



HEKS/EPER International Programme (HIP)

Annual Report 2020

And Summary of HIP Results 2013-2020

Activities, progress, management, finances, institutional governance, learning and steering decision; and context of international cooperation.

Zürich / Lausanne, May 2021

Photo: HEKS/EPER cashew project in Northeast Cambodia.

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Reporting System of HEKS/EPER

HEKS/EPER international division has a diverse reporting documentation with several a **main HIP Annual report 2020** and several **thematic factsheets** to document strategy, activities, progress and perspectives of the HEKS/EPER international programme 2017-2020. In brief ...

This HIP Annual Report 2020

- It is summarizing **progress** towards HEKS/EPER theories of changes and objectives in development cooperation, humanitarian aid, church cooperation;
- It is documenting HEKS/EPER **International Divisions evolution** in management, finances, acquisition, institutional governance (including PSEAH) and monitoring–evaluation–learning.
- It outlines the **achievements of the whole phase 2017-2020** of the HEKS/EPER international programme ([chapter 2](#)).

10 thematic factsheets 2020

HEKS/EPER's strategies, activities, progress and perspectives on most essential topics:

- Land and Natural Resources Governance
- Enabling Environment for Civil Society
- Gender Equality
- Inclusive Markets
- Sustainable Food and Agricultural Systems
- Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)
- Non-Discrimination & Inclusion
- Resilience to Climate and Disaster Risks
- Humanitarian aid
- From evidence and learning to steering (MEL)

Promising practices, case studies, project examples

In its factsheets HEKS/EPER demonstrates how it reaches its vision and objectives on the ground – each of the 10 documents contains many project examples illustrating e.g., the gender-sensitive implementation, how civil society is enabled to be an actor on its own or how to promote collective land rights – check it out:

[Thematic factsheets 2020 on HEKS/EPER ID's website about its institutional governance.](#)

The Organisations' overall annual report 2020 of the HEKS/EPER Switzerland & International



The annual report 2020 of HEKS/EPER activities in Switzerland and globally, including the financial report is published online:

<https://www.heks.ch/wer-wir-sind/jahresbericht-2020>

Are you interested in more details or documentation?

Institutional Governance of HEKS/EPER International Division

To learn more about HEKS/EPER's evidence, learnings and steering decisions, read the [HIP reports 2007 to 2019](#) and the [thematic factsheets 2020](#).

All **management and programme strategies, policies, guidelines and reports** belonging to HEKS/EPER are published on the website on Institutional Governance: https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance.

- **Contact:** monitoringevaluationlearning@heks.ch

1 Summary of HEKS/EPER's International Programme 2020

HEKS/EPER is the aid organisation of the Swiss protestant churches and campaigns for a more peaceful and equitable world. It supported in 2020 jointly with 100 partner organisations and strategic global alliances with 143 projects in 33 countries with more than 3.5 million people in economic and social need. HEKS/EPER invested worldwide CHF 37.58 Million. Out of the 143 projects, 88 in 20 countries were **development cooperation (DC) projects**, 30 **humanitarian projects (HA)** in 12 countries; and 22 projects in 9 countries implement through **church cooperation (CC)**.

The **COVID-19 crises increased worldwide existing inequalities**, and achieving the SDGs becomes more challenging. At the same time, the pandemic hampered project implementation and made quick and flexible adaptations of intervention logic necessary – **57 projects in 29 countries** included specific COVID-19 response activities **reaching 3.165 M people**. Partly, DC projects could not fully implement as planned and therefore not spend the funds foreseen, yet HA activities and funding respectively increased. Many DC projects will catch up in 2021, reaching the initial yet adapted overall goals. 2020 has shown the fragility of many people's access to essential resources and services. COVID-19 has deepened existing inequalities, with a disproportionately more significant economic impact on the marginalised and vulnerable. They are also more exposed to the risk of infection and inadequate access to medical care, severe illness and death.

WFP stated that in 2020 957 million people across 93 countries suffer hunger with food systems failing. The number of people suffering from acute hunger and malnutrition is on the rise again. Also, WFP documents that 155 million people in 55 countries suffered acute food insecurity in 2020 – 30 million more than in 2019. Amongst the 10 countries, most in crises 6 are countries HEKS/EPER was working in 2020: DR Congo, Syria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Haïti. Unless the manifold inequalities are not reduced, the world will not contain the pandemic with its devastating consequences, certainly for MIC and LIC countries, also in 2021 and 2022, yet probably even in the years that follow.

The seven trends/challenges elaborated by HEKS/EPER during its context analysis in 2019 (see [annexe C](#)) are still relevant and became even more evident in 2020. COVID-19 crisis was a magnifier increasing inequality, social and economic gaps, poverty, discrimination and making them more visible. Inequality and discrimination go along with enormous economic costs, jeopardise social cohesion and political stability, and remain a key obstacle to reaching the Agenda 2030 and **'leaving no one behind'** (LNOB) agenda. HEKS/EPER's efforts to create an economically, social and political more just world became more difficult. Nevertheless, opportunities identified by HEKS/EPER in 2019 (see [chapter 9](#) and [annexe C](#)) proofed now to be critical factors to prevent or mitigate the effects of crises. Opportunities, such as inclusive business and markets, digitalization, local agroecological production or the importance of good governance by duty-bearers.

HEKS/EPER **DC** activities alleviated in 2020 with **16.14 M** (11.88 M DC South; 4.26 M DC East) the life of 205'000 people directly – indirectly, 2.63 M people were reached. Focus lay on access to land and resources, securing basic services, fostering agroecological production and inclusive market systems. HEKS/EPER promoted through policy dialogue and strengthening civil society actors and partners inclusive governance structures in the countries as well as social, economic, and political inclusion of disenfranchised people. HEKS/EPER cultivates constant dialogue with all relevant development and Government actors, protecting civil society actors and enabling them to advocate for their needs and rights.

- In 2020, projects enabled **access to land** (almost 93'00 ha) and resources for more than 140'000 people with a clear focus on a community approach.
- More than 100'000 people were in **market-related** projects, and 61% stated an increase of income – despite COVID-19 crises affecting the economy (less access to labour, markets, services etc.).
- **Policy dialogue** between State authorities, the private sector and people/communities became challenging in 2020 with fewer opportunities to gather and exchange and government restrictions that shrank space for civil actors. 213 claims were made (or pending) by almost 160'000 people. And 152 claims out of these 213 were accepted.
- **Overcoming discrimination** and getting access to education, job markets, housing or water infrastructure, medical care etc., was challenging in 2020. In Eastern Europe, HEKS/EPER enabled access to such **basic services** for 6'000 people, mainly in homecare and education.

HEKS/EPER's **HA** supported with CHF **17.49 M** about 3.4 M people affected by disasters and crises ...

- **Emergency aid** interventions to save lives and cover immediate needs reached 631'273 individuals – COVID-19 emergency measures in Western Haïti alone reached 500'000 persons.

- **Restoring livelihoods** was possible for 62'723 people with
- **rehabilitating infrastructure** reached 1'803'763 individuals, including projects linked to COVID-19 emergency, improving the conditions of communities – e.g., in Bangladesh, the rehabilitation of health centres in the Cox' Bazaar for Rohingya refugees and host community was an asset for 1.7 M people.
- **Prevention and preparedness** activities reached 982'913 people, mainly in Bangladesh, DR Congo and Uganda, Venezuela.

In the frame of **Church Cooperation**, HEKS/EPER enabled with 3 M CHF social work of Reformed Churches in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, reaching out to 38'700 people.

Additional, 0.94 M CHF were invested in **cross-sectional IC activities** such as global land governance activities or capacity-building of partners and communities.

Striving for a **systemic change** and the **human rights-based approach** are the guiding principles, also promoting the **nexus** between humanitarian aid and development activities. HEKS/EPER cultivates constant dialogue with all relevant development and Government actors, protecting civil society actors and enabling them to advocate for their needs and rights. [See chapter 2.](#)



Bangladesh: Awareness-raising about COVID-19 effects. HEKS/EPER country office jointly with its long-term partners of development projects delivered emergency services to the most vulnerable, distributing food basket for those who lost jobs and income in the economic crises and informing on how people lower the risk of infection.

1.1 Highlights 2020 of HEKS/EPER's International Division

The **COVID-19 crises** hampered 'courant normal' project implementation yet made quick and flexible adaptations of intervention logic necessary. In 2020, HEKS/EPER COVID-19 response reached **3.12 M people** in **57 projects** in **29 countries**. 42 projects reaching more than 2.5 M people were co-financed by SDC. Most people benefitting were already participants of existing HEKS/EPER humanitarian or development projects. Partners and offices reacted professional and quick to the pandemic with **adapted preventive and mitigating activities**, mainly with awareness-raising & hygiene campaigns, distribution/production of hygiene material, WASH activities, food security measures, direct cash support, and strengthening civil society actors defending their rights (HRBA). **SDC** has been flexible in adjusting to COVID-19-issues in the programme and made additional funding available for urgently needed response activities. Thanks to SDC, HEKS/EPER could also air-lift material to Venezuela and upscale its response in Bangladesh.

The **financial stabilisation and consolidation** measures introduced in 2019 continued to positively affect HEKS/EPER activities in Switzerland and International in 2020. Despite the pandemic, 2020 was an excellent financial year for HEKS/EPER. The international division reacted fast to incorporate COVID-19 response activities such as information campaigns, provision of protective gear, access to water and sanitation into its projects. Several innovative examples were also used for fundraising, and the Swiss public, SDC and other donors reacted with additional funding sources.

In 2020, HEKS/EPER ID did continue its **management focus process** with declared objectives of reducing structural costs at all levels, decentralising putting the countries in the programmatic and managerial driver's seat towards more responsibility, agility, securing/broadening funding sources and sharpening operational profile by concentrating on less thematic priorities, programmes and partners. Phase-out in India, Zimbabwe and office closing in Columbia brought geographic focus, the new HIP 21-24 with 4 Outcomes instead of 17 in the previous phase, a programmatic one. Adaptive programme management and a proficient approach towards institutional governance, mutual accountability (complaint/feedback mechanisms, PSEAH, fraud, misuse of power, etc.) got further anchored with a new Good Governance Policy and PCM capacity-building efforts.

The intervention domains of Development Cooperation (DC), Humanitarian Aid (HA) and Church Cooperation (CC) continue to create synergies, learnings and helps for a broader outreach. With its past and current experiences in conflict transformation combining it with HA and/or DC activities (e.g., South Sudan, Israel/Palestine), HEKS/EPER also contributes to the discussion of 'double' and 'triple' **nexus** approaches and modalities.

The **new HIP 21-24** submitted to SDC got a very positive rating from the independent assessment panel boosting HEKS/EPER staff's motivation to working towards the vision and set outcomes coherently. An intensive capacity-building on the core topics of the new HIP with six digital webinars (planned already in 2019 before COVID-19) accompanied by six in-depth workshops in each country from September till December 2020 reached more than 60 staff members. The initiative not only increased professional knowledge yet narrowed further the gap between HQ and country staff.

Civil society: ACT Alliance study 'Development needs civil society' provided evidence of the importance of civil society towards achieving the SDGs. It confirmed HEKS/EPER's empirical experience that civil society room for manoeuvre is a prerequisite for any sustainable and inclusive development. Striving for human rights, non-discrimination and sustainable land & resource governance and civil society actors are hit hardest by current shrinking space, HEKS/EPER – implementing since decades mainly through CSOs – introduced 'strengthening civil society' as a cross-cutting approach in the new HIP 21-24. Each programme shall foster participation/ownership of civil society, policy dialogue between duty-bearers and rights-holders, protection of civil space and its actors, enhancement of supportive policies and practices, including funding for CSOs.

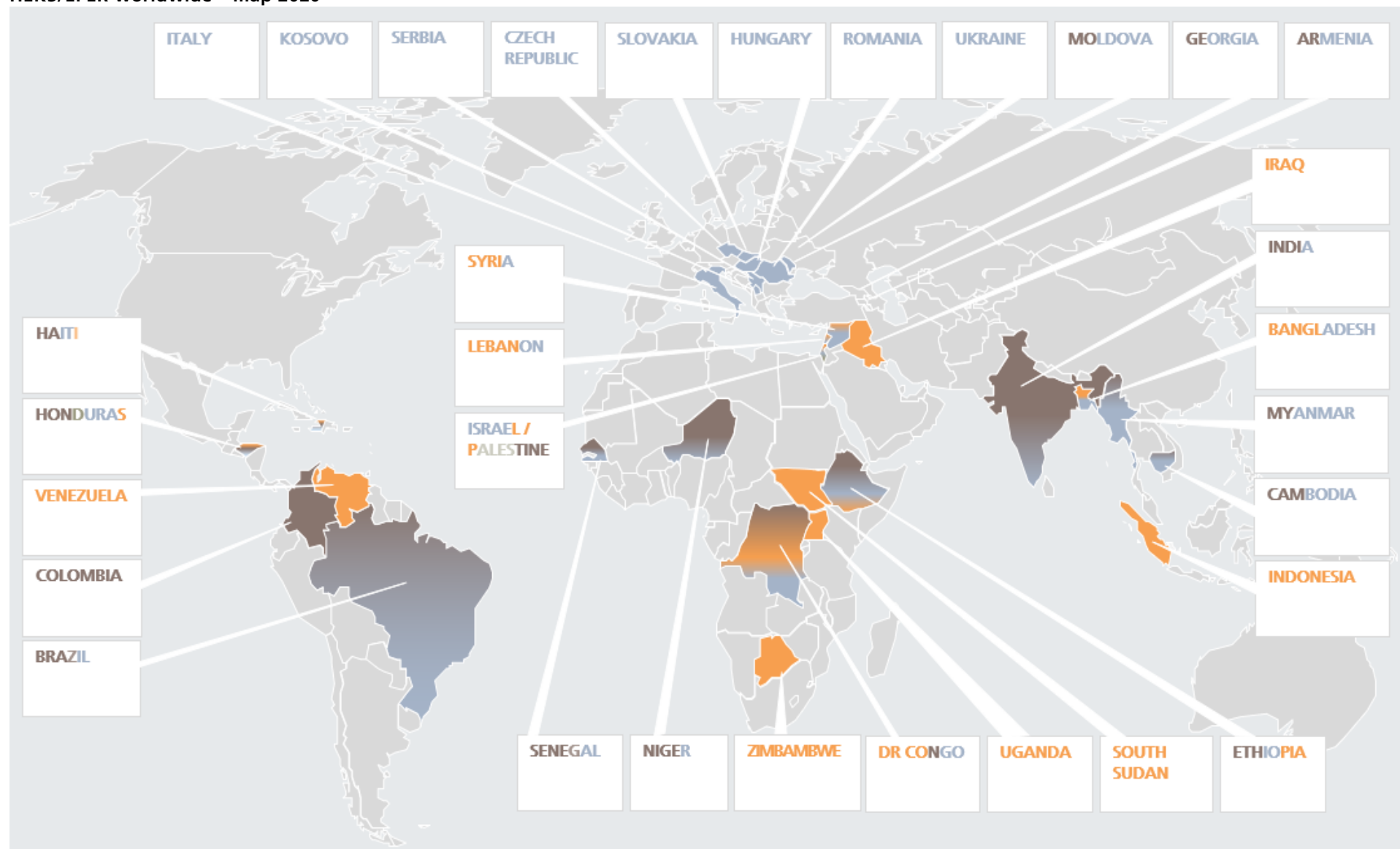
Digitalization and ICT – identified already as a key opportunity during the HIP 21-24 context analysis – proved effective in managing programmes in 2020, bridging COVID-19 mobility restrictions. HEKS/EPER wants to facilitate further efficient, effective, CO2 friendly, remote management of offices/programmes and partners/projects. Investments made since 2017 in a cloud server system, in intranet and webinar series on various programmatic and managerial topics paid off in 2020.

The **merger** of HEKS/EPER with BfA progressed. The legal bodies (churches) formally endorsed the new statutes of the merged organisation. Intensified discussions on ID division level prepared the inclusion of staff, projects and topics in the development policy of BfA and HEKS/EPER. BfA staff will legally join HEKS/EPER effective from January 2022. The new HIP strategy 2021-2024, as approved by SDC, already incorporated the development policy work in its theory of change and its new outcome 4 'Supportive Policies and Practices' embracing activities in Switzerland, in countries and on an international level.

2020 was successful for **acquisition**. Grants income 2020 (DC & HA) amounted to CHF 8.2 million (approx. 1.3 M from SDC). Triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, HEKS/EPER tripled its tender submission in 2020 compared to 2019 grasping new opportunities. The win rate was 35%, 32 new grants signed, and 44 active grants managed in 2020. Relationships with key donors, as SDC, EU/ ECHO, WHO and IOM, got deepened. HEKS/EPER acquired funds from new donors USAID/ BHA and UN OCHA.

A [study](#) on **UNDROP** published in 2020, commissioned by HEKS/EPER and other iNGOs, analysed Swiss foreign policy in trade, seeds and land rights, development cooperation. It revealed shortcomings of Swiss politics disadvantaging small-scale farmers in developing countries and presented a catalogue of demands for action in Swiss foreign policy. HEKS/EPER will continue advocacy in Switzerland, based on the study's results.

HEKS/EPER worldwide – map 2020



HEKS/EPER worldwide 2020 (Status: 31.12.2020)

Total = 33 countries (in 16 with Country Offices) coloured the logic of the 4 outcomes of the HEKS/EPER International Programme 2021-2024

Orange = Basic needs in crisis covered Blue = Overcoming discrimination Brown = Land & NR Governance Global level & Switzerland: implementation of supportive policies and practices

HEKS/EPER - countries & projects 2020**16 programmes with Coordination Offices / Directors in 19 countries**

| countries | programmes | country / region | section | nb of projects | | |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|----|----|
| | | | | DC | HA | CC |
| Asia / Middle East | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1 | Bangladesh | DC & HA | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| 2 | 2 | Cambodia | DC | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 3 | Myanmar | DC | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | 4 | India | DC | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | 5 | Palestine/Israel | DC | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Africa | | | | | | |
| 7 | 6 | Ethiopia | DC & HA | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 8 | 7 | Niger | DC | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | 8 | Congo DR | DC & HA | 5 | 4 | 0 |
| 10 | 9 | Senegal | DC | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | 10 | Uganda/South Sudan | HA | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Americas | | | | | | |
| 13 | 11 | Brazil | DC | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | 12 | Haiti | DC | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | 13 | Honduras | DC & HA | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| 16 | 14 | Colombia | DC | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Europe | | | | | | |
| 18 | 15 | South Caucasus | DC | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | 16 | Romania | DC & CC * | 5 | 0 | 5 |

*= CC activities in ROM coordinated by HQ, not by CO

other countries without CO (managed by HHQ or delegates)

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Asia/Middle East | | | | | | |
| 20 | | Indonesia | HA | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 21 | | Iraq | HA | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 22 | | Lebanon | HA & CC | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 23 | | Syria | HA & CC | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Africa | | | | | | |
| 24 | | Zimbabwe | HA | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Americas | | | | | | |
| 25 | | Venezuela | HA | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Europe | | | | | | |
| 26 | | Czech Republic | CC | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 27 | | Hungary | CC | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 28 | | Italy | CC | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 29 | | Kosovo | DC | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 30 | | Moldova | DC | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 31 | | Serbia | DC & CC | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 32 | | Slovakia | CC | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 33 | | Ukraine | CC | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| projects DC, HA, CC active in 2020 -> | | | | 89 | 29 | 22 |
| global projects | | DC & HA & CC | | 3 | | |

DC 2020: 20 countries -> 17 countries with, 3 countries without Office / **CC 2020:** 9 countries

HA 2020: 11 countries -> 5 countries with, 6 countries without Office / **total 2020:** 33 countries / 16 programmes with Office

Overall: 20 countries with DC, 12 countries with HA, 9 countries with CC.

total 2020 projects: 143 (89 DC, 29 HA, 22 CC, 3 other)

2 Development Cooperation

HEKS/EPER DC activities alleviated in 2020 with 16.14 M (11.88 M DC South; 4.26 M DC East) the life of 205'000 people directly – indirectly, 2.63 M people were reached – in 20 countries with 89 projects. HEKS/EPER's analysis on DC projects and programmes does focus on four thematic hallmarks:

- Improved **access to land**.
- HRBA and the **dialogue between rights-holders and duty-bearers**.
- Inclusive and efficient market systems.
- Inclusion / Basic Services.

The tables below show the most important key indicators of DC, including baseline, targets, and results of 2019 and 2020.

The **COVID-19 crises** hampered project implementation and made quick and flexible adaptations of intervention logic necessary – 57 projects in 29 countries included specific COVID-19 response activities. DC projects could not fully spend the funds foreseen, yet HA activities and funding respectively increased. Many DC projects will catch up in 2021, reaching the initial yet adapted overall goals.

Being more precise in data collection distinguishing better between direct (e.g., a farmer taking part in vocational training) and indirect beneficiaries (whole household profiting from new skills for better production or increased income), the number of direct beneficiaries drops to 205'000 compared to ½ M in 2019. Yet, **indirectly, 2.63 M people were reached in 2020**.

HEKS/EPER exceeded all set targets of all 4 DC key outcomes and the respective indicators for the SDC contract period 2019/2020 but one. The targets were set based on the results 2017 as a baseline and the prognosis made by the projects entered in the digital data system.

| Outcome | Indicator | Baseline 2017 | Target 19/20 | Result 2019 | Result 2020 |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| Secured access to land and resources | # of hectares of land for # of people have secured access | Enabled access to 27'160 ha for 25'913 individuals | 40'000 hectares of land for 50'000 people newly secured | 102'750 ha land secured for 136'965 individuals | 92'829 ha land secured for 140'213 individuals |

Land & Resources: With almost 200'000 ha land for more than 176'000 people for the year 2019/2020, HEKS/EPER projects topped the planned targets 19/20 with 40'000 ha for 50'000 people by far.

| Outcome | Indicators | Baseline 2017 | Target 19/20 | Result 2019 | Result 2020 |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Inclusive and efficient market systems | % of beneficiaries stating a change in their incomes | 42% state a positive change | 52 % in 2019; 55% in 2020. | 73.5% stated a positive change | 61 % stated a positive change |
| | # of individuals profiting from IM projects | 125'000 individuals | 245'000 individual profiting from IM projects in 19/20 | 190'000 people in market projects | 103'000 people in market project |

Market: Being in 2019 as in 2020 above targets, HEKS/EPER must state that 2020 was less successful than 2019, mainly due difficult economic situation due to COVID-19 and less access to the projects.

| Outcome | Indicators | Baseline 2017 | Target 19/20 | Result 2019 | Result 2020 |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| Empowered rights-holders & accountable duty-bearers | # of official claims made and accepted, reflecting the interests of beneficiaries, with the contribution of HEKS/EPER partners | 1200 claims with 61'500 individuals – 400 claims approved by duty-bearers. | 1100 official claims for 180'000 individuals made and/or accepted | 478 claims submitted, 120 accepted – 191'290 people reached | 213 claims made, 152 accepted – 158'824 people reached |

Policy Dialogue: With 700 claims, less were made or accepted than planned in 2019/20, yet HEKS/EPER projects reached out to more people than planned – about 350'000 instead of 180'000.

| Outcome | Indicator | Baseline | Target 19/20 | Result 2019 | Result 2020 |
|---|---|--------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Inclusion of disadvantaged in Eastern Europe | # of people with access to basic services | 14'345 individuals | 12'000 Eastern Europe (32'000 individuals globally) | 3933 individuals (13'886 globally) | 5'941 individuals (20'568 globally) |

Inclusion: Reaching worldwide a bit more people than targeted for 2019/2020, in Eastern Europe project delivered below target – mainly to difficulties in economic inclusion (COVID-19 19), the phase-out in Moldova yet also due to change of approaches more towards advocacy for policy change and making municipalities and Government accountable.

2.1 Access to Land and Resources

Land and natural resource governance entails the **rules, processes, structures, and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities over land and resources are exercised and how decisions about access to land, its use, and management are taken.** It describes how those decisions are implemented and enforced, how competing interests in land and resources are managed, and how land users are included in decision-making processes.

HEKS/EPER fosters governance principles that relate to inclusive decision-making, transparency, responsiveness and accountability. They are oriented towards effective, equitable and sustainable natural resources management and livelihood enhancement and embrace diverse cultures and knowledge systems.

Thus, for HEKS/EPER, land and natural resource governance means people and communities have secured rights to land ownership and/or land use. They can control, manage, and use the land and its affiliated resources in the long term. HEKS/EPER supports the development of inclusive land governance models and sustainable land-use practices.

Based on its expertise and reflecting on the realities in the countries it operates, HEKS/EPER acknowledges the importance of and sets a special **focus on territories/landscapes¹ and the role of ecosystems** in providing and sustaining key services such as the provision of food, freshwater, biodiversity, their role in climate and flood regulation and water purification, but also their spiritual, cultural and recreational services, and their important role for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Territorial development can be understood as the 'capacity of the actors located in a territory to exercise control over its changes and future'². In this sense, secured access to territories and restoring and sustaining ecosystem services ensure human well-being in secured access to land, water and other resources, sufficient nutritious food, social cohesion, peaceful co-existence between different user groups and locally adapted economic development opportunities. HEKS/EPER mobilises people and communities' participation, engages with state actors, and holds them accountable to create a favourable political, legal, and economic environment and encourage the private sector to create opportunities for people and the environment.

HEKS/EPER core demands promoting sustainable governance of land and natural resources

PROMOTE THE RIGHT TO LAND

HEKS/EPER requests that the right of every person or community to access, use and manage land and resources are respected, protected and fulfilled. Land is the basis for the fulfilment of the right to food, the way of living, and local communities' cultural identity.

ENABLE COMMON LAND USE

HEKS/EPER is convinced that community-organised management forms lead to sustainable use and conservation of finite resources and public assets such as land, water, forests and biodiversity. HEKS/EPER sets a special focus on, promotes, and legally protects this economic and living form of the traditional 'common land'.

PROTECT LAND ACTIVISTS

HEKS/EPER works to ensure that human rights defenders who are committed to the implementation of land, territorial and environmental rights are supported in their work and better protected against discrimination and violence.

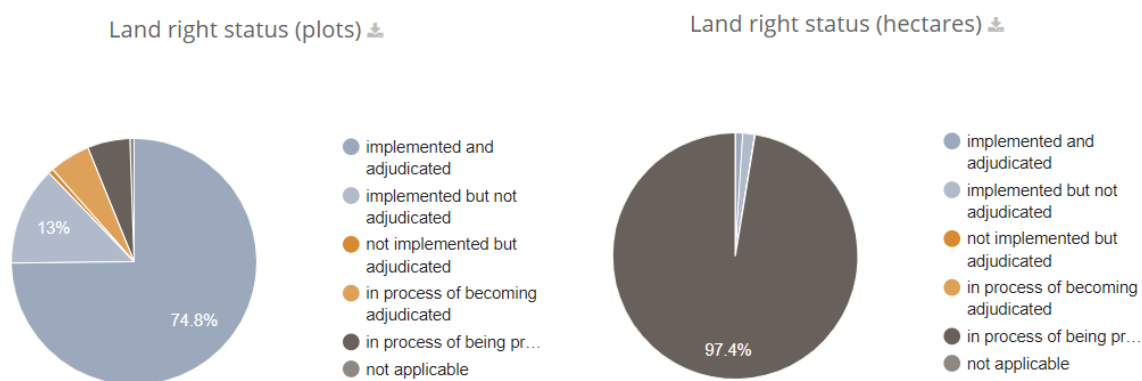
¹ There is no universally accepted definition of a landscape / territory. Thus, HEKS/EPER context-specifically defines it at programme / project level. However, it will usually consist of a combination of a cultural, ecological and geographic scope.

² Deffontaines J.-P., Marcelpoil E., Moquay P., 2001. Le développement territorial : une diversité d'interprétations. In : Représentations spatiales et développement territorial: bilan d'expériences et perspectives méthodologiques (Lardon S., Maurel P., Piveteau V.,Ed.). Paris, Hermès, 39-56.

Achievements on land governance

Between 2013 and 2020, the trend of HEKS/EPER projects taking up the issue of ‘access to land’ is more systematically included in their strategies – a trend which had set in phase between 2008 and 2012 – has been further pursued in the majority of HEKS/EPER’s focal countries. Accordingly, the number of projects focusing on access to land has increased over the past to 44 projects in 14 countries in 2020. **From 2009 till 2020, land projects led to improved access to land for about 692’553 individuals.**

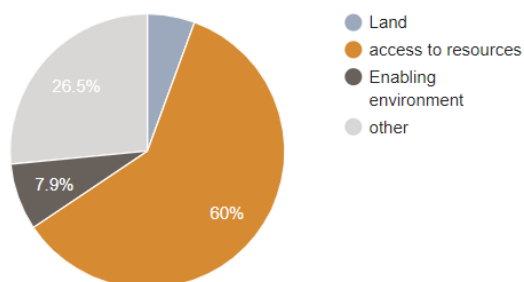
From land rights data analysed in 13 projects in 6 countries, HEKS/EPER, together with its partners, facilitated in 2020 access to **92’829 hectares of land for 140’213 individuals** covered by different access rights. Almost all, 99% (91’927 ha) of this surface is covered by collective and only 1% (901 ha) by individual land rights. 99.3% (92’176 ha) are use rights for the people living on and from the land, and 0.7% (653ha) are transfer rights. 611 individuals (281 are women) profited from individual land rights, of which 281 are women and 139’602 from collective land rights, of which a slight majority 70’644 are women, which can be rated as a success.



Status of land rights of people supported in their legal fight for securing their land 2020.

The figures show the status of land rights of the land secured for these people in 2020. When we look at individual plots, **74.8% of the analysed of plots have a status of being implemented and adjudicated** – meaning that the land right is a legally binding right, usually documented and assigned by legal authority and implemented in the sense that the concerned land is de facto utilised. When we look at the status of land rights regarding hectares, the big majority, 97.4% of analysed land, have a status of being in the process of protection. This high number stems from a land access process in Senegal, where in the North Eastern province Ferlo, after years of negotiation, 87’500 ha of land is now in the process of being reforested and protected with the help of the Ministry of Livestock. However, formal adjudication on a national level is still outstanding.

50 plots comprising 87’500 ha of land were newly in the process of becoming adjudicated – most of them collective land rights. Such processes need distinctive follow-up by the people claiming their land rights and steady efforts of HEKS/EPER supporting these people over the years. The fact that 99% of all ha of land HEKS/EPER facilitates access to collective land rights (91’927 ha), yet they form only 20% of the plots. The other 80% of the plots compromise only 1% of the land. This is in line with HEKS/EPER’s ambition to focus more on collective land rights



Type of claims: 60% of all claims demand rights linked to resources; 7% are linked to land.

In addition, within 9 projects from 4 countries, 12 claims related to access to land and 129 related to access to resources. Duty-bearers accepted 5 land claims, 62 claims for resources. The duty-bearers already accept 77% of these claims, and 87% are binding. The vast majority of the claims related to land and resources were individual claims (about 80%).

Despite the difficulties and complexity of addressing land rights issues in many contexts, HEKS/EPER is working, and substantial progress could be achieved during 2020 and security of access to land – individually or collectively – increased.

Brazil – Agricultural Heritage of Mina Gerais



Since 2014, HEKS/EPER has supported its partner CODECEX, a local grass-root movement for the defence of the rights of flower picking communities in the Serra do Espinhaço range of Minas Gerais, Brazil, in their efforts to claim their right to land and develop sustainable land use strategies. The access to their ancestral territories is increasingly threatened by green grabbing, the implementation of huge eucalypt plantations and mining activities and has led to increasing land disputes and violence in the region. In March 2020, these communities (10.800 individuals) won recognition for their crucial role enhancing biodiversity and preserving traditional knowledge in a territory of approximately 100.000 ha.

It is the first time that a Brazilian site won the recognition as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS). 'Thanks to their profound understanding of natural cycles and ecosystems, and their vast knowledge of native flora, the local communities manage all kinds of agricultural activities well adapted to each soil type, geographic and climatic characteristics to sustain their lives', said FAO GIAHS Coordinator Yoshihide Endo.

This territorial working approach to strengthen land rights and enhance governance structures of local communities on the natural resources of their traditional territories is already gaining the attention of other communities, and discussions have started between national FAO representatives and HEKS/EPER where and how to support other promising initiatives in the country.

Cambodia – Preventing Land Grabbing



In Cambodia, knowledge about land rights/laws is still insufficient and marginalised and indigenous groups are often subject to micro and macro land grabbing. Until recently, those affected by rights violations in the Province Monduliri had no way to defend their rights because there was no structure to complain. In 2020 HEKS/EPER partners in Cambodia have been able to establish formal alternative

dispute resolution mechanisms linking communities, state administration and traditional processes. In addition, HEKS/EPER has contributed to a provincial NGO network that aims to combine forces to exploit synergies and promote constructive dialogue with the provincial administration and ministries. These strategic networks provide links to provincial advisory groups to protect rights holders in the more asymmetric conflicts that cannot be dealt with effectively due to the large imbalance of power in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. As in other countries where HEKS/EPER is present, an increasing emphasis on collective land rights, is also particularly important in countries such as Cambodia, where individual titling is much faster compared to collective titling, leaving those groups who invest in obtaining collective titles behind. In 2020, HEKS/EPER partners were able to advance the lengthy process towards collective land rights with the recognition of two community land titles by the Ministry of Interior.

Study on coherence of Swiss foreign politics with UNDROP

In December 2018, the international community adopted the ‘Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas’ (UNDROP). 28 articles describe the most important rights that peasants worldwide are entitled to, including the right to land. HEKS/EPER has joined forces with a broad alliance of civil society organizations to promote the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) in the North and the South. Switzerland was one of the supportive countries to get the declaration signed and adopted by many countries the alliance aims at entering a dialogue with Swiss administration in order to follow up on its commitments towards the UNDROP.

