiv} This differs from other sectors or focus areas, which cannot point to a specific document to inform how their sector engages, or should, with COs. Another informant noted specific challenges related to guidance: “In a pure humanitarian response you have the IASC and they tell you how things should be organized and coordinated and there's a set structure and can be brought to the global cluster leaders and discussed there. For us, we can't turn to UNHCR global for guidance because [its] not a pure refugee coordination model, we [also] can't turn to IASC because [there are] no clusters and we can't turn to UNDG because it's humanitarian. So, who to turn to?

How would it look if we were to absorb everything under the same roof, [with] nowhere to turn to for guidance? We are hoping that what is being set up in the Secretary General forum where there is now a new steering committee that brings together the UNDP Administrator and the OCHA ERC, but this won't solve it for the refugees because the High Commissioner is not there".^{xxxv}

With respect to context, informants raised two considerations: the emphasis on protracted humanitarian crises in fragile states, and regional responses. Highlighting the potentially different **circumstances of refugees**, a group of informants (N=4) explained how humanitarian crises that "give rise to the Clusters [are] predicated on the idea that the government is weak in that area. They [the Clusters] should only exist when government can't step-up to the plate. Refugees [however] flee to safe and stable places; when they get to those places the government likes to run its own deal. Massive refugee movements might overwhelm a government, but that should not be confused with situations that lead to Clusters. And for refugees [the key issue] is always the land, which always [means engaging the] government. ... In no time when we work with refugees can we ignore the government".^{xxxvi} Yet this concern is not necessarily inconsistent with the need for COs to be context specific; moreover, displacement actors are not alone in raising concerns of the importance of national government engagement with COs.

In relation to refugees, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) is seen by some actors as the operationalization of the key features of collective outcomes. For example, in Uganda, The Uganda Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy (REHOPE) on pre-existing Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and was developed through a consultative process involving the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the World Bank during 2016 and early 2017 (World Bank, 2016). The ReHoPE strategy is viewed as the overarching framework for partners to support the government in achieving Uganda's goal of an integrated refugee response. The poorest generally lack self-confidence and social capital. Regular inputs are required to help participants with business planning and money management, along with social support and health and disease prevention services.

Among the case studies proposed by key informants, only refugee responses had adopted a **regional approach**. For example, the regional response to the Syrian refugee crisis has country-specific response plans that are context specific, but are linked to the overarching regional response. Informants did not suggest that regional approaches were limited to refugee-oriented contexts; some reflected that a regional approach could enhance country-based collective outcomes. Refugee response plans (e.g. Lebanon Crisis Response Plan) are shaped by "strategic objectives", regarded by informants for all intent and purposes as collective outcomes, even though the CO term is not used.

1.3 Health & Food Security

Informants engaged with health and food security, respectively, observed that both are present in most collective outcome processes. Health informants (N=2) in particular highlighted that the "concept of universal health coverage speaks to humanitarian and development worlds",^{xxxvii} suggesting it is therefore a natural fit for COs. Moreover, in "most humanitarian crises, health is usually identified as one of the 5-6 priority sectors, in almost all HRPs...there is usually one [objective] to improve access of target population for social services. And I think that it's a collective outcome that could speak to the development as well as humanitarian community, including with disaggregation on the target population level and see what we can contribute to that".^{xxxviii} Health outcomes were also highlighted as being a potential catalyst for collective outcomes in that current iterations of draft collective outcomes all aim at the reduction of mortality and/or morbidity. Ultimately, health metrics and measuring of health outcomes can be a long-term approach to assessing impact of collective outcomes.

In addition, in the health sector, specifically as it relates infectious disease control and the management of epidemics, demonstrate that collective outcomes can be global in nature and explicitly linked to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3, in particular). In this regard, the *Global Roadmap to 2030 on Ending Cholera* presents a collective approach to an outcome that aims to address cholera control. By implementing the strategy between now and 2030, the Global Task Force on Cholera Control (GTFCC) partners, which consists of both international and national humanitarian and development actors will support countries to reduce cholera deaths by 90 percent. With the commitment of cholera-affected countries, technical partners, and donors, as many as 20 countries could elimination disease transmission by 2030.

While it is not explicitly pitched in the “new way of working” language, It is not explicitly pitched in the NWOW lingo but it refers to the humanitarian development divide and appear to address all the elements of the Commitment to Action and the New Way of Working, e.g. in support of national and local efforts, and with a diverse set of actors defined by: **Working to collective outcomes** across the UN system and the broader humanitarian and development community, including Multilateral Development Banks; **Working over multi-year timeframes**, recognizing the reality of protracted crises and aiming to contribute to longer-term development gains, in the logic of the SDGs; **Working collaboratively based on comparative advantage** of diverse actors (as relevant to the context).

Similar views were expressed by food security informants (N=2), who also perceived their sector as particularly advanced in relation to COs. They argue that, “at the sector level for food security we have reached an advanced understanding of [collective outcomes]. I believe the other sectors are not so advanced...the CO concept is just something to reinforce what is already existing”.^{xxxix}

2. Which parts of the CO definition are featured in practice?

This section describes the application of the CO concept, as described in Key Informant Interviews and E-Surveys. In other words, to what extent the proposed definition above is occurring in practice. It is important to note that the majority of COs discussed are still under development/in draft form (a potential exception being the Regional Refugee Response Plan which is not officially a CO process). For these reasons, those consulted are not named and all findings in this chapter should be taken cautiously. Owing to limited public documentation available on collective outcome processes, only those case studies discussed in detail by key informants are presented in the tables below.

