**Collecting Information and Lessons Learned on the New Way of Working**

**Background**

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Agenda 2030 and the imperatives of “leaving no one behind” and reaching the “furthest behind first”, sets out a path not just to meet needs, but to reduce risk and vulnerability. It is these frameworks and the notion of “collective outcomes” that provides a reference frame for all actors to bring their capacities together to tackle the drivers of need and accelerate development gains for the most vulnerable, particularly in protracted and recurrent crises.

The Commitment to Action made at the World Humanitarian Summit called for a New Way of Working (NWoW). It is also one of the elements of Secretary-General António Guterres’ reform agenda, in which he calls on individual agencies, the UN system, and the “system as a whole” to break down silos and “…*bring the spheres closer together from the beginning of a crisis to support affected communities, address structural and economic impacts and help prevent a new spiral of fragility and instability*.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

The success of the NWoW will be measured upon how it can manage to transition itself from the global policy level to concrete changes on the ground and how in-country leadership is supported in making the necessary operational changes and manage the shift of well-established mindsets. It will therefore be critical to ensure that the NWoW can be implemented within different situations and country contexts. The demand for gathering information to identify good practices, opportunities and challenges is therefore high.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s Task Team on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus in Protracted Crises and the UN Working Group on Transitions[[2]](#footnote-2) agreed in their joint action plan for operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDPN) to collect information, which could be analyzed and lead to lessons learned, best practices and challenges from the implementation of the NWoW on the ground and at the country level. Jointly UNDP and OCHA volunteered to take this work forward with other interested entities.

There are currently various initiatives ongoing within the system to collect information, including internal evidence gathering and a recent IASC TT survey to all RC/HCs[[3]](#footnote-3), along with an initiative to engage the Center on International Cooperation (CIC) to help showcase opportunities and challenges arising from the implementation of the NWoW.

To align these various initiatives, a coordinated approach is being made in defining research questions and a methodology for collecting and analyzing the country evidence of NWoW implementation, which also builds upon findings and results from already existing research such as the IASC TT survey.

**Objective**

* To collect structured information and analyze how the NWoW is being implemented at the country level in various contexts with the objective to identify concrete examples of promising practice, steps being taken to support coherent delivery, enabling factors, and persistent barriers to progress and proposed mitigating measures.
* To share lessons learned and good practices of NWoW implementation among countries, inter-agency and senior management with clear recommendations, which potentially could lead to changes at country level or contribute to wider system reforms.

**Deliverables**The information on country implementation of the NWoW will be collected and analyzed with a view to use the findings for several purposes, including but not limited to: advocacy materials, a ‘catalogue’ (or other format) with promising practices, documents to support the establishment of peer networks and peer support structures, and communications on blockages to be addressed at HQ. It is thus envisaged that the information can be utilized for various purposes to address already identified needs and accommodate additional requests that may arise as the collection of evidence progresses.

**Methodology**

**1) Country selection:** The research methodology will be using a two-tiered approach for country selection: Tier 1 will have a more pro-active engagement based upon the country selection criteria. Tier 2 will be on a more ad hoc basis and when opportunities arise, e.g. inter-agency missions, RC briefings, reports etc.

The criteria for country selection should include but not be limited to: strong commitment to NWoW, type of crisis, and different stages of NWoW implementation. It will also be important not only to identify best practice countries but also countries that might have encountered challenges, road blocks or potentially where the NWoW is not the best way forward.

The countries identified using the criteria above could potentially include: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, DRC, Lebanon, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Haiti and Uganda.

**2) Interviews, follow up and analysis:** Overall, the research methodology will be based upon desk reviews, qualitative key informant interviews and link to field missions where and when possible. Depending on the context, the interviewees could include: RC/HCs, WB CD/CMs, UN agencies, government representatives, NGOs, key regional Multilateral Development Banks and key donors.

During the initial interviews, besides learning from previous experiences, it will be important to establish where the interviewed entity currently is in terms of implementing the NWoW (baseline), how they will move forward in implementation (milestones), what barriers they have identified and how they will try to mitigate these to progress. This will enable that lessons learned during the follow up calls will easier be identified.