A study published in 2020, commissioned by HEKS/EPER, Bread for All, CETIM, Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund, FIAN-Switzerland, SWISSAID and Uniterre, analysis that there is a considerable need for action in Swiss foreign policy to advance the implementation of the UN Declaration to which Switzerland has committed

itself. The study, analysed Swiss foreign policy in areas of trade, seeds and land rights as well as development cooperation. It revealed shortcomings – e.g., Switzerland’s focus on trade liberalisation or certain measures to protect Swiss agriculture. It presents a catalogue of demands as this nationally oriented policy disadvantages small farmers in the countries of the South and violates the rights enshrined in the UNDROP. As a result, countless people lose their right to land, to biodiversity and to a clean and healthy environment. Here, Switzerland is called upon to take a close look and to review the impact of existing or future free trade agreements on farming families in Switzerland as well as in partner countries. In addition, the participation of farmers in the negotiations must be proactively promoted and the standards adapted accordingly. Switzerland should clearly position itself in favour of the right to seeds and thus renounce strict plant variety protection laws as a component of free trade agreements.

Farmers have always bred, used and reproduced seeds and thus contributed to the protection of biodiversity. Through development cooperation, Switzerland should encourage the development of alternative plant variety protection laws and strengthen local farmer seed systems.

Furthermore, the study shows that in the new Dispatch on the International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024, farmers’ rights are not mentioned, except in the SDC’s Global Programme for Food Security, and that the strong involvement of the private sector poses a considerable risk in terms of respect for human rights and traditional land use. However, Switzerland must ensure that all Seco and SDC projects are in line with farmers’ rights. In order to enable and strengthen their voice and participation, the study recommends that international cooperation support farmers so that they can claim and exercise their rights. In addition, it should support the formation and promotion of farmers’ organisations and national farmers’ councils.

At today’s meeting between the NGOs and representatives of the federal offices, including the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Institute of Intellectual Property, the results of the study were presented. The clients of the study appreciate this openness and hope for continued constructive dialogue.



RESEARCH BRIEF

DIE SCHWEIZER AUSSENPOLITIK UND DIE ERKLÄRUNG DER VEREINigten NATIONEN ÜBER DIE RECHTE DER KLEINBAUERN UND - BAUERINNEN

Other publications related to access to land

- GENEVA ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS (2020). Research Brief – Die Schweizer Aussenpolitik und die Erklärung der Vereinten Nationen über die Rechte der Kleinbauern und -bäuerinnen.
- HEKS/EPER (2019). Securing the mobility of pastoralists. The ZAMTAPO project in Niger – Capitalisation of HEKS/EPER experiences. Working Paper N°4, 04/2019, Zurich, April 2019.
- HEKS/EPER (2019). Access to Land Annual Report 2018. Report on Swiss Church Aid’s strategy, activities, progress and perspectives on access to land. May 2019.
- HEKS/EPER (2018). Access to Land Annual Report 2017. Report on Swiss Church Aid’s activities, impact and perspectives related to access to land. April 2018.
- HEKS/EPER (2017). Access to Land in the Philippines. Capitalisation of HEKS/EPER Experiences. Working Paper N°3, 07/2017, Zurich, July 2017.
- HEKS/EPER (2017). Access to Land Annual Report 2016. Report on Swiss Church Aid’s activities, impact and perspectives related to access to land. May 2017.
- HEKS/EPER (2015). Assess & Enhance Land Tenure Security, HEKS/EPER Analytical Framework. Working Paper N° 2, 02/2015, Zurich, February 2015.
- HEKS/EPER (2012). Access to Land – laying the groundwork for development, Working Paper N° 1, 12/2012. Zurich, December 2012.

The HEKS/EPER (digital) Landforum

On 28th October 2020 HEKS/EPER together with IUCN and the University of Berne organised the **3rd Landforum**, which due to COVID-19 was held online, after it had been already cancelled in March 2020. The 2020 Landforum under the title *'Strengthening Governance and Land Tenure Rights as a Response to Climate Change'* analysed specifically at the land climate change interactions and shared interesting insights from the three organising organisations as well as the participants. 62 participants participated in the workshop and a smaller group signalled interest to further exchange on the topic in a Community of Practice.

Perspectives 'access to land'

Strengthening land, territorial and natural resources rights is key to eliminate poverty, strengthening food sovereignty, reducing inequality and conflict, advancing gender equality, and preserving biodiversity and ecosystem services. Local communities with secure tenure rights and the possibility to sustainably use and manage natural resources are more resilient to external shocks and stresses and protect and restore landscapes. For HEKS/EPER, land and natural resources governance means people and communities having secured rights to land ownership and/or land use, and that they can control, manage and use the land and its affiliated resources in the long term. HEKS/EPER supports the development of inclusive land governance models and sustainable land-use practices. Based on its expertise and reflecting on the realities in the countries it operates, HEKS/EPER acknowledges the importance of and sets a special focus on territories and the role of ecosystems in providing and sustaining key services such as the provision of food, freshwater, biodiversity, their role in climate and flood regulation and water purification, but also their spiritual, cultural and recreational services, and their important role for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The pandemic showed the fragility of people's access to essential resources disbalancing food systems – with growing inequalities and inequities leading to more hunger, malnutrition, and extreme poverty in many countries HEKS/EPER works in. A shift towards diversified agroecological production systems is urgent. Thus, for HEKS/EPER, securing land, territorial and natural resources rights remain crucial to respond to the mid- and long-term effects of COVID-19 crisis, to eliminate poverty and to strengthen people's food sovereignty.

Based on this, HEKS/EPER will continue advocating for the fulfilment of land and tenure rights and will also in future explicitly link its work related to governance of land and natural resources to overarching legal frameworks to systematically use the legal power at national and/or international level such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Nagoya Protocol, The UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, the ILO Convention 169, and the FAO Tenure Guidelines. HEKS/EPER will continue its **territorial approach** combined with **advocacy and case work** on governance of land and resources focusing on ...

- Community of Practice on land and climate change, fostering linkages between land rights and land governance, ecosystem services, nature-based solutions, highlighting important role indigenous and local communities have as custodians of natural resources.
- Strengthen rights and governance capacities of local communities on natural resources (seeds, biodiversity, water) through the development of Community Protocols (Biological and/or FPIC).
- Support initiatives that value traditional, local agricultural food systems preserving territories, e.g., in the context of FAO's Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems initiative.
- Support inclusive market system initiatives that develop locally promising value chains and market services that derive from sustainably managed forests, pastures, savannas, or marine ecosystems.
- Introducing ICT solutions supportive for small-scale farmer and producers, particularly in the context of agroecological production, land governance and territorial markets.
- Creating synergies between BfA and HEKS/EPER already in 2021, 2 projects start tackling the topics Free Trade Agreement EFTA-Mercosur and climate justice.
- UNDROP in selected countries: Activities focus on capacity-building and awareness rising to support policy work of HEKS/EPER's partners. In Switzerland, HEKS/EPER re-enforces its cooperation with the Friends of the Declaration NGO group.
- HEKS/EPER and its partners further support the international struggles of the Guaraní Kaiowá people to secure their ancestral territories. This case is currently pending in the Interamerican Human Rights Commission in Washington.

More details?

Read the HEKS/EPER's **thematic factsheet 2021** on **land and resources governance**.
https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance

2.2 Inclusive Market and Food Systems

In the frame of the food systems summit, WFP stated that in 2020 957 million people across 93 countries suffer hunger with food systems failing. The number of people suffering from acute hunger and malnutrition is on the rise again.

WFP documents that 155 million people in 55 countries were suffering acute food insecurity in 2020 – 30 million more than in 2019. Amongst the 10 countries, most in crises 6 are countries HEKS/EPER was working in 2020: DR Congo, Syria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Haïti. Yet, the COVID-19 pandemic may push even more families and communities into deeper distress in 2021. The Global Humanitarian Outlook projects 239 million people in need of life-saving humanitarian action and protection this year.

At the same time, malnutrition, obesity and overweight are increasing and cause major health issues. In many cases, food and farming systems around the world are driving environmental degradation, loss of vital ecosystem services, economic hardship for smallholders, socio-economic inequalities, or lead to food insecurity for many. HEKS/EPER promotes sustainable production and food systems as well as inclusive market to ensure food security and to generate additional income as well as economic inclusion. Many of these problems are linked to ‘industrial agriculture’: input-intensive crop monocultures and industrial-scale production practices that now dominate many farming landscapes³.

2.2.1 Inclusive Market Systems

To contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal’s agenda of **leaving-no-one-behind**, i.e., to achieve inclusion and income increase of poor and marginalised people in agriculture and non-agriculture markets in a systemic and sustainable manner, HEKS/EPER applies since 2017 a combination of Market Systems Development (MSD) and Inclusive Business approaches, impact investment and, where needed, additional direct interventions.

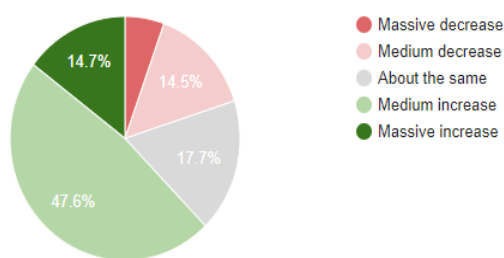
HEKS/EPER promotes an approach that strengthens the voice of families and local communities, upgrades the value chain structure for the benefit of producers, workers and/or consumers. Projects carefully assess market structure, actors and dynamics, reasons for exclusion and malfunctioning of markets, as well as opportunities. Interventions are elaborated in a participatory way. Including vulnerable groups into the mainstream, markets require specific measures to build skills and ownership to overcome barriers for participation, like stigmatisation, lack of trust or prejudice.

Through the **Inclusive Business (IB) approach**, HEKS/EPER supports the creation, development and scaling-up of business models of single companies or entrepreneurs. These models can include vulnerable people at various points in a value chain, be it consumers on the demand side or producers, employees or entrepreneurs on the supply side. Scaling up of such models can be supported by providing investments through the global **impact investment** facility of HEKS/EPER. The **Myanmar projects** supporting ICT entrepreneurship of small yet innovative start-up companies with applications fostering financial literacy led to more income for small-scale farmers and was effective also during COVID-19 crises.

Projects working with private and public actors to improve market systems need to consider the **Human Rights-Based Approach**, which for example, can mean ensuring that companies the project works with adhering to human rights or that government actors fulfil their duties in securing these rights

Generating income

In 17 countries in 53 projects, HEKS/EPER supported more than 100’000 people in market or agroecological production relates projects to increase their income. Target 2020 was that half of the project participant would achieve an increase. The numbers reported from the country surveys show that 61% (14.7 more than 20%; 47.6% 5-20 %) of the people (total 62,880) achieved a higher income. Out of the persons stating a positive change in their incomes, 53% explain this increase by **increased outputs** and 48.3 % by the **increase of**



Income: Despite the COVID-19 crises 61% of the project participants still stated an increase in income.

³ IPES-Food (2016). From uniformity to diversity: a paradigm shift from industrial agriculture to diversified agroecological systems. International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems, Brussels.

market prices, both remarkable facing the COVID-19 crises. 20% (2019 14%) of stated a **decrease of their incomes**, mainly due to decreased production (unfavourable climate conditions, increased production), less demand or lower prices they achieved selling on markets; many stated to have lost their jobs. Income had been used by 58% of the respondents for consumption purposes, 40% reinvested in their farming business, 35% saved the money, and 31% used it for education; amongst those 32% stating they used income for 'other' purposes, most spent it for medical care or house renovation.

Georgia– Organic Hazelnut Production



Hazelnuts for export: Quality check and sorting-out in the middle of the hazelnut

Many families in rural Georgia are engaged in subsistence and live below the minimum subsistence level – HEKS/EPER promotes an organic fair trade hazelnut project to increase the income of local farmers by better production, certification, inclusive market. The private Georgian hazelnut processing company ANKA and the private Swiss premium brand Pakka sells fair-trade nut specialities made from organic ingredients to retail and wholesale in Switzerland and Europe.

The 2020 mid-term review of the Organic Hazelnut Production project revealed evidence that the project activities successfully contributed to a substantial **increase in the income** of the engaged farmers through hazelnut sales. It also has contributed to more decent employment for the families

in rural areas. The review also showed that the project made considerable progress in several areas managed by the farmers themselves. Despite COVID-19 crises and difficult world market conditions, the number of farmers remained stable, and the **hazelnuts' quality improved**. These results have significantly contributed to more consolidated sales. By December 2020, 679 farmers were part of the [UTZ](#) and organic certification system (195 organics among them). 15.3% of farmers reported a massive increase in income through hazelnut sales and 46.6% experienced a medium increase, while 14.7% reported that the income stayed the same as the year before.

Furthermore, some unintended contextual changes could be observed, e.g., a more favourable legislation for farmers through the changing of law for the establishment and operation of cooperatives.

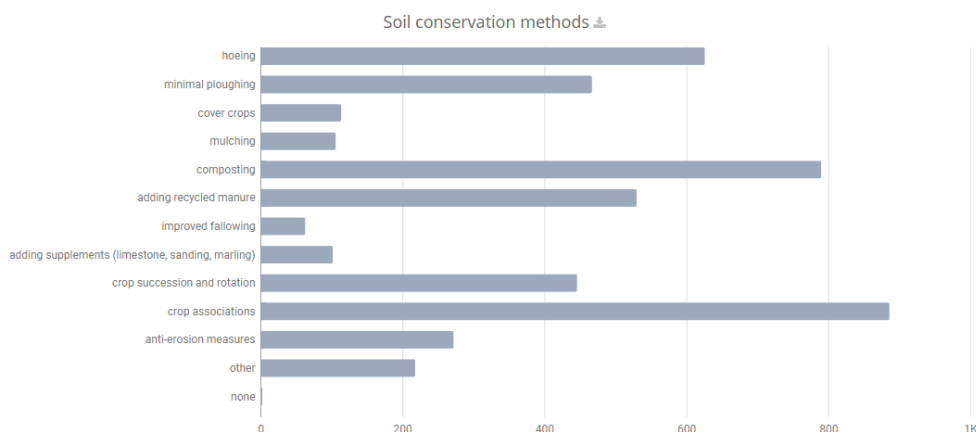
Perspectives 'inclusive market'

Over the past years, HEKS/EPER gradually has in many countries shifted from a production-oriented to a more market-systems-oriented approach. To ensure income, improved livelihood, and to overcome economic discrimination, HEKS/EPER continues to apply a combination of Market Systems Development (MSD) and Inclusive Business approaches, impact investment, and, where needed, additional direct interventions. MSD strengthens the voice of families, small-scale producers and local communities. It upgrades the value chain structure for the benefit of small producers and workers. Projects must carefully assess market structure, actors and dynamics, reasons for exclusion and malfunctioning of markets, as well as opportunities. Interventions are elaborated in a participatory way with relevant market actors and upscaled based on sound monitoring and learning. Including vulnerable groups into the mainstream, markets require more specific measures to build the preconditions needed to take an active role in the market and overcome soft barriers to participation, like stigmatisation, lack of trust, or prejudice. Projects work with private and public actors to improve market systems and will consider HRBA and LNOB. Based on these approaches and understanding of MSD, and also considering the challenges and learnings emerging from the COVID-19 crisis that has shown significant impacts on food markets and consumer behaviour, HEKS/EPER will focus its inclusive markets interventions in 2021 on:

- Development of short food supply chains and more direct producer-consumer relations.
- Development of territorial market approaches that strengthen the production of goods and services deriving from sustainably managed agricultural land, forests, savannas or marine ecosystems.
- Development of business promotion programmes and private sector engagement.
- Further elaboration of impact investment strategies.
- Inclusion of ICT solutions in selected projects.

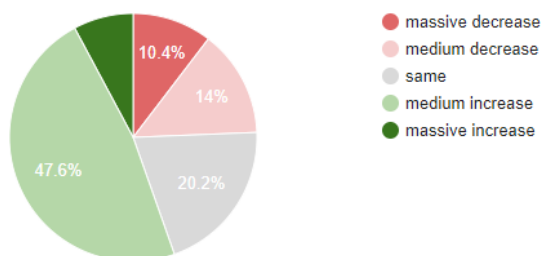
2.2.2 Agroecological Production

HEKS/EPER’s ambition is to promote food security through access to land and sustainable food systems with agroecological production. Progress is measured by a specific key indicator on the application of agroecological production practices⁴ by farming households. Throughout 2020, this indicator was monitored by 6 selected projects in 3 countries⁵ worldwide, which all have the objective to increase knowhow and application of agroecological practices. The 6 projects cover a total production area of 1352.7 hectares. During 2020, it could be achieved that **83% of these surfaces (1125.3 ha) fulfil all set criteria of agroecological production practices**. All of the producers apply soil conservation measures. More than 93% of the producers apply measures to manage ecological relationships such as integrated pest management, crop association, or intercropping. Nearly 100% of the monitored producers do not use GMO on their plots. About 88% of the producers also do not use synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. The most



prevailing soil conservation methods applied compared over all different contexts are crop association (by 88% of the producers), composting (79%), hoeing (62%). 90% of the farmers use locally suited varieties of crop.

Perceived change in agricultural yield



Yields: 55.4% of the project participants stated an increase in agricultural yields – mainly thanks to better techniques.

Another HEKS/EPER key indicator measures the self-perceived change in agricultural yields and its explaining factors. Data from 9 projects in 6 countries show, that **55.4%** (2019: 71.4%) of the asked producers state a medium or massive **increase** in their agricultural yields compared with their last agricultural season. The explaining factors for these increases in yield are quite diverse: about 60% of the producers’ state that the increase in yield can be explained by improved technical factors such as better soil management, pest management, irrigation practices or general improved production skills. Additional factors mentioned are favourable weather conditions or investment possibilities due to savings from last year. About **25%** of the asked producers in the different

regions state a **decrease** in their yields. Here, the main explaining factors are loss due to unfavourable climatic conditions (77%!).

Perspectives on agroecological production

In most HEKS/EPER countries, agricultural production and agriculture-based markets play an important role in the livelihoods of smallholders, indigenous and local communities. This is even more true during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 and the next years, as these markets did not work well for the most vulnerable or even exclude them. Production is difficult due to lack of relevant know-how or changing climatic conditions and lack of access to inputs, or simply lack of physical access to the workplace or the land plot.

⁴ The indicator defines three criteria to be fulfilled for agroecological production practices: Application of at least one resource (soil, water, biodiversity) conservation method; application of at least one measure to manage ecological relationships such as integrated pest management, intercropping, crop/livestock integration; and guarantee that no GMO and no synthetic / inorganic pesticides and inorganic fertilizers are used.

⁵ Cambodia, India, Brazil, DR Congo, Niger and Senegal.

Guided by the principles of agroecology and food sovereignty, as outlined in important international frameworks like the UN Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, HEKS/EPER includes strategies to empower smallholder farmers and other people living in rural areas, as well as those that facilitate access to sustainable agriculture-related knowledge, inputs, services and finances and development and marketing of (new) products; in difficult times as well. Where needed, HEKS/EPER will further invest into additional direct interventions to lift people into agricultural markets based on agroecological production (e.g., providing training or assets).

Sustainable governance of land and natural resources is vital for agricultural production. Securing land tenure for farmers is key for them to be willing to invest in agriculture. In turn, making productive use of land and natural resources can help with securing land tenure. HEKS/EPER, therefore, sees the two topics as interlinked and will try to combine them where appropriate.

More details?

Read the HEKS/EPER’s **thematic factsheets 2021** on **‘Inclusive Markets’**.
https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance

2.3 HRBA / Dialogue Between Duty-Bearers and Rights-Holders

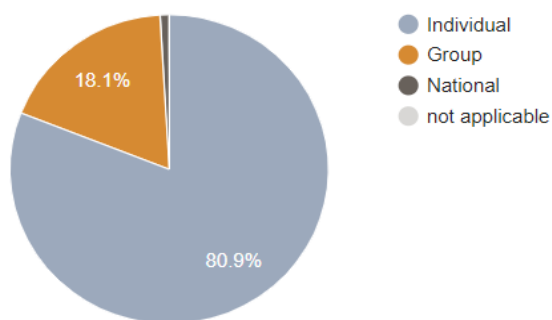
Despite all human beings being entitled to equal human rights without discrimination of any kind, discrimination and inequalities persist and, in many cases, have worsened. At the global level, inequality has risen significantly since 1990, notwithstanding strong growth and the decline of national poverty figures in some countries. Inequality has increased in nearly all world regions in recent decades but at different speeds. Discrimination, exclusion and inequality have high economic costs, jeopardize political stability, and remain key obstacles to sustainable development. HEKS/EPER aims to promote equal opportunities by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices.

COVID-19 has deepened existing inequalities, with a disproportionately bigger economic impact on marginalised and vulnerable, who are also more exposed to the risk of infection, and due to poor access to medical care, serious illness and death. Unless this changes, the world will not contain the pandemic with its devastating consequences, certainly for MIC and LIC countries. Inequality and discrimination go along with enormous economic costs and jeopardise social cohesion and political stability, and remains a key obstacle to reaching the Agenda 2030 and its pledge for ‘leaving no one behind’. Thus, HEKS/EPER invests in **building quality relationships** between private and state actors with members of civil society. Strengthening the capacities of rights-holders and making duty-bearers aware of their responsibilities was and will be key to fight the COVID-19 crises. And policy dialogue remains, of course, the most promising practice to institutionalize policies and practices that enable equal rights.

Applying the HRBA for more than ten years successfully, HEKS/EPER and its partner organisation have achieved considerable results. Some of the key results of 2020 about HRBA are discussed below.

In 2020, HEKS/EPER enabled claims for **15’824 people**. HEKS/EPER gathered key indicator data on 142152 people to which the charts refer. 213 applications were submitted, 99 already have been accepted. The proportion of accepted claims increased from 42% in 2019 to 46% in 2020.

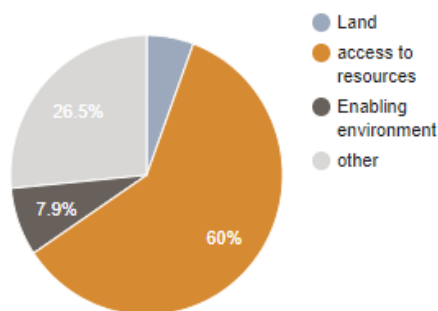
HEKS/EPER focused on **individual claims** (see graph left) – in particular, for access to resources and land, and enabling environment – sensitizing project participants about advantages referring to promising policies and practices.



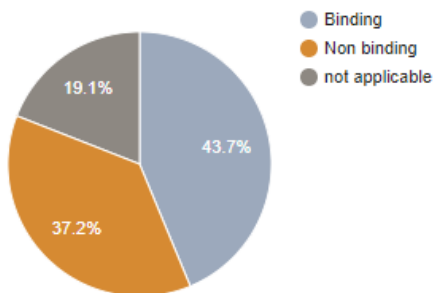
Claims: Most claims, 81%, are claiming individual rights.

and practices. Thus, *individual claims made* inclined from 47 % in 2019 to 81 % in 2020. Binding claims increased from 37% in 2019 to 43.7% in 2020. Since 2017 the share of women benefitting constantly was around 50%.

Interestingly the number of claims has been quite stable. However, we might have expected a decline in the pandemic with communities and Governments attention on other necessities and coordination was impaired by restrictions on freedom of assembly and movement. This can be interpreted as good adaptability to the new circumstances the pandemic put on programming.



Claims: Majority of claims is linked to land (7%) and resources (60%).



Claims: In 2020, more binding claims were made and accepted – 43.7%.

Within 9 projects from 4 countries, 12 claims related to access to land and 129 related to access to resources (60% of all claims). Duty-bearers accepted 7 land claims, 67 claims for resources have been accepted. The duty-bearers already accept 52% of these claims, and 41% are of binding character. The vast majority of the claims related to land and resources were individual claims (about 87%). But also comprise group and national claims, and in total, about 15'000 households shall benefit in the different project regions.

Partners keep on addressing the shrinking of space for civil rights actors. Whereas in 2017, 4.3% of the claims aimed at enabling environment for civil society activities, the ratio increased to 7.7% in 2018 and doubled to 16.6% in 2019. In 2020, it dropped again to 7.9%; COVID-19 restriction might be the main reason.

Another trend is the increase of **non-binding claims** (*graph left bottom*). The reason varies, but long-term binding claims demand more time and work. The needs of marginalised urge often immediate action before a legal system officially grants a binding claim. Also, trust in the national/international legal system seems to decrease. Thus, quick negotiations toward 'simple' favours are often seen as the better option by project participants. Binding claims decreased in comparison to 2017 but increased a little compared to 2020. HEKS/EPER will follow up if the increase of non-binding claims may be the reason for the increase of approvals.

The indicator on '**degree of cooperation between civil society and duty-bearers**' provides insights into HEKS/EPER's engagement enhancing constructive relationships. Data show HEKS/EPER focuses on dialogue with local authorities, as progress opportunities are the most promising on this level, with 2/3 of the collaborations being local. 2017, 2018 and 2019 institutionalised and respectful collaboration has greatly increased from 5% in 2017 to 1/3 in 2019. And relations characterized by mutual respect increased from 2% in 2017 to 20% in 2019. Institutionalized contact decreased to only 7% in 2020 – most relationships between civil society and duty-bearers were described as 'issue-based' (57%). 31% were at least 'constructive'. This clear deterioration is mostly linked to the phase-out in Zimbabwe with a strong dialogue programme and, of course, to COVID-19 19, making relationships tenser, and rights of communities and CSO actors were neglected or denied; also, civil society opportunities to gather in multi-stakeholder meetings were diminishing. The full impact of this trend will be seen when the pandemic is under control.

In 2020, HEKS/EPER facilitated in 7 countries 103 **capacity-building workshops** and **learning/sensitization events**, 40 in the field of human-rights based approach, conflict sensitivity and conflict transformation that included 16'800. The AAP land rights project in DR Congo was very active in sensitising duty-bearers, reaching 174 local authority representatives.

The number of **own initiatives taken for equality and non-violence** is important to follow-up the success of capacity-building in how far own initiatives of communities are following. These own initiatives show commitment, as well as behavioural change and, are thus an indicator for the possible sustainability of a project. Data gathered from 4 projects in 3 countries show that 84 activities have been traced. 83% were collective initiatives. 35% were taken up independently, 51% were facilitated by HEKS/EPER and 14% supported by other organizations.

Perspectives on HRBA and the policy dialogue between rights-holders & duty-bearers

Despite the considerable achievements of working human rights-based, cooperation, capacity-building and accountability of duty-bearers remains an ongoing challenge for HEKS/EPER, especially in fragile and conflict context and in pandemic containments. In the last years, international institutions and frameworks such as human rights are coming more and more under pressure, and the COVID-19 crises exacerbate the situation. In many countries, not only in the South, authoritarian governments shrank space with free movement and assembly restrictions. This, and also the lack of security for civil society, made mistrust in government systems grow. Other hindering factors include informal relationships and nepotism, the pitfalls of



Senegal: Claims linked to land and resources were made with the support of HEKS/EPER – they are pending and local partners organize the follow-up.

assimilation or segregation, lack of responsibility and interest on the part of duty-bearers, conflicts over scarce resources and last but not least, the fear of elites and mainstream society of losing privileges.

Based on the study of ACT Alliance (2019): [Development Needs Civil Society](#) about HEKS/EPER's evaluations and learnings, the new HIP 21-24 strengthens the scope of civil society action in the project's programming and are about to develop guidelines to implement 'civil society empowerment as a cross-cutting approach. And, with the merger of HEKS/EPER and

BfA and the new specific outcome 'Supportive Policies and Practices', the new organization starting in 2022, wants to create synergies to promote HRBA practically in project implementation as well as on an advocacy and sensitization level on a local, national and international level. Constructive dialogue between civil society and governments is key to fighting the pandemic and overcoming discrimination in the mid- and long-term, achieving the SDGs and the goals of HEKS/EPER.

However, some opportunities have emerged, for example, through advancing digitalisation. Thanks not least to the commitment of international civil society organisations, including HEKS/EPER in association with ACT Alliance, the importance of promoting the role and function of civil society to enable ownership and sustainable development has become established in the discourse of international cooperation. Numerous multinational (e.g., UN; OECD, EU, UN), donors and SDC, with its new IC strategy 21-24 developed guidelines for promoting civil society. The realization of human rights is not possible without accountable and capacitated duty-bearers and empowered rights-holders, who cooperate and interact with each other. Thus, enhancing frequent, constructive, mutually respectful and meaningful policy dialogue is a precondition for HEKS/EPER's rights-based programming. The scope of civil society to influence systems and policies that grants inclusion, justice, and sustainability depends on the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers.

More details?

Read the **three (!)** HEKS/EPER's **thematic factsheets 2020** on '**Enabling Environment for Civil Society**', '**Relationships for Equitable and Peaceful Societies**' and '**HRBA & Dialogue**'.

https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance

2.4 Social Inclusion / Non-Discrimination

During the last decades, HEKS/EPER supported and facilitated processes towards enhancing the inclusion and fulfilment of rights of discriminated and excluded minority groups such as Roma, Dalit, Adivasi and other indigenous or traditional communities in Eastern Europe, Latin America and Africa and Asia.

The experience of HEKS/EPER shows that lack of trust within excluded groups as well as from and towards the mainstream society is a **key challenge to social inclusion**. Other hindering factors are informal relations and nepotism, the pitfalls of assimilation or segregation, lack of interest of duty-bearers, scarce resources and fear of mainstream society to lose their privileges.

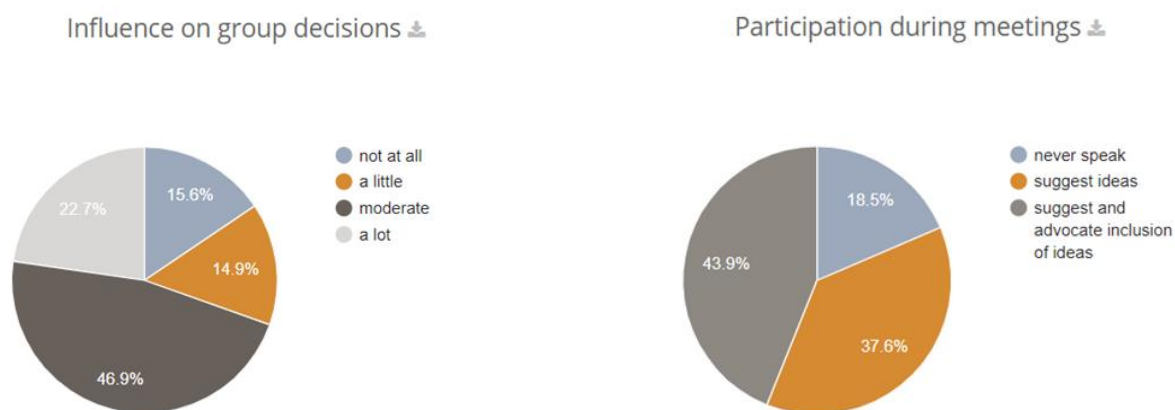
Measuring 'access to basic services' such as education, health and social schemes, infrastructures such as housing or drinking water is relevant data indicating more inclusion.

2.4.1 Non-Discrimination Worldwide

HEKS/EPER enabled **access to basic services** for 16'627 persons – in Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, DR Congo and in Eastern Europe in Moldova, Kosovo, Serbia and Romania. 6 projects in 4 countries collected digital data with additional qualitative info of 2225 individuals; 1438 women got access to services thanks to HEKS/EPER. More than 1435 belong to minority groups such as Dalit or Adibashi in Bangladesh or to groups excluded from social or health services such as elderly people in rural areas of Moldova. Most services were community services aiming to improve individuals or household livelihood through access to public water or hygiene systems, roads, or a newly granted education or medical service.

The indicator **'# of own initiatives taken for equality and non-violence'** is important to follow-up the success of capacity-building endeavours in how far they resulted in communities' initiatives. These own initiatives show commitment, as well as behavioural change and, are thus an indicator for the possible sustainability of a project. Data gathered from 4 projects in 3 countries (South Caucasus, DR Congo and Isr/Pal) show that -despite COVID-19 – **84 activities** have been implemented and traced.; 83% were collective initiatives. 35 % were taken up independently; 51% were facilitated by HEKS/EPER and 14% supported by other organizations. Beneficiaries were almost 1000 in the South Caucasus and 3100 in DR Congo. Pal/Isr initiatives aimed to promote equality for more than 200'000 people.

Women's effective participation in decision-making bodies at the community level has been measured in 11 projects in 5 countries so far. Women feel that they can have moderate (47%) or high (23%) influence in community bodies in many organisations where they participate. In 38% of organisations, the women are encouraged to suggest ideas, and in 44% of organisations even advocate for the adoption of their ideas (which is 10% more than it was in 2019). However, in 19% of organisations, the women never speak out, and in 30% of organisations, the women feel that they have little or no influence.



Effective women participation in decision-making bodies at community level (data from 11 projects in 5 countries).

2.4.2 Non-Discrimination in Eastern Europe

HEKS/EPER assisted with DC projects directly promoted inclusion for 18'103 people; indirectly 120'000 working towards various objectives – mainly fostering **social/market inclusion** and **improved inter-group relations**.

Overall, in Eastern Europe, 5'941 individuals did profit from projects providing **equal access for discriminated to basic rights and services** like education, housing, health and social services. In the frame of the **Roma inclusion programme** in Romania, Serbia, and Kosovo, HEKS/EPER reached 3'941 people.