Definition components

Table 5 identifies the presence of key attributes of the CO definition in country case studies discussed by key informants and publicly available documents. ‘Information not available’ indicates the limits as to what was accessible to the Research Team. The table illustrates that the key components of the definition are present in the case studies noted. The main variation is the extent to which they are explicitly linked to the SDGs. As the majority of the countries noted are still in the process of drafting and/or reaching final agreement between stakeholders on COs and are not yet public, they are not explicitly named.

Table 5: CO Definition Components in Action

COUNTRY	Jointly envisioned	Result	Addressing Needs, Reducing Risk	Combined Effort	Hum-Dev Actors	Other Actors
Somalia	✓ Shared view that a difference approach is required with change embodied in COs	4 draft COs across different sectors linked to SDGs	✓	✓	✓ Multi-stakeholder group ^{xi}	Info not Available
Sudan	✓ Shared view that a different approach is required with change embodied in COs	4 draft COs across different sectors	✓	✓	✓ Multi-stakeholder group	
Uganda	✓ Shared view that a different approach is required with changes embodied in COs (“strategic objectives”)	2 COs (“strategic objectives”) across different sectors with refugee focus	✓	✓	✓ Multi-stakeholder group	Info not Available
Ukraine	✓ Shared view that a change in approach is required with change embodied in COs	Draft COs (especially for Health ^{xii}) linked to SDGs	✓	✓	✓ Multi-stakeholder group	Info not Available

COUNTRY	Jointly envisioned	Result	Addressing Needs, Reducing Risk	Combined Effort	Hum-Dev Actors	Other Actors
Lebanon	✓ Shared view that a regional refugee response with country-specific response plans with COs (“strategic objectives”) required	4 COs (“strategic objectives”) across different sectors with refugee focus	✓	✓	✓ Multi-stakeholder group	X
<i>All discussions and documents available were insufficient to catalogue other countries where CO processes are known to be taking place, including: DRC, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Chad, Mali,</i>						

Features of Effectiveness

Overall, key informants agreed with the ‘features of effectiveness’ identified in the literature review to different extents, with **the strongest support for multi-year COs**. This also scored well with e-survey respondents (mean score of 1.87 out of a maximum of 3.0), though with humanitarian actors slightly more convinced than mixed/development actors. The most fully embraced effectiveness factor of COs for e-survey respondents is the **need to contextualize them** (mean score of 2.37 out of maximum 3.0, and no major difference between sub groups), though this factor was also taken for granted among the majority of key informants as a natural part of country-specific collective outcomes. The exception to this would be those countries that are part of a regional response (e.g. Lebanon), for while the individual countries are adapted to their contexts they also form part of a wider model.

Conversely, while ‘ideal’, **addressing root causes presented the greatest challenge** for COs and has a mixed presence among CO examples (See Table 6). Among e-survey respondents (Table 6) this was also the factor that gained the lowest agreement (out of the 10 with a mean 1.83, but with NGOs less likely to agree). While COs may address critical issues such as food security or access to basic services, the extent to which they are engaging the root causes, such as conflict and state fragility, can be questioned. As one informant explained in relation to Somalia, “the NWoW is quite linked to the process of drought response and so what we’re saying, especially in displacement, is of course [this is] triggered by drought, but the root causes [of the crises in Somalia] are the conflict. So that element needs to be more brought in”.^{xliii} While drought can be a root cause of crises in some contexts, the concern here is that there is insufficient consideration of the underlying causes that enable the drought to become a crisis, including the history of conflict and state fragility in a context like Somalia. In another example, this time focused on refugee responses, unlike with internal displacement, they will take place in a receiving country, rather than the country of origin, addressing the root causes of the refugee crisis can be very limited, especially if there is only a country-based response (i.e. no regional or wider response).^{xliiii} As a result, most case studies received a ‘mixed rating’ (both ✓ for presence and X for ‘not addressed’) on addressing root causes (last column).

Table 6: CO Features of Effectiveness (E-Survey Results)

AGREEMENT ON CRITICALITY OF CO FEATURES (Mean score; 3=highest)							
BY ORG/TYPE	N	multi-year time frames	context specific	measurability of the collective outcome	consideration of the comparative advantages of actors involved	need-based and prioritized	address the root causes of a crisis
WHO	5	3.00	3.00	2.60	2.00	2.40	2.40
OCHA	3	2.33	2.00	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.67
UNDP	3	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.50	2.00
WFP	3	2.00	2.00	1.67	2.00	2.33	1.67
FAO	2	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
IOM	1	3.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
OHCHR	1	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
UNICEF	1	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	0.00
UNHCR	6	1.50	2.17	1.83	2.17	1.17	1.83
UN OTHER	2	1.00	3.00	1.50	2.00	2.00	1.50
NGO	4	2.00	2.50	1.25	2.25	2.00	1.00
Total	31	2.03	2.37	1.93	2.00	1.93	1.83
Variation UN and NGO		-4%	7%	-59%	15%	-5%	-91%
Variation Hum. and Mixed/Dev		31%	10%	13%	6%	13%	9%
BY PROFILE	N						
Humanitarian	14	2.43	2.50	2.07	2.07	2.07	1.93
Mixed OR DEV	17	1.69	2.25	1.81	1.94	1.81	1.75