Based on the initial findings, follow-up actions will be taken, including follow-up calls and/or field visits to capture developments of NWoW implementation and how identified milestones have been achieved or not, and what can be learned from this process. At least one additional follow-up interview should be conducted to check the status of NWoW implementation and any adjustment in milestones in implementing the NWoW.

In addition to calls, all possible opportunities, such as already planned meetings, workshops, country missions, should be utilized for conducting interviews.

**Overall Research Questions**

* How is the New Way of Working being implemented at country level and what behavioral changes have occurred or are needed within the various modalities of engagement? What are contributing factors to success?
* What opportunities and good practices already exist at country level and how can evidence of these best be utilized to support implementation in other countries and by other stakeholders?
* What are the primary internal and external blockages to NWoW implementation? What are suggested solutions to overcoming these blockages?

Under each overall research question there are sub-questions, also depending on the person being interviewed, which can be found in the annex.

**Timeline**

* June: Discussion among relevant agencies to agree on methodology as well as the list of countries
* July-September: Initial calls with identified countries; for a set number of countries.
* August-December: Follow-up calls and analysis of collected information to distill lessons learned, challenges that hinder progress and recommendations. If needed, follow up calls with country cases can still be needed for verification of findings.

**Annex: Questions for the qualitative interview**

The questions below are only guiding questions. Before conducting interviews, to avoid duplication, a desk review should be conducted to gather existing information, i.e. RC/HC survey sent out by the IASC TT, mission reports, information from the Copenhagen and Istanbul meetings etc.

*General questions:*

* From your perspective, what does the NWoW entail? What is “new” about it – how does it depart from business-as-usual? What overall opportunities does it bring? What, if anything, does the NWoW fail to capture? Do you see it as problematic in any way?
  + - What approaches are underway in your country that you think are especially promising or good examples of joined-up engagement and NWoW implementation?
  + Examples of joint analysis? Joint planning? Joint programming? Better coordination? How have you approached the task of identifying and pursuing collective outcomes? What are some examples of collective outcomes in your country?
  + Where have you seen the most progress? Why do you think that is?
* What blockages are you seeing in your own systems or in relationship with other agencies when it comes to implementing the NWoW?
  + Can you provide examples of lost opportunities in this regard?
  + What do you think the best way forward is?
* What challenges are you encountering externally, with donors, host governments, civil society, or the private sector?
  + Can you provide examples of lost opportunities in this regard?
  + What do you think the best way forward is?
* Is the World Bank engaged in advancing the NWOW?
  + How specifically is the WB engaged?
  + What are the opportunities and challenges in this regard?

(After follow-up/more specific questions from below, as relevant) Is there anything else you think we should know?