- **Housing:** In **Kosovo**, HEKS/EPER did not anymore invest directly in house upgrading yet establishes since 2020 cooperation with municipalities, so they subsidize a housing programme for the marginalized, based on successful models developed previously. Negotiation takes place with 3 municipalities, 1 agreed already. A three-year housing action agreement with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning was reached that considers

| Access to basic services in HEKS/EPER Eastern Europe development projects | |
|---|---------|
| Individuals | Country |
| 2000 | Moldova |
| 1'966 | Kosovo |
| 1'371 | Romania |
| 604 | Serbia |
| 5'941 individuals in total | |

marginalised needs, including those living in informal settlements. In **Serbia**, house legalization continued with administrative procedure, preparation of technical documentation for houses in three Roma settlements in Novi Sad, one Roma settlement in Arandelovac, 2 Roma settlements in Raška and 1 Roma settlement in Požega. In total, 150 houses continued the process of legalization during 2020.

- **Education:** In **Serbia**, 200 children did profit from various educational programmes of partner EHO (tutoring, learning support under COVID-19 measures). In **Kosovo**, HEKS/EPER enabled 19 learning centres in 12 municipalities supporting 891 children; 534 secondary students received scholarships, and of them, 200 also mentoring and 127 tutoring support. Initiated by HEKS/EPER partners, after-school support made a step forward as a cooperation agreement was signed to institutionalise the programme of 17 learning centres, which will be managed by respective municipalities starting from 2021 with the partial financial support of HEKS/EPER until they take over full responsibility.

In **Romania**, educational support and social inclusion activities for 1660 Roma children in 52 localities were enhanced, with 123 children participating at the COVID-19 catch-up educational summer camp in August. 82% of parents were reached for workshops/meetings for sensitization on education, COVID-19 and inclusion. Overall, 2755 children and young students were supported. Advocacy to institutionalize legally the financing of after school programmes was approved, offering vouchers for pupils – piloting started, the nation-wide budget will be 30 M Euro.

In **Hungary**, 750 students of vulnerable background profit from efforts of 4 Reformed schools to offer inclusive education system – 2 additional schools developed an action plan to become inclusive schools as well. Additionally, the Roma inclusion project offered 300 Roma students afterschool fosters school performance and life skills to create long-term perspectives.

- **Income & employment:** In **Kosovo**, a consortium continued to focus on job mediation, internship programme and to advocate for the increase of numbers of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians working in public institutions. A cooperation agreement was signed with the State Employment Agency to support Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian: In total, 50 young jobseekers have started an internship and 14 got employed by the end of the year. In total, 90 young people were part of the information and mediation process, and 20 got employed. The consortium identified 14 informal Roma construction groups all over Kosovo and supported 5 of them to formalize their construction companies and register their business.



Kosovo: Joining the formal labour market with the internship pro-gramme – 14 out of 50 got employed in 2020.

In **Romania**, 26% of the beneficiaries who were part of job mediation services between 2016 and 2019 obtained a job (258 persons). In the difficult 'COVID-year' 2020, 109 students from professional and technical schools received counselling services. 18 were employed after graduation thanks to the mediation of the project (28 companies were contacted for job mediation); 10 got employed on their own initiative. The main activities to reach this goal were networking and job mediations with private companies and public institutions. Since 2019/2020, the focus was on quality rather than quantity, so a mentoring process for the candidates during the job mediation process was maintained to improve the chances of insertion in the labour market. A study conducted in 2019/2020 gives insights into how jobseekers' retention rate from vulnerable groups in their newly found jobs can be increased by employers providing adequate support during the induction period and by actively creating a culture of mutual respect. Respective training for HR and middle management of employers of the public and private sector took place with 84 participants of 8 companies that emphasised how to increase retention rate.

- Access to **social assistance** and **health care** was provided through DC partner CASMED, mainly in **Moldova**, reaching out to more than 600 elderly and sick. Additionally, CASMED provided health and prevention assistance related to Covid-19 for overall 2000 people. In **Romania**, 260 sick and elderly were part of the DC-funded homecare programme. In **Serbia**, CC-funded Diaconia Homecare Service supported 1'192 elderly and sick – with visits varying from 1 to dozens per person.
- **Inclusion:** In **Kosovo**, an antigypsism campaign was launched with key politician, journalists and human rights activist as messengers for non-discrimination, and with a social media campaign viewed by 170'000 people. An antigypsism summit and a conference with key stakeholders participating were successful.

Economic inclusion – diapraxis project in Bangladesh

HEKS/EPER Bangladesh promotes inclusive market systems where **Dalit and Adibashi receive opportunities to increase their income and improve their economic status**. Dalit are the lowest cast of the minority community Hindus. Adibashi are ethnic minorities with distinct religious and ethnic characteristics. Both groups are socio-economically and politically discriminated, with significantly lower access to education, health services, social security, infrastructure, the justice system and the labour market.

Dalits typically earn a living as shoe, leather or bamboo basket makers, scavengers, garbage and carcass removers, street sweepers and latrine cleaners, for municipalities and private households. They cannot engage in other occupations due to a lack of skills or the unwillingness of the majority to use services of 'untouchables'.

The ethnic minorities, Adibashi, typically work as daily labourer on the farmland of others. Like Dalits, they lack recognized land ownership, for the little land they may have.

As from 2017 till 2020, **1983 Dalit and Adibashi households bull fattening, chicken rearing and door mat production**, and directly **7'500 people benefitted** from this HEKS/EPER's project. The COVID-19 pandemic reduced some progress in 2020. Still achievements over the past 4 years were remarkable:

- The average income thanks to these three commercial activities increased from 4921 BDT (average in the phase 2013-2016) to 8323 BDT, and 72% of the producers increased their income.
- 1238 producers received vocational trainings improving their skills to successfully produce and market.
- 236 youth received technical training, and 228 were linked to the job market.
- Women were explicitly included in the activities – most of the members of the producer groups were women. About 100 of them expanded their business on a large scale, gradually increasing their income, and they kept power on managing the finances.
- About 50% of the people involved in bull fattening, 55% involved in chicken rearing and 80% involved in doormat production were able to sell their production to the mainstream market, i.e., to people of the majority population. These linkages help to improve social inclusion of the marginalised Dalit and Adibashi.
- 270 claims related to agriculture subsidy card, water& sanitation, roads construction, temple, TVET, safety-net, drug, community solar were submitted, and 111 accepted by authorities.
- Most project participants are landless. Still, the project enabled land user rights of overall 52 ha land for 428 people. 185 got even transfer rights over 9.4 ha.
- 5425 individuals got access to basic public services, e.g., Government safety nets, education, medical care etc., thanks to advocacy programmes.
- Education rate increased and child marriage gradually decreased. 98% of children are going to pre-primary school, 96% to primary school, 84% to secondary school and 50% to the higher secondary level.
- In total 132 people were included in the various steering committees of which 47 women; committees such as school management committee, standing committee, Bazar committee, ward committee for promoting their rights and entitlements. This inclusion to committees dominated by mainstream society is a success.
- During COVID-19 crises in 2020 1441 people received from Government and Non-Government organisation food support, 469 direct cash assistance. This thanks to advocacy.

2.4.3 Non-Discrimination Activities of Church Cooperation

In **Eastern Europe**. HEKS/EPER also works on social inclusion of marginalized groups through church cooperation focusing on 3 areas: i) homecare for elderly and sick/handicapped in Romania, Ukraine and Serbia; ii) Roma inclusion in Hungary, Slovakia, Ukraine; iii) on migration/refugees in the Czech Republic, in Hungary, Slovakia and Serbia. These **CC inclusion projects reached 19'700 individuals**. In the **Middle East**, Church Cooperation's activities on social inclusion reached 11'050 people, including Syrian refugees in Lebanon (1'480 people) or Syria enabling almost 5000 Muslim and Christian children and youth access to the education and afterschool programme.

Perspectives non-discrimination and 'access to services' in Eastern Europe

HEKS/EPER launched a new phase of the Programme Social Inclusion and Equality in Eastern Europe 2021–2025, working towards the vision of disadvantaged people enjoying equal rights and equal opportunities and actively participating in society. Today, in most countries of Eastern Europe, a significant proportion of the population is at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Roma are among the most affected, with poverty levels at least twice as high as those of the respective majority populations, with high unemployment rates and a significant gap in educational attainment. Access to public institutions and services (education, medical care, public infrastructures such as electricity, water or sewage) is limited for Roma communities.

Consultations with a wide range of stakeholders in Europe concluded that the failure to address antigypsism and discrimination is one of the most important reasons why social inclusion efforts have been only partly successful. HEKS/EPER is therefore giving greater importance to acting upon antigypsism and discrimination, e.g., through trainings for service providers, through campaigns in which stereotypes are challenged, and alternative narratives strengthened, or through support for inclusive small-scale civil society projects and local church congregations. In addition, the successful models developed in the previous programme phase for inclusive education, access to the labour market and improving the housing situation are being continued and anchored in local institutions. HEKS/EPER continues with policy dialogue and successful negotiations between rights-holders and duty-bearers or for better inclusion of marginalized communities and individuals. The Key is not to provide services substituting Government, but on facilitating access with duty-bearers made accountable and providing and financing education, infrastructure, health, social assistance, etc. Promising examples in the previous years are to be upscaled with homecare services or Roma inclusion activities with substantial contributions of local municipalities towards such endeavours.

More details?

Read the HEKS/EPER's **thematic factsheet 2021** on '**Non-Discrimination & Inclusion**'.

https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance



Homecare projects: As here in Romania, HEKS/EPER partners – mainly diaconic church-based organisations – enable medical and social care for elderly and sick, mostly in remote rural areas of Romania, Ukraine, Serbia, Moldova.

2.5 Climate and Disaster Resilience

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how vulnerable the world is to a truly global catastrophe. But another catastrophe has been building for many decades: the impacts of global warming are already killing people and devastating lives and livelihoods every year, and they will only get worse without immediate, determined action. The frequency and intensity of climatological disaster are increasing (35% since the 1990s), with more category 4 and 5 storms, more heatwaves breaking temperature records and more heavy rains, among many other extremes. Loss of natural resources, food insecurity, direct and indirect health impacts and displacement are likewise rising. In the past ten years, 83% of all disasters triggered by natural hazards were caused by extreme weather- and climate-related events killing more than 400'000 people since 2010.⁶ Also, the IPCC Special Report 'Global warming of 1.5°C'⁷, which was released in October 2018, demonstrates with scientific authority that the impacts of climate change such as the increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, sea-level rise or an increase in the variability of rainfall are already painfully felt under the current global temperature increase of 1°C. Any further warming to or even above 1.5°C will intensify these impacts.

Alongside climate change, biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation are of major concern. The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES 2019⁸) released in May 2019 shows that the health of the world's ecosystem is deteriorating more rapidly than ever, eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide. 75% of the world's land surface has been significantly altered, and around 1 million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction.

Achievements over the past years

In 2014, HEKS/EPER started to systematically analyse climate and disaster risk and integrate resilience-building measures into its programmes and projects. With the help of the Participatory Assessment of Climate and Disaster Risk (PACDR) Tool⁹, which HEKS/EPER developed in cooperation with Bread for All (BfA) and Bread for the World (BftW), natural hazards and impacts of climate change, vulnerabilities and capacities are assessed at the community level. They mean to build assets and capacities identified and implemented. Between 2014 and 2017, HEKS/EPER held capacity-building workshops on climate and disaster resilience for HEKS/EPER office staff and partner organisations in all focus countries. With a systematic integration, the awareness of climate and disaster risks could be raised considerably. In the Latin American and African programmes, the focus of the implemented resilience building measures is mainly on sustainable management of natural resources, soil and water conservation measures, the introduction of climate-resilient agro-ecological farming techniques or conservation of traditional seed varieties which show resilience to extreme weather (e.g., increasing heat stress and drought). In the Asian context, the focus of the implemented resilience building measures is on awareness-raising of climate change issues for minority communities and their integration into governmental disaster risk management and climate change adaptation programmes and financing, as well as supporting them in diversifying livelihoods to become more resilient to shocks and stresses.

Achievements 2020

In 2020 HEKS/EPER could further strengthen its project portfolio concerning nature-based solutions. Regeneration of degraded ecosystems and their sustainable use, management and protection play were of increasing importance in the HEKS/EPER portfolio to adapt to impacts of climate change and to build resilience long term. Examples of such projects are the mangrove regeneration and sustainable use projects in the Sine Saloum Delta in Senegal and in the Grand Anse in Haiti, forest regeneration in Brazil, Niger, Senegal and regeneration of rangelands in Niger and Ethiopia.

Concerning more climate-friendly agricultural cultivation techniques, analysis from the projects revealed that conservation or agroecological farming techniques have also been gaining further importance in the portfolio in 2020:

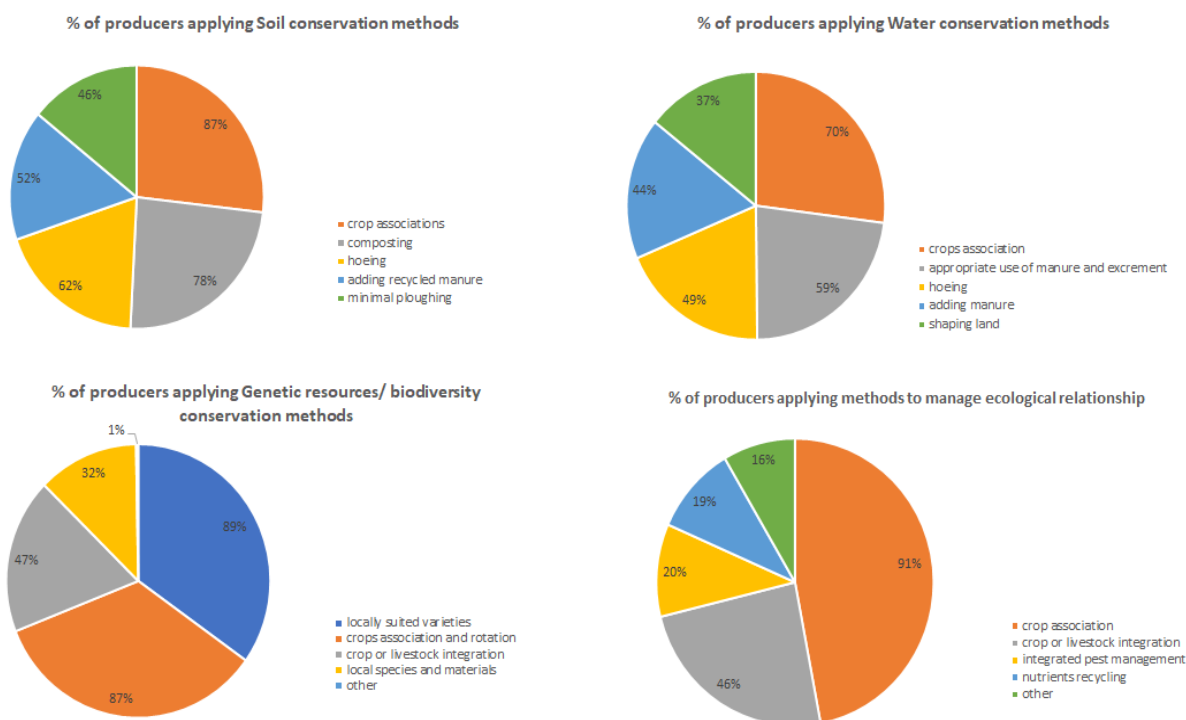
A wide range of conservation methods is applied in different contexts, ranging from soil and water conservation measures to genetic resources, biodiversity conservation and methods to manage the ecological relationship (see figure next page).

⁶ Based on figures of I IFRC (2021). World Disasters Report 2020

⁷ IPCC, 2018: Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

⁸ IPBES, 2019: Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services: <https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services>

⁹ <https://pacdr.net/>



Climate change resilience: HEKS/EPER promotes climate friendly agricultural cultivation techniques with a wide range of conservation methods ranging from soil and water conservation measures to genetic resources, biodiversity conservation and methods to manage ecological relationships.

Other resilience building measures integrated into HEKS/EPER projects are the building of storage facilities for grain, seed and fodder; informal and formal risk-sharing mechanisms, such as grain/seed/fodder banks on a community level linking of communities to insurance schemes for livestock or harvest. Furthermore, the diversification of income strategies plays an important part in resilience building so that people have different income sources to fall back on, given that one of them fails. Particularly in humanitarian aid, projects also contain more technical approaches to resilience building, e.g., disaster-proof (re)construction of houses and infrastructure, building or rehabilitation of evacuation routes, strengthening of early warning mechanisms but also awareness-raising and the establishment of local disaster preparedness committees and plans.

Considering the strengthening of transformative capacities, HEKS/EPER in 2020 facilitated dialogue between the most vulnerable, often minority communities and local authorities to make them aware of their susceptibility to impacts of disasters and climate change and the importance of adaptation measures and finance (Bangladesh, Niger, Senegal, Ethiopia, Brazil).

Perspectives

The biggest experience of HEKS/EPER regarding climate and disaster resilience lies in the field of governance and management of natural resources and the promotion of climate resilient agricultural farming practices. Here, HEKS/EPER should explore across the programme portfolio how to further strengthen the link between land governance and resilience as a solution for the climate and environmental crisis and make this more visible. Another strength of HEKS/EPER that should be applied across the entire portfolio is the application of a rights-based approach in resilience building to make the people we work with aware of what kind of protection from shocks, stresses and uncertainties they are entitled to and to hold authorities accountable to protecting people from disasters linked to natural hazards and prepare them for changes.

A more systematic application of a risk lens is key to integrating resilience building in all projects – this calls for the broader application of community-based risk assessments in the project planning phase. Also, projections about changing climatic conditions should be considered, particularly when it comes to project in the field of agriculture or market system development. To show more evidence regarding HEKS/EPER activities in the field of resilience, further systematic integration of the topic into programme and project reporting is needed. To achieve this, climate and disaster resilience has become an output in the new HEKS/EPER International Programme (HIP) 2021-2024, which the organisation will be measured against.

Through the merger with Bread for All (BfA) as of January 2022, HEKS/EPER will increase its voice for climate justice in Switzerland.

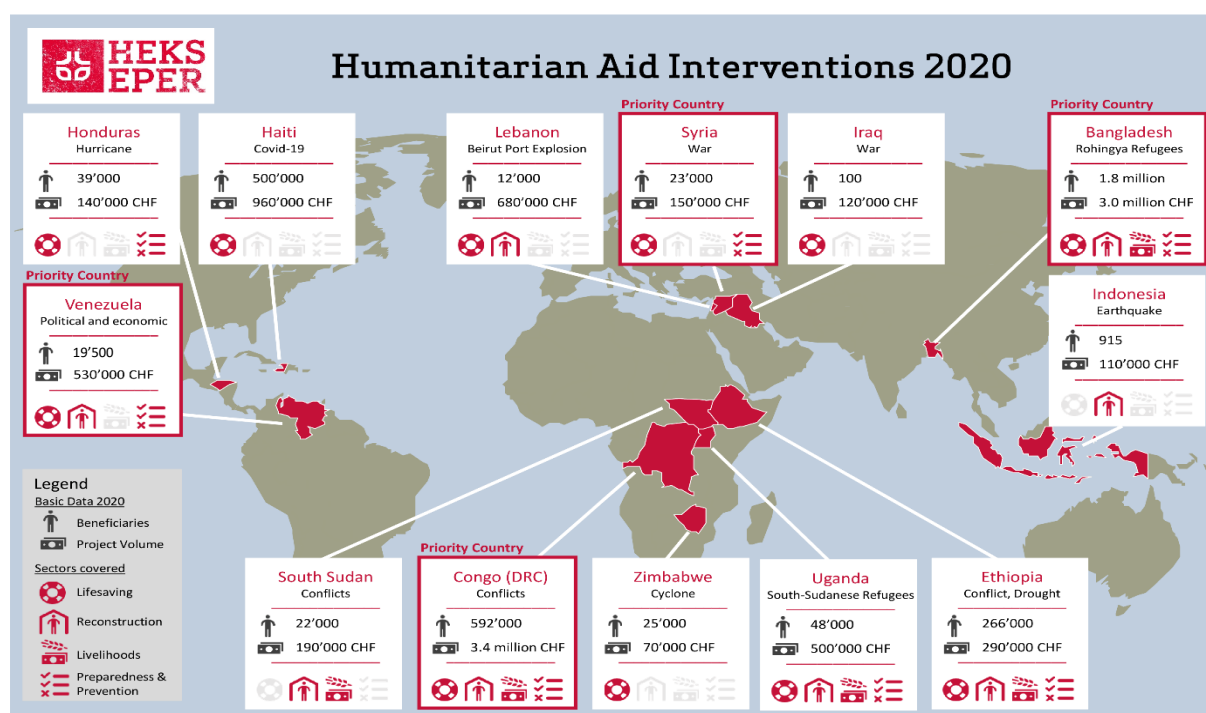
3 Humanitarian Aid

HEKS/EPER’s **humanitarian aid** supported with 17.49 M in 13 countries 3’388 people affected by disasters. With **emergency** aid interventions: 631’273 individuals, COVID-19 emergency measures in Western Haiti reached 500’000 persons. HEKS/EPER was restoring **livelihoods** of 62’723 people; and rehabilitating **infrastructure** for 1’803’763 individuals, including COVID-19 emergency, prevention and infrastructure projects improving the conditions and opportunities of communities – e.g., in Bangladesh the rehabilitation of health centres in the Cox’ Bazaar area for Rohingya refugees and host community was an asset for 1.7 Million people). Prevention and **preparedness** activities in 2020 reached 982’913 people, mainly in Bangladesh, DR Congo and Uganda, Venezuela, mostly linked to COVID-19 awareness-raising. In 2020, more than 3.165 million people benefitted from COVID-19 activities, yet more than 2 million were reached through flexible adaptations of HEKS/EPER development projects.

Even though there were no huge environmental disasters, but the ongoing armed conflicts – such as in Myanmar, Middle East, South Sudan, and the DRC – called for immediate emergency actions with lots of people fleeing the conflict areas and devastated communities in the war zones itself.

| 2020 | Emergency – Lifesaving: Distributions of food/non-food, unconditional cash, etc. | Reconstruction: WASH (infra-structure & hygiene), shelter, roads, schools, etc. | Livelihood: agronomic support, irrigation, economic development, credit schemes | Prevention and Preparedness: in 2020 focussing mainly on COVID-19 | Total direct project beneficiaries |
|--------------|--|---|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Bangladesh | 12’559 | 1’699’568 | 14’800 | 129’276 | 1’840’261 |
| Congo (DRC) | 23’551 | 31’845 | 6’600 | 576’900 | 592’600 |
| Ethiopia | 4’225 | 57’769 | 4’225 | 203’875 | 265’896 |
| Haiti | 500’000 | | | | 500’000 |
| Honduras | 10’048 | 6000 | | 5’550 | 19’548 |
| Indonesia | | 915 | | | 915 |
| Iraq | 102 | | | | 102 |
| Lebanon | 10’835 | 1’120 | | | 12’045 |
| South Sudan | | 2’862 | 19’044 | | 21’915 |
| Syria | 22’600 | | | 5’500 | 22’750 |
| Uganda | 5’988 | 12’055 | 31’098 | 38’549 | 47’973 |
| Venezuela | 16’365 | 401 | | 22’401 | 39’167 |
| Zimbabwe | 25’000 | | | | 25’000 |
| total | 631,273 | 62,723 | 1,803,763 | 982,913 | 3’388’172 |

HA figures 2020: Individuals benefitting from HEKS/EPER HA projects – per country and outcome.



HA countries 2020: Main humanitarian interventions of HEKS/EPER including spending – the focus of HEKS/EPER HA lies in the Middle East, South-East Asia, Latin America/Caribbean and East-Central Africa.

Livelihood activities

Disasters often result in massive destruction of private and public means of livelihoods as communities, and local authorities are not resilient enough to anticipate and independently recover. More than 100'000 people could be reached with livelihood activities in 2019/20, more than planned. This is important, then crises and disasters often result in massive destruction of private and public means of livelihoods as communities, and local authorities are not resilient enough to anticipate and independently recover. Therefore, HEKS/EPER – also in line with its nexus approach – strives for implementation beyond relief, enhancing livelihoods of the most affected and most vulnerable applying CHS principles like participation, empowerment, accountability, equality, and non-discrimination. Aiming at supporting 58'000 people overall in 2019 and 2020, in the reporting period 2019, 39'709 were reached, in 2020 a total of 62'723 individuals' livelihoods were improved with projects in Bangladesh (Rohingya refugees, camp livelihood), Iraq (returning IDPs), the DRC (conflict-affected in hard-to-reach areas) and South Sudan (recovery after civil war devastations).

Cash programming

In 2018 and 2019, HEKS/EPER had cash programmes running in 10 countries. These used disbursement modalities vary from debit cards in Lebanon, the hawala system in Iraq, and a voucher fair in the Democratic Republic of Congo. While both unconditional and conditional cash approaches were applied, there has been a considerable shift towards unconditional cash. In recent years, this approach has proven to be a vehicle to promote social cohesion between host and refugee or IDP communities, whereby both communities participate in joint activities to improve the living conditions for both communities.

Also, a well-done cash programming reduces risks of fraud and costs in logistics; people in need may purchase goods more adequate to their individual needs.

A quick but sound market analysis is needed to decide on the appropriate cash method, if at all. It is effective to combine the cash approach smart with other activities and approaches and link it to pre-conditions. Cash programming leads to fewer opportunities for fraud than in-kind distributions as procurement, transport, storage is not handled by the organization.

Cash projects 2018-2020

Haiti: **cash for work** after the cyclone Matthew.

Lebanon: **unconditional/conditional cash** and cash for work for Syrian refugees and people affected by the Beirut Port Explosion

Nigeria: **unconditional cash** for IDPs.

Uganda, Bidi Bidi: **cash for work** in refugee camps.

Iraq: unconditional/conditional & unrestricted/restricted cash in livelihood project for returnees.

Bangladesh: **cash for work** and **cash for livelihoods** in the Rohingya Camps and the host communities

Ethiopia: **cash for work** after a drought to reconstruct water systems.

DRC: **unconditional restricted cash** through a fair – for IDPs (in camps), **cash for work**

India: **unconditional unrestricted cash** for basic needs and house repair.

Indonesia: **conditional unrestricted cash** for owner driven house reconstruction.

Honduras: **unconditional cash** after a Hurricane

Perspectives of humanitarian aid activities

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted every HEKS/EPER intervention in 2020 as no beneficiary remained untouched. The needs of beneficiaries changed strongly, often not primarily related to the health dimension of the pandemic, but even more related to the measures implemented to reduce the spreading of the virus, which had a strong impact on people's income opportunities. Especially in contexts where an ongoing humanitarian crisis already weakened people or a new humanitarian crisis developed, COVID-19 added another layer on fragile systems. One example is Lebanon, a country with many refugees and an ongoing political and economic crisis before the onset of the pandemic. In 2020 the economic crisis developed into hyperinflation, and the Beirut Port Explosion devastated people's homes and further destabilised the political system. COVID-19 infection rates sky-rocketed, and the government implemented hard lockdowns during months, which further destabilised people's incomes. The result of the combination of multiple crises has led to the impoverishment of the middle class. This required to strongly adapt the response to the Beirut Blast, where 'in normal times' following a short phase of relief and reconstruction, the phasing out of projects would have been quickly possible. People in Lebanon must be supported further by cash months after the Explosion. The example shows that a constant reassessment of the situation on the ground must ensure the best support for people in need.

COVID-19 has also strongly illustrated that implementation of humanitarian aid constantly requires making ethical choices between the intended positive impacts of intervening and the risks of doing harm. The Rohingya Camps in Bangladesh were, from the onset of the crisis, considered as one of the most susceptible environments for the spread of the virus, related to the impossibility of social distancing in the densely populated camps. A key strategy of preventing the outbreak of the disease in the camp was reducing movements. In this context, aid workers are potential vectors spreading the disease as they move between the camp and the outside world every day. Another risk is NGO activities like distributions and training, as these events can develop into super-spreading events. A logical response by the government was to put all 'non-essential' interventions on hold. This included HEKS/EPER's shelter repair and maintenance programme at a time when the monsoon was approaching, and people would have suffered from leaking roofs during the monsoon. HEKS/EPER successfully negotiated with the government to consider its shelter programme as an essential intervention. By that, HEKS/EPER valued the need for shelter support higher than the risk of spreading the virus. Retrospectively, it was the right choice also because there were finally no widespread infections in the camp. However, when deciding, HEKS/EPER willingly took the risk of triggering a COVID-19 crisis in the camp. Taking risks not only for the organisation and its employees but also for beneficiaries' lives and well-being is a constant part of humanitarian programming. Risk-taking requires that we accept that some of our interventions might do more harm than benefit the people of our concern or the society in general. However, before deciding to intervene, risks must be assessed to ensure that the likelihood is very high that benefits will exceed the harm.

HEKS/EPER's HA unit wants to strengthen its conflict-related programming beyond ensuring conflict sensitivity during implementation. Expertise from development cooperation and by HEKS/EPER thematic advisors must be incorporated systematically into response projects, allowing HEKS/EPER to develop a value-added on top of regular humanitarian aid programming like distributions, WASH and reconstructions. Detailed conflict sensitivity analysis must be done in the early phase of the response. Projects shall consider components in which different interest groups (conflict parties, host and refugee community, etc.) will be linked through diapraxis fostering participation and ownership. Cash programming has been proven an effective approach for many interventions, and therefore HEKS/EPER will adopt it whenever appropriate.

More details?

Read the HEKS/EPER's **thematic factsheet 2021** on '*Humanitarian Aid*'.

https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance

4 Church Cooperation

CC is a mandate defined in discussion with the PCS (EKS in German), Protestant Churches Switzerland, with cooperation with the organizations of the Reformed Churches in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Serbia, Romania, Ukraine and the Middle East in Syria and Lebanon. Currently, CC is accompanying around 30 partnerships between parishes and institutions in Switzerland and Eastern Europe and/or the Middle East.

In both the Middle East and Eastern Europe, 2020 was hit hard by the pandemic. Everywhere, inter- and intra-country travels were limited, social and economic life was massively cut back. Project work of Church partners was heavily affected, with many activities not implemented as planned, some even temporarily stopped. Since HEKS/EPER does not have CC country offices and partners are weakly equipped, managing projects and communicating with each other was difficult. In the frame of Church Cooperation, HEKS/EPER enabled with 3 M CHF social work of Reformed Churches in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, reaching out to 38'700 people.

4.1 Eastern Europe

HEKS/EPER works through well-coordinated and interlinked projects focusing on inclusion of the elderly, handicapped and marginalized through projects providing homecare, fostering inclusion of Roma or refugees, supporting the disabled or projects protecting and counselling victims of domestic violence. There is a strong nexus with HEKS/EPER's DC Roma inclusion programme Eastern Europe which is active in Serbia, Romania and Kosovo. Supporting the churches to maintain a vivid community life with children's events,

social activities, and infrastructure rehabilitation is the 2nd, but the minor pillar of CC. A third objective of the CC strategy is to promote a lively exchange between the church communities in Switzerland and the church communities in the partner countries (for example, through community partnerships, joint activities and events as well as through community trips, work assignments and youth camps).

Homecare: Biggest component of CC interventions in Eastern Europe is homecare. Through diaconal and very professional projects run by church organisations, HEKS/EPER supported 19'000 elderly and sick people with homecare services: 17'400 in Romania, 300 in Ukraine, 1'200 in Serbia.¹⁰ This medical and social service is key for poor and marginalized people, often living in rural areas.

Afterschool, inclusive schools, youth camps: 3'730 children and young people benefitted from activities to promote educational inclusion and youth work; in Romania, Hungary, in the Czech Republic and in the Ukraine.



Homecare services of the Church partners of HEKS/EPER was key in 2020, to fight the pandemic, yet also to enable medical care at home with more difficult access to hospitals or doctors.

Romania

Overall, CC reached almost 23'000 people; here some main activities ...

- **Homecare:** Diakonia continues to expand homecare service in more than 180 localities in eight branches of Transylvania, delivering about ½ million homecare visits to 17'400 elderly and/or sick; co-financed by municipalities and other Government bodies. Students at universities supported caregivers in using the new digital tools to make work more effective.
- **People with disabilities (PwD):** COVID-19 crisis led to the closing of a big company – 800 people lost their jobs, among them also 18 PwD. The partner organisation assisted these PwD and their families in accessing the social schemes and coping with the more challenging family situation due to lockdown. Nevertheless, job mediation and the promotion of barrier-free services continue. Furthermore, Christian Diakonia Foundation supported 80 PwDs with advisory services.
- **Inclusion:** Diakonia supported 720 Roma children and their parents with counselling services aiming to improve inclusion. All these activities are accredited and partly supported by the RO State. All indicators in Project Proposals were fulfilled in 80 %, despite a very changing RO environment.
- **Domestic violence:** Due to the COVID-19 shutdown, domestic violence increased dramatically in Romania. At the same time, access to counselling services of HEKS/EPER partners in Oradea got more difficult. Public sensitization and prevention campaign was key with info material disseminated. Still, sensitization was made through different events, visits and digital meetings; often in cooperation with police, child protection department and lawyers, reaching more than 200 people; and 315 high schools students received training on domestic violence.

Ukraine

Life in Transcarpathia was much affected by the weak economy and low salaries already the COVID-19 crises; more people were driven into unemployment and poverty during 2020. The migration of people towards EU countries increased. The social projects of the Church partners are important to the communities. Despite Covid, many project components could be expanded, providing more assistance.

¹⁰ In addition, the EZA partner Casmed in Moldova reached 700 people directly and another 2000 with COVID-19 prevention measures.