NB: Dev=1, Mixed=16

Table 7: COs by Features of Effectiveness by Case Study

COUNTRY	Multi-year	Context Specific	Comparative Advantage	Measurable	Needs-based	Prioritized ^{xliv}	Addresses Root Causes
Somalia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Info not Available	✓ / X
Sudan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓ / X
Uganda	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Ukraine	✓	✓	Info not Available	✓	✓	Info not Available	Info not Available
Lebanon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X

Enabling Factors

Overall there was agreement that analysis, planning, leadership and financing are core enabling factors, yet reflections on current practice in these four areas underscore nuances and challenges.

Joint Analysis: This factor, while manifesting in different ways, is consistently present in CO processes among the case studies. It also scored high among e-survey respondents (mean of 2.13, though NGOs are on average less convinced). Furthermore, in several cases it may be more appropriately described as “co-analysis” or “joined-up analysis”. For example, in Somalia and Sudan informants described use of the existing humanitarian and development assessments and analyses that had been conducted as the basis for identifying common areas of concern and attention to inform problem statements (what COs should focus on). As explained in relation to Sudan, “The analyses weren’t conducted together [by the humanitarian and development communities] but the two analyses [by the humanitarian and development communities] were [later brought] together,” referring to multiple actors participating in both analyses and later compared or merged.^{xlv}

Joint Planning: While too early in the CO development process to be discussed in detail in many of the case studies ('TBC' in the table below), KII discussions indicate that this may be a) better described as planning *and* programming and b) more akin to "alignment" of planning and programming than "joint" interventions that are directly implemented together.

Leadership: Consistently perceived as critical, interviews highlighted potential dependence on specific individuals or personalities (as opposed to their given role). As one informant reflected in relation to Sudan, "it was the individuals that created the critical mass [that made COs possible]. One and half years ago we got new representatives in WHO, WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF and they are on-board [with the CO process]. They said, 'we are behind this'. That's a big support to move things. Of course, they speak for their agency if needed, but they are on board that we have to change things. The [donor representatives] are [also] all on board. But tomorrow we might have different representatives and [as a result] we might have issues [with the CO process]. But if you have [the key big donors] on board [it works]. It all comes down to people. We have luck in that. We really have the right people in place to have this discussion".^{xlvi} Reflecting on COs overall (not country specific), one informant also observed the need to ensure the neutrality of CO leadership: "You need someone neutral – so if the head of the UN country team is the head of a UN agency you have lost part of the game because they aren't seen as neutral. The top has to be neutral, and so cannot belong to one UN agency."^{xlvii}

Finally, the terminology of "empowered" was also challenged. As one respondent explained, "Effective collective leadership and coordination are critical enablers, not necessarily and "empowered leadership" for the RC/HC only." This was echoed by another respondent observing that "empowered is typical UN jargon that is quite unhelpful, unless the aim is to build up a specific UN leadership model". Similarly, one key informant explained how there was a need to focus on "transformative" and "collaborative" leadership skills rather than trying to "push collective outcomes and empowered leadership" which can result in "you los[ing] the advantage of COs in that it's not just about one agency", inferring the link to the RC/HC and/or one agency".^{xlviii}

Financing: Moving from project-based funding to multi-year financing was identified as the enabling factor facing the greatest challenges. The majority of informants observed that while COs consistently focused on multi-year timeframes, there had not been a corresponding shift with financing. As to the cause, select informants (N=2) suggested that the donors remained sceptical of the added value of multi-year financing and that it "cannot be based on assumptions of flexibility and better results. They want to see what type of result you are achieving and how do those results decrease humanitarians needs to come [in the future]".^{xlix}

Informants also highlighted institutional blockages to multi-year financing. As one UN agency representative explained, "our financial regulations and budget are still bi-annual and so on the one hand we have initiatives, but for concrete initiatives and signing agreements for more than 2 years, it is challenging internally, and we know a number of partners are like that. Hopefully that will change, but it will take time".ⁱ The question of changing "mind-sets" among practitioners and donors was also raised. For example, one informant reflected that while there has been a shift towards multi-year mechanisms such as multi-year HRPs, that has not changed the mind-set or approach, which they argued needs to change to support COs: "[In a multi-year HRP] you do the same thing over three years' time and it is easier if you have resources for three years at the beginning and make some economy of scale, you achieve some cost saving by having resources up front for the duration. But this is not enough, it cannot be only this, multi-year financing for COs because you are trying to achieve other types of results with longer term impacts and reduce the need for hum needs in the coming years. So here there is a need to really, if the system is really going towards COs the way it is being conceptualized there are some major changes that need to take place".ⁱⁱ Finally, the "quality" of multi-year financing was also raised by at least one respondent, observing that "the quality of this multi-year funding however is more relevant than its timeframe and predictability. The challenge being in enabling funding that will allow capacities to respond to multi-sectoral and multi-actors response strategies to address these outcomes."