*More specific questions:*

* How are issues around **joint analysis** being implemented in-country?
  + What are the primary opportunities and challenges when it comes to joint analysis?
  + Are there currently any joint (UN) assessments in country that combine humanitarian, development, and, if applicable, peace aspects?
  + What tools have been utilized for joint analysis that include a humanitarian, development and, if applicable, peace lens?
  + Has the joint analysis led to any joint planning?
  + How does in-country analysis ensure subnational input and the views of target populations, i.e. those left furthest behind?
  + How and with what tools does the UNCT identify “those furthers behind”?
* How are issues around **planning** being implemented in-country?
  + What are the primary opportunities and challenges when it comes to planning?
  + What planning frameworks are being used? Do they integrate/cover both humanitarian, development and, if applicable, peace issues?
  + What tools/mechanisms are the teams utilizing during the planning phase?
  + What timeframe(s) do(es) the planning framework(s) cover?
  + How are collective outcomes being formulated and articulated, with govt, without govt? are all actors contributing to all outcomes? How are these aligned to the SDGs?
* How are issues around **joint programming** being implemented in-country?
  + What are the primary opportunities and challenges when it comes to joint programming?
  + Does the analysis and planning translate into (joint) programmes that integrate humanitarian, development and, if applicable, peace aspects?
  + How many agencies are implementing both humanitarian and development projects and activities? And if applicable, how do they interlink with the peace element?
  + What is the mechanism for monitoring and reporting of results and resources? Does it include both humanitarian and development aspects? Are Inter-agency and national reporting systems in place?
  + How is evaluation of these efforts envisioned?
  + What are the accountability frameworks envisioned for collective outcomes?
* How are issues around **leadership and** **coordination** being implemented in-country to enable planning for collective outcomes?
  + What are the primary opportunities and challenges when it comes to coordination and the achievement of collective outcomes?
  + What could an institutional arrangement for aligning humanitarian and development efforts around collective outcomes look like in your country context? Are there existing country-led strategic mechanisms that can be leveraged for this purpose? If applicable to the context, how would institutional arrangements need to look like if peace actors were to be included?
  + What entry points are there towards bridging the humanitarian and development space? And if applicable to the context, what entry points are there to link to the peace aspect.
  + If relevant, are there opportunities/entry points for the HCT to engage more closely with the Government and national counterparts on coordination?
  + If relevant, are there opportunities/entry points for the UNCT to engage more closely with NGOs on coordination?
  + If relevant, are there opportunities/entry points to engage more closely with the peace actors in the relevant context on coordination. What are the primary opportunities and challenges in this regard?
  + Following the above, does the senior country leadership have the necessary support structures in place to facilitate the implementation of the NWoW? Has progress been made on this and/or what further changes needs to be made? What support is required?
  + Are the senior leadership in country empowered to make the necessary changes? What stands in the way of empowered leadership to achieve collective outcomes? What needs to change, including at global level?
  + What are the incentives needed to foster a stronger buy in to the NWOW? For UN staff, interagency collaboration, for NGOs, for govts, etc.
* How is **financing** being channeled to collective outcomes?
  + What are the primary opportunities and challenges when it comes to financing the New Way of Working?
  + Beyond grants, are funds being channeled through a varied typology of financing instruments such as loans, insurance, bonds, pooled funding etc.?
  + Are there joint instruments or structures in place to coordinate and/or influence decision-making on certain funding allocations?
  + Are there instruments or coordination structures in place for the UN to influence World Bank disbursements?
* What is the role of the national government in NWoW implementation?
  + What are the primary opportunities and challenges when it comes to your relationship with the national government in terms of advancing the NWOW?
  + What national planning framework(s) are in place in country?
  + What is the view of the government in relation to the humanitarian - development nexus? For example, appetite on joint planning?
  + To what degree are sub-national authorities involved in joint analysis, planning and coordination of humanitarian and development activities?
  + Are there any other national/local initiatives happening in terms of humanitarian - development nexus?
  + Who supports Governments in increasing evidence based data collection to inform decision-making? Are data accessible and easy to use?

Additional questions to consider:

* Does the NWoW improve the ability to reduce needs, risks and vulnerabilities?
* Does the NWoW do harm? Does this impact humanitarian principles, and if so which one in particular (humanity, independence, neutrality and impartiality) and how?
* Are there actions currently undertaken by international humanitarian actors that could be done by international dev actor, or by national actors, or the Government? If this was to be undertaken by these alternatives, then what would be the consequences in the short and long term?
* What is the international community’s comparative advantage in this response situation? Is it on response? Advocacy? Recovery? SDG implementation? Peace?
* What is the most appropriate response and coordination model based on sub-geographic context?
* What should be the conditions through which humanitarian action should “cede” to development actors?
* What are the protection concerns that need to be maintained (even without full lead) in certain response strategies led by development/peace actors?
* What are the key development gains required to secure a humanitarian “exit”? Social safety net and protection? Governance? Risk assessment?

1. UN Secretary-General-designate António Guterres’ remarks to the General Assembly on taking the oath of office, 12 December 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The UN Working Group on Transitions has been abolished and a new UNDG Results Group on Promoting Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace been established. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mandated by the DERC [↑](#footnote-ref-3)