- The **homecare service**, which started in 2017, has now 6 working points. Expansion had to be put on hold because of COVID-19. The 14 caregivers provided 23'690 visits (15'000 in 2019) visits for up to 300 people. Clients pay only a small fee. Government does not (yet) contribute to this service certainly important to the most vulnerable.
- The **social day centres for persons with disabilities** improved the capacities of 92 (77 in 2019) children and young adults to build up a more independent life. The project reached 90% of registered children with disabilities in Mevövari and 70% in Hetyen.
- 79 Roma children (52 in 2019) attended the **afternoon classes**, taking place in four different places, where they receive assistance for homework and develop skills in music, sports, handicrafts.
- The **Diaconal Centre for deprived people** in Beregszász continued with a soup kitchen for 240 marginalized and poor; also providing support for an elderly home with 25 aged persons and the crisis centre for women and children affected by domestic violence (15 rooms available).
- The regular **youth camps**, which in previous years attended by 1'800 to 1'900 children, were cancelled due to Covid-19. Yet, the church partner organized day camps (without sleepovers) in Summer 2020 with 868 young people from 44 congregations participating – important to church life itself, building the basis for future diaconic work.

Hungary

The Roma project on inclusive school models in 4 reformed schools – which made a self-assessment in the previous year – continued with about 750 students from vulnerable families – many of them Roma. 2 additional schools started their initial analysis and will join the project. Yet, a big need for sensitization towards parents and with Reformed organization remains to prevent segregation dynamics.

The partner supported 300 Roma children and students (180 in 2019) with afterschool activities targeting improving school performance and fostering life skills and perspectives.

The refugee project provided study support and language courses to 58 children and 50 adults to integrate into the Hungarian school system, pass the 8th grade, or enter the job market.

450 children and youth participated in youth groups and camps of the Reformed Church with the support of HEKS/EPER.

In spring 2020, HEKS/EPER commissioned an external evaluation of the Roma project. The new phase from 2021 onwards will be an improved continuation aiming at increasing the self-reliance and sustainability of vulnerable Roma. Staff and volunteers shall be capacitated more intensely. The refugee project considers learnings to continue despite shrinking space, with stronger ownership of the church. Other local and international partnerships are strengthened so that the project, e.g., will use public community spaces and count on the steady financial support of international church partners.

Slovakia

Reformed Church continued to be active in 5 congregations with life skills activities for children and youth for Roma. Around 400 children and youth benefitted from playhouses, youth groups, handicrafts activities, music groups, religious education classes, and summer camps, while about 40 are involved in the afterschool programs. around 40 children received afterschool support, 20 children and their parents (mostly mothers) participated in early childhood development groups.

Czech Republic

Despite Covid-19, the church department of education organised a summer camp for disabled children and their parents, with 1362 participants. Capacity-building for lay people were organized to enable them to lead workshops and camps.

Also, the church partner worked with migrants and refugees, who are disadvantaged because of their different language and cultural and religious background. In the project DOMA, HEKS/EPER provided social assistance, which means helping to deal with Czech authorities, schools, health care providers, job offices etc. Our help enables them to make the first steps to integrate into Czech society.

With partial support of HEKS/EPER, a new pastoral ministry in Prague was launched in interreligious dialogue and dialogue with people who live at the edge of Czech society.

Serbia

1'192 elderly and care-dependent people benefited from **homecare services** provided by HEKS/EPER partner EHO Diaconia Homecare in 10 municipalities in Vojvodina and Southern Serbia. EHO is an acknowledged partner of local authorities winning several tenders in 2020. The local Government fully covers cost in most municipalities; HEKS/EPER supports the financing of coordination and capacity-building. EHO successfully participated in municipalities' tendering system to finance homecare services, enabling them to expand its services to additional municipalities. The project also managed to initiate an association of NGO homecare providers in Serbia, which is advocating for improving the quality standards in public tendering procedures and improving the care and health system.

The project was key in the pandemic for many clients providing social and medical assistance and implementing a **COVID-19 response** – co-financed by SDC – providing hygiene packages and food for the most deprived households in 9 municipalities, reaching 600 people 6 months.

4.2 Middle East

In the Middle East, 2020 was a challenging year with several difficulties for our CC partners. Due to the war in **Syria**, it is impossible to plan, while it was precisely what was needed. An enormously increasing number of students are willing to come to school (again), but their family cannot pay even a small fee. The prices for food, fuel and health were 39 times as high as before the war and eight times as much as 2019. Simultaneously, Syria's job situation has worsened dramatically, and many Syrians are physically and psychologically weakened. The weak health system and the partly non-existent nursing resources were another struggle for our partners.

2020 was particularly tragic in **Lebanon** as well. The already existing biggest financial crisis since the civil war in the ailing state of Lebanon, which had led to much unemployment, low incomes, and massively increasing emigration (especially of the wealthy social class), the terrible explosion at the port of Beirut in August was the famous last straw that broke the camel's back and, according to experts, set the development of the state back by decades.

Syria

As the war in Syria continued and 11 Million people fled the country, the remaining Syrian population depends on humanitarian aid, with 6.5 Million internally displaced and another 5.6 Million who fled abroad.



Syria: 2550 children from disenfranchised families receive support to send their children to the schools of two local Reformed churches.

HEKS/EPER continued its engagement not only in HA but also in CC, despite sieges, bombardments, embargoes, water supply stops, supply bottlenecks, COVID-19, closed borders, military interventions from Turkey and Russia.

CC partners have been able to keep the services in the church schools constantly open. And they have been able to improve online teaching. The

10 schools of the church partners of HEKS/EPER in Syria, NESSL and UAECNE, are attended by one-quarter of Christian and three-quarters of Muslim students learning and living together. Due to the war, economic crisis and COVID-19, parents struggle to pay the school fees. With a new programme, HEKS/EPER supports disadvantaged parents of 2350 (1'800 in 2019) students with scholarships.

The children programme in 12 congregations in Syrian has developed successfully. The activities are attended weekly by more than 2550 children (2000 in 2019), coming from different denomination and religions. After years of war, children enjoy community, a peaceful atmosphere and at least for some hours normal life.

Lebanon

In the first half of 2020, the 4 NESSL Churches in Minyara, Tripoli, Tyre and Kherbet Qanafar continued their work to include refugees and their children (1500 persons in total) in the community life... through open sports days, theatre, music lessons, choir projects etc.

In the second half, emergency aid was key – due to the explosion at the port, combined with the impact of Covid-19 on health and the economy. HEKS/EPER partner launched two new projects: A weekly soup kitchen in Zahlé for 25 deprived persons – the guests, then give this invitation to somebody else in need and so on. A project well-received, also fostering solidarity. The other one is a community garden in the South of Lebanon where the church lend land so a whole village could do agriculture, regardless of religious background.

The afterschool for marginalised children in Bourj Hamoud, a neglected quarter of Beirut, was closed as all schools for months due to Covid. Partner encouraged children to study online, providing digital supplies, internet and safe learning space as due to the explosion, many children lost their homes.

CC activities complemented the HEKS/EPER HA response to the port blast in August 2020 supporting more than 10'000 people.

Perspectives Church Cooperation

CC is a mandate, which is defined by PCS. Whilst the cooperation with the partner churches in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ukraine, Slovakia, Serbia and Romania, remain on the same level, the project volume has been extended in the Middle East with FMEEC and its member churches NESSL and UAECNE. On the one hand, CC wants to focus on stable and reliable partnerships with its church partners in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East. On the other hand, CC also wants to put an accent in building relationships with the Swiss Reformed Churches.

The cooperation with the Reformed Church of **Hungary** is part of the church cooperation mandate of the PCS. For the individual project, attention is given to avoid dependency on HEKS/EPER as a sole funder and to mobilise local financial resources, so the work will continue even if HEKS/EPER decides to phase out of a project or to change the focus.

HEKS/EPER will continue to be involved in **Transcarpathia** in the coming years. The goal is to develop a country strategy and, if possible, to create a coordination position for project management (similar to Hungary). A strong focus must be placed on mobilising local funds to avoid dependence on HEKS/EPER and smaller contributions from supporters in Germany/Austria.

In general, CC Eastern Europe does also work closely together with the new Eastern Europe Inclusion Strategy 21-25 of HEKS/EPER, with DC actors in Romania, Kosovo and Serbia (see 'Perspectives' of the Non-Discrimination chapter).

5 COVID-19 Response of HEKS/EPER



Awareness-raising on how to prevent and deal with Covid-19 was one of many immediate actions taken by HEKS/EPER projects worldwide – as on the picture in Haiti, where sensitization was done with posters, flyer, radio, community meetings, market stands or visits at premises for elderly, handicapped or in schools and even in prisons.

In April 2020, [HEKS/EPER COVID-19 Guidance Note](#) was in place, enhancing partner organisations and country offices to quickly set up an unbureaucratic, effective and relevant response to the pandemic crises, setting three strategic priorities: 1) Contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and decrease morbidity and mortality. 2) Decrease the deterioration of human assets and rights, social cohesion and livelihoods. 3) Protect, assist and advocate for refugees, internally displaced people, migrants and host communities particularly vulnerable to the pandemic. Three global and several national knowledge-sharing events aimed to coordinate all efforts and to detect adaptive and transformative practices to achieve good results. Analysis in the countries showed significant challenges such as no more remittances, reductions of mobility and less access to income-generating activities for the most vulnerable such as day labourer or small-scale farmer, decreasing economy with fewer jobs and less income, school closures and missing funds for schools creating education gaps, no access to water for simple hygiene measures, misuse of lockdown as for hindering democracy and participation, and of course insufficient health care as well as no adequate social protection.

Overall, in 2020, HEKS/EPER reached out to **3.165 M people** in **57 projects** in **29 countries**, assisting them to cope with COVID-19. Most people benefitting were already participants of existing HEKS/EPER humanitarian or development projects that reacted quickly to the pandemic with **adapted preventive and mitigating activities**, mainly ...

- COVID-19 awareness-raising & hygiene promotion
- distribution/production of hygiene material
- water and sanitation activities – including rehabilitation of water and health infrastructure
- food security – from emergency distribution to agricultural livelihood activities
- direct cash support and cash for work
- Restoring economic assets
- strengthening civil society actors defending their rights (HRBA)
- advisory services to enable access to medical, social and unemployment assistance.

SDC has been very flexible in adjusting to COVID-19-issues in the programme and made additional funding available for urgently needed response activities. Thanks to SDC, HEKS/EPER could also air-lift material to Venezuela and upscale its response in Bangladesh.

- SDC’s IP programme contribution co-financed 38 mainly DC projects adding COVID-19 components and assisting 890’495 people.
- SDC direct funding of 4 projects that included COVID-19 activities reached 1’642’732 people.
- Another 631’892 individuals were reached by 15 HEKS/EPER project not co-financed by SDC.

Perspectives

In many countries, HEKS/EPER is working, COVID-19 is still out of control as in Brazil, or measures hamper the recovery of social and economic life. HEKS/EPER is worried about economies further deteriorating with negative perspectives to recover in 2021 or even in the years to come. For the most vulnerable people, nutrition, food security, and income generation have become more important than ever. E.g., the population of Haiti is harshly affected by reduced remittances which form a substantial part of income. In most countries, the informal employment sector remains strongly affected. Also, partners, offices, and local civil society face increased restrictive regulations, less based on protecting health but shrinking space – as in Cambodia, Honduras and Ethiopia.

Partly, DC projects could not fully implement as planned and not spend the funds foreseen, yet HA activities and funding increased. Many DC projects will catch up in 2021, reaching the initial yet adapted overall goals.

HEKS/EPER consolidated main challenges, achievements, good practices, the mid- and long-term impacts, the learnings, and adaptations the COVID-19 crisis will have on international cooperation in general:

- **Digitalisation** opportunities to work more effectively and reach communities despite travel restrictions, due to COVID-19 yet also when security fails or Government restrictions (HRBA) disable access to people and communities. Nevertheless, the importance of direct social interaction came to light as well – to ensure controlling, management,
- Digital tools must further facilitate efficient processes and shall serve towards a more effective, CO2 friendly remote **management** of programmes and project, yet also closing the gap between HQ and country offices.
- Advocate donors to demonstrate more **flexibility** and promote adaptive management within the organization to respond to real needs in fast-changing contexts and enable implementing units to apply permanent assessment of the context the achievements and embrace learning4steering. HEKS/EPER will review its PCM and Learning4Steering processes for DC, CC and HA activities and also work on the mindset of staff and partners to ensure projects and programmes respond to changing context, needs and organisational resources/capacities.
- HEKS/EPER and other iNGOs have insufficient funds to fight the mid- and long-term negative effects of COVID-19. Therefore, HEKS/EPER must increase its efforts to become even more effective and reach as many people as possible and **invest in acquisition** to gain sufficient funding to cover increasing needs.
- The humanitarian aid agility of HEKS/EPER to cope with COVID-19 was high, certainly in Bangladesh and Venezuela. With 57 projects incorporating COVID-19 measures, flexibility was demonstrated by many partners and offices – HEKS/EPER must **build on these strengths**.
- Strengthen HEKS/EPER and partners' ability to apply risk-informed programming, ensuring the health and security of all stakeholders, not only during a pandemic yet in any fragile and conflict context.
- Finally, **COVID-19 effects will impact projects and programmes of HEKS/EPER in the next years** with economic and social crises continuing and civic space probably not opening fast. Therefore, HEKS/EPER observes its interventions logic on project, programme and global level to further adapt to the needs and ongoing challenge.

5.1 Examples of COVID-19 Projects Worldwide

Bangladesh – infection control and prevention during the pandemic



In **Bangladesh**, HEKS/EPER **HA** unit enabled the rehabilitation of health centres in and around Rohingya refugee camps covering access to health care for 1.7 M people.

COVID-19 emergency activities executed by **DC** partners of CO in Dakkah to protect vulnerable Dalit and Adivasi supported 20'000 people.

COVID-19 has highlighted the urgency of improving hygiene and infection prevention and control in health facilities, not only to contain the spread of the virus among patients but also by creating a safe environment for health

care workers, which is crucial to maintain health facilities operational not only for COVID-19 but also for the regular health support provided in these facilities.

In Bangladesh, HEKS/EPER was in a good position to contribute to the safe functioning of health facilities during the pandemic as it has already become an expert organisation on WASH in place by piloting WHO's and UNICEF's WASH FIT approach since 2019, which strengthens WASH in health facilities including an Infection Prevention and Control which is key in addressing the pandemic. The projects were strongly scaled with the start of the pandemic and allowed to support all 439 primary and secondary health facilities in the Rohingya Camps and the host community in Cox's Bazar district with formal training, on the job training, Facility level WASH improvement strategy development, as well as construction interventions in selected facilities.

DC partners, also with the support of SDC, provide to strongly affected female sex workers and their children food baskets, masks and soap; they installed handwashing points at community level and are launching IGA activities. An informative audio-visual documentary on the effect of COVID-19 on communities was produced.

Haiti – COVID-19 prevention and mitigation

In Haiti from April till October 2020, HEKS/EPER responded to COVID-19 reaching out to 500'000 vulnerable people with an awareness-raising campaign (radio, posters, market stands, community meetings, etc.), the production and distribution of 50'000 hygiene masks, the installation of 78 water points and 800 handwashing stations and supported 58 health centres. HEKS/EPER was present at markets, schools, churches, centres for the elderly and handicapped and in prison (*more COVID-19 projects: <https://www.heks.ch/corona-pandemie/projekte>*).



Awareness-raising with posters at info points, with visits to 69 markets, and with trainings in community centres.

Production of 50'000 masks and of soap; and distribution including awareness-raising to the beneficiaries.



78 water points with tanks and **800 hand-washing stations** installed, and Rehabilitation of water infrastructure to secure access to water.

Distribution of hygiene material in communes and in 58 health centres in Jérémie county.



Distribution of hygiene items and **awareness-raising** towards most vulnerable in prisons, churches, schools – and to handicapped and elderly people.

More countries responding to COVID-19

- **Armenia:** The HEKS/EPER partner distributed hygiene material but also seedlings, saplings and inputs to 900 farmers during lockdown to ensure food security; and organized workshops for farmers on government programmes related to COVID-19.
- **Brazil:** 16'000 people in three DC projects of HEKS/EPER did profit from manifold activities accompanied by an awareness-raising campaign: 1) A women network produced and distributed 8.000 health kits with masks, soap, etc. 6.6 tons of food were purchased from local agroecological producers and distributed to the most vulnerable. 2) 1'700 litres of disinfectant was produced and afterwards distributed (a project with sugarcane production). 3) And another project organised 880 food kits, 50 water tanks, 700 hygiene kits and 1'300 masks.
- **Cambodia:** 131'500 individual – mainly in rural farmer families – received hygiene material and got information on prevention measures.
- **Colombia:** 500 people received COVID-19 emergency assistance – mainly biosecurity kits or food baskets, and sensitization training was provided.
- **DR Congo:** DC projects adapted interventions to distribute hygiene material (masks), installed handwashing facilities for 7'300 people. And the country office launched a public information campaign with poster, leaflets, etc.
- **Ethiopia:** HEKS/EPER delivered essential sanitation and hygiene material and water kits, promoted hygiene, improved access to safe water and installed handwashing facilities in two existing projects.
- **Honduras:** Distribution of food packages, hygiene material and awareness-raising about COVID-19 impact to 52'000 vulnerable.
- **Hungary:** 200 students being part of the regular educational project got support with food, heating and hygiene material – online learning was ensured.



- **India:** Despite phasing-out in India, the two projects still running in 2020 implemented COVID-19 activities – through an awareness-raising campaign and also distributing health material. 7000 Adivasi did profit.

- **Israel / Palestine:** 3 projects raised awareness, distributed hygiene material, and provided emergency food baskets. 1200 people did profit.



- **Kosovo:** 4000 marginalised members of minorities were addressed with additional COVID-19 activities, such as ensuring digital home-schooling with mentoring/tutoring components or through additional advocacy ensuring that Roma communities got access to medical care.

- **Lebanon:** CC partner have an afterschool programme for 30 children of Syrian refugees and marginalized children of local families. During the lockdown, they enabled 'remote schooling' offering digital devices. 350 Syrian refugees received hygiene material.



- **Moldova:** Homecare partner CASMED included COVID-19 sensitization and distributing hygiene material in their regular activities – reaching out to 2000 elderly and sick.

- **Niger:** With partners of 3 DC projects – Doum palm, Moringa processing and marketing and food security – HEKS/EPER was able to address the local population with sensitization and information on COVID related prevention measures and through the distribution of masks for workshops. 8'400 people were reached.

- **Romania:** The Roma Youth inclusion projects responded to COVID-19 with the distribution of food and hygiene items. Also, HEKS/EPER ensured digital home-schooling with mentoring/tutoring components to catch up again. 300 young individuals did profit.

- **Senegal:** 35'000 people in two DC projects got emergency aid with hygiene material and direct cash support (176 families). HEKS/EPER collaborated with local municipalities to launch a sensitization campaign to promoting prevention measures.

- **Serbia:** HEKS/EPER partner EHO's homecare service, with its decentralised structure, acted as distributor of SDC co-financed emergency aid with food and hygiene packages to 600 people living in vulnerable households. And EHO ensured that 100 vulnerable students were addressed with online tutoring.

- **Slovakia:** 50 students being part of the regular educational project got support with food, heating and hygiene material – online learning was ensured.
- **South Sudan / Uganda:** 1000 people got additional food assistance to maintain livelihood; sensitization and distribution of hygiene material were additional responses to the pandemic.
- **Syria:** Partners organised internet access for 40 students to participate in home-schooling.
- **Ukraine:** 4 projects provided to 1200 vulnerable people with food packages and hygiene material.

Venezuela

Venezuela's basic supply systems have partially collapsed as a result of the political crisis, hyperinflation and international embargoes. An estimated 10 to 12 million Venezuelans lack proper access to food (source: OCHA 2020), and 7 million people need humanitarian aid (source: UN 2019). The population was particularly vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic. HEKS/EPER has therefore launched a multifaceted emergency aid programme to alleviate the plight of those most in need.

HEKS/EPER was providing emergency aid for some 18.700 people, including warm meals and toiletries for needy women and children as well as the elderly. To stem the spread of the coronavirus, hospitals are actively supporting disinfection campaigns while victims of the crisis are being supplied with toilet articles and food packages. In addition, with the financial support of Swiss Solidarity, HEKS/EPER is also assisting internal migrants living under precarious conditions at the border with Colombia and who are receiving next to no government aid.



Humanitarian aid in Venezuela



Humanitarian aid for vulnerable people in Venezuela

HEKS/EPER is helping on the ground

6 Consolidated HIP Results 2013–2020

Development Cooperation: Key results achieved during HIP 2013–2016 & HIP 2017–2020¹¹

From 2013–2016, HEKS/EPER reached about 3.3 million individuals through its development cooperation and 1.02 million people through its humanitarian aid programme (see tables on the next page). In DC, the HIP programme in particular succeeded in providing people with secured access to land and inclusive market systems and increasing their resilience. Only the objective of reduced emergence of violence was not progressing as planned, due to deteriorating security and armed conflicts in the focus countries. In addition, progress to enhance an enabling environment was difficult in countries experiencing a backlash against individuals and communities asserting their rights (e.g., Palestine/Israel, Brazil and Azerbaijan).

| HIP 2013-2016: Key Results Development Cooperation | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------|-----------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| | Total # of individuals reached | Numbers of individuals reached per indicator | | | | | | | |
| | | Income increased | Yields increased | New job opportunities | Better quality of life in conflict situations | Access to public services for marginalised | Access to land (individuals) | Access to water | Access to public services |
| 2013 | 1'048'474 | 176'629 | 189'319 | 16'578 | 201'819 | 44'434 | 86'026 | 152'612 | 220'719 |
| 2014 | 719'349 | 16'499 | 124'988 | 45'859 | 164'986 | 48'202 | 70'357 | 113'781 | 40'355 |
| 2015 | 601'846 | 103'358 | 79'865 | 16'321 | 215'176 | 79'583 | 104'630 | 96'719 | 66'304 |
| 2016 | 935'061 | 61'535 | 62'230 | 139'407 | 174'682 | 52'406 | 66'475 | 79'578 | 15'791 |
| Total | 3'304'730 | 358'021 | 456'402 | 218'165 | 756'663 | 224'625 | 327'488 | 442'690 | 343'169 |

Key results 2013–2016 in development cooperation.

During the HIP phase 2017–2020, HEKS/EPER reached a total number of **2.36 million** people through development cooperation and more than **4.21 million** people through humanitarian aid, 3.5 million in 2020. It made significant progress in the four key areas of secured access to land and resources, empowered rights-holders and accountable duty-bearers, inclusive and efficient market systems, and social inclusion (see table below). More than 500'000 people participated in market projects aiming to increase income.

6.1 Development Cooperation: Key Results 2013-2020

| HIP 2017-2020: Key Results Development Cooperation | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | Total # of individuals reached | Results achieved per HEKS/EPER key indicator | | | | |
| | | A2L: # of individuals | A2L: # of hectares | Claims: # submitted and/or accepted | Income: % of individuals stating increase | Access basic services: # of individuals |
| 2017 | 498'000 | 25'913 | 27'160 | 1'200 for 61'497 individuals | 55% | 116'376 |
| 2018 | 1'146'000 | 61'974 | 101'713 | 43'492 for 554'637 individuals | 54% | 39'061 |
| 2019 | 509'000 | 136'965 | 102'750 | 934 for 191'200 individuals | 74 % | 65'262 |
| 2020 | 205'000 | 140'213 | 92'829 | 213 for 158'824 individuals | 61% | 20'568 |
| Total | 2'358'000 | 365'065 | 324'452 | 45'839 for 966'158 individuals | 61 % | 241'267 |

Key results 2017–2020 in development cooperation.

¹¹ For detailed overview on the results achieved, please refer to [Annex D](#).

Track record in 'Access to Land' 2013–2020 (Land Governance)

Access to land and resources has been a focus topic of the HIP since 2013. Between 2013 and 2019, the trend of HEKS/EPER projects more systematically taking up the issue of 'access to land' in their strategies – a trend which had started in the phase between 2008 and 2012 – was further pursued in the majority of HEKS/EPER's focus countries. Accordingly, the number of projects focusing on access to land has increased in recent years. In 2016, in 12 countries worldwide, 40 projects were, to various degrees and with different approaches, dealing with the topic of access to land; in 2017, 12 countries worldwide and 41 projects; and in 2018, 14 countries and 44 projects. In 2019, it was 30 projects in 12 countries. In 2020, 32 projects in 13 countries. From 2009 to 2020, land projects led to improved access to land for 864'213 individuals.

Key studies/factsheets on access to land are posted on the ID's Institutional Governance website:

- [Factsheet Access to Land, 2019](#)
- [Access to land, laying the groundwork for development, 2012](#)
- [Assess and enhance land tenure security – HEKS/EPER Analytical Framework, 2015](#)
- [Access to land in the Philippines, capitalisation of HEKS/EPER experiences, 2017](#)
- [Securing the mobility of pastoralists, capitalisation of HEKS/EPER experiences, 2019](#)
- [Custodians of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, 2019](#)

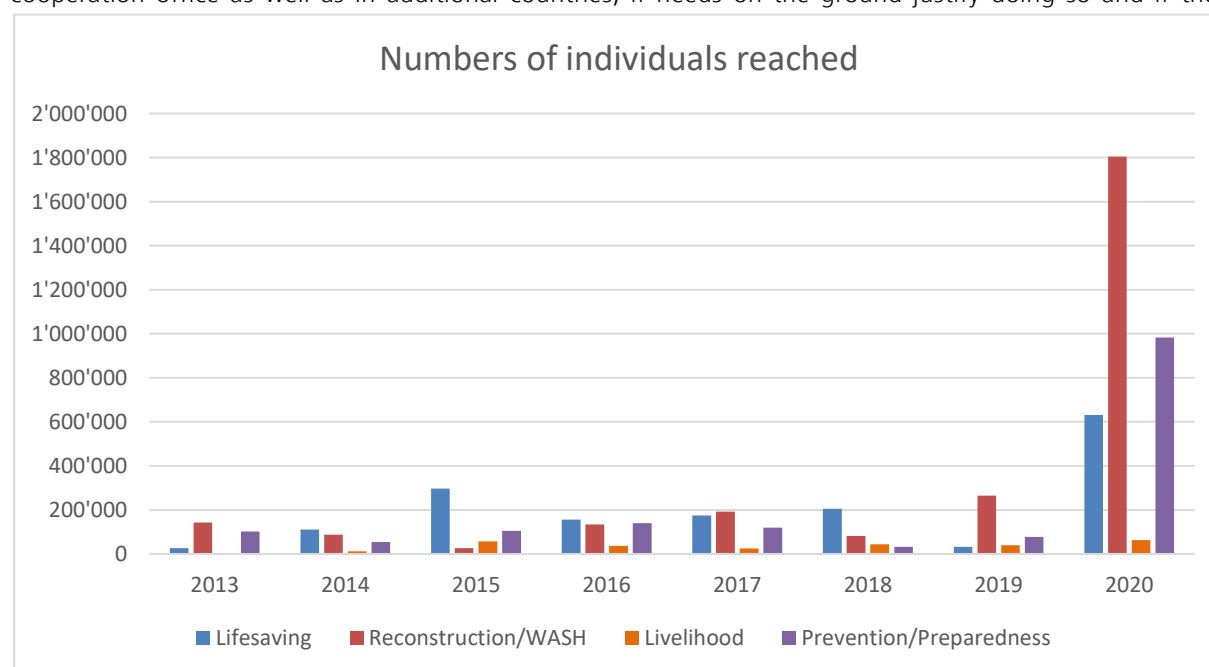
Inclusive market

In the phase 2017-2020, more than 500'000 people participated in various HEKS/EPER projects related to access to markets, linked to the aim to generate increased income through agricultural and non-agricultural production, job mediation, etc. In every year, **54% or more of these persons reported an increase in income**. Both in 2019 and 2020, the results were above targets. However, mainly due to the difficult COVID-19 economic situation and more restricted project access, 2020 was less successful than 2019.

| Outcome | Indicators | Result 2017 | Result 2018 | Result 2019 | Result 2020 |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Inclusive and efficient market systems | % of beneficiaries stating a change in their incomes | 55% state a positive change | 54% state a positive change. | 73.5% stated a positive change | 61% stated a positive change |
| | # of individuals profiting from IM projects | 100'000 people in market projects | 125'000 people in market projects | 190'000 people in market projects | 103'000 people in market project |

6.2 Humanitarian Aid: Key Results 2013–2020

HEKS/EPER responds to humanitarian crises, where HEKS/EPER is already present with a development cooperation office as well as in additional countries, if needs on the ground justify doing so and if the



HA data 2013-2020: Number of individuals benefitting of HEKS/EPER's humanitarian assistance (2013–2020) in the four main HA objectives 'Live Saving', 'Reconstruction/WASH', 'Livelihood' and 'Prevention/Preparedness'.

national government and civil society do not have the capacity to assist crisis-affected populations. The map reveals the key interventions over the past 3 years since the current HIP phase started in 2017.

Between 2013 until the end of 2020, HEKS/EPER has been able to assist **5.5 million people** with **humanitarian assistance**.

This includes **1.6 million** people who benefited from **lifesaving emergency activities** including the distribution of food, NFI, WASH, and cash interventions.

In addition, **278'000 people** were supported to restore their **livelihoods**.

2.7 million people benefitted from the **reconstruction** of their houses as well as public infrastructures such as schools and health facilities.

Disaster prevention and preparedness, including **COVID-19** prevention and emergency aid (hygiene, water, sanitation, food security, etc.), played a pivotal role for **1'614'100 people** in the countries in which HEKS/ EPER worked.

6.3 Church Cooperation: Key Results 2017–2020

Church Cooperation changed working focus in the previous phase 2013-2016 away from the rehabilitation of church facilities towards supporting church organisation and Reformed churches to become a relevant player in their societies/countries in social/diaconic work and start in 2016, activities in the Middle East.

During the phase 2017-2020, activities focused on Social Inclusion reaching more than 104'808 individuals, mainly in homecare and educational inclusion (after schooling of marginalized) and some humanitarian activities as in Lebanon in 2020.

Vivid **church life** is key to enhancing churches' ability and its diaconic organizations to play a relevant role in their societies: **34'218 persons** were reached – mainly with youth camps or training for Church staff.

To lead a self-critical **dialogue** with other Reformed denominations – e.g. between Swiss Reformed Churches and the Hungarian Reformed Churches in Eastern Europe – or even with other confessions is the third pillar of CC, regularly reaching about **2000 people** per year.

From 2017-2020 Church Cooperation reached out to **142'080 people** in the **nine countries** Ukraine, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Check Republic, Serbia, Italy, Lebanon and Syria.

| Field of work | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | Total |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Eastern Europe | | | | | |
| Social Inclusion (Homecare, PwD, Refugees, After schooling, Inclusion of marginalized, ...) | 21'751 | 24'153 | 24'000 | 21'488 | 91'392 |
| Strengthening Church Life (Youth Work, Rehabilitation of Facilities, Capacity-building, ...) | 8'091 | 6'615 | 6'000 | 6'910 | 27'616 |
| Church in Dialogue (Exchange with other denominations/confessions) | 2'110 | 1'150 | 200 | 1'870 | 5'330 |
| Middle East | | | | | |
| Social Inclusion (Homecare, PwD, Refugees, After schooling, Inclusion of marginalized, ...) | 1'613 | 1'560 | 1'200 | 9'043 | 13'416 |
| Strengthening Church Life (Youth Work, Rehabilitation of Church Facilities, Capacity-building, ...) | 1'700 | 2'000 | 1'800 | 1'102 | 6'602 |
| Church in Dialogue (Exchange with other denominations/confessions) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1'112 | 1'112 |
| Total | | | | | |
| Project Participants overall | 36'000 | 35'380 | 32'000 | 38'700 | 142'080 |

CC data 2017-2020: Number of individuals benefitting of HEKS/EPER's church cooperation projects. Focus was on inclusion of people being socially or economically marginalized.

7 Strategy of HEKS/EPER International Programme 2017-2020

According to the foundations' statute, HEKS/EPER has the mandate to act on behalf of the Protestant churches of Switzerland. The Assembly of Delegates of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (FSPC) briefs the aid organisation on its mandates and assignments. 'HEKS/EPER campaigns for a more humane and equitable world' and 'to assist people in economic and social need in Switzerland and abroad'. 'The focus of its commitments is on the dignity of each individual. This is one of universal human rights principles, and it is also reflected in basic Christian values.'¹² The mission statement expresses its deep respect for people of all cultures, ethnicities and religions. As such, HEKS/EPER supports people and communities in gaining prosperity or claiming their rights regardless of their religious affiliation, ethnic origin, social background, gender or sexual orientation. All people should live a life of dignity and safety in social, economic and political terms.

According to the statute, 'the International Division fights the causes of hunger, injustice and social deprivation; and gives humanitarian and emergency aid.' In addition, 'HEKS/EPER cultivates dialogue with rights-holders, duty-bearers, donors and working partners. HEKS/EPER bases its work on values like self-determination, solidarity, responsibility, participation and grass-roots involvement. The top priority is to bring people to a point where they are independent of outside aid. This is why schemes and projects are developed in a spirit of partnership and run-in liaison with those affected.'

7.1 Theories of Change of the HIP 2017-2020

The year 2020 marks the 4th and last year of the HEKS/EPER International Programme 2017–2020. The programme document serves as a guideline for the HEKS/EPER International Department in Switzerland and abroad and for its partner organisations. Furthermore, it is 'strategy statement' for the EKS, the donors and the broad public.