Table 8: CO Enabling Factors (E-Survey Results)

AGREEMENT ON CRITICALITY OF ENABLING FACTORS (Mean score; 3=highest)						
BY ORG/TYPE	N	joint analysis	joint planning	empowered and effective leadership and coordination	multi-year financing	
WHO	5	2.20	2.00	2.00	2.80	
OCHA	3	2.33	1.67	2.00	2.00	
UNDP	3	2.00	2.00	1.00	0.50	
WFP	3	2.33	2.33	1.67	2.00	
FAO	2	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	
IOM	1	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	
OHCHR	1	3.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	
UNICEF	1	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
UNHCR	6	1.83	1.83	1.17	1.33	
UN OTHER	2	2.50	2.00	3.00	1.50	
NGO	4	1.50	0.75	2.50	2.00	
Total	31	2.13	1.77	1.90	1.87	
Variation UN and NGO		-55%	-151%	25%	14%	
Variation Hum. and Mixed/Dev		1%	9%	21%	29%	
BY PROFILE	N					
Humanitarian	14	2.14	1.86	2.14	2.21	
Mixed OR DEV	17	2.13	1.69	1.69	1.56	

NB: Dev=1, Mixed=16

Table 9: COs by Enabling Factors by Case Study

COUNTRY	Joint Analysis	Joint Planning	Leadership	Financing
Somalia	✓	TBC	✓	Info not Available
Sudan	✓	TBC	✓	X
Uganda	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ukraine	✓	TBC	Info not Available	Info not Available
Lebanon	✓	✓	✓	✓

3. What is the recipe for effective COs in practice?

The triangulated evidence converges to support the definition of Collective Outcomes, the features of CO effectiveness and the factors that are most likely to enable them, as provided in Part A of this consultancy report. Current documented practice of CO per se is nascent, and a **precise recipe is premature. It is critical at this juncture, however, to encourage and enable the safe experimentation of COs.** One example of requisite experimentation is the longitudinal evaluation being launched by UNHCR on its engagement in humanitarian-development cooperation (RFP/2018/2016 covering 3 years and 5 contexts).

Concluding that a change to the year-to-year humanitarian intervention approach is needed, **sequencing or a “building blocks” approach is perceived as critical** to developing a strong foundation for the CO process in

country case studies examined. For example, in Sudan informants report they've "been [assembling] building blocks. First the UNDAF and multi-year HRP [were] developed at the same time, then [there was a] support mission on how to finance things (that's there's more than humanitarian and development money, remittances etc.); getting the government around the SDGs; coordination [mechanisms] review task team. We will [now] finalize COs [followed by an] OECD workshop and then we will have to start breaking down programmatic approaches and who will do what. But we never went to the next step until we got everyone on board".^{lii} Taking the CO process slowly and building up the pieces in a **sequence** that makes sense in each context is critical to formulate COs and ensure support.

In Uganda, the basis for the collective outcomes is the "REHope" document centred on refugee and host community resilience. The document "was pulled together by UNCHR, the RC and the Government of Uganda in close collaboration with the World Bank (they are one of the four signatories), but also involved the UNCT as well as line ministries as well as large bilateral donors like USAID and DFID...the advantage was that we didn't make it a fundraising doc in the initial stages which meant people didn't have to get their own projects in there. [We] started with common principals and what to achieve, and then [added] on sector level outcomes, such as focusing on a specific [school] population in one part of the country".^{liii} Despite some challenges as a result of not having budget figures from the start, practitioners suggested that they "were right to not have that there in terms of sequencing, because if you muddle costing with principles people have different methodologies, the government in particular. What is required now is to come up with more granular costed plans on how to get there".^{liv}

In Somalia, the change process began in 2011 with a joint FAO, WFP and UNICEF Resilience Program, which was "much more than just food security and agriculture". The initiative focused on two levels of results. One was on livestock from a humanitarian perspective "to keep the animals alive and protect against animal disease, feed them during the drought so the Somalis can still feed themselves. At the same time we were working for development results" with an emphasis on the livestock markets with a vaccination campaign in an effort to open the Arabic Peninsula livestock trading with a "full spectrum of organizations [having] contributed to this".^{lv} The discussion and practice has since progressed sequentially and expanded into other increasingly "high-level" areas (targeting food security, durable solutions for displacement, access to basic services and climate induced hazards)^{lvi} but has reportedly stayed true to the CO foundations described in this consultancy report.

[Revised] Proposed Generic Definition on Collective Outcome

Bold: additional; crossed-out: to remove

A collective outcome is a jointly envisioned result with the aim of addressing needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities, requiring the combined effort of both humanitarian and development communities and other actors as appropriate. To be effective, the CO should be context specific, engage the comparative advantage of all actors and draw on multi-year timeframes. They can be further *enabled* by joint **(or joined)** analysis, co-planning, ~~empowered~~ and effective leadership/coordination, refined *financing* beyond project-based funding **and sequencing in formulation and implementation.**

4. What is missing in Current Collective Outcome Discussions?

Three ingredients are missing from current discussions that could have an impact on the recipe for effective COs: how to navigate the nexus and still respect humanitarian principles, MEAL and accountability to affected populations.

1. How to navigate the nexus and still respect Humanitarian Principles

One missing ingredient relates to guidance on how to navigate the challenge of balancing humanitarian principles with collective outcomes. The literature is clear on the importance of ensuring no negative impact on life-saving humanitarian activities and the humanitarian principles that underpin them. However, how to address this tension and still achieve collective outcomes is absent. For example, it has been noted that a main concern is "the role of government – since the implementation of development activities is coordinated closely with governments, do closer development-humanitarian links mean compromising humanitarian principles by working through governments who are party to a conflict to control humanitarian aid?"^{lvii} At the same time,

others have observed that “a lack of clarity about the importance of drawing a careful line within the nexus which protects principled humanitarian action, and respects its right to move independently across a conflict. ... [As a result] will often be leveraging a nexus of its own with the relevant authorities and will not be involved with others in joint needs assessments and specific collective outcomes”^{lviii}. Furthermore, those far less concerned (or included in current debates) with the definitions and features of collective outcomes, i.e., NGOs and RCRC actors, play a significant role in their achievement. These issues raise a related question that merits exploration: **what will be the impact when key stakeholders choose not to engage with the collective process and how this can be mitigated?**

2. Monitoring, evaluation and learning from COs

Another missing ingredient relates to collective outcome indicators and monitoring. While a preferred aspect of collective outcomes is that they should be measurable (i.e., literature underscores the importance of measurement and indicators for collective outcomes), there is limited discussion on the monitoring and evaluation frameworks for COs or key considerations in establishing indicators shared by multiple stakeholders. A few stakeholders suggest the SMART—Specific^{lix}, Measurable, Achievable^{lx}, Relevant, Time bound^{lxi}—model^{lxii}. Yet this does not provide a clear, *common* position on what CO indicators or an ‘ideal’ M&E framework could or should look like.

While measurable COs are important, informants noted significant challenges in their measurement. For example, one informant reflected that while “I have observed achievements, ...we haven’t had tools in place to measure [achievements] effectively. What is important now when talking about COs, we need to talk about tools to achieve them and to measure and to collect evidence; [understanding and having evidence for] what was done, how and why”^{lxiii}. There is a general view that **tools and structures are not yet in place to effectively measure COs**. Another informant noted, “the achievement we should aim for is people being more well off five years down the line than now, which is something we are not able to measure through the humanitarian lens and the measurements of the development side are too vague to get clear conclusions. We need to be precise in measurements, but not only outputs. [It is] too early to get to these results right now”^{lxiv}. Furthermore, it was argued by one informant that neutrality in analysing data from monitoring and evaluation should be taken into consideration: “Data analysis and collecting has to be neutral [in monitoring and evaluating the CO results]; [this] can be partly done by FAO, WFP for food security, UNICEF for water, etc. Data can come from all parties, the World Bank, anyone, the government – but the data analysis [in relation to the CO results] ... has to be neutral otherwise you lose confidence in the process.”^{lxv}

One agency adamantly raised the concern that COs may become another onerous **reporting requirement**. As one informant expressed, “We have to be careful we don’t slip into a new structure, processes and tools that drive us crazy. ...if at the end of the day you have an UNDAF doc with a humanitarian chapter...as long as there are not additional processes, that will be fine.”^{lxvi} In the era of a NWoW, **it is timely to carefully consider contextualized qualitative evaluation frameworks as a fresh approach to accompany COs**. See for example the SPICED^{lxvii} model as one way to monitor CO impact: Subjective, Participatory, Interpreted (and communicable), Cross-checked, Empowering, Diverse and disaggregated. Rather than burden CO with a heavy reporting product, SPICED would attach new meaning to the CO *process*.

3. Accountability to affected populations

A final missing ingredient in the literature reviewed is the role of affected communities in collective outcomes.^{lxviii} Similarly only two e-survey respondents referenced the inclusion of affected communities as key stakeholders in the “collective” and only one key informant cited an example of engagement with affected communities in developing their collective outcomes, as distinct from any implicit involvement in the assessments that feed into the ‘joint analysis’. While national, regional and local authorities are regularly referenced as key stakeholders, they may not share the same perspectives as affected communities in relation to collective outcomes—including the problem statement that guides them or how to address them—especially in fragile state settings. Moreover, in the reviewed literature “localization” / “localized efforts” is only explicit in relation to collective outcomes for certain stakeholders.^{lxix} In further developing the common understanding of collective outcomes it is important to clearly articulate a role for affected communities in the different stages of the collective outcomes process to be fully effective. In this regard, lessons can be drawn from the Comprehensive Refugee Response Model (CRRF), which has all the hall marks of the so-called New Way of Working, and in which refugees have been invited by hosting-governments to participate in CRRF facilitation mechanisms. In some CRRF implementation countries,

refugees and host community representatives are members of either steering committees, secretariats, or technical working groups.