This chapter outlines the theory of changes of the current HIP, on which also this document reports. HEKS/EPER's operates in three sections, **development cooperation (DC)**, **humanitarian aid (HA)** and **church cooperation (CC)**. In 2020, HEKS/EPER and its local partner organisations implemented 143 projects in 33 countries. Figure 3 gives an overview of HEKS/EPER's current results framework.

The **theories of change** of the three sections are ...

- **Development cooperation (DC):** HEKS/EPER strengthens civil society and inclusive governance structures, living together in peace, the pursuit of access to land and resources, and sustainable production and inclusive market systems. Thus, HEKS/EPER contributes so that all people and communities enjoy equal rights and prosperity despite shocks and stresses.

- **Humanitarian aid (HA):** HEKS/EPER's humanitarian aid saves lives, alleviates suffering, restores livelihoods and rehabilitates infrastructure by providing and improving access to life-saving resources and basic services, livelihood opportunities, private and public infrastructure, as well as increasing resilience of people and communities prone to or affected by disasters.

- **Church cooperation (CC):** The contribution of reformed churches to their societies is recognised as relevant while working towards inclusion of disadvantaged, strong church life and partnerships between Swiss and foreign Reformed churches.

HEKS/EPER coordinates all efforts and seeks **nexus synergies** between the sections and their objectives to achieve progress and relevance.

The **cross-cutting issues** of *gender*, *conflict sensitivity* and *resilience-building* must be mainstreamed in all projects and programmes of the 3 sections as best as possible. Specific guidelines, tools and checklists help the planning and implementing staff to do so.

The HIP also describes the **management framework**, highlighting focus and growth strategies, capacities, resources, cooperation, funds and financial accountability, and programmatic steering, using tools to

¹² Constitution of the Foundation HEKS/EPER, Art. 2: Purpose. Zürich, 2009.

monitor, learn, and steer to achieve the HIP’s objectives. HEKS/EPER strives for ‘enabling management’, which contributes to a professional, effective, transparent, relevant, and impact-oriented implementation that is meaningful for the people and communities we work with. PCM, financial and administrative standards and other management and programmatic policies are applicable for all programmes and projects to ensure quality and progress.

In general, HEKS/EPER continued in 2018 with its approach to acting close to local realities in mainly rural areas through qualified staff organized in country offices. The main stakeholders are the people and communities we work with – mainly, rural families organised in locally rooted civil society organisations such as CBOs, associations and producer groups. Implementing partners are local or national NGOs or lobbying platforms and networks. Suppose there is no specific qualified partner organisation present in the programme region. In that case, HEKS/EPER can act as a self-implementer through a project implementation unit (PIU), as it is the case in a few priority countries.

7.2 New Strategy of the HIP 2021-24

HEKS/EPER acts in demanding, dynamic and increasingly complex and fragile environments. The **HEKS/EPER International Programme 2021–2024 (HIP)** was developed using internal and external expertise, on a thorough analysis of the achievements and evidence of the previous programme phases since 2013 and based on the global context ([Annex C](#)), the defined trends/challenges and the international frameworks such as the Human Rights Charter or the Agenda 2030. The HIP describes a global results framework HEKS/EPER will follow up for learning and strategic steering, and it is the **programmatic guidance for country programmes and projects**. Depending on the context and needs in a programme or project, they will re-arrange the logic.



Vision of HEKS/EPER ID

- HEKS/EPER follows a human rights-based approach.
- It operates towards more equitable, peaceful and resilient societies to facilitate systemic change.
- The 4 outcomes are:
 - sustainable land and natural resources governance
 - overcoming social, political and economic discrimination:
 - in crises, covering basic needs (emergency, livelihood, infrastructure).
 - Supportive Policies & Practices (policy dialogue / advocacy / awareness-raising)
- 9 Outputs orbiting around outcomes contribute to the 4 outcomes.
- HEKS/EPER empowers vulnerable people, communities and civil societies to execute participation and ownership. It links them at the local, national, and international level with governments and/or the private sector, promoting the accountability of these duty-bearers.

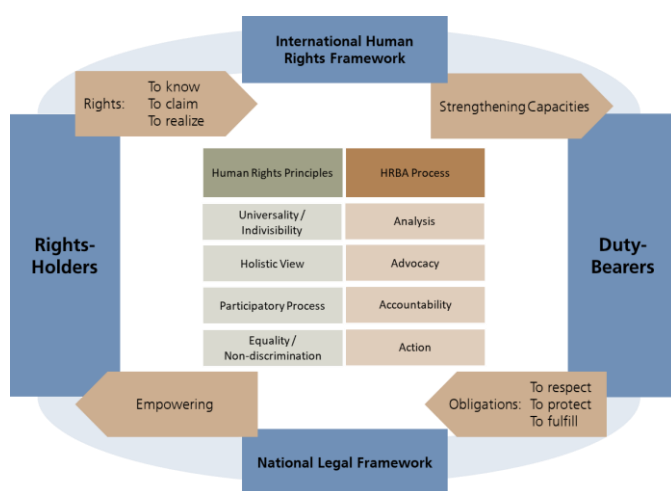
| Sections | Development cooperation (DC) | Humanitarian aid (HA) | Church cooperation (CC) |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|
| ToCs | Equal rights & prosperity despite shocks and stresses | Lifesaving, recovery, preparedness&prevention | The contribution of reformed churches to their societies is recognized as relevant |
| Approach | Human rights-based approach | | |
| Cross-cutting issues | Resilience building / Gender / Conflict sensitivity | | |
| Principles | Holistic & systemic perspective / Learning for steering | | |
| Programmatic objectives | <p>Development of rural communities</p> <p>Access to land, resources, services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secured access to land and resources. 2. Secured access to basic services. <p>Production & market systems</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Sustainable agricultural production. 4. Inclusive & efficient market systems. <p>Civil society & governance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Enhanced security & space for civil society. 6. Empowered rights-holders & accountable duty-bearers. 7. Inclusion & participatory governance structures. <p>Living together in peace</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Improved intra- & inter-group relations. 9. Commitment & public attitude towards peace. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lifesaving through access to water, food, shelter, sanitation. 2. Rehabilitated livelihood opportunities. 3. Reconstructed public and private infrastructure. 4. Increased prevention and preparedness. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening & inclusion of disadvantaged. 2. Strengthening church life. 3. Churches in dialogue with differing confessions. 4. Sense of belonging to the same church family. |
| Institutional objectives | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The impact of HEKS/EPER interventions on access to land, territories and resources gained acknowledgement in the development sector and public visibility. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. International division programme work is relevant, effective and implemented professionally. | |

7.3 Cross-Cutting Approaches and Issues

HEKS/EPER works with a **holistic and systemic perspective** and the human rights-based approach, which shall foster dialogue between duty-bearers and rights-holders and contribute to good governance and systemic change.

The core competency of HEKS/EPER lies in pursuing a **holistic approach** to international cooperation and thus an explicit consideration of the interconnectedness and synergies between its three sections. HEKS/EPER can add substantial value by creating such synergies and making use of interfaces and mutual reinforcing, which lead to working strategies that enable interventions to devise change processes more efficiently, competently and effectively, and make it possible to bring about structural changes in society, the economy, politics/governance and the environment.

HEKS/EPER defines **systemic change** as transformations in the structure or dynamics of a system that impacts large numbers of people, either in their attitudes and values, material conditions, behaviour or access to information, services and products. Systems analysis that examines social, political and economic value systems, the diversity of different groups of stakeholders with different attitudes, interests and behaviours, and relationships provide important entry points for interventions in terms of possible paths and channels to change the system. HEKS/EPER is in constant search of new cooperation models and working approaches.



HRBA: International civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, as well as national and local legislation and values (in line with universal human rights), provide a guiding framework for the HEKS/EPER international programme. Human rights standards and principles – such as participation and empowerment, accountability and advocacy, equality and non-discrimination, and links to human rights mechanisms – frame not only HEKS/EPER’s results but are also integrated into all stages of the programming process (analysis, planning, implementation and impact measurement). To change negative systems, a certain space to act is needed. This space includes the possibility of speaking out, cooperating and linking up with others without fear of being threatened or even

HRBA: HEKS/EPER human rights-based approach.

physically attacked. This is a precondition for empowering rights-holders and holding duty-bearers accountable. (More on HRBA and duty-bearers/rights-holders [in chapter 2.3](#)).

HEKS/EPER programmes combine the project/programme objectives adapted to the respective context and needs of the people and communities, also fostering **diapraxis**. Applying a holistic perspective in this sense means making use of the synergies between the thematic fields of action and combining practical and strategic activities, advocating through a strong network along the lines of a human rights-based approach for the needs of the target group. A foundation of values that entails commitment and public attitude of striving for equal rights and living together in peace provides backing for vulnerable groups to claim rights and the motivation of duty-bearers to take up their responsibilities of fulfilling rights in mutual constructive dialogue and participatory governance structures.

Cross-cutting issues

In its projects and programmes, HEKS/EPER includes **3 cross-cutting issues** which are key to achieving the objectives and making sustainable progress: gender, conflict sensitivity and resilience. Specific guidelines and tools combined with capacity-building and a PCM system for coherent planning and monitoring the issues enable mainstreaming.

HEKS/EPER provides specific annual thematic reports on the 3 cross-cutting issue – see. Also, [in chapter 8.4](#) you will find the annual report on **PSEAH** findings and activities of HEKS/EPER.

Promising practices on HEKS/EPER’s approaches and cross-cutting issues

In its factsheets HEKS/EPER demonstrates how it implements its approaches and cross-cutting issues. Check [Thematic factsheets 2020 on HEKS/EPER ID’s website about its institutional governance](#), for ‘Gender Equality’, ‘HRBA & Dialogue’, ‘Conflict Sensitivity’, ‘Resilience to Climate and Disaster Risks’, ‘MEL’.

7.4 Who HEKS/EPER Works For and With

HEKS/EPER works mainly in rural areas **in favour of people and communities who do not enjoy equal rights and prosperity** due to being socially, politically or economically disadvantaged, such as the landless, smallholders, marginalised indigenous/traditional/rural communities, the underrepresented, the oppressed, the disaster-prone, conflict-affected people, etc. And thus HEKS/EPER works with:

- **Rights-holders**, individuals entitled to enjoy human rights (for individuals and groups), to claim these rights (and be protected if they do so peacefully) and to redress when rights are violated, as well as with the obligation to respect the rights of others.
- **Duty-bearers**, stakeholders with the responsibility to respect, promote and ensure rights such as state authorities, local or national leaders and representatives in politics, economics, religion or communities.

Model for partnership and policy dialogue

To improve the situation of people and communities, HEKS/EPER does not exclusively work with the most vulnerable or those who are discriminated against, but also with people and grassroots organisations close to them that have a significant impact on the fight against poverty and in securing economic security, fostering social inclusion or creating peace. Women are still amongst the most marginalised, certainly single mothers or older women without supporting relatives. Also, HEKS/EPER facilitates the mutual dialogue with duty-bearers to create a base to continue or launch joint initiatives promoting development.



DR Congo: HEKS/EPER supports in the war-torn Kivu region people in remote villages to regain economic security.

8 Management for Quality, Progress, Learning, Steering

This chapter describes how HEKS/EPER fosters the relevance and efficiency of its activities as postulated in its institutional objective. It includes the evolution of HEKS/EPER as an organization highlighting finances, institutional governance including PSEAH, acquisition, monitoring evaluation learning, networks and alliances.

8.1 Programme Management

8.1.1 Organisational Evolution

The financial stabilisation and consolidation measures introduced in 2019 continued to positively affect HEKS/EPER activities in Switzerland and internationally in 2020. It made HEKS/EPER ID adapt its portfolio with decisions to phase out entirely in Moldova and Zimbabwe by the end of 2019, closing the office in **Colombia** (keeping only 1-2 projects) and significantly reducing the volume in the Israel/Palestine program. By the end of 2020, after 62 years, HEKS/EPER ended its activities in **India**. In India, HEKS/EPER had its first development program in the South, focusing mainly on social and economic non-discrimination of Dalit and Adibashi and sustainable and profitable agroecological production of small-scale farmers. Land rights projects in the past ten years secured access to land for 100'000 people. HEKS/EPER will continue its path to operational decentralisation while ensuring compliance and standards as reported in the previous CC-AR.

The pandemic has forced the organisation to digitalise further and to virtualise meetings. The positive 'side-effect' was that this had brought field and HQ staff closer together. Both sit at the same virtual table, which has shifted attention to operations and advanced our inclusiveness and participation on a global corporate level.

In addition, HEKS/EPER prepared structures and processes for the next strategy period with the declared management objectives of a) reducing structural costs at all levels for improved ratios of program delivery, b) further decentralising for more flexibility and agility, c) securing/broadening funding to reduce dependency on few funding sources and d) sharpening the operational profile by concentrating on fewer thematic priorities, programs and partners with the same or higher volume.

Therefore, despite the military coup, HEKS/EPER is willing and able to extend its activities in Myanmar to have a relevant Southeast Asia programme – also extending the Niger/Senegal activities to neighbouring countries may result in a West African programme. HEKS/EPER aims at decentralising fundraising activities. While local partners sit in the driver's seat, HEKS/EPER backed the proposal with its expertise and some minor co-funding. This approach paid off in Honduras (EU grant), Brazil (Banco do Brasil Foundation), and Uganda (UN grant). **Humanitarian Aid:** In 2020, the volume invested in DR Congo HA activities amounted to CHF 4.4 M, far beyond the budget of 750'000 CHF. Also, HA in Bangladesh reached 4.4 M; Lebanon 1 M, Isr/Pal 0.8 M, and Ethiopia 0.9 M become more significant actions than planned.

8.1.2 Merger HEKS/EPER & BfA

The merger with BfA is progressing. The respective legal bodies, e.g., the churches, have formally endorsed the new statutes of the merged organisation. Discussions have intensified on department levels to incorporate the staff, projects and topics of BfA in development policy. BfA staff members will legally join HEKS/EPER effective from January 2022. The new HIP strategy 2021-2024, as approved by SDC, has already incorporated the development policy work in the theory of change and its new outcome 4.

8.1.3 Security

HEKS/EPER operates in areas affected by conflicts and disasters and is aware of the risks of working in such contexts. HQ and country staff, staff of contracted partners, actors of like-minded alliances or of partnering civil society organisation and of people and communities HEKS/EPER is working with – their security is a major concern when interacting and/or implementing projects. HEKS/EPER makes every effort to fulfil its duty of care and acknowledges its legal and social obligation to ensure appropriate security risk management measures are being implemented. Therefore, in cooperation with field office staff, ID management provides

updated global and country-specific information and practical tools enabling staff to handle security issues to protect themselves and others. The HEKS/EPER Global Security Policy¹³ regulates the security risk management, outlining principles and roles/ responsibilities of staff. An intranet security website bundles all necessary info, online courses, tools, processes and makes it available for staff. Incidents are reported and handled with care.

In 2020, the **pandemic** led to 2 updates of the Travel Guidance. Criticality (do benefits of travel outweigh risks?), accountability (formal and documented approval of line manager), and consent (free, informed, consensual travel of staff only) were and are the main criteria to decide if travelling is recommended. HEKS/EPER reduced travelling massively in 2020, by HQ staff and office staff, with humanitarian aid still quite active. In 2020, 24 reports security incident reports were issued worldwide, traffic and health (COVID-19) being its main sources, but it is also linked to increased awareness to report. DR Congo got most incidents, amongst them also armed criminal assaults.



Intranet website gives staff orientation to handle security issues to protect themselves and others:

<https://heks.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Security.aspx>

8.1.4 Adaptive Management & Innovation

HEKS/EPER embeds learnings from its own practices and adapting to them in its *project cycle management manual*. **Adaptive management** is key to innovation and was further enhanced in 2020. PCM and other MEL tools were consolidated – a webinar series planned to make a needs assessment at partner and country office level. To increase relevance and effectiveness in meeting the needs of people and communities, it remains key to be flexible and permanently to adapt strategy, programme and activities to the changing and fragile context – the now 8-year-old HIP principle **Learning4Steering** is paramount for adaptive management. HEKS/EPER made steps towards more evidence-based programming while planning and during implementation. [Read more on MEL \(monitoring evaluation learning\) in chapter 3.5.](#)

HEKS/EPER put the focus on project design on results-orientation. In line with this, HEKS/EPER continued testing **models and tools that stimulate creativity and innovation**, e.g., the Design Thinking approach with a human-centred experimentation approach. HEKS/EPER developed new, innovative projects and approaches, such as the various approaches to cash programming in humanitarian aid, financial contribution of local municipalities to include activities in Eastern Europe, funding social businesses in ICT in Myanmar, boosting financial literacy with a smartphone up for small-scale farmer, etc. Cooperation with academia, Nadel, Intrac, SDC and other Swiss or international institutes or private sector actors will help HEKS/EPER in its endeavours to embrace innovation.

8.1.5 Supportive Management Systems

HEKS/EPER launched in 2017 a cloud-based file and communication (intranet) platform using Microsoft Sharepoint Online. This proved to be very effective. Until 2019, all country offices of HEKS/EPER gained full ownership as they have full access and editing rights to the same files as the staff at HHQ. This increased the ability of joint strategic planning – especially during proposal development and reporting processes, staff appreciate the simultaneous work on the same documents.

With proficient ICT tools and processes in place, HEKS/EPER ID could master the COVID-19 effect of reduced mobility and home office; offering staff all equipment and access to the cloud servers to further work effectively and to communicate with country staff. In 2020, country and headquarter staff got closer together as digital meetings were held globally with the relevant staff members.

Also, 83% of projects using key indicators digital system in 2020, through which 10'500 interviews were conducted by our partners (see [chapter 8.5](#)) HEKS/EPER was acknowledged as an organisation that has made particular progress in digital maturity, striving for more effective results-based programming. Invitations of SDC and another donor to exchange on MEL underline HEKS/EPER's leading role.

¹³ Global Security Policy. HEKS/EPER, July 2019: https://drive.google.com/file/d/19of_o2wFkPxpX3Y-mU81oF9-m1W_fz0r/view

8.2 Finances

8.2.1 Whole Organisation of HEKS/EPER (CH & International)

The stabilising and consolidating the fiscal position were largely achieved. Against the background of the **Covid-19 pandemic**, however, forecasts for the year 2020 and onwards are very difficult. In addition to dealing with the economic consequences of the pandemic, which cannot yet be foreseen to their full extent, the other framework conditions such as economic pressure in a highly competitive environment or the reorientation of development cooperation decided by the Federal Council remain a demanding challenge on the way back to a balanced or positive financial budget for HEKS/EPER.

Operating income was 78.8 M CHF, a figure that exceeded expectations, while expenditure of 73.2 M CHF was below the preliminary estimate.

HEKS/EPER earmarked altogether 61.4 M CHF for 198 projects abroad and in Switzerland. Some 12.9 M CHF supported development cooperation projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. A further 2,1 million francs were allocated to church cooperation in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. HEKS/EPER also provided 11,3 million francs worth of humanitarian aid in the wake of droughts, natural disasters and conflict zones. In Switzerland, HEKS/EPER spent 27.0 M CHF as follows: 17.7 M CHF for projects to promote inclusion for socially underprivileged people and 8.9 M CHF for legal advice to asylum seekers, recognized refugees and other target groups.

Overall income: Despite greater economic pressure in a highly competitive environment, especially as it pertains to international mandates and contracts from the cantons for work to be done in Switzerland, it was still possible to generate a positive operating income of 5.6 M CHF. This is attributable, for the most part, to increased donations from private and institutional donors for Covid-19 programmes both locally and abroad. Therefore, the result was roughly 11.1 M CHF higher than the previous year's figure (2019: minus 5.5 M CHF). Income from work in Switzerland amounted to 32.9 M CHF, representing 42 per cent of overall income.

Administrative costs: The share of administrative costs in overall expenditure (11.8 million francs) was 16.1% (Zewo guideline). HEKS/EPER, therefore, continues below the average for Zewo-certified non-profit organizations (21%).

Financial and real estate income: Income from real estate increased to 0,2 million francs. Despite the adverse conditions that prevailed on stock markets, asset investments yielded a net book profit of 0,7 million francs. The value fluctuation reserves, therefore, had to be replenished by 0,6 million francs, at the expense of the operating result.

Funding trends: Owing to the difference between expenditure and income, 6.2 M CHF had to be taken from operating income (2019: a withdrawal of 3.3 M CHF) and allocated to existing funds for work in Switzerland and work abroad. Fund capital, therefore, now stands at 37.7 M CHF: work in Switzerland, 11.6 million francs, work abroad, 17.2 M CHF, and humanitarian aid, 8.9 M CHF.

Result: In addition to increasing the value fluctuation reserves (by 600'000 CHF), an amount of 100'000 CHF was withdrawn from the organisation 's free capital and an amount of 300'000 CHF from tied capital. This balances the annual result.

8.2.2 Finances International Division

The ID specific financial **stabilisation and consolidation measures** introduced in 2019 continued to positively affect HEKS/EPER activities in Switzerland and International in 2020. It made HEKS/EPER ID adapt its portfolio with decisions to phase-out completely in Moldova and Zimbabwe by the end of 2019, to close the office in Colombia (keeping only 1-2 projects) and significantly reducing the volume in the Israel/Palestine programme; and now to phase-out in India by the end of 2020.

Despite the pandemic, 2020 was an excellent financial year for HEKS/EPER. The international division reacted fast to incorporate COVID-19 response activities such as information campaigns, provision of protective gear, access to water and sanitation into its projects. Several innovative examples were also used for fundraising, and the Swiss public, SDC and other donors reacted with additional funding sources. Partly, DC projects could not fully implement as planned and therefore not spend the funds foreseen, yet HA activities and funding respectively increased. As a result, many DC projects will catch up in 2021, reaching the initial yet adapted overall goals.

Overview on budget and expenses 2020 of HEKS/EPER international programme (HIP) – details see Annex

| Country / Programme | Plan 2020 from HIP 2017-2020 SDC Contract | Net Budget 2020 | Net Expenses 2020 | Gross Expenses 2020 full cost accounting | SDC Contribution 2020 | % of SDC Contribution 2020 | Deviation Net Expenses 2020 to Plan 2020 from HIP 2017-2020 SDC Contract | Deviation Net Expenses 2020 to Net Budget 2020 |
|--|---|-------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| Overview costs HEKS/EPER international programme | | | | | | | | |
| DC & HA overall (without SDC Project contributions) | | | | | | | | |
| total costs DC | 17,500,000 | 15,142,700 | 12,989,165 | 15,679,471 | 7,180,000 | 46% | -4,510,835 | -2,153,535 |
| total programme costs DC & HA | 27,500,000 | 19,375,600 | 22,657,068 | 30,435,854 | 7,880,000 | 26% | -4,842,932 | 3,281,468 |
| Total management costs DC & HA | 5,000,000 | 3,784,000 | 4,060,651 | - | - | - | -739,349 | 276,651 |
| Total costs DC & HA | 32,500,000 | 23,159,600 | 26,717,719 | 30,435,854 | 7,880,000 | 26% | -5,582,281 | 3,558,119 |
| SDC Program contribution incl. COVID | 8,000,000 | 7,680,000 | 7,880,000 | 7,880,000 | 7,880,000 | - | -120,000 | 200,000 |
| SDC Program contribution contracted | 8,000,000 | 7,680,000 | 7,680,000 | 7,680,000 | 7,680,000 | 25% | -320,000 | - |
| SDC contribution in % | 25% | 33% | 29% | 25% | - | - | | |
| HIP overall: DC & HA & CC (including SDC Project contributions) | | | | | | | | |
| total programme costs HIP | 40,000,000 | 21,782,000 | 27,229,944 | 37,582,090 | 7,880,000 | 21% | -12,770,056 | 5,447,944 |
| total management costs HIP & HA | 5,150,000 | 3,884,000 | 4,310,651 | - | - | - | -839,349 | 426,651 |
| Total costs ID (Financial Report 2020) | 45,150,000 | 25,666,000 | 31,540,595 | 37,582,090 | 7,880,000 | 21% | -13,609,405 | 5,874,595 |
| Total Overhead from Organisation | N.A. | N.A. | 6,041,495 | | | | | |
| Total costs ID incl. Costs from the Organisation | | | 37,582,090 | 37,582,090 | 7,880,000 | 21% | | |

Overall expenditure for development cooperation was below the budgeted amount. Spending on humanitarian aid, in contrast, recorded an increase based on project-specific funding commitments. Meanwhile, expenditure for work in Switzerland remained below budget for the most part. Investment in international work declined mostly concerning projects in Europe (down 1.4 M CHF), principally in Moldova (phase-out in 2019/2020) and Romania. There was also a fall-off in investment in Latin America and Asia (down 1.8 M CHF), more specifically in Colombia, Haiti and Palestine/Israel. The prevailing political instability in some project countries, as well as more difficult operating environments caused by financial restrictions and embargoes, were also among the reasons for the downturn in expenditure.

Compared to the previous year, humanitarian aid spending varied significantly, depending on the project country. There was an increase of 1.5 M CHF in overall expenditure, covering the following countries, among others: Bangladesh (up 1.1 M CHF), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DCR) (up 2.5 M CHF), Venezuela (up 0.5 M CHF), Ethiopia (up 0.5 M CHF) and Lebanon (up 0.3 M CHF). In contrast, expenditure diminished in several other regions. This affected, for example, Iraq (down 1.4 M CHF), Indonesia (down 0.7 M CHF) and Zimbabwe (down 0.5 M CHF).

For **all activities in the international division**, HEKS/EPER spent – full cost accounting – CHF 37.58 million (CHF 38 M in 2019).

Total **'DC South'** project costs amounted to CHF 11.88 M, while **'DC East'** project costs totalled CHF 4.26 M – both without SDC direct project contributions nor mandates.

For **HA projects**, HEKS/EPER spent in 2020 CHF 17.49 M with a contribution of SDC of 5% without project contributions.

For **church cooperation** projects, CHF 3 M were implemented with no SDC contribution: as not eligible to programme contribution.

Additional 0.94 M CHF were invested in **cross-sectional IC activities** such as land governance or capacity-building of civil society partners.

Co-financing by SDC in the phase 2017–2020

| | | Costs 2017 | Costs 2018 | Costs 2019 | Budget 2020 | Costs 2020 |
|---|---|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Costs & budget (CHF) of the HIP part co-financed by SDC's programme contributions | EZA Süd | 20'935'887 | 16'603'500 | 14'536'602 | 14'426'000 | 11'648'127 |
| | EZA Ost | 6'338'494 | 4'136'000 | 4'469'363 | 4'347'000 | 4'031'344 |
| | HH Süd | 10'549'485 | 8'867'000 | 12'696'282 | 7'976'000 | 14'756'383 |
| | HH Ost | 699'747 | 612'188 | 120'235 | 0 | 0 |
| | Contribution of SDC in % / absolute (CHF) | | | | | |
| | EZA Süd | 30% | 40% | 45% | 46% | 56% |
| | EZA Ost | 11% | 16% | 13% | 13 % | 14% |
| | HH | 1% | 6% | 4% | 6% | 5% |
| | | 6'300'000 | 6'600'000 | 6'600'000 | 6'600'000 | 6'600'000 |
| | | 700'000 | 642'000 | 580'000 | 580'000 | 580'000 |
| | | 117'686 | 500'000 | 500'000 | 500'000 | 700'000 |
| | <i>Total EZA, HH</i> | <i>18 % (EZA + HA)</i> | <i>25 % (EZA + HA)</i> | <i>24% EZA + HH</i> | <i>29% EZA + HH</i> | <i>25% EZA + HH</i> |
| | <i>Total EZA, HH, KiZA</i> | <i>17% total</i> | <i>21% total</i> | <i>20% total</i> | <i>24% total</i> | <i>21% total</i> |
| SDC direct contributions and grants (share of SDC in CHF) | EZA Süd | 121'617 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1'168'405 |
| | EZA Ost | 1'623'105 | 1'237'000 | 311'985 | 60'000 | 226'698 |
| | HH Süd | 0 | 115'000 | 239'000 | 0 | 2'730'820 |
| | HH Ost | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

SDC contributed 7'880'000 CHF with its IP's programme contribution, including CHF 0.5 Million for HA and CHF 0.2 Million for a particular COVID-19 intervention programme in Bangladesh. The contractual amount for this extraordinary contribution amounts to CHF 450'000, out of which CHF 200'000 were spent in 2020 (250,000 was used for the project in early 2021). That is **21% of the overall volume of all international activities of HEKS/EPER**, including DC, HA, CC and project contributions. The share ID programme co-financed by IP (DC and HA without CC, and without project contributions) was in the contract period was 20% in 2019 and 25% in 2020 – both way underneath SDC IP's limit of 50%.

8.2.3 ID Controlling

Full cost accounting continued to prove advantages for the financial monitoring of individual projects, considering all costs incurred. In 2018, full cost accounting was introduced. That means each project receives a share of the project support costs at HQ and country level. In a further step, the remaining costs such as infrastructure, service, finance, human resources were now fully allocated proportionately to the projects. Therefore, 2019 and 2020 quality of financial controlling processes were improved. Additionally, HEKS/EPER HQ hired 2020 as a data specialist to improve and mainstream ICT tools for financial flows and accountability.

The most common key for distribution is volume. **The financial table of Annex B)** is based on this **cost accounting**. The comparison with previous years is not meaningful, which is why it was dispensed. The net expenses are comparable with HEKS/EPER's external financial report. However, the gross expenses are not directly comparable with the financial report, which follows the cost distribution logic of ZEW0.

8.3 Grant Acquisition and Donor Partnerships

Since 2016, HEKS/EPER ID pursues an **acquisition strategy** that seeks to achieve greater diversification of its funding portfolio by acquiring grants and contracts from bi- and multilateral donors and local governments and international foundations.

2020 was a busy and successful year in acquisition. The number of submissions of funding proposals to bilateral and multilateral donors increased threefold compared to 2019. This increased acquisition activity was triggered by additional or a change in needs in programme countries caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the opening of new funding opportunities to apply for. In total, **32 new grants** were signed in 2020 (twice as much as in 2019). The average win rate across DC and HA was 35%, with HA faring slightly better than DC. This is an excellent result and an all-time high for our organization.

HEKS/EPER further consolidated its relationships with key donors, such as SDC, EU/ ECHO, WHO and IOM, while also acquiring funds from new donors, such as USAID/ BHA and UN OCHA.

HEKS/EPER increasingly entered into **strategic partnerships** with like-minded international NGOs for joint resource mobilization and programming. In addition, efforts to pro-actively showcase HEKS/EPER's work through targeted donor engagement and more effective communication at a country level and in Switzerland were maintained despite the challenges of virtual communication due to travel and movement restrictions.

Despite the decision of the European Commission in January 2019 to exclude Swiss NGOs from accessing ECHO funds, HEKS/EPER has been successful in securing ECHO funds through partnering with ECHO-accredited European NGOs. Furthermore, HEKS/EPER continues exploring options to access this major humanitarian donor soon directly.

Summary

The total **income 2020 from grants** for DC and HA projects amounted to **CHF 8.2 million**.

In **DC**, HEKS/EPER managed **19 active grants** across **11 countries**, of which 7 included direct or indirect financial contributions from SDC (see paragraph and table below). Other donors towards DC projects include the European Commission, DANIDA, Liechtenstein Office for Foreign Affairs and the Cambodia Climate Change Alliance. Overall income from bilateral and multilateral donors for DC was just over CHF 2 M (SDC: CHF 493'147).

In **HA**, HEKS/EPER managed **25 active grants** across **8 countries**, of which 4 included direct or indirect financial contributions from SDC (see paragraph and table below). Other donors towards HA projects include Swiss Solidarity, ECHO, USAID/ BHA, IOM, WHO and UN OCHA. Overall income from bilateral and multilateral donors for HA was CHF 6.2 million (SDC: CHF 809'165 and 1'963'835 by SwS).

Funding from SDC (excl. programme contribution)

In 2020, SDC provided **CHF 1.3 million** in targeted project contributions to HEKS/EPER DC and HA projects. In **DC**, projects in Bangladesh, Niger and Kosovo were supported. In Haiti, HEKS/EPER received SDC funds as a sub-contractor to Helvetas in the [PAGAI](#) programme. Finally, HEKS/EPER received funds for water projects in Niger, Uganda and Ethiopia as a member of the SDC-supported Swiss Water Consortium. In 2020, HEKS/EPER did not implement a mandate for SDC.

In **HA**, SDC granted HEKS/EPER a top-up to its programme contribution for immediate COVID-19 response in the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh. Additional project contributions supported humanitarian interventions in DRC (conflict and displacement), Haiti (food security/nexus) and Honduras (hurricanes Eta and Iota).