D. Conclusion

Policy thrusts aimed at strengthening collaboration across the humanitarian development divide are not new and have seen many iterations dating back to the late 1980s. Attempts to do so, have been branded 'linking relief to development', 'the relief-development continuum', 'the humanitarian-development contiguuum', linking relief, reconstruction and development (LRRD) and 'early recovery'. Against the backdrop of these historical attempts, the notion of collective outcomes is seen as the distinguishing feature and the culmination (in planning and programming terms) of the transformational agenda set-out during the World Humanitarian Summit.

Faced with a growing number of protracted crises, the notion of collective outcome has resonated widely amongst practitioners, spurring experimentation at the field level. While much is to be learnt from these ongoing attempts, the findings of this report suggest a wide variance in institutional and interagency understanding of collective outcomes. The lack of progress in developing interagency global guidance coupled with the varied contexts where collective outcomes are currently being tested, may have contributed to the wide variance in understanding.

As implementation continues, and focus begins to turn to monitoring the progress and impact of collective outcomes, it is imperative that concerted and inter-agency guidance is developed; offering an additional level of granularity to the high-level definitions outlined in the Commitment to Action and the SG report to WHS. A global level multi-stakeholder process aimed at developing a generic definition of collective outcomes (which in turn can be adapted to context) will also provide an opportunity to reflect on the missing ingredients such as the interlinkages of collective outcomes and peacebuilding; as well as designing an inclusive approach to designing collective outcomes in a way that proposed participation of affected populations.

1. Methodology

The findings presented in this paper are drawn from data collected and compiled through a literature review, key informant interviews and an e-survey.

Literature Review

In order to establish the key concepts presented in Part A, a literature review was conducted drawing on purposeful and objective samples of publicly available documents and select internal documents provided by IASC/WHO covering the period 2015 to present. In total **55 documents** were reviewed: 28 documents from the purposeful sample pre-identified by IASC/WHO and the consultants as being relevant; and 27 documents from the objective sample identified through a rules-based search of Reliefweb and ALNAP for “collective outcomes” anywhere in a document. The initial rules-based search identified 98 documents in Reliefweb and ALNAP with “collective outcomes” anywhere in the document. The final total of 27 documents reflects the final total once documents were reviewed for false positives (e.g. no reference to collective outcomes or where there was a passing reference to collective outcomes but no explanation of meaning) and duplicates, which were automatically excluded. The documents included internal memos, meeting notes, research reports and press releases, among others. The documents represent the combined voices of 35 different entities of five types (see Table 1): UN agencies (N=35), NGO/RCRC (N=9), Donors (N=3), multi-organisational bodies/platforms (e.g. IASC) (N=5) and other institutions (e.g. ALNAP, independent consultants) (N=8). Private sector and national governments were included as possible stakeholder groups but no documents were identified from these authoring institutions. The discussion, definitions of and approaches to collective outcomes within each document were examined, comparing within and between stakeholder groups. To be reported in the present document concepts, features and approaches needed to be documented by a minimum of three entities across at least two different stakeholder types. The documents were not, however, weighted by date or author.

Key Informant Interviews

In total 11 interviews were conducted with 18 individuals from the following agencies:

Agency	No. of Informants
UNHCR	5 (in 2 separate interviews)
UNHCR Somalia	1
FAO	2
WFP	1
WFP Sudan	1
OCHA	2
RC / HC Office Sudan	1
WHO	2
Protection Cluster Ukraine	1
Lebanon Crisis Response	2

Key informants were identified either directly by WHO or through contacts provided by WHO, who in turn identified relevant individuals for the Research Team to contact. Efforts were made to contact 25 individuals either for interviews or for additional contact information; all individuals who responded positively and were available during the interview period (January 25 – 7 March, 2018) were interviewed. Contacts unavailable for interviews were also provided the opportunity to respond to questions by email, however no written responses were received. In order to respect the confidentiality of informants all KII contributions have been anonymized and are referenced with a code so as to distinguish informants.

E-Survey

A short e-survey was designed on Survey Gizmo to get perspectives from a wider set of respondents. WHO invited all of the HDN TT by email with one reminder; all interviewees were also encouraged to complete it. It

was live from 5 February to 12 March and 31 respondents from 14 organizations completed the survey. The 31 respondents included 6 from UNHCR, 5 from WHO, 3 each from OCHA and UNDP and 4 from NGOs. Among the 31 respondents, only 1 claims to have an “official” role in the development community; 17 situate themselves solidly as a humanitarian actor and 13 report a “mixed” profile.

Limitations

Owing to limited level of effort (LoE), only a small selection of KIIs could be conducted and as a result does not form a representative sample. Furthermore, sector and country case studies have only one to five (with N=5 as the outlier) respondents each, therefore creating a limited evidence base for triangulation. As a result, all interview findings should be treated as individual views / anecdotes and not rigorous, evidence-based findings. Furthermore, the KII sample focuses on humanitarian or multi-mandate organizations, with no exclusively “development” oriented organizations interviewed (e.g. UNDP, World Bank). Efforts were made to contact representatives of UNDP, but were however unsuccessful / unavailable during the interview period. The KII sample is also UN-centric, with no interviews conducted outside of UN agencies. While the Research Team received authorization to approach NGOs, this was late in the interview phase and insufficient LoE remained to pursue. As a result, there is an expected bias in the findings, both from the humanitarian/multi-mandate perspective and from the UN perspective. The Research Team anticipates the potential that findings might be influenced should there be a wider range of development actors and non-UN actors in the interview sample.

Many of these limitations were partially compensated for in the E-Survey, which captured quantifiable perspectives of 4 NGOs and at least 1 exclusive development actor, including UNDP.

A major impediment to more concrete conclusions was the timing; many CO efforts are underway only now with no evidence to report to date. The study would gain from being repeated in 12 or more months.

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ⁱ IRC 2017

ⁱⁱ This is adapted from OCHA et al. 2016 summarizing the UN Secretary General’s report on *One Humanity, Shared Responsibility*. See also UN & World Bank 2016; Author Unknown undated (a)*; Knox Clarke & Campbell 2016; Baker & Salway 2016*; OCHA 2017b. NGOs and ICRC also explicitly or implicitly indicate working with collective outcomes as collaboration between their internal humanitarian and development objectives or departments and not exclusively about different actors working together.

ⁱⁱⁱ Stakeholders described in the table are as follows: United Nations (UN); International, national or local non-governmental organization (NGO); Government funders, international financial institutions, private foundations (Donors); other entities (e.g. multi-agency bodies such as IASC); Consortium refers to a mixture of two or more of the preceding stakeholders.

^{iv} See for example WHO undated(a); OCHA et al. 2016; Author Unknown undated (b)*; Author Unknown 2017; OCHA 2017c; OCHA undated; OCHA et al. 2015; IASC 2016; OCHA & UNDP 2017; Manuel et al. 2017; OCHA 2017d; UN Economic and Social Council 2016a; UN Economic and Social Council 2017; UN General Assembly 2017; ICVA 2017a; EU 2017; OCHA 2017e; World Vision undated. Multi-year planning is also referenced by WHO undated(a); The Grand Bargain 2016; OCHA et al. 2015; Development initiatives 2017.

^v Only 9 of the 55 documents use the term “resilience” related to COs –7 of them from UN or consortium, and one of these insisting that, on the contrary, COs should “not be confused with generic strategic objectives (e.g. reduce mortality, improve governance, increase resilience)”. While some actors closely relate DRR and resilience, this is beyond the scope of this paper. For these reasons, resilience is not in the current definition above.

^{vi} Expressed in different forms, this position is reflected across the reviewed literature; see full reference list for sources.

^{vii} For example, it has been observed that “while efforts are mobilizing in these areas [e.g. The New Way of Working, Grand Bargain, Charter for Change], it is not yet possible to demonstrate improved outcomes for people affected by crises” OCHA 2017d, p. 3). Furthermore, based on a review of “commitments to support a shift from funding short-term activities toward financing collective outcomes...no collective outcomes [were] identified in the reporting period [2016]” (*Ibid.*, p. 83).

^{viii} WHO undated(a); OCHA et al. 2016; WHS 2016; IASC undated(b); OCHA 2017a; UN 2016b; OCHA 2017c; OCHA undated; FAO, Action against Hunger & IRIS 2017; OCHA 2017b; OCHA 2015; IRC & Center for Global Development 2017; UN Economic and Social Council 2016b*; UN General Assembly 2017; ICVA 2017a.

^{ix} OCHA 2017b citing the Commitment to Action.

^x WHO undated(a); UN 2016b; OCHA 2017c; OCHA undated; IASC 2016; OCHA & UNDP 2017; OCHA 2017d; ICVA 2017a; OCHA 2017e.

^{xi} See for example OCHA et al. 2016.

^{xii} WHO undated(a)*; OCHA et al. 2016; WHS 2016*; IASC undated(b)*; IASC 2017b; The Grand Bargain 2016*; IASC undated(a)*; Author Unknown undated (b)*; Author Unknown undated (a)*; OCHA 2017a; Author Unknown 2017*; UN 2016b*; OCHA 2017c; IRC undated*; OCHA undated; OCHA et al. 2015*; FAO, Action against Hunger & IRIS 2017; OCHA & UNDP 2017; WHO undated(b)*; Baker & Salway 2016*; MSF 2016a*; FAO, OCHA & NRC 2017*; OCHA 2017b; OCHA 2017d; IRC & Center for Global Development 2017*; UN General Assembly 2017; ICVA 2017a; EU 2017*; OCHA 2017e; IRC 2017.

^{xiii} WHO undated(a); OCHA et al. 2016; UNDG & IASC undated; WHS 2016; IASC undated(b); OCHA 2017a; UN 2016b; OCHA undated; Trocaire 2016; ICVA 2017b; OCHA 2017b; OCHA 2017d; OCHA 2015; IRC & Center for Global Development 2017; OCHA 2016; UN General Assembly 2017; ICVA 2017a; EU 2017; World Vision undated.

^{xiv} Adapted from ICVA 2017a, p. 1 and OCHA et al. 2016, p. 10; see also OCHA 2017b citing the Commitment to Action.

^{xv} Author Unknown 2017; OCHA undated; ICVA 2017a; OCHA 2017e; IRC 2017; OCHA 2017a; WHO undated(a); Author Unknown undated (b); Author Unknown undated (a); OCHA 2017d.