Overview of projects with financial contribution from SDC 2020

| Development Cooperation | | |
|--|---|---|
| Project # | Title | Country |
| 756.350 | Production du Moringa biologique pour le renforcement de la résilience communautaire dans les régions de Maradi/ Zinder | Niger |
| 610.438 | COVID-19 Response and Rehabilitation Initiative (C2RI) for the Most Vulnerable Groups in Bangladesh | Bangladesh |
| 652.338 | Localizing Application of Appropriate Smart Technologies for Sustainable Climate Resilient Water Resources Management | Cambodia <i>(implementation started in January 2021)</i> |
| 756.342 | Programme Hydraulique Rurale Appui au Secteur Eau et Assainissement au Niger (PHRASEA) Phase 2: 2017-2022 | Niger <i>(via Helvetas)</i> |
| 926.330 | Social inclusion for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and other vulnerable groups in Kosovo | Kosovo <i>(partly via VoRAE)</i> |
| 830.388 | Projet de renforcement et développement de capacités de groupements de production artisanale de semences | Haiti <i>(via Helvetas / PAGAI)</i> |
| 756.360 / 786.012 706.397 / 706.401 | Various projects as part of the Swiss Water Consortium | Niger, Uganda, Ethiopia <i>(via Helvetas)</i> |
| Humanitarian Aid | | |
| Project # | Title | Country |
| 610.427 | Improving Hygiene, Infection Prevention and Control in Health Facilities in and around the Rohingya camps | Bangladesh <i>(programme contribution)</i> |
| 788.387 | Integrated emergency assistance to improve living conditions of IDPs and extreme hardship cases amongst the conflict-affected in hard-to-reach areas of the Eastern DRC | DR Congo |
| 830.390 | Cantines Scolaires Communautaires | Haiti |
| 835.404 | Asistencia humanitaria para personas vulnerables en los departamentos de Santa Bárbara y Colón afectados por las tormentas Eta e Iota en Honduras | Honduras <i>(implementation started in January 2021)</i> |

8.4 Corporate Governance

In 2020, **minor fraud cases** at partner organisations in Asia were detected, with amounts of fraud less than USD 1'000. The clues came from HEKS/EPER anti-corruption officers in the country offices. The offending employees of the contracted partner organisations have since been dismissed. In general, HEKS/EPER is vigilant as fraud risks may have increased in 2020 during the COVID-19 crises. In most cases, internal audits at implementing partner organisations executed either by HQ or by the country office staff could be done online only. Other INGOs signalled to us the same apprehension of increased fraud risk. Once the COVID-19 situation allows us to do so, our controlling department will return to on-site internal audits and anti-corruption workshops.

In addition to existing **whistleblowing** channels, HEKS/EPER has set up its global <https://heks.integrityline>. It is managed by an external service provider and is integrated into HEKS/EPER's overall good governance concept. Also, in 2020, HEKS/EPER released a **Good Governance Policy**, highlighting existing policies, standards and tools of the FFAG, the PCM, Code of Conducts and other sources.



HEKS/EPER Good Governance Policy

8.4.1 PSEAH

HEKS/EPER Corporate Governance policy includes PSEAH laid down in the HEKS/EPER Gender Policy, the HEKS/EPER Guideline on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, Bullying, Discrimination, and Harassment, the FFAG (Field Financial and Administration Guidelines) and annexed code of conducts as well as regulations – the policy includes complaint mechanism, controlling standards. HEKS/EPER reports and learns on it. In this chapter, we report on HEKS/EPER endeavour in applying its policy with a focus on PSEAH according to the contract 2019/2020 with SDC IP

| Outcome 2 | Indicator |
|---|---|
| Together with SDC and other institutional partners, HEKS/EPER exchanges and assures coherent and consistent standards for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and functioning compliance mechanisms for a protected reporting and independent treatment of cases of inappropriate behaviour. | Standards and functioning compliance mechanisms exist. Type and effectiveness of collaborations between institutional partners in the field of PSEA. |
| Output 2.1: Active participation and constructive inputs in a joint learning process on PSEA organized by SDC | |
| Output 2.2: Code of Conduct with zero tolerance valid for HEKS/EPER and all its contractual partners elaborated and introduced into the contracts with all its partner organisations. | |
| Output 2.3: Availability of didactic material (Good Governance toolbox, recommendation checklists) Workshops for inclusion of PSEA with a focus on target group protection (complaint mechanisms, mainstreaming in project work) | |
| Output 2.4: Efforts to strengthen gender equality at the operational and management level are intensified | |

Outcome 2 – coherent standards and compliance mechanisms

In autumn 2020, HEKS/EPER started the electronic whistleblowing tool heks.integrityline.org/. This tool is entirely independent of the HEKS/EPER ICT environment. Through an internal mailbox, it also enables communication with anonymous whistle-blowers ensuring maximum confidentiality. All HEKS/EPER staff at the HQ and the country offices were familiarised with the tool, which is an addition to the channels already in use, such as letterboxes, phone and SMS lines. In these whistle-blower channels, employees, partners and project participants can address feedback and complaints. These are investigated within a professional framework and, if the suspicion is confirmed, consistently sanctioned. This new integrity line supports the whistleblowing and feedback system that has been in place since 2018 and the appointed anti-corruption/PSEAH officers in each country office or delegation.

The FFAG – a binding policy for HEKS/EPER in dealing with its staff, partners and suppliers - was fully updated in 2017 and covered in many staff workshops ever since. This good corporate governance policy covers corruption, misuse or abuse of power, explaining the associated complaint mechanisms and how to put the policy into practice. To emphasise these efforts and its zero-tolerance policy, HEKS/EPER ID published a specific [Good Governance Policy](#) in October 2020 – highlighting key points of its institutional standards. Furthermore, as a member of the CHS Alliance, HEKS/EPER commits itself further to strengthen its processes, systems and corporate culture regarding effectivity, transparency and mutual accountability.

Output 2.1 – joint learning with SDC

SDC did not organise such learning events in 2020. HEKS/EPER joined CHS Alliance and ACT Alliance on a dozen webinars and knowledge sharing online events to exchange on PSEAH, gender justice, child protection.

Output 2.2 – codes of conducts/policies

HEKS/EPER is a member of the **CHS Alliance**, **ACT Alliance** and **Transparency International** and acts according to the Code of Conduct for Contractual Partners of the **FDFA** and also according to [ACT code of conduct](#). HEKS/EPER is part of the Community of Cooperation ([KoGe](#)) working group on Good Governance and exchanges with Bread for All and other ACT iNGOs on PSEAH, misuse of power, corruption etc. Since **1st January 2020**, HEKS/EPER's **new Gender Policy**, including the Guideline on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, Bullying, Discrimination, and Harassment, is compulsory for all staff and partners. The HRBA and the Core Humanitarian Standards are an even more substantial part of programming in the countries according to the HIP 21-24, embracing mutual accountability, participation and easily accessible feedback and complaint mechanisms. The [FFAG](#) policy details regulations, standards and agreement templates to which contracted staff, implementing partners, consultants and suppliers must comply. All

relevant documents on HEKS/EPER's strategies, policies, guidelines and tools to manage its international programme are published online: [ID institutional governance website](#). Specific Gender or PSEAH documents are ...

- the **HEKS/EPER Gender Policy including guidelines** <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YgqRk-ZfYS9NZOhkTMzi2Pq1H7dfgXtl/view> plus the [Gender Action Plan 21-24](#)
- and the **HEKS/EPER Gender Implementation Guideline (on programmatic level)** https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dJdjACOEw4rLHnGqXzH_fx5a1N4xm4Zz/view
- All relevant **Codes of Conduct** (ACT Alliance CoC; IFRC CoC, HEKS/EPER Staff CoC, HEKS/EPER and partner staff behaviour code) are stored here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cPmDb3Xuos7Er062pYqcr-q0Ys6UOqcr>

Output 2.3 – availability, capacity-building, complaint mechanism

Prevention of sexual abuse is an integral part of HEKS/EPER good governance standard. Due to COVID-19, no workshops could be held in the countries this year. However, online courses on this topic were made available (e.g., <https://www.interaction.org/training/>). Countries reported 1 incident in 2020 (in December, investigation ongoing).

Specific didactic material such as 'Good Governance toolbox', 'recommendation checklist' and facilitation manuals on how to train partners and sensitise staff is being provided and procedures being discussed in the workshops over the past years but is also accessible to all staff online on the intranet and for partners at the country offices.

All policies, guidelines, and tools are accessible for all contracted stakeholders, donors, and the public on [ID institutional governance \(website\)](#)

Output 2.4 – gender equality

By 2021, 3 out of 5 ID management members are women. In 2020, 5 out of 14 operative desk country managers were women, and 5 out of 16 country directors were women. In the countries, 62 out of 169 staff members were women. In 2020, HEKS/EPER elaborated a [Gender Action Plan 21-24](#) to implement and roll out the new gender policy. All staff in the country offices and at HQ were consulted during its elaboration. Objectives, strategic measures, practical actions and responsibilities are planned for HEKS/EPER ID for each of the five gender policy principles until 2024. The principles are:

- **Staff balance and participation:** Gender balance in HQ, field and all-important decision-making processes, equal pay, gender- and family-friendly working conditions, discussion on diversity, gender focal point in IDMT.
- **Gender equality in programmes and projects:** Application of ID Gender Implementation Guidelines, gender analyses and objectives at the programme level, gender portfolio, disaggregated monitoring data for learning and steering.
- **Gender mainstreaming in partner organisations:** Gender training, gender action plans and gender policies in all implementing partner organisations.
- **Gender competencies of staff:** Compulsory online courses for all staff, thematic meeting every two years, gender focal points in the countries.
- **Prevention of sexual violence and abuse:** PSEAH guidelines renewed and presented to all staff, external complaints mechanism, processing of cases and support for those affected, annual reporting, PSEAH anchored in all partner contracts and the Code of Conduct.

8.5 Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning (MEL)

Since 2014, HEKS/EPER has consistently strived to set up a comprehensive global approach to MEL that facilitates **global performance assessment** and enables **evidence-based and results-oriented steering decisions**.

For 2017-2019, the strategy has been continuously adapted by the MEL unit and IDMT, incorporating Knowledge Sharing in the unit, positioning itself as the leading MEL agency in Switzerland, ensuring quality assurance systems, introducing an advanced digital HKI system with performance assessment. In 2018/2019, the focus lay on consolidating these achievements, professionalising its implementation, promoting the ownership and learning culture on all levels: project, country programme, globally, and per thematic priorities. 2020 was additionally marked by the new HIP 21-24 that triggered a capacity-building initiative about core topics and an update of digital key indicators, elaborated together with thematic and country experts.

The MEL vision is ...

... to maintain and further develop high-quality MEL system and tools **promoting evidence-based and results-oriented programming and adaptive management** thanks to **learning 4 steering** that leads to an effective, relevant and high-quality implementation of the HEKS/EPER International Programme and contributes to the achievement of its vision and set objectives meeting the needs of people and communities.

In addition, institutional efforts towards MEL foster **good institutional governance and mutual accountability**, enable demonstrating progress as well as impact and therefore contribute to **increased acknowledgement** by project participants, partners, civil society and donors as a professional and trustworthy organization. HEKS/EPER participates in **networks & alliances** to build and manage cooperation/links strategically to and of other organizations to foster participation, knowledge-sharing, innovation and building competence, effectiveness, visibility and relevance, systemic change, protection.

To ensure the relevance, achievement and effectiveness, projects and programmes **plan** interventions based on risk-informed, gender-sensitive context analysis and internal as external evidence. During **implementation**, however, it is paramount to stay flexible and, therefore, always observe, analyse, learn, and adapt strategies and activities to the complex changing context to ensure progress and impact.

These information, analysis and decisions are documented in an annual project, programme, HIP and thematic reports, evaluation and impact assessment reports, training' and knowledge sharing events' minutes, etc.; and of course, in HEKS/EPER's digital data collection and analysis tool.

8.5.1 MEL Achievements 2020

24 project **evaluations** completed in **14** countries.

1 ongoing and **1** completed **impact assessments** in **2** countries.

1 **global digital roll-out of HEKS/EPER new International Division strategy (HIP 21-24)**

83% of **projects using key indicators digital system – implementing partners conducted 10'500 digital interviews.**

In 2020, in 14 countries, 24 mostly external project and programme **evaluations** were completed, and 2 **impact assessments** were active, 1 ongoing, and 1 completed. Most evaluations were end-of-phase to enable analysis and to learn for the next programme phase. 9 had an explicit management response document outlining the steering decisions. HEKS/EPER will review the proposals 2021 to check if evaluations' findings were part of the evidence used to identify and plan the follow-up phase of the other projects. 83% of DC projects use the digital HKI system, which is a great result, given that new partners joined HEKS/EPER, and it takes some time to introduce those. Compared to last year, where 17'000 interviews were held with project participants, in 2020, only 10'500 face-to-face interviews were done, mainly due to COVID-19 measures which restricted access of partners and HEKS/EPER offices to the people on the ground.

HKI digital system for monitoring, performance assessment and analysis

Since the introduction of the digital monitoring system in 2017, significant efforts were put into capacity-building, professionalizing implementation, promoting ownership and learning culture at all levels: project, country, globally and also within thematic priorities. **In 2020**, MEL unit started the revision of the HEKS/EPER key indicators (HKIs) to match the requirements of the new HIP 21-24 with new outcomes and outputs and very much based on the practitioners' feedback of partner and country office staff, also launching a webinar series on how to choose, use and apply HKIs effectively to enable learning 4 steering. The HKI digital system was updated technically and contextually to facilitate various data collection, monitoring and analysis needs of all stakeholders.

HEKS/EPER was acknowledged by SDC, donors and other Swiss iNGOs as an organisation that has made particular progress in digital maturity, striving for more effective results-based programming.

Evaluations

An evaluation aims to provide a credible analysis of an intervention's results and/or processes, focusing on one or several of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. Evaluations are an important source of information for decision-making and



steering processes and provide the information needed to be accountable towards relevant stakeholders. In 2020, 24 evaluations were conducted in 14 countries. 4 of these were evaluations of humanitarian projects.

Promising practices Capitalisation of experiences (CapEx) of the India country programme



For 60 years, HEKS/EPER has been working with marginalised groups such as Dalit and Adivasis in four southern states of India. The main focus of the India country programme was on access to land and rural development. HEKS/EPER decided to phase out from India by the end of 2020.

To capture the wealth of experience gained during the implementation of the India country programme, HEKS/EPER commissioned a Capitalization of Experience (CapEx). The purpose of the CapEx was to contribute to shaping recommendations for future HEKS/EPER interventions.

-  **Document Review** Annual Reports, Evaluations, Literature, etc.
-  **Online Survey (33/42 responses)** Questionnaire to HEKS Partners, HEKS Project Officers, HEKS Coordination staff in India + Switzerland (former + current)
-  **23 Interviews / 1 FGD** with HEKS Partner Organisations, HEKS Staff (current + former), other stakeholders (e.g. consultants, govt officials)
-  **Kick off meeting + Sense making workshop** with HEKS Partner Organisations

The Covid19 situation in India had escalated about the time the CapEx review commenced. It was therefore deemed unsafe for the consultant team to visit the HEKS/EPER project areas and hold discussions with various stakeholder groups. Therefore, the CapEx was conducted almost entirely online, except for one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) held by the HEKS/EPER India Country Director. The CapEx returned many recommendations for key areas of intervention of the HEKS/EPER India country programme: (1) land mobilization & land development, (2) the project implementation set-up known as *Forum approach*, (3) capacity-building at the grassroots level & community engagement, and (4) income generation.

Impact assessments

At HEKS/EPER, impact is understood as the changes *produced by* an intervention. Consequently, any assessment of impact should not only describe or measure the changes that have been observed but should also identify the role of the project or programme in *producing* these changes. This is often referred to as causal attribution, causal contribution, or causal inference.

| Country & Design of the impact assessment | Thematic focus | Status |
|--|---|--|
| Honduras | Conflict transformation, access to land | A planning workshop was conducted in 2019 to set up the project's Theory of Change and identify a design of the IA. After completing the evaluability assessment, MEL unit decided that an IA of this project would not be suitable at this time. Furthermore, the project won an EU tender changing the modalities of work. |
| Senegal / Theory-based with contribution analysis and process tracing | Access to land | Final report completed. |
| Palestine/Israel / Combination of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and participatory assessment of development (PADev) | Right to return, including access to land and strengthening civil society | Preparatory steps for the 2020 endline assessment, such as developing the Terms of Reference and designing the methodology, were initiated in 2019. The data collection tools were in place in March 2020, and the final report was completed in July 2020. |
| Bangladesh / Combination of theory-based approach (applying contribution analysis) and counterfactual approach (applying quasi-experimental design) using quantitative and qualitative methods. | Social inclusion of Dalit and Adibashi in Northwest Bangladesh | The qualitative data collection and parts of the quantitative data collection have been completed in March 2021. Unfortunately, the data collection had to be stopped due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation. Data collection will resume at a later stage. |

Learning 4 steering (adaptive management)

The **new HIP 21-24** submitted to SDC received a very positive rating from the independent assessment panel boosting HEKS/EPER staff's motivation to working towards the vision and set outcomes coherently. Hosted by HEKS/EPER's MEL unit, an intensive **capacity-building** on the core topics of the new HIP with 6 digital webinars (planned already in 2019 before COVID-19) accompanied by 6 in-depth workshops in each country from September to December 2020 reached more than 60 staff members. These workshops did not only increase professional knowledge yet brought the HQ and country staff closer together.

Digitalisation and ICT were already identified as a key opportunity during HIP 21-24 context analysis. In 2020, they proved to be effective tools in managing programmes, bridging COVID-19 mobility restrictions. Since 2019, MEL maintains a regularly updated and often visited intranet website on Sharepoint promoting internal and external online courses, learning events, webinars, including a wide range of links to platforms for knowledge sharing and capacity-building relevant for HEKS/EPER's work.

Since 2019, MEL hosts a **public website on HEKS/EPER's Institutional governance** (https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance). Publishing almost all HEKS/EPER reports, factsheets and evaluations, strategies, programmatic, administrative, managerial and thematic policies and guidelines was well received by donors, partner organisations, media, public, and HEKS/EPER own staff a pioneer practice demonstrating transparency and enabling learning.

The investments in a cloud server system (operative since 2017 and accessible for all HEKS/EPER staff at HQ and in countries), in an intranet and a webinar series on various programmatic and managerial topics during the last three years paid off in 2020. As a result, HEKS/EPER aims at further facilitating efficient, effective, CO₂-friendly, remote management of offices, partners, programmes, and projects.

Perspectives on MEL 2021 onwards

With its new MEL strategy 2020-22, HEKS/EPER builds on the context evolution and its long-standing experiences to make MEL an inherent part of each project/programme, thanks to ongoing capacity-building and joint global reflections. Main adaptations and continuations are:

- More emphasis on **supporting** staff and partners during the **planning phase** focussing on a sound **vision, LogFrame, and MEL plan** to increase the project's or programme's quality and relevance. Also, thanks to new specialised staff.
- **Modular, flexible (online) capacity-building on PCM tools and MEL** for HEKS/EPER staff and contracted partner organisations. They shall be capacitated to identify, plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and learn effectively and in good quality.
- Contributing to **HEKS/EPER's public acknowledgement**, enhancing cooperation of the whole ID with research and other IC actors and supporting acquisition endeavours is a clear mandate of the MEL unit.
- Enhancing in cooperation with IDMT and controlling unit **'Good Institutional Governance', PSEAH, Mutual Accountability** with MEL being the CHS focal point enhancing CHS self-assessment.
- Revision of the results framework and the (digital) indicator system according to new HIP; and in general support IDMT and thematic advisory unit to **smooth roll-out of the following strategy**.
- **Enhancing own ICT tools for monitoring, analysing and reporting on achieved results.** Considering the needs of all stakeholders, MEL develops and tailors state-of-art ICT tools for comprehensive data collection, processing and analysis.

Support ID's endeavours to intensify a **joint institutional learning culture including countries and HHQ embracing new ICT, digitalisation** (with its opportunities of remote management and knowledge sharing) and promoting **decentralisation** of capacities, competencies, tasks, etc

8.6 Alliances, Networks and Multiple-Stakeholder Partnerships

Since HEKS/EPER often works with community-based organisations and local partners and is itself a rather small player – also, when implementing directly – integrating its activities into thematic or advocacy/lobbying networks is crucial. HEKS/EPER strives to bring communities, partner organisations and other stakeholders into contact with each other. HEKS/EPER's endeavours to openly search for and cultivate cooperation, partnerships, dialogue, and networking contributes to more effective and efficient achievement of its set objectives. Through networking, HEKS/EPER is committed to expanding knowledge and expertise to benefit from its own international cooperation work and to lobby for the interests of the people and communities

we work with. HEKS/EPER is therefore strategically affiliated with specific coalitions and cooperation partners. This section describes the most significant national and international networks that HEKS/EPER belongs to. In addition, HEKS/EPER is a member of many national and multinational networks relating to specific priority countries.



Niger: Joint forces of like-minded actors enhance progress, relevance and effectiveness of HEKS/EPER projects.

Main network activities 2020

HEKS/EPER strives to strengthen relevant alliances/networks and facilitates cooperation between partners/communities with other actors. Networks contain essential expertise and relationships for consulting, connecting and protecting each other. Cooperation aimed at enhancing the vision of programme can be facilitated at local, national and international level. To be effective and influence global IC strategies of different actors, HQ seeks additional entry-points at Swiss or international level and connects these with stakeholders in its programmes. Among others, HEKS/EPER was active in the following networks (see box):

Networks & Alliances of HEKS/EPER ID

Major networks, alliances and communities of practices HEKS/EPER participates in at HQ level. On country programme or project level HEKS/EPER engages in many additional local or national networks.

Alliances & Networks globally

ACT Alliance (ACT Alliance is an international coalition of more than 130 churches and affiliated iNGOs, working together in over 120 countries to create positive sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalized people). HEKS/EPER is also a member in sub-groups on country and international level; e.g., **CoP 'Rights & Development'**.

CHS Alliance (This alliance aims to improve the effectiveness and impact of assistance to people and communities vulnerable to risk and affected by disaster, conflict, or poverty; by working with humanitarian and development actors on quality, accountability, and people management initiatives)

Blue Community Network: (Network committed to the principle that the UN's right to water and sanitation is respected and enforced; knowledge sharing on water and common advocacy work)

Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition (Initiative of Civil Society Organizations and social movements that recognize the need to act jointly for the realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition – food security)

FAO NGO Working Group (Informal working group of Swiss NGOs related to FAO processes, agriculture and food)

EISF (European Interagency Security Forum) (NGO network of security focal points of 100 iNGOs. It is a global centre of excellence for humanitarian security risk management; the forum currently represents over)

Conflict Sensitivity Community Hub (Joint learning, evidence building, promotion of conflict sensitivity at policy and operational levels; it aims together with other Hub members to create synergies and foster the application of conflict sensitivity globally)

Beam Exchange (A space to share knowledge and learning about the role of market systems in reducing poverty, to understand how and why market systems approaches work, read practical guidance on how to put the approach into practice, and to share insights with other practitioners)

EFECCW (The ecumenical forum is an international, church-related organisation active in 30 European countries to promote initiatives for peace, justice, reconciliation; to commit to action on behalf of women's rights and human rights)

Alliances & Networks in Switzerland

Alliance Sud (Policy platform of six big Swiss INGOs advocating in Switzerland for just global structures)

Swiss NGO Platform (incl. sub-groups – e.g., CoP ‘Enabling Environment’.)

Platform Agenda 2030 (50 civil society actors engaged in development cooperation, environmental protection, gender, peace, sustainable business, and trade unions, advocating towards implementation of the Agenda 2030 within Switzerland as well as globally)

Swiss NGO DRR Platform (Its goal is to contribute to enhanced quality of our services, to promote the diversity of know-how and experience, to provide guidance for increased effectiveness, and to advocate for the importance of DRR and CCA for building resilient communities worldwide)

Klima-Allianz / Swiss Climate Alliance (Participation in meetings, exchange on climate change and DRR related issues, support to campaigns/activities, link to Swiss NGO DRR Platform)

SDC networks (Member of various thematic networks: e.g., agricultural and food security, conflict and human rights, climate change and environment, DRR, employment and income, and résEAU)

KOFF / Swisspeace (Dialogue & exchange network facilitated by Swisspeace, connecting Swiss state/non-state actors active in peacebuilding to ensure that Swiss peacebuilding activities are strengthened, relevant, and visible)

Swiss Water Partnership (Multi-stakeholder platform bringing Swiss organisations from academia, civil society, public and private sector together to find innovative solutions for water challenges in developing and transitioning countries)

Agusan (Interdisciplinary Swiss community of practice (CoP) that brings together a broad range of specialists to promote wider and deeper understanding of key water and sanitation issues in developing and transitioning countries)

Transparency International (Exchange of joint learning and experiences on anti-corruption)

SEVAL (Swiss Evaluation Society) (Experience sharing on evaluations and networking)

Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services (SFRAS) (Knowledge sharing on agriculture and rural advisory services)

Dialogue and partner model 2021-2024 – how to link and work with networks, alliances and multiple-stakeholder partnerships

In 2019/2020, HEKS/EPER was re-thinking and re-shaping its dialogue and partner model. Also, in the ongoing endeavour of decentralization of decision and financial power toward the country programme responsible in the countries. Because all forms of cooperation must be adequately strategic and operational to serve HEKS/EPER offices in achieving its vision in all country outcome areas, the added value of a partnership, an alliance or a platform follows five distinct areas:

- **Participation:** Cooperation is always an opportunity to learn which needs, perceptions, approaches and/or values various stakeholders have. Analysing them contributes to a more comprehensive, targeted, effective and more conflict-sensitive programme implementation.
- **Knowledge sharing and competencies** of the Headquarters, country offices and partner organisations will be increased.
- **Resources, effectiveness and relevance:** Cooperation will create synergies and up-scaling, achieving good results via implementation using fewer resources/funds (e.g., lower overhead costs from sharing infrastructure with others) lowering the cost/Output ratio (e.g., being effective only if reaching a certain scale).
- **Systemic perspective:** Cooperation must enable systemic change, for example, by incorporating duty-bearers and following a multi-stakeholder approach in the development process or intervention logic, or through broad alliances securing steps towards a more developed society/economy.
- **Advocacy and policy dialogue:** Alliances and networks at a local as well as at a national/international level are key for effective advocacy, facilitating a dialogue towards positive changes to policies and practices. Moreover, such alliances may also take joint legal actions to enhance change.
- **Protection:** Shrinking space, criminality, conflicts endangering people and communities, as well as CBO and NGO staff such as human-right defenders or HEKS/EPER staff. Strategic cooperation and advocacy may lower risks, protect and enlarge the space for civil society actions and generally enhance security.

9 Challenges of International Cooperation

The global context of international cooperation influences HEKS/EPER strategy, the goals, and the implementation of its programmes and projects. To play a relevant role in an increasingly complex and multi-polar world, HEKS/EPER continuously reflects on the international context, especially on how to contribute to Agenda 2030. In 2019, HEKS/EPER made an **in-depth analysis of the international cooperation context** concerning planning its next HIP phase 2021-2024.

The **COVID-19 crises** increased worldwide existing inequalities, and achieving the SDGs becomes more challenging. At the same time, the pandemic hampered ‘courant normal’ project implementation and made quick and flexible adaptations of intervention logic necessary.

In the frame of the food systems summit, WFP stated that in 2020 957 million people across 93 countries suffer hunger with food systems failing. Moreover, the number of people suffering from acute hunger and malnutrition is on the rise again. Also, WFP documents that 155 million people in 55 countries suffered acute food insecurity in 2020 – 30 million more than in 2019. Amongst the 10 countries, most in crises 6 are countries HEKS/EPER was working in 2020: DR Congo, Syria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Haïti. Therefore, unless the manifold inequalities are not reduced, the world will not contain the pandemic with its devastating consequences, certainly for MIC and LIC countries, also in 2021 and 2022, yet probably even in the years that follow.

In 2020, HEKS/EPER COVID-19 response reached **3.12 M people** in **57 projects** in **29 countries**. Most people benefitting were already participants of existing HEKS/EPER humanitarian or development projects. Partners and offices reacted professional and quick to the pandemic with **adapted preventive and mitigating activities**, mainly with awareness-raising & hygiene campaigns, distribution/production of hygiene material, WASH activities, food security measures, direct cash support, and strengthening civil society actors defending their rights (HRBA). HEKS/EPER realized that it is new HIP with its four main goals is meaningful to tackle the impact of the pandemic as they focus on the inequalities COVID-19 disclosed.

The **seven context trends/challenges** elaborated by HEKS/EPER during its context analysis in 2019 (see [annexe C](#)) are still relevant and became even more evident in 2020, with COVID-19 crises being a magnifier increasing inequalities, economic or social gaps, poverty, discrimination, and making them more visible. It was hampering HEKS/EPER’s efforts to create an economically, social and political more just world, and the international community struggles to achieve Agenda 2030’s main pledge of ‘leaving no one behind’. Yet also opportunities HEKS/EPER identified proofed to be still promising to overcome the COVID-19 crises, such as inclusive business and markets, digitalization, local agroecological production or the importance of good governance by duty-bearers as factors to prevent or mitigate effects of crises.

2020 has shown the fragility of many people’s access to essential resources and services. In health systems and food systems, critical weaknesses, inequalities, and inequities have come to light with even more people living on the cusp of hunger, malnutrition, and extreme poverty.

An in-depth context analysis elaborated by HEKS/EPER international department **in 2019** based on the latest scientific analysis has been the starting point of the strategic planning towards the new HIP phase 2021-2024. The analysis is still valid and can be subsumed in seven overarching trends and challenges to which HEKS/EPER responds in its theory of change and approaches chosen. Check the examples for project examples linked to these trends and challenges. And per trend/challenge, the summary below includes the outcomes and outputs as well as approaches of the HIP 2021-2024 responding to them:

- 1) Deteriorating governance and shrinking space for civil society
- 2) Raising inequalities and discrimination
- 3) Climate and environmental crisis and the importance of sustainable land governance
- 4) Economic growth and private sector
- 5) Fragility, complexity and protracted humanitarian crises
- 6) Demography, mobility and migration
- 7) Digital technology and media use

The **10 thematic factsheets** of HEKS/EPER ID contain **specific context analysis** relevant to the respective topic.



HEKS/EPER – Swiss Church Aid

| | | |
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10 Appendices

A) Finances 2020 – Budget, Expenses, SDC Contribution

[See Link to the full table \(pdf & excel\) on Sharepoint here.](#)

| Country / Programme | Plan 2020 from HIP 2017-2020 SDC Contract | Net Budget 2020 | Net Expenses 2020 | Gross Expenses 2020 full cost accounting |
|---|---|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Development Cooperation (DC) South | | | | |
| Asia General | 0 | 293,600 | 43,087 | 63,972 |
| Myanmar | 0 | 250,000 | 87,005 | 127,731 |
| Bangladesh | 1,200,000 | 1,340,000 | 1,199,402 | 1,585,409 |
| Cambodia | 800,000 | 1,040,000 | 982,435 | 1,325,330 |
| India | 900,000 | 200,000 | 204,092 | 272,097 |
| Palestine/Israel | 1,700,000 | 780,000 | 352,948 | 190,337 |
| Total Asia | 4,600,000 | 3,903,600 | 2,868,969 | 3,564,876 |
| Congo DR | 900,000 | 816,200 | 529,865 | 270,729 |
| Ethiopia | 1,000,000 | 968,700 | 766,666 | 660,984 |
| Niger | 1,050,000 | 1,048,000 | 1,196,245 | 1,475,079 |
| Senegal | 1,000,000 | 1,028,000 | 916,409 | 1,202,575 |
| Uganda | 0 | 0 | 269,520 | 572,702 |
| Zimbabwe | 1,100,000 | | | |
| South Sudan | 950,000 | | | |
| Total Africa | 6,000,000 | 3,860,900 | 3,678,705 | 4,182,069 |
| Americas general | 0 | 120,000 | 101,793 | 153,344 |
| Brazil | 1,200,000 | 1,025,000 | 836,950 | 1,142,123 |
| Columbia | 1,100,000 | 382,000 | 385,962 | 535,879 |
| Haiti | 1,000,000 | 887,000 | 599,273 | 336,182 |
| Honduras | 1,100,000 | 887,000 | 640,452 | 798,112 |
| Total Americas | 4,400,000 | 3,301,000 | 2,564,430 | 2,965,640 |
| Total programme | 15,000,000 | 11,065,500 | 9,112,104 | 10,712,585 |
| Total management ID | 3,200,000 | 1,750,000 | 1,808,949 | - |
| Total DC South | 18,200,000 | 12,815,500 | 10,921,053 | 10,712,585 |
| SDC contribution* | 6,800,000 | 6,450,000 | 6,450,000 | 6,450,000 |
| SDC contribution in % | 37% | 50% | 59% | 60% |
| SDC Project Contributions (Bangladesh + Niger) | 2,500,000 | | 698,309 | 1,168,405 |
| Total DC South incl. SDC Project Contribution | 20,700,000 | 12,815,500 | 11,619,362 | 11,880,990 |
| hub Asia | 1,500,000 | | | |
| hub Africa | 2,300,000 | | | |
| hub America | 1,300,000 | | | |
| Development Cooperation East | | | | |
| Europe general | | 10,000 | 205,692 | 43,877 |
| Armenia | 500,000 | 412,700 | 426,217 | 633,536 |
| Georgia | 500,000 | 1,815,500 | 1,685,950 | 2,516,170 |
| Kosovo | 200,000 | 300,000 | - | - |
| Moldova | 1,000,000 | 260,000 | 253,672 | 334,222 |
| Romania | 300,000 | 534,000 | 361,098 | 491,079 |
| Serbia | | 0 | 8,890 | 12,460 |
| Total programme | 2,500,000 | 3,332,200 | 2,941,519 | 4,031,344 |
| Total management ID | 800,000 | 857,000 | 920,000 | |
| Total DC East | 3,300,000 | 4,189,200 | 3,861,519 | 4,031,344 |
| SDC contribution* | 700,000 | 580,000 | 580,000 | 580,000 |
| SDC contribution in % | 21% | 14% | 15% | 14% |
| SDC Project Contributions (Kosovo) | 1,500,000 | | 161,741 | 226,698 |
| Total DC East incl. SDC Project Contribution | 4,800,000 | 4,189,200 | 4,023,260 | 4,258,042 |
| hub Europe | 1,400,000 | | | |

| Country / Programme | Plan 2020 from HIP 2017-2020 SDC Contract | Net Budget 2020 | Net Expenses 2020 | Gross Expenses 2020 full cost accounting |
|--|---|------------------|-------------------|--|
| Humanitarian Aid South | | | | |
| Asia | | 965,552 | 89,295 | 132,833 |
| Bangladesh | | 70,044 | 3,016,670 | 4,372,742 |
| Iraq | | 200,000 | 119,109 | 176,848 |
| Lebanon | | 60,000 | 682,898 | 1,013,944 |
| Yemen | | 0 | 16,263 | 30,790 |
| India | | 0 | 113,783 | 113,783 |
| Israel/Palestine | | 260,000 | 414,024 | 816,902 |
| Indonesia | | 258,204 | | |
| Syria | | 0 | 152,597 | 226,570 |
| Ethiopia | | 0 | 454,468 | 915,727 |
| DRC | | 724,700 | 2,766,011 | 4,399,300 |
| Venezuela | | 0 | 529,412 | 786,273 |
| South Sudan | | 142,000 | 341,077 | 735,723 |
| Uganda | | 805,000 | 234,278 | -261,041 |
| Zimbabwe | | 25,000 | 74,554 | 109,416 |
| Brasil | | 0 | -1,245 | -1,245 |
| Haiti | | 612,400 | 489,923 | 874,949 |
| Honduras | | 110,000 | 174,786 | 312,869 |
| Programm HA South | 9,000,000 | | | |
| Total programme | 9,000,000 | 4,232,900 | 9,667,903 | 14,756,383 |
| Total overhead ID | 800,000 | 1,177,000 | 1,331,702 | |
| Total HA South without SDC Project Contribution | 9,800,000 | 5,409,900 | 10,999,605 | 14,756,383 |
| SDC contribution* | 500,000 | 500,000 | 700,000 | 700,000 |
| SDC contribution in % | 5% | 9% | 6% | 5% |
| SDC Project Contributions (Haiti + DRC) | | | 1,632,025 | 2,730,820 |
| Total HA South incl. SDC Project Contribution | 9,800,000 | 5,409,900 | 12,631,630 | 17,487,203 |
| Humanitarian Aid East | | | | |
| Programm HA East | 1,000,000 | | | |
| Total programme | 1,000,000 | | | |
| Total management | 200,000 | | - | |
| Total HA East | 1,200,000 | | - | - |
| SDC contribution* | 0 | | - | - |
| SDC contribution in % | 0 | | - | - |
| Church Cooperation | | | | |
| CC Europe regional | | 75,000 | 51,776 | 75,128 |
| Czech Republic | | 81,000 | 66,393 | 96,323 |
| Hungary | | 333,000 | 269,786 | 391,461 |
| Italy | | 33,800 | 32,617 | 47,327 |
| Lebanon / Asia regional | | 70,700 | 46,145 | 66,957 |
| Romania | | 484,600 | 488,298 | 709,595 |
| Serbia | | 495,000 | 334,333 | 485,119 |
| Slovakia | | 100,000 | 65,289 | 94,735 |
| Syria | | 415,800 | 445,949 | 647,075 |
| Ukraine | | 317,500 | 280,215 | 406,593 |
| Programm Curch Cooperation | 2,000,000 | | | |
| Total programme | 2,000,000 | 2,406,400 | 2,080,801 | 3,020,313 |
| Total overhead ID | 150,000 | 100,000 | 250,000 | |
| Total CC | 2,150,000 | 2,506,400 | 2,330,801 | 3,020,313 |
| Other global projects DC | 0 | 745,000 | 935,542 | 935,542 |

Summary Finances 2020

| Country / Programme | Plan 2020 from HIP 2017-2020 SDC Contract | Net Budget 2020 | Net Expenses 2020 | Gross Expenses 2020 full cost accounting |
|--|---|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Overview costs HEKS/EPER international programme | | | | |
| DC & HA overall (without SDC Project contributions) | | | | |
| total costs DC | 17,500,000 | 15,142,700 | 12,989,165 | 15,679,471 |
| total programme costs DC & HA | 27,500,000 | 19,375,600 | 22,657,068 | 30,435,854 |
| Total management costs DC & HA | 5,000,000 | 3,784,000 | 4,060,651 | - |
| Total costs DC & HA | 32,500,000 | 23,159,600 | 26,717,719 | 30,435,854 |
| SDC Program contribution incl. COVID | 8,000,000 | 7,680,000 | 7,880,000 | 7,880,000 |
| SDC Program contribution contracted | 8,000,000 | 7,680,000 | 7,680,000 | 7,680,000 |
| SDC contribution in % | 25% | 33% | 29% | 25% |
| HIP overall: DC & HA & CC (including SDC Project contributions) | | | | |
| total programme costs HIP | 40,000,000 | 21,782,000 | 27,229,944 | 37,582,090 |
| total management costs HIP & HA | 5,150,000 | 3,884,000 | 4,310,651 | - |
| Total costs ID (Financial Report 2020) | 45,150,000 | 25,666,000 | 31,540,595 | 37,582,090 |
| Total Overhead from Organisation | N.A. | N.A. | 6,041,495 | |
| Total costs ID incl. Costs from the Organisation | | | 37,582,090 | 37,582,090 |

B) Evaluations & Impact Assessments of HEKS/EPER

In 2020, in 14 countries, 24 mostly external project and programme evaluations were completed, and 2 impact assessments were active, 1 ongoing, and 1 completed. Most evaluations were end-of phase to enable analysis and learning for the next programme phase. 9 had an explicit management response document outlining the steering decisions. HEKS/EPER will review the proposals 2021 to check if evaluations' findings were part of the evidence used to identify and plan the follow-up phase of the other projects.

Evaluations (by country)

| Country | Project number, name, and duration | Timing | Terms of reference | Report | Management Response |
|------------|---|--------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| Armenia | 904.356: VET Development in Syunik Marz (Project phase Oct 2016 – Sep 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Apr 2020 | May 2020 |
| Armenia | 904.351: Horticulture Market Development in Vayots Dzor and Gegharkunik Marzes of Armenia (HMDP) (Phase: Jan 2018 – Dec 2021) | Mid-term | Yes | Oct 2020 | No |
| Bangladesh | 610.312: Accelerating Livelihoods Options for the Dalit and Ethnic Community (ALO) implemented by GBK (Jan 2017 - Dec 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Sep 2020 | No |
| Bangladesh | 610.314: Promotion of Rights of Ethnic Minorities and Dalit's for Improvement Program (PREMDIP) implemented by ESDO (2017-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Sep 2020 | No |
| Bangladesh | 610.404: DREAM Project implemented by ARCO (2017-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Sep 2020 | No |
| Bangladesh | 610.424: Improving the environment in and around Jamtoli Rohingya Camp implemented by HEKS/EPER and DAM (Mar 2019 – Feb 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Mar 2020 | Jan 2021 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----|-----------|-----------|
| Brazil | 812.359: Territory, use rights and access to markets for family farmers and traditional peoples implemented by CEDAC (Mar 2017 – Dec 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | June 2020 | Aug 2020 |
| Brazil | 812.385: Defence of the rights to territories and protection of socio-biodiversity implemented by TDD (Jan 2018 – Dec 2020) | Mid-term | Yes | Feb 2020 | June 2020 |
| Colombia | 842.366: Accompaniment and capacity-building for the protection and security of rural communities defending human rights implemented by PAS / PWS (2017-2020) | Mid-term | Yes | Nov 2019 | No |
| Colombia | 842.395: Defence of peasant rights over the territory and socio-economic development in the Cimitarra river valley reserve zone (ZRC-VRC) implemented by PAS / PWS (2017-2019) | End-of-phase | Yes | Aug 2019 | Nov 2019 |
| Congo DR | 788.355: Know and assert your land rights in Nord-Kivu implemented by AAP (2018-2019) | Mid-term | Yes | Mar 2020 | No |
| Georgia | 918.046: Promoting Citizen Engagement for Economic Development Project (PROCEED) implemented by ELKANA (2016-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Nov 2020 | No |
| Georgia | 618.036: Organic hazelnut value chain creates income and decent employment in Western Georgia implemented by ELKANA (2018-2023) | Mid-term | Yes | Nov 2020 | No |
| Haiti | 830.380: Improvement of revenues of rural families in Grand'Anse implemented by PRR-EMH (Phase 2: Jul 2016 – Nov 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Aug 2020 | Sep 2020 |
| Haiti | 830.381: Improvement of rural infrastructure (PAIR) implemented by PRR-EMH (Phase 2: 2016-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Nov 2020 | Feb 2021 |
| Honduras | 835.355: Overall Development of Rural Communities at Las Guarumas and El Tránsito implemented by Vecinos Honduras (Phase 3: Mar 2017 – Feb 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Apr 2020 | Apr 2020 |
| Hungary | 949.335: Integration of Roma into church and society implemented by RCH (Phase 2: 2017-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Jul 2020 | No |
| India | 363.000: India Program on Access to Land and Rural Development (1999 – 2020). | End-of-program | Yes | Dec 2020 | No |
| Indonesia | 636.356: Transitional Shelter and WASH for Earthquake Affected Households in Central Sulawesi implemented by MDMC (2018-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Apr 2020 | No |
| Israel-Palestine | 605.325: The Economy of Dispossession – Focus on East Jerusalem implemented by Al-Haq (Jun 2016 – Mar 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Sep 2020 | No |
| Israel-Palestine | 605.342: Israr Youth Engagement and Empowerment Project implemented by CFTA (Aug 2018 – Jul 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Oct 2020 | No |
| Senegal | 764.311: Whole Senegal Program on access to land, promotion of natural resource generation and income of small-holder farmers (Phase 3: 2016-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Dec 2020 | Apr 2021 |
| Uganda | 786.007: Covid19 response project in Rwamwanja refugee settlement and surrounding host communities implemented by LWF and ACORD-Uganda (2019-2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Dec 2020 | No |
| Uganda | 786.009: Wash enhancement project for South Sudanese refugees in Bidi settlement by ACORD-Uganda (May 2017 - Jun 2020) | End-of-phase | Yes | Oct 2020 | No |

Evaluations (by HIP 17-20 objectives)

| DC results framework | |
|---|---|
| HIP objectives | Project / programme evaluations |
| Access to land, resources, services | |
| Secured access to land and resources | Brazil 812.359: Territory, use rights and access to markets for family farmers and traditional peoples implemented by CEDAC (Mar 2017 – Dec 2020) ¹⁴ Brazil 812.385: Defence of the rights to territories and protection of socio-biodiversity implemented by TDD (Jan 2018 – Dec 2020) ¹⁵ Congo DR 788.355: Know and assert your land rights in Nord-Kivu implemented by AAP (2018-2019) Honduras 835.355: Overall Development of Rural Communities at Las Guarumas and El Tránsito implemented by Vecinos Honduras (Phase 3: Mar 2017 – Feb 2020) ¹⁶ India 363.000: Whole India Programme on Access to Land and Rural Development (1999 – 2020). Senegal 764.311: Whole Senegal Program on access to land, promotion of natural resource generation and income of small-holder farmers (Phase 3: 2016-2020) |
| Secured access to basic services | Haiti 830.381: Improvement of rural infrastructure (PAIR) implemented by PRR-EMH (Phase 2: 2016-2020) ¹⁷ Haiti 830.380: Improvement of revenues of rural families in Grand'Anse implemented by PRR-EMH (Phase 2: Jul 2016 – Aug 2020) ¹⁸ |
| Production & market systems | |
| Sustainable agricultural production | Armenia 904.351: Horticulture Market Development in Vayots Dzor and Gegharkunik Marzes of Armenia (HMDP) (Phase: Jan 2018 – Dec 2021) ¹⁹ Georgia 618.036: Organic hazelnut value chain creates income and decent employment in Western Georgia implemented by ELKANA (2018-2023) ¹⁹ |
| Inclusive & efficient market systems | Armenia 904.356: VET Development in Syunik Marz (Project phase Oct 2016 – Sep 2020) Georgia 918.046: Promoting Citizen Engagement for Economic Development Project (PROCEED) implemented by ELKANA (2016-2020) Georgia 9618.036: Organic hazelnut value chain creates income and decent employment in Western Georgia implemented by ELKANA (2018-2023) ¹⁹ |
| Civil society & governance | |
| Enhanced security & space for civil society | Colombia 842.366: Accompaniment and capacity-building for the protection and security of rural communities defending human rights implemented by PAS / PWS (2017-2020) ²⁰ Colombia 842.395: Defence of peasant rights over the territory and socio-economic development in the Cimitarra river valley reserve zone (ZRC-VRC) implemented by PAS / PWS (2017-2019) ²⁰ |
| Empowered rights-holders & accountable duty-bearers | - |
| Inclusion & participatory governance structures | Bangladesh 610.404: DREAM Project implemented by ARCO (2017-2020) Bangladesh 610.314: Promotion of Rights of Ethnic Minorities and Dalit's for Improvement Program (PREMDIP) implemented by ESDO (2017-2020) Bangladesh 610.312: Accelerating Livelihoods Options for the Dalit and Ethnic Community (ALO) implemented by GBK (Jan 2017 - Dec 2020) |
| Living together in peace | |
| Improved intra- & inter-group relations | Israel-Palestine 605.325: The Economy of Dispossession – Focus on East Jerusalem implemented by Al-Haq (Jun 2016 – Mar 2020) Israel-Palestine 605.342: Israr Youth Engagement and Empowerment Project implemented by CFTA (Aug 2018 – Jul 2020) |
| Commitment & public attitude towards peace | - |

¹⁴ The project Brazil 812.359 contributes to the three objectives "Secured access to land and resources", "Sustainable agricultural production" and "Inclusive and efficient market systems"

¹⁵ The project Brazil 812.385 contributes to the three objectives "Secured access to land and resources", "Enhanced security & space for civil society" and "Empowered rights-holders & accountable duty-bearers".

¹⁶ The project Honduras 835.355 contributes to both objectives "Secured access to land and resources" and Sustainable agricultural production"

¹⁷ The project Haiti 830.381 contributes to both objectives "Secured access to basic services" and "Inclusive & efficient market systems"

¹⁸ The project Haiti 830.380 contributes to both objectives "Secured access to basic services" and "Inclusion & participatory governance structures"

¹⁹ The projects Armenia 904.351 and Georgia 618.036 contribute to both objectives "Sustainable agricultural production" and "Inclusive & efficient market systems"

²⁰ The projects Colombia 842.366 and Colombia 842.395 contribute to both objectives "Enhanced security & space for civil society" and "Improved intra- & inter-group relations"

| HA results framework | |
|--|--|
| HIP objectives | Project / programme evaluations |
| Lifesaving through access to water, food, shelter, sanitation | Indonesia 636.356: Transitional Shelter and WASH for Earthquake Affected Households in Central Sulawesi implemented by MDMC (2018-2020). Uganda 786.009: Wash enhancement project for South Sudanese refugees in Bidi settlement by ACORD-Uganda (May 2017 - Jun 2020) Uganda 786.007: Covid19 response project in Rwamwanja refugee settlement and surrounding host communities implemented by LWF and ACORD-Uganda (2019-2020) Bangladesh 610.424: Improving the environment in and around Jamtoli Rohingya Camp implemented by HEKS/EPER and DAM (Mar 2019 – Feb 2020) |
| Rehabilitated livelihood opportunities | - |
| Reconstructed public and private infrastructure | - |
| Increased prevention and preparedness | - |

| CC results framework | |
|--|--|
| HIP objectives | Project / programme evaluations |
| CC programme – all objectives | - |
| Strengthening & inclusion of disadvantaged | Hungary 949.335: Integration of Roma into church and society implemented by RCH (Phase 2: 2017-2020) |
| Strengthening church life | - |
| Churches in dialogue with differing confessions | - |
| Sense of belonging to the same church family | - |

Impact Assessments (baseline / end line)

| Country & design of the impact assessment | Thematic focus | Status 2020 |
|---|--|--|
| Palestine/Israel 'Open Forum' programme (development cooperation): Combination of qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and participatory assessment of development (PADev) | Improving Palestinians' rights and access to land, house and public spaces | Completed. The endline assessment pursued summative and formative objectives and focused on the two OECD-DAC criteria <i>effectiveness</i> and <i>impact</i> . The data collection took place in March 2020, and the final report was completed in July 2020. |
| Bangladesh programme 2017-2021 (development cooperation): Combination of theory-based approach (applying contribution analysis) and counterfactual approach (applying quasi-experimental design) using quantitative and qualitative methods. | Social inclusion of Dalit and Adibashi in Northwest Bangladesh | Ongoing. The impact assessment focuses on the OECD-DAC criteria <i>effectiveness</i> and <i>impact</i> . The qualitative data collection and parts of the quantitative data collection have been completed (March 2021). The data collection had to be stopped due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation. Data collection will resume at a later stage. |

C) Context of International Cooperation

Context analysis executed in December 2019 by HEKS/EPER international department.

In 2019 as the starting point for the elaboration of the coming 2021-2024 HIP phase, HEKS/EPER analysed current and future trends relevant to International Cooperation and thus HEKS/EPER's future engagement. Key topics such as human security, equal rights, prosperity, climate, and environmental crisis are cross-border challenges and require internationally coordinated commitments. To answer to these challenges appropriately and play a relevant role in a world that is increasingly complex and multipolar, HEKS/EPER continuously reflects on the international context, especially on how to contribute to the [Agenda 2030](#) and its main pledge of 'leaving no one behind' (LNOB), and adapts its strategy accordingly.

The 'global sustainable development report' introduced in September 2019²¹ finds that the current development model is not sustainable. Progress made in the last two decades is in danger of being reversed through worsening social inequalities and potentially irreversible declines in the natural environment sustains us. The scientists concluded that a far more optimistic future is still attainable, but only by drastically changing development policies, incentives, and actions. They include a call to action that identify objectives for multi-stakeholder collaborative activities. Today's analysis must feed into strategic planning and action to ensure that progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda gets on track. Through the adoption of a systemic approach, the new HEKS/EPER International Programme (HIP) is meant to contribute to the collective struggle of putting the dots together towards a multi-stakeholder implementation of the sustainable development goals and embraces an understanding of the interconnections between the individual SDGs and the ways to manage resulting synergies and trade-offs.



In Niger, HEKS/EPER facilitates the peaceful living together between pastoralists and sedentary small-scale farmers to use scarce resources of land, grass and water jointly in a sustainable way.

Patterns of international cooperation – challenges and opportunities

At HEKS/EPER's headquarters, the 2019 annual country reports from DC country offices, humanitarian aid projects and church cooperation as well as the results of various MEL tools such as evaluations, monitoring and analysis with the HEKS/EPER digital key indicators or field visit reports and 'most significant change' interviews were shared and analysed by HHQ ID staff.

²¹ The future is now. Science for achieving sustainable development. 2019.
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalsdreport/2019>

Identified patterns from previous years proved to be landmarks for new HEKS/EPER, refining its profile and actions. The table on the next page shows the 'major pattern lines' since 2011. most relevant emerging patterns which may hamper or foster the implementation and the sustainability of projects and programmes, depending on how well HEKS/EPER deals with these challenges and opportunities. Below is a compilation of opportunities and challenges and how HEKS/EPER deals with the most relevant recurring patterns.

In 2019, the HHQ team identified or re-identified key patterns emerging from and around HEKS/EPER's international cooperation activities in the frame of the in-depth context analysis to plan the next HIP phase 21-24. Key elements of the context analysis (chapter 4) and additional management analysis resulted in 12 overarching challenges and opportunities for 2019 (see table below).

| 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|--|---|--|--------------|-------|--|----------------------------|--|------|
| Networks / partnerships /alliances for sustainable change, effectiveness, security, advocacy, | | | | | | | | |
| | Raising inequalities & discrimination | | | | | | | |
| | Fragility, complexity, protracted humanitarian crises | | | | | | | |
| Dimensions of land governance: access to land, land rights, use, commons, innovative approaches, ... | | | | | | | | |
| | Focus on migration / urban vs rural, demography/perspectives of young | | | | | | | |
| | | | Striving for | | | systemic change | | |
| | Link short & long-term interventions | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Inclusive market/business/private sector | | | |
| | | | | | | Dialogue RH/DB | | |
| | | Fragmented | | | | | groups | |
| | | Climate & environmental crises & | | | | | building resilience towards sustainability | |
| | | 'Bad Governance', shrinking space | | | | | for civil society | |
| | | Holistic approach, HRBA, diapraxis, conflict sensitivity | | | | | | |
| | | Enabling management: PCM, staff, capacity-building, FFAG, visibility, accountability | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | Digitalization & media use | | |
| | | Evidence-based programming & L4S | | | | | & adapting to complexity | |
| | Space 4 internal learning | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | Changing aid landscape | | |
| domestic | | | | abuse | | | | |

Context analysis – base for HEKS/EPER International Programme 2021–24

An in-depth context analysis elaborated by HEKS/EPER international department based on the latest scientific analysis has been the starting point of the strategic planning towards the new HIP phase 2021-2024. The analysis can be subsumed in seven overarching trends and challenges to which HEKS/EPER responds in its theory of change and approaches chosen. Check chapter 4.1 of this annual report 2020 for project examples linked to these trends and challenges. And per trend/challenge, the summary below already includes the outcomes and outputs as well as approaches of the HIP 2021-2024 responding to them:

- 1) Deteriorating governance and shrinking space for civil society
- 2) Raising inequalities and discrimination
- 3) Climate and environmental crisis and the importance of sustainable land governance
- 4) Economic growth and private sector
- 5) Fragility, complexity and protracted humanitarian crises
- 6) Demography, mobility and migration
- 7) Digital technology and media use

1) Deteriorating Governance and shrinking space for civil society

- 4% of the world's population currently lives in countries where they are free to express their opinions, assemble, and enjoy access to a free press. The shift in power dynamics, rising authoritarianism, nationalism and neoliberalism promotes the current trend of a decline in fundamental civil rights and closing of civic space for actors in the liberal, human rights tradition observed across the world. HEKS/EPER responds with **Outcome 2** 'Overcoming discrimination, **Outcome 4** 'Supportive Policies & Practices' / **Approaches** HRBA, Strengthening Civil Society.

For years now, we have witnessed a decline in fundamental civil rights across the world: freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and press freedom, for example, are becoming ever more restricted in many countries. Major emerging economies such as China and India have provided a blueprint for a 'top-down' approach to economic development, one that fails to take the population on board and displays scant regard for the environment. Emulating their example, also smaller and poorer developing countries are today increasingly allowing themselves to reject demands for civil and political rights. In contrast to the early 1990s, only 4% of the world's population currently lives in countries where they are free to express their opinion, to assemble, and enjoy access to a free press. Civil rights are being restricted or suppressed in 109 countries around the world.²²

Civic space is changing in terms of who participates and how

Civic space is closing for actors in the liberal, human rights tradition but widened for right-wing, extremist and traditionalist groups. The growth of digital space has reshaped the civic space for all actors and helped the unruly protest movements that are taking up more space to mobilize. Despite the many justifications for new legal, political, and other restrictions on civil society, each shares a common aim: for political elites to increase their own control on power, whether that is to retain a predatory hold on lucrative office, defend national sovereignty against foreign values, or push through 'developmental' agendas that violate political and civil rights in the pursuit of growth. **Conflicts over the use of natural resources and land have been found to be key reasons why civic space is restricted.** How political elites seek to balance power, and the 'fit' between civil society, state and market in the overall process of development, will determine the implications for development.

Impacts of civic space on the SDGs

In the frame of its engagement for CSO space, HEKS/EPER, since 2009, elaborated three studies²³ examining the dimension of shrinking space, developing recommendations to protect and expand space, as well as creating evidence on the vital role of CSO in achieving the sustainable development goals. Examples show how civil society has positively contributed to the achievement of sustainable development goals in the past and how restrictions on civic space have already affected and are likely to further impact adversely on SDG 1; 2; 5; 8; 10; 11; 15 and 16. The report concludes: civic space is a pre-condition for SDG progress and 'leaving no one behind'. Without a fully engaged civil society, the SDGs are bound to fail. Most governments have strong incentives to demonstrate that they are making substantial progress in their development goals. Their legitimacy depends on that performance. For this reason, Governments have numerous instrumental or pragmatic reasons for promoting civic space: External scrutiny by social actors and independent analysis is essential for highlighting the impacts of economic and social trends and for identifying groups at risk of being left behind or adversely affected by policies. Civil society participation in the design, monitoring, and evaluation of public policy is thus of vital importance. Without civil society activism, policies may go unchecked, with no available avenues for potential alternatives to be raised. Policies developed in open and transparent spaces are potentially better policies. Citizens – in particular, vulnerable groups – must be able to hold the providers of basic public services accountable for equitable delivery of services such as education, health, water and sanitation, housing, safety and justice. Governments routinely struggle to improve the quality of public services but shrinking and closing civic space and violating fundamental freedoms excludes citizens from addressing challenges in the delivery of basic public services. The 'leave no one behind' principle commits governments to

²² Bread for the World & CIVICUS (2019). Atlas der Zivilgesellschaft 2019.

²³ ACT alliance (2011), Shrinking political space of civil society action. <http://www.icnl.org/research/resources/regional/shrinking-political-space-of-civil-society-action.pdf>

ACT alliance (2015) Space for civil society - How to protect and expand an enabling environment. <https://actalliance.org/publications/space-for-civil-society-how-to-protect-and-expand-an-enabling-environment/>

ACT alliance, IDS (2019) Development needs civil society - the implications of civic space for the SDGs. <https://actalliance.org/act-news/development-needs-civil-society-the-implications-of-civic-space-for-the-sustainable-development-goals/>

reach the most vulnerable populations. Their voices must be heard, and their active participation as agents of change needs to be promoted. Clamping down on information-sharing and scrutiny of public affairs has counter-productive effects, as public trust is undermined when governments control the flow of information. In the absence of independent scrutiny and analysis of official statistics, methodologies and sources, public experts and development partners are often suspicious of official data.

Development needs of civil the society – key findings

- I. The shrinking space of civil society hinders social and -economic development and hinders achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- II. Restrictions on civic space prevent Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from engaging in policy formulation, monitoring rights, raising awareness, championing the voices of vulnerable populations, and from building partnerships.
- III. When civic space is limited, development risks excluding voices and increasing social distrust. Ultimately, this increases inequalities and makes development less sustainable.
- IV. Civic space is essential to provide transparent and verifiable information. If objective data is absent due to shrinking civic space, trust in official data and political performance is likely to decrease.
- V. Weakening of civil society may increase a permissive culture of corruption among elite groups without sufficient checks and balances. Not only could this erode trust in governance, but it could also trigger significant economic, food and political crises.
- VI. Overemphasis on huge infrastructure projects and economic growth increasingly competes with the discourse of inclusion and thereby puts the key SDG principle of ‘leaving no one behind’ at risk.

Changing global governance systems – from nationalist values to aid architecture

The changing global governance system is well visible in the populist ‘roar’ and national-interest first movement, with its attendant anti-globalisation, anti-foreigner, anti-aid and anti-multilateral connotations. The influence of China on the global level has become well visible during field research on the role and function of civic space towards achieving the sustainable development goals. In some cases, it is arguably the case that legitimating norms have shifted from Western liberal and human rights values to values emphasizing economic progress and sovereignty as the goals of national development, or even towards global values of neoliberalism, characterized by a high tolerance for rapacious economic investment in the pursuit of profit. In this, the ‘discourses of inclusion’ increasingly compete with ideas about the need for policies to generate ‘Big Development’ through major infrastructural investments. Furthermore, the trend is marked by a shift in development priorities in many OECD countries away from international altruism. Presenting aid not as charity but as an expansion of the donor country’s an investment and trade opportunities and international ‘spheres of influence’ has become an important political defence for aid budgets. Arguments for spending public money on global challenges such as the mitigation of conflict, migration and climate change have a parallel self-interest logic.

It is questionable in how far, in the future global governance mechanism may serve to mitigate global public bids while promoting global public goods. Even though that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs can be seen as a success, the implementation still depends on political commitment – however, the growing nationalist tendencies are showing the risk of undermining those efforts. Responses to global challenges may be increasingly fragmented as the number of multipolar cooperation and regional solutions grow while new actors engage. The number of middle-income countries will raise and may gain importance in global governance. Countries as China, India and Indonesia are likely to grow faster than the ‘old established economies, further changing existing power structures. Developments in individual countries tend to have greater regional or even global effects supporting the spread of hazards such as conflicts, terrorism and disease. This trend is linked to a decline of Western liberal values to attitudes which tend to accept xenophobia, discrimination of minorities and denial of Human Right values as well as the international Human Rights standards.

International aid landscape and criticism

A **changing aid landscape** sees a structural shift in the organisation and the use of economic and political power. The instrumentalization of international collaboration to serve specific (nationalist) political or (neoliberal) economic interest increase. The rise of emerging economies and the new role of the private sector results in countries or businesses becoming stronger actors in development cooperation, shaping development policy, so they can deliver ‘humanitarian or development services. They pursue their own political and economic interests and new approaches, not all of them working according to the principles of human and international rights. There is also a proceeding trend in institutional donors shifting their attention towards the private sector, often at the cost of funding civil society actors.

Agenda 2030 – SDGs & Switzerland

In September 2015, the UN countries agreed on the [2030 agenda for sustainable development \(SDGs\)](#). This agenda addresses the most burning issues to improve the situation of human beings globally. The Swiss Government emphasizes that 'the SDGs are to be achieved around the world, and by all UN member states, by 2030. In August 2017, the Swiss Confederation undertook the first consolidation to the implementation status and Switzerland's future need for action, including consultation with civil society organisations, academic institutions and actors from the private sector. The results of the consultation served as a basis for Switzerland's first Country Report 2018 for the attention of the UN.

Switzerland had been very active in formulating the ambitious goals of the agenda 2030, but the real progress in implementing those actively in Switzerland is neglectable.²⁴ In order to emphasize the importance of the SDGs 40 Swiss organisations, amongst them HEKS/EPER, formed in 2017 the 'Civil Society Platform Agenda 2030 for sustainable Development'. The platform elaborated recommendations for action to implement the Agenda 2030 for the attention of Swiss politics and other duty-bearers and facilitates the dialogue between governmental, private and civil society actors as well as enables the sensitization of the public. Only with the active participation of civil society and claims towards authorities can make sure the ambitious goals will be achieved.

2) Raising Inequality and discrimination

- More than 75% of households live in societies where income is more unequally distributed. Inequality with respect to the fulfilment of fundamental rights, discrimination and absolute economic inequality are on the rise and remain a key obstacle to enhancing sustainable livelihood opportunities. Women are more affected by poverty, violence, discrimination and by the lack of access to land and resources. Women and girls experience multiple forms of discrimination based on gender and other inequalities and are the ones furthest left behind.

Outcome 2 'Overcoming discrimination'; **Outcome 3** 'Land governance', and **Outcome 1** 'Covering Basic Needs / **Approaches** HRBA, Gender & Diversity, Strengthening Civil Society.

Inequality with respect to the fulfilment of fundamental rights, discrimination and absolute economic inequality are on the rise and remain a key obstacle to enhancing sustainable livelihood opportunities. At the global level, inequality has risen sharply since 1980, despite strong growth in some countries like China. Inequality has increased in nearly all world regions in recent decades, but at different speeds. The fact that inequality levels are so different among countries, even when countries share similar levels of development, highlights the important roles that societal structures and corresponding national policies play in shaping inequality.

Today, more than 75% of households live in societies where income is more unequally distributed than in 1990.²⁵ Since 2000, 50% of the increase in global wealth benefitted only the wealthiest 1% of the world's population. Conversely, the poorest 50% of the world's population received only 1% of the increase.²⁶ The distinction between the Global North and South is fading and is being replaced by a more complex picture. The global inequality crisis is reaching new extremes, both within and between countries, and is undermining global efforts to end poverty, discrimination and marginalisation, advance women's rights, defend the environment, protect human rights and democracy, prevent conflict, promote fair and dignified employment and uphold the rule of law.

It is social and economic inequalities that persist and, in many cases, have worsened. Virtually everywhere, some individuals and groups are confronted with barriers that prevent them from fully participating in economic, social and political life. Wide and often mutually reinforcing disparities within countries include disparity in terms of rural/urban disparities, household wealth, gender, ethnic minorities and indigenous people, migrant status, and disability. Looking at inequality, the household and individual level is crucial as well; According to the SDG report 2018, up to 30 per cent of income inequality is due to inequality within households, including between women and men. Women are also more likely than men to live below 50

²⁴ Civil society report on the implementation of the Agenda 2030 by Switzerland: https://plattformagenda2030.ch/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Platform-Agenda-2030_E_report-web-1.pdf

²⁵ UNDP (2016). UNDP support to the implementation of sustainable development goal 10 – reducing inequality within and among countries. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Sustainable%20Development/10_Reducing_Inequality_Jan15_digital.pdf?download

²⁶ UNDP (2017). Human Development Report 2016.

per cent of the median income.²⁷ Moreover, global evidence confirms, on the one hand, that women are more affected by poverty²⁸ violence²⁹ and by the lack of access to land and resources³⁰. Women often work informally and are unpaid. It is often women's voices which are least heard and least considered in decision-making processes³¹. On the other hand, evidence also shows that gender equality is key to inclusive economic growth³². More equal and inclusive societies, non-violent conflict transformation and just power relations as well as gender equality do not only improve the situation for women/girls, but also for men/boys. Multiple sources of evidence indicate that discrimination remains a major driver of exclusion in both developed and developing countries. There are strong links between socio economic exclusion and armed conflict, as it creates conditions under which violent conflicts might escalate. This can range from civil unrest to violent armed conflict to terrorist activity. Seriously disadvantaged groups with common characteristics (such as ethnicity or religion) can resort to violent conflict to assert their rights and eliminate inequalities. Group differences alone are not enough to trigger conflict, but social exclusion and horizontal inequalities provide fertile ground for violent mobilization.

Inequality and food security

Income inequality increases the likelihood of severe food insecurity. Economic slowdowns or downturns disproportionately undermine food security and nutrition where inequalities are greater. Out of 65 countries, where recent adverse impacts of economic slowdowns and downturns on food security and nutrition have been strongest, 52 countries rely heavily on primary commodity exports and/or imports.³³ Peasants and other people living in the rural area are particularly vulnerable. About 80% of the rural population engages, at least to some extent, in primary sector labour. Of the 570 million farms worldwide, 90% are family farms and 72% **smallholders**. They produce most of the world's food, but also house the majority of its poor and hungry.³⁴ Typically, the poorest are most dependent on the agriculture-based economy. At the same time, 75% of the world's population suffering from hunger live in **rural areas**³⁵.

FAO estimates, that more than 820 million people **suffer from hunger**. Hunger is on the rise in almost all African subregions, making Africa the region with the highest prevalence of undernourishment, at almost 20 percent. Hunger is also slowly rising in Latin America and the Caribbean, although its prevalence is still below 7 percent. Asia shows a continuous increase since 2010, with more than 12 percent of its population undernourished today. In addition, considering all people in the world affected by moderate levels³⁶ of food insecurity together with those who suffer from hunger, it is estimated that over 2 billion people do not have regular access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food, including 8 percent of the population in Northern America and Europe³⁷. Simple correlations show higher levels of chronic and acute **food insecurity** and undernutrition in countries affected by conflict. On average, 56 percent of the population in countries affected by conflict live in rural areas, where livelihoods largely depend on agriculture. Syria³⁸, Iraq or South Sudan³⁹ provide illustrative examples of conflict's destructive impact on agriculture, food systems and poverty⁴⁰.

²⁷ UN (2018): SDG Goal 10 Reduced Inequalities: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

²⁸ UN Women (2018): Turning promises into action: Gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: UN Women.

²⁹ World Health Organization (2013): Global and regional estimates of violence against women. Geneva: Switzerland.

³⁰ Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA (2014): Gender & Land - Implications for Sustainable Development. Bern: Switzerland.

³¹ United Nations (2019): The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019. New York: USA.

³² IMF (2018): Growth and Inclusion? With the Right Policies, Countries Can Pursue Both Objectives, Finance and Development. Washington: IMF.

³³ FAO (2019). Op. cit.

³⁴ FAO (April 2017). FAO and the SDGs: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6919e.pdf>

³⁵ WFP (March 2016). Website: <https://www.wfp.org/hunger/who-are>

³⁶ While severe food insecurity is associated with the concept of hunger, people experiencing moderate food insecurity face uncertainties about their ability to obtain food and have been forced to compromise on the quality and/or quantity of the food they consume.

³⁷ FAO (2019). The state of food security and nutrition in the world. Safeguarding against economic slowdowns and downturns. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf>

³⁸ FAO (2017): Formerly a vibrant middle-income economy, 85% of the population of Syria now live in poverty.

³⁹ FAO (2017): In February 2017, more than 4.9 million people, over 42% of the population, were severely food insecure.

⁴⁰ FAO (2017). <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition>

3) Climate and environmental crisis and importance of sustainable land governance

- Land and natural resources rights are increasingly disputed due to environmental stresses and degradation, impacts of climate change, demographic pressure and land grabbing. Global temperatures are raising and are leading to more extreme heat waves, heavy precipitation, intense and frequent droughts. Securing tenure rights for indigenous and local community lands is one of the answers both to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Outcome 3 'Land governance', **Output 3.2** 'Resilience', and **Outcome 4** 'Supportive Policies & Practices'.

Deteriorating state of the world climate and environment

40 years ago, scientists from 50 nations met at the First World Climate Conference (in Geneva 1979) and agreed that alarming trends for climate change made it urgently necessary to act. But despite 40 years of global climate negotiations, with few exceptions, we have generally conducted business as usual and have largely failed to address this predicament. The climate crisis has arrived and is accelerating faster than most scientists expected (IPCC 2018). Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are still rapidly rising, with increasingly damaging effects on the Earth's climate. This is more severe than anticipated, threatening natural ecosystems and the fate of humanity (IPCC 2019). Especially worrisome are potential irreversible climate tipping points and nature's reinforcing feedbacks (atmospheric, marine, and terrestrial) that could lead to a catastrophic 'hothouse Earth,' well beyond the control of humans. These climate chain reactions could cause significant disruptions to ecosystems, society, and economies, potentially making large areas of Earth uninhabitable. To secure a sustainable future, we must change how we live. An immense increase of scale in endeavours to conserve our biosphere is needed to avoid untold suffering due to the climate crisis. Economic and population growth are among the most important drivers of increases in CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel combustion, therefore, bold and drastic transformations are needed.

According to the disaster loss reports of the reinsurer MunichRe, 2018 and also 2019 (disaster loss reports for 2019 not released yet) were yet another two years with records in extreme weather events: particularly storms and wildfires caused high financial losses. The fact that an increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events can be attributed to climate change was demonstrated with great scientific evidence in the IPCC Special Report: Global warming of 1.5°C⁴¹, which was released in October 2018. While this is already painfully felt under the current temperature increase of 1°C, in a 1.5°C or even 2°C warmer world we can expect even more extreme heat waves, more heavy precipitation in several regions and more intense and frequent droughts in some regions. The report also highlights that the consequences of warming are not equally distributed and depend on geographical location (small-islands, low-lying coastal areas and dry lands will be worst affected) as well as the socio-economic status of communities and associated vulnerabilities. The report emphasises the great urgency for an increased ambition in mitigation, but also an urgent need for effective and scaled-up climate change adaptation and disaster risk management. However, currently the world is far from being on track to reduce global temperature increase to below 2°C. The 2019 Emission Gap Report⁴² which has been released annually for the last 10 years by UNEP states that unless the world begins to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement 'will slip out of reach'. Global CO₂ emissions have increased by around 11% since the first UNEP emissions gap report in 2010 and even if all unconditional NDCs under the Paris Agreement are implemented, the world is still on track for a warming of around 3.2°C above pre-industrial levels in the year 2100. Another challenge, which is elaborated in the 2019 Human Development Report⁴³, is to ensure that climate and disaster resilience does not become the reserve of only a select group of countries, communities and people that can most afford it.

Alongside climate change, biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation are of major concern. The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES 2019⁴⁴) released in May 2019 shows that the health of the world's ecosystem is deteriorating more rapidly than ever, eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide. Around 1 million animal and

⁴¹ IPCC (2018): IPCC Special Report – Global Warming at 1.5°C, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf

⁴² UNEP (2019): Emission Gap Report 2019, <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2019>

⁴³ Human Development Report 2019.

⁴⁴ IPBES, (2019): Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services: <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services>

plant species are threatened with extinction. And the IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land⁴⁵ which was released in August 2019 finally shows that 75% of the world's land surface has been significantly altered and this rate is increasing further. This majorly impacts on the ability land (particularly forest and soil) to function as carbon sinks. Also, degraded land in combination with changes in precipitation intensity and increasing temperatures will further accelerate land degradation. On the other hand, intact ecosystems and a high biodiversity are important factors to support climate change adaptation.

In 2019 millions of people all over the globe followed the student movement '#FridaysForFuture' which has recognised the severity and urgency of the crisis and is pushing for immediate action on the climate and environmental crisis through active campaigning and advocacy.

Land and resources governance

Land and natural resources rights are increasingly disputed due to environmental stresses and degradation, impacts of climate change, demographic pressure and land grabbing. With natural resources diminishing and a third of the soil worldwide degraded and affected strongly by flood and drought⁴⁶, good land governance, intact ecosystems, deeper knowledge on the efficiency and sustainability of land and water usage and peaceful solutions to land and water disputes are vital. For example, the World Bank reported in 2013 that economic growth in Africa is being held back by poor land governance. It said, '90 percent of Africa's rural land is undocumented [...] making it highly vulnerable to land grabbing and expropriation.' It linked this directly to the continent's high poverty rates, in which almost half the population lives on less than \$1.25 a day⁴⁷.

In addition, evidence is mounting that where indigenous peoples and local communities have secure tenure, they are often the most capable custodians of the planet's natural capital. A review of 130 local studies in 14 countries, conducted jointly by the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) and the World Resources Institute (WRI), found that community-run forests suffer less deforestation and store more carbon than other forests⁴⁸. Although there has been progress in many countries, commitments to respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities often remain empty promises. Forest, water, rangeland and mineral resources continue to be the primary target of rapidly expanding investments and 'development' projects that displace indigenous peoples and local communities. Women in particular suffer from the insecurity of these rights. Globally, women are just 13 per cent of agricultural land holders⁴⁹. Moreover, women and girls are still far from enjoying an equal role to men in shaping land governance on local level as well as national policies. The growing number of people killed for defending their land is a stark reminder of the huge challenge, and unspeakable violence.

Analysis shows that despite a history of customary use and ownership of over 50 percent of the world's land area, the world's indigenous peoples and local communities – up to 2.5 billion women and men – possess ownership rights to just one-fifth of the land that is rightfully theirs⁵⁰.

The gap between customary rights and legal title is largest in sub-Saharan Africa. Here, as Liz Alden Wily, a political economist who specializes in land rights issues, puts it, 'African rural communities consider themselves to be the traditional owners of not just their house plots and farms, but also the forests, pastures and other naturally collective resources which fall within their domains'⁵¹. Yet only three percent of land is legally recognized as owned by indigenous peoples or local communities.⁵²

⁴⁵ IPCC (2019): IPCC Special Report – Climate Change and Land, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/4/2019/11/02_Summary-for-Policymakers_SPM.pdf

⁴⁶ FAO (April 2017). FAO and the SDGs: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6919e.pdf>

⁴⁷ F.F.K. Byamugisha. 2013. Securing Africa's land for shared prosperity: a program to scale up reforms and investments. Africa Development Forum. Washington: World Bank Group. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13837>

⁴⁸ C. Stevens et al. 2014. Securing Rights, Combating Climate Change: How Strengthening Community Forest Rights Mitigates Climate Change. World Resources Institute and Rights and Resources Initiative. Retrieved 30 December 2015, from <http://www.wri.org/securingrights>.

⁴⁹ UN (2019): SDG Goal 5 Gender Equality: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>. Retrieved December 2019.

⁵⁰ Oxfam, International Land Coalition, Rights and Resources Initiative. 2016. Common Ground. Securing Land Rights and Safeguarding the Earth. Oxford: Oxfam.

⁵¹ L. Alden Wily. 2012. Grand Larceny in the Tropics. Patrick McAuslan's Role in Limiting Legal Land Theft in Africa. Paper presented at 'Law and Development: Patrick McAuslan's Odyssey 1961–2011.' Birkbeck College, University of London. 12–13 January 2012. www.bbk.ac.uk/law/news/LizforPatrickJan2012.pdf.

⁵² Rights and Resources Initiative. 2015. Who owns the land in Africa? RRI Factsheet. Retrieved 30 December 2015, from www.rightsandresources.org/publication/who-owns-the-land-in-africa/.

Worldwide, 663 million people have no access to safe drinking **water** and 2.4 million people have no access to proper sanitation⁵³. Crops and livestock account for 70% of all water withdrawals, and up to 95% in some developing countries. Two-thirds of the world population could be living in water-stressed countries by 2025 if current consumption patterns continue. Water withdrawal for irrigation and livestock will increase as global population growth and economic development drive food demand up. Just access to land and its resources, especially the right to water, are key to eradicating poverty.

4) Economic growth and private sector engagement

- Globalisation and technological progress have led to economic growth, but also exacerbated inequality. Inclusive growth depends on the existence of accountable institutions that prevent narrow vested interests from capturing economic benefits at the expense of the broader society and in particular vulnerable groups.

Outcome 2 'Overcoming discrimination', **Outcome 4** 'Supportive Policies & Practices' / **Approach** 'Inclusive Market Systems'

The trend of a changing development discourse emphasising economic growth whereby pushing equality and human rights and environmental sustainability aside has been described in the global governance chapter above. After a decade of strong growth at the start of the 21st century, developing countries will face stronger headwinds in the decades ahead. Global growth is likely to be weaker and manufacturing is becoming more capital and skill intensive. Automation, its effects on productivity and the potential to make use of demographic dividends, among others are difficult to predict in detail and make it difficult to determine economic growth levels in future. While there are arguments that weak economic growth may become the new normal and the share of global GDP will shift to emerging market economies like China and India others suggest that automatization may lead to higher economic growth levels. These productivity levels however may not translate into increased employment. Furthermore, the relationships between governance and economic growth and growth and inequalities are other important topics of debate. Businesses are engines for economic growth, having the potential to create jobs, foster economic activity through their value chain, and contribute tax revenues for public services and infrastructure. However, business can also exacerbate inequality, and its structural drivers, including by being complicit in perpetuating biases and discrimination. Governance matters for economic growth⁵⁴. The nature of politics, institutions, and a society's informal rules play a vital role in kick-starting and sustaining growth. Effective institutions are fundamental to creating markets, shaping investment opportunities, and creating the stable incentives the private sector needs to invest and innovate. Inclusive growth depends on the existence of accountable institutions that prevent narrow vested interests from capturing economic benefits at the expense of the economy overall and ensure that opportunities are spread across society. For example, more transparent countries have higher foreign direct investment inflows and lower borrowing costs. Furthermore, fundamental civic rights are a prerequisite in order to unleash long term environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth⁵⁵. Finally, the discussion on unlimited growth at times of an escalating climate and environmental crisis is gaining importance. Is it possible to enjoy both economic growth and environmental sustainability? Over the past decade, green growth clearly dominated policy making with policy agendas at the United Nations, European Union, and in numerous countries building on the assumption that decoupling environmental pressures from gross domestic product (GDP) could allow future economic growth without end. The 'Decoupling Debunked' Report⁵⁶ outlines in a robust way that there is no empirical evidence supporting the existence of a decoupling of economic growth from environmental pressures is not anywhere near the scale needed to deal with environmental breakdown, but also, and perhaps more importantly, such decoupling appears unlikely to happen in the future.

5) Fragility, complexity and protracted humanitarian crises

- There is a high likelihood that by 2030 more than 80% of the world poorest will live in fragile contexts. The thirty-year trend of decreasing wars has been reversed since 2010; since then, there has been an increase in the number of terrorist attacks, war deaths and violent expulsions. **Outcome 2** 'Overcoming discrimination', **Outcome 1** 'Covering Basic' / **Approaches** Conflict Sensitivity, HRBA, Strengthening Civil Society; Conflict Transformation; Nexus.

⁵³ UNDP (2017). Human Development Report 2016.

⁵⁴ DEFID 2019: Governance for Growth, Stability and Inclusive Development.

⁵⁵ IDS, ACT alliance (2019) Development needs civil society – the implications of civic space on the SDGs.

⁵⁶ European Environmental Bureau (EEB) report – 'Decoupling Debunked: Evidence and arguments against green growth as a sole strategy for sustainability'.

Studies predict a high likelihood that by 2030 more than 80% of the world poorest will live in fragile contexts⁵⁷. And broad database shows the worrying trends in global conflict. While in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, more violent conflicts ended than new ones broke out, this ratio was reversed since 2010. At the same time, since then there has also been an increase in the number of terrorist attacks, war deaths and violent expulsions. These trends led to the situation that in 2016, more countries were affected by war situations than at any time in the past 30 years. Moreover, today's violent situations last longer, have regional dimensions, involve growing numbers of non-state violent actors and increasingly affect middle-income countries. Causes for this trend are the change in global power relations, the increasingly unequal wealth distribution and the new growth of countries striving for a redistribution of political spheres of influence (see also trend 2: Raising inequality and discrimination above).

Xenophobic and racist extremism and the rise of populism and nationalist politics in many parts of the world cause insecurity and polarisation within and between countries. This is negatively impacting global responses to poverty and injustice. A far-reaching crisis of democracy linked with a distrust in democratic institutions, has been accompanied by a decrease in political and civic participation (elections, political party membership, etc.). This, combined with a decrease in respect for human rights, has resulted in increasing insecurity and polarisation, fuelled by the misuse of mainstream media. At the same time, such crises are often linked with socio-economic situation of the countries and the inter-relationship with individuals' economic situation.

Increased fragility as well as climate-induced shocks contribute to protracted cycles of vulnerability. Lessons learned from the SDG implementation show: sustainable development and durable solutions are impossible without an active civil society and peaceful structures. In response to the worrying trends such as the spike of violent conflict worldwide and unparalleled levels of forced displacements, the report of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres' on peace building and sustaining peace was conceptually breaking new grounds⁵⁸. The corresponding resolutions and the '**triple nexus**' call to focus on sustaining peace 'at all stages of conflict and in all its dimensions' and on the imperative to prevent 'the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict'.⁵⁹ Humanitarian aid, development programmes and peacebuilding are not serial processes but are all needed at the same time. The triple nexus approach which aims at making use of the synergies has evolved out of this understanding and aims at enhancing the synergies between those. It calls into question the status quo of the aid system, which is overloaded and works with little coordination between project-based development and humanitarian interventions, so that it does not effectively meet the needs of the most vulnerable people. In contrast to earlier efforts, however, the dialogue goes beyond links and goes beyond a programmatic or conceptual approach. It is linked to the ongoing structural changes in the overall aid system that are changing the way aid is planned and financed.

6) Demography, mobility and migration

- The world's forcibly displaced population is at a record high with a global population of 70.8 million being forcibly displaced people as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations by the end of 2018.

Outcome 2 'Overcoming discrimination', **Outcome 4** 'Supportive Policies & Practices', and **Outcome 1** 'Covering Basic Needs' / **Approaches** Nexus, Conflict Transformation.

The lack of economic and social **prospects** – combined in many contexts – and **violent conflicts** lead to internal (rural urban as well as rural to rural) and international **migration**. According to UNHCR, at the end of 2018 there were 70.8 million people who were forcibly displaced⁶⁰; 41.3 million of them are internally displaced people (IDPs). Most of this increase was between 2012 and 2015, driven mainly by the Syrian conflict. But conflicts in other areas also contributed to this rise, including in the Middle East such as in Iraq and Yemen, parts of sub-Saharan Africa such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and South Sudan, as well as the massive flow of Rohingya refugees to Bangladesh at the end of 2017. Of particular note in 2018 was the increase in the number of displaced people due to internal displacement in Ethiopia and new asylum claims from people fleeing the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The proportion of the world's population who were displaced also continued to rise as the increase in the world's forcibly displaced population outstripped global population growth. In 2017 this figure was 1 out of every 110 people but in

⁵⁷ States of Fragility 2018.

⁵⁸ <https://www.antonioguterres.gov.pt/mission-statement/>

⁵⁹ <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/report-secretary-general-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace> and Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict, World Bank Group, 2018.

⁶⁰ UNHCR (2019): Global Trends Report on Forced Migration in 2018, <https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf>

2018 it stood at one out of every 108 people. 86% of the people displaced are hosted in developing countries, which is an additional burden.

Key challenges faced by IDPs, refugees, stateless persons or those displaced by climate change or disasters due to natural hazards is the lack of protection and the violation of their rights. These issues also affect many of the world's migrants, particularly those working in lower-skilled sectors. Many of them are increasingly part of large-scale mixed irregular movements including forced migration, making them vulnerable to exploitation and rights abuses. The current global population is 7.2 billion and growing, while earth's total resources can only support 2 billion people at the current demand. Natural resources are being depleted and the consequences will have a strong impact on the planet, given that we are already using 2 to 3 times more of the Earth's natural resources than is sustainable. More extreme weather events are expected, while human-induced conflicts stand to strain further the use, management and access of these resources.

One perspective on the peace-migration nexus, and perhaps the more obvious one, is that armed conflict and violence can trigger involuntary migration. However, another perspective suggests that migration – voluntary and involuntary – plays a role in conflict dynamics in countries of origin, transit and destination. Moreover, people who migrate or flee deal with conflicts along the migration route, in host countries and upon return. Hence, migration issues should be part enhancing equality and actively incorporated in programming. The peace-migration nexus in this sense is not about preventing migration or instrumentalizing development work but is relevant as an element of transformation towards justice.

7) Digital technology and media use

- Rapid development within technology, including the rise of social media, means that the world is connected as never before. Social media are playing both a positive and negative role in social cohesion, conflict dynamics, and broader social issues. HEKS/EPER increasingly explores the use of ICT in awareness raising, providing facts, combatting hate speech campaigning and embraces a communication for development approach and applies proficient digital mail system.

Outcome 2 'Overcoming discrimination', Management, and MEL.

Rapid development within technology including the rise of social media means that the world is connected as never before, bringing positive and negative results. The use of smart technologies for development and commerce (e.g., mobile banking across Africa), and smart tools to measure development impacts provide new and exciting opportunities for how development actors work, while also posing some challenges for minorities and vulnerable groups. Artificial intelligence may bring benefits and risks for humanity. This is combined with an increased influence of the media and the roles, habits and attitudes of Millennials (known as Generation Y).

ICT is not only vital for monitoring and analysis – e.g., with a digital data system as HEKS/EPER built it up over the past year with data collection at beneficiary level. But while implementing C4D (communication for development) has become an important tool to provide information and communication on rights, economic and social opportunities or on technologies and methods for production, processing and marketing. Reaching out to people and communities, but also to enable networking with the support of ICT is fundamental for HEKS/EPER's role to facilitate progress and change. Some examples:

- C4D is key in enabling the transfer of knowledge, i.e., disseminating good practices and innovative farming models, and in providing small-scale farmers access to market information.
- It is key in informing right-holders about their rights, accessing public information and supporting them in holding duty-bearers accountable.
- Communication platforms are important in connecting stakeholders and managing networks. More capacity and ownership can be created for people and communities, but also iNGOs and other development actors will learn and contribute. Communication must be multidirectional, responsibility for communication must be shared.
- Information and communication technologies and strategies are needed to reach out to a larger audience and gain useful publicity amongst targeted stakeholders.

Using opportunities of new media: Until today, information has mainly been disseminated through interpersonal communication, printed or electronic media: public meetings, information sessions, cultural event (theatres), exhibitions, brochures, banners, radio, TV. But, more recently SMS, websites and new media

such as social media with Facebook, twitter, YouTube, blogs gain importance. Social media are playing both a positive and negative role in social cohesion, conflict dynamics, and broader social issues. Social media can incite hatred and violence, fuel polarization, and build support for authoritarian leaders. Social media can also help people combat hate speech, increase awareness through online dialogue and accurate information, and empower social movements to support democracy and social change. HEKS/EPER has started in exploring the potential of new media in its project work yet there remains a large untapped potential in using more modern ICT. This are among others the use of tailor-made apps for smartphones, mobile money transfer apps, new social media channels and even block chain technologies in order to more effectively reaching out to people, enabling access to information, facilitating interaction and communication. While in few project contexts some modern ICTs are already in use, other more remote contexts still suffer under a lack of infrastructure.

10.1 Distinct HEKS/EPER projects addressing global trends and challenges

HEKS/EPER's project portfolio and thematic approach are answering most of the identified global challenges and trends in favour of the most vulnerable people and communities. During the annual reporting process HEKS/EPER operative and thematic staff identified and analysed such promising practices to overcome challenges or to use trends.

Promising practices, case studies, project examples

In its factsheets HEKS/EPER demonstrates how it reaches its vision and objectives on the ground – each of the 13 documents contains many project examples illustrating e.g. the gender-sensitive implementation, how civil society is enabled to be an actor on its own or how to promote collective land rights – check it out:

[Thematic factsheets 2020 on HEKS/EPER ID's website about its institutional governance.](#)

10.1.1 Deteriorating governance and shrinking space for civil society

Promising practice worldwide – strengthening civil society and civic space on international level

as a response to increasing restrictions, which has been felt by partners since 2009, HEKS/EPER together with other members of the Act Alliance decided to explore the phenomena in detail. A first study, published in 2011 revealed the common patterns of 'shrinking civil society space' which start with ridiculing and delegitimization, cutting of finance opportunities, criminalization and finally threatening and physical violence including murder (Act Alliance 2011; van der Borgh and Terwindt 2012). The following study measured the space for civil society. It looked at how civil society responded to increasing restrictions. This second study concluded with good practice recommendations for civil society, states as well as multilateral institutions (Act Alliance/CIDSE et al. 2015). The latest study, drawing on a 12 desk studies and 4 country case studies provides evidence on the role and function of civil society in achieving the SDGs. The study provides evidence that: **'development without civil society is bound to fail'** If the international community wants to take the SDGs and the 'leaving no one behind agenda' serious we need to enhance

Events used to make the international community understand why civic space is needed for sustainable development

- Rome: 'Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, SDG 16 implementation and the path towards leaving no one behind', 27-29 May, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Brussels: ACT alliance EU general assembly with EU delegates, 21-23 May.
- Paris: Civil Society Days: Meeting in Task Team for Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, 4-5 June, OECD Conference Centre.
- New York: High Level Political Forum 2019 (Theme: 'Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality'), 9-15 July, UN Headquarters.
- New York: Senior-Level Meeting of the GPEDC, 13-14 July, UN Headquarters.

and protect space for civil society - this is what our latest study reveals. Accordingly, HEKS/EPER together with its act alliance partners has been active to use the newly generated evidence in order to influence the development discourse and to motivate the donor community to act in order to keep civil society on board in implementing the sustainable development agenda. Examples on how civil society concretely contributes to specific development goals and how shrinking space has halted or reversed achievement have been discussed in several workshops and plenary sessions (see box left).

Achievements 2019: As a response to concerted action in cooperation with other international organisations who are fighting for civic space different institutions such as OECD or UN organisations among others are taking the topic of 'shrinking space' seriously and are about to develop guidance to protect and enhance civic space in development.

10.1.2 Raising inequalities and discrimination

Promising example Eastern Europe – social inclusion for Roma and other vulnerable groups with HEKS/EPER's regional programme promoting policy changes towards inclusion with a special focus on combatting anti-gypsism and discrimination. It reaches around 10'000 direct beneficiaries per year.

In most countries in Eastern and Southeast Europe, Roma remain the single most excluded group, with levels of poverty and extreme poverty at least twice as high as in the majority population, unemployment rates of up to 90%, and still a considerable gap in educational achievements. Thus, HEKS/EPER targets the most disenfranchised by promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of the Roma population in Romania, Kosovo, Serbia, Hungary, Slovakia and the Ukraine in the areas of education, labour market inclusion and improvement of housing conditions. The focus lies on improving the political and institutional framework in the respective countries in order to achieve systemic changes.

Until 2019, the programme has succeeded in creating a legal basis for the integration of educational support for disadvantaged students into the national school system in Kosovo and generating recognition and local funding levels of 60-100% for afterschool support for vulnerable students in Romania.

Evidence on European level have shown that efforts towards social inclusion are often not fully effective because they pay too little attention to the underlying negative attitudes and discrimination against the Roma. HEKS/EPER has therefore stepped up the act against discrimination and anti-gypsism, defining it in the programme 2020 onwards as an objective in its own, while successful models for the inclusion of Roma and other disadvantaged communities from previous projects will be continued and fully integrated into the respective educational and social systems.



Overcoming discrimination is key to enhance inclusion of vulnerable groups such as Roma.

Main HEKS/EPER inclusion strategies are ...

- **Promoting the institutional framework for social inclusion** with networking of civil society actors and promoting their participation, full integration of educational support into local school system, advocacy for active labour market and the respect of employment quotas, and advocacy for legalisation and upgrading of houses/settlements.
- **Awareness raising on and acting against discrimination and anti-gypsism** with an anti-discrimination and diversity trainings of civil servants, service providers and employers in the private and public sectors. Also strengthening Roma communities to deal with discrimination through information, empowerment and access to legal aid and remedies. Campaigns/media work shall promote inclusion as well as joint activities of Roma and non-Roma through small projects in schools, community centres, churches and cultural institutions.
- **Promoting inclusive education:** Mentoring of school development teams; quality assurance and transfer to municipalities/state of promising models such as after-school classes, learning centres, scholarships, mentoring/tutoring). Career guidance promote the access of disadvantaged young to quality vocational schools linking to labour market.
- **Promoting labour market inclusion:** Internship programmes and trainings, mentoring/coaching, etc. for young Roma and sensitization of employers, promotion of support structures, diversity management and coaching in companies.
- **Improving housing conditions:** Legalization of houses in informal settlements that become permanent in cooperation with respective municipalities promoting a participatory house-upgrading through 'Dweller Driven Approach' which includes co-financing from and coordination by State authorities.

10.1.3 Climate and environmental crisis and the importance of sustainable land governance

Promising example Ethiopia – Borana pastoralists as custodians of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems: For the Borana pastoralists, who live in the semi-arid lowlands of Ethiopia, prolonged dry periods and droughts have always been part of life. Over centuries the Borana people have developed a common production system that makes sustainable use of the scarce grazing and water resources in the region and is very resistant to climatic fluctuations. Certain parts of the pastureland are reserved as grazing land for the rainy seasons, in other parts cattle is only allowed to graze during the dry season. The Borana

people therefore move their livestock to different areas depending on the season. As a result of this transhumance patterns the pasture and water resources could regenerate sufficiently, so that during the next grazing season sufficient fodder and water was available again. With this way of live and their traditional knowledge the Borana in Ethiopia are protecting the important ecosystem services of the rangeland, such as provision of food and water, or the protection of biodiversity, all important prerequisites to mitigate climatic shocks such as heavy precipitation events or extreme drought which are on the increase in Borana. However, the upkeeping of this traditional management system is challenged, on the one hand due to changing climatic conditions, widespread rangeland degradation and population increase. On the other hand, the Borana lack formal recognition of ownership or user rights to their rangelands. Moreover, the Borana traditional customary institutions are losing authority and are rarely consulted for decisions taken by the formal authorities concerning the conversion of the land that they depend on to make a livelihood. Over the past 30 years Borana has seen massive land use changes for settlement, agricultural production or commercial ranching which further limits the free movement of cattle and their herders.

Together with the Borana grassroot organisation Gayo Pastoralist Development Initiative – GPDI, HEKS/EPER is implementing a comprehensive resilience building project in the Borana rangelands. The project supports Borana customary institutions in emphasizing the vital importance of their traditional production system for the resilience the Borana region and people. Towards zonal and regional governmental institutions, the project is advocating for the inclusion of the customary institutions in any planned or ongoing land governance processes. Besides the governance component, the project also intends to strengthen the anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive resilience capacities of the Borana pastoralists. Through measures of sustainable land management (erosion control, grass and shrub, tree plantation) particularly degraded areas in the rangelands are rehabilitated. In order to increase the preparedness of Borana pastoralists, the project is bringing together traditional weather forecasters and meteorologists to produce climate forecasts which are then communicated to the wider population to plan for the season and make appropriate decisions (e.g., regarding cropping or selling livestock). Moreover, communities are supported to improve their livestock feed management practices (e.g., hay making or the establishment of forage banks to be used in the dry season) and actively links pastoralists to existing risk transfer initiatives such as the 'Index Based Livestock Insurance Programme' set up by ILRI (International Livestock Research Institute). And finally, in the sense of a nexus approach, the project integrates emergency fund, which is released to most vulnerable pastoralist households in case of a drought catastrophe. This will ensure that productive assets can be protected in times of crisis and pastoralists are not drawn into the vicious cycle of ever-growing vulnerability.



Natural Resource Management in the Borana rangelands in Southern Ethiopia.

10.1.4 Economic growth and the private sector

Promising example Georgia – bio fair trade hazelnuts project to increase income of local farmers by better production, certification, inclusive market. Many families in rural Georgia are engaged in subsistence and live below the minimum subsistence level. Their low income is not enough to invest in a better future. Small-scale farmers who produce hazelnuts are also affected. Hazelnut cultivation has always been an important and traditional pillar of agriculture in Georgia. HEKS/EPER supports hazelnut producers to increase their productivity and improve yields quality of their products and is committed to certified organic production and fair trade with Europe and Switzerland. The main objective is to increase income of farmer families and to create jobs.



Organic hazelnut production in collaboration with private sector processor and Swiss nut trading company generates income.

In cooperation with universities, UNPD and MFI, better services on the part of producers and processors were enabled. And after advocacy of HEKS/EPER, organic farming was included as a priority in Georgia's

agricultural and rural development strategy – thus, the systemic framework conditions for organic hazelnut cultivation ameliorated significantly.

The private Georgian hazelnut processing company ANKA and the private Swiss premium brand Pakka sells fair-trade nut specialities made from organic ingredients to retail and wholesale in Switzerland and Europe.

The share of hazelnuts from organic production or from conversion to organic farming has increased steadily. 1400 farmers were in 2019 organized the cooperative and have benefited from improved hazelnut cultivation. Through the sale of organic hazelnuts (82 tons) and UTZ/fair trade-certified hazelnuts (1300 tons), farming families benefit from higher sales prices and a growing sales market with 70% reporting increased income. The second project phase aims to increase the number of participating farmers.

10.1.5 Fragility, complexity and protracted humanitarian crises

Promising example Uganda – a diapraxis project to strengthen livelihoods and income as well as to improve conflict management and mitigation for Congolese refugees and Ugandan host communities in and around Rwamwanja refugee settlement. The camp hosts some 70'000 refugees fleeing the highly volatile region of North-Eastern DRC a conflict showing no signs of abating.



Typical house in the Rwamwanja refugee settlement.

Intergroup hatreds underlie much of the vulnerability in DRC, and these are often imported into the refugee settlements in Uganda. A conflict analysis in Rwamwanja found considerable levels of latent conflict between different groups (tribes) fuelled by unresolved grievances, mistrust and unequal access to resources and opportunities. Conflicts also exist between refugees and the host communities, dating back to the settlement's re-establishment in 2012, when many of the hosts became alienated from their land, and so they feel neglected by the

Government of Uganda and