^{xvi} WHO undated(a); OCHA undated; FAO, OCHA & NRC 2017*.

^{xvii} UNDG & IASC undated; WHO undated(b); Development initiatives 2017.

^{xviii} OCHA et al. 2016; The Grand Bargain 2016; OCHA 2017c; IASC 2017a; FAO, Action against Hunger & IRIS 2017; Manuel et al. 2017; Development initiatives 2017; ICVA 2017b; OCHA 2017d; IRC & Center for Global Development 2017; FAO 2016; UN General Assembly 2017; OCHA 2017a; OCHA & UNDP 2017; WHO undated(b); EU 2017; OCHA 2017e

^{xix} EU 2017.

^{xx} OCHA 2017c; FAO, Action against Hunger & IRIS 2017; WHO undated(b); Manuel et al. 2017; ICVA 2017b; OCHA 2017d; FAO 2016; UN General Assembly 2017. Some of the documents use the term ‘joined-up’ for reasons unclear to the research team.

^{xxi} OCHA 2017e, p. 10.

^{xxii} OCHA et al. 2016; UN 2016b; OCHA 2017c; OCHA 2017b; FAO 2016; ICVA 2017a; UN General Assembly 2017.

^{xxiii} OCHA et al. 2016; UN 2016b*; FAO, Action against Hunger & IRIS 2017*; Manuel et al. 2017; Development initiatives 2017; FAO 2016; UNDP 2016*; UN General Assembly 2017; ICVA 2017a; OCHA 2017a; OCHA 2017d.

^{xxiv} KII-1, 16 February 2018.

^{xxv} KII-8, 8 February 2018.

^{xxvi} KII-1, 16 February 2018.

^{xxvii} KII-8, 8 February 2018.

^{xxviii} KII-9, 2 March 2018.

xxix KII-7, 21 February 2018.

xxx KII-8, 8 February 2018.

xxxi KII-10, 27 February 2018.

xxxii KII-11, 1 March 2018.

xxxiii KII-3, 12 February 2018.

xxxiv KII-1, 16 February 2018.

xxxv KII-11, 1 March 2018.

xxxvi KII-1, 16 February 2018.

xxxvii KII-8, 8 February 2018.

xxxviii KII-8, 8 February 2018.

xxxix KII-3, 12 February 2018.

^{xi} Here multi-stakeholder refers to the presence of both humanitarian and development actors as a minimum; this may include multi-mandate actors. In some contexts donors are also engaged to varying degrees in the CO discussions.

^{xli} Based on information made available to the Research Team.

^{xlii} KII-2, 22 February 2018.

^{xliii} KII-11, 1 March 2018; KII-9, 2 March 2018.

^{xliv} While “needs based” and “prioritized” were originally combined (see Part A), key informant responses indicated a need to separate these two as they were engaged differently in the CO process.

^{xlv} KII-5, 19 February 2018.

^{xlvi} KII-7, 21 February 2018.

^{xlvii} KII-3, 12 February 2018.

^{xlviii} KII-9, 2 March 2018.

^{xlix} KII-3, 12 February 2018.

^l KII-1, 16 February 2018.

^{li} KII-3, 12 February 2018.

^{lii} KII-7, 21 February 2018.

^{liii} KII-9, 2 March 2018.

^{liiv} KII-9, 2 March 2018.

^{liv} KII-3, 12 February 2018.

^{lvi} These are still in draft format.

^{lvii} OCHA et al. 2016, p. 4.

^{lviii} ICRC 2017.

^{lix} WHO undated(a); Author Unknown undated (b); Author Unknown undated (a); OCHA 2017a; OCHA 2015; OCHA 2017e.

^{lx} WHO undated(a); Author Unknown undated (b)*; Author Unknown undated (a)*; OCHA 2017a; OCHA undated.

^{lxi} WHO undated(a); Author Unknown undated (b)*; Author Unknown undated (a)*; OCHA undated; OCHA 2017b; OCHA 2017e; IRC 12017.

^{lxii} For example, references by select stakeholders were made to ‘time-bound’ (WHO undated(a); Author Unknown undated (b)*; Author Unknown undated (a)*; OCHA undated; OCHA 2017b; OCHA 2017e; IRC 12017) and ‘specific’ (WHO undated(a); Author Unknown undated (b); Author Unknown undated (a); OCHA 2017a; OCHA 2015; OCHA 2017e).

^{lxiii} KII-4, 5 February 2018.

^{lxiv} KII-8, 8 February 2018.

^{lxv} KII-3, 12 February 2018.

^{lxvi} KII-1, 16 February 2018.

^{lxvii} Recent use of SPICED in UN system: http://www.g3ict.org/download/p/fileId_1028/productId_337

****** Exceptions which reference consultation with or identify affected communities as a stakeholder for collective outcomes include: IASC 2017d (Uganda example); OCHA undated; OCHA 2017a; Baker & Salway 2016; those that also reference consultation with or identify civil societies as a stakeholder include: OCHA undated; UNDG & IASC undated; IASC undated(a)

^{lxix} OCHA et al. 2016; OCHA 2017a; OCHA et al. 2015; OCHA 2015; IASC undated (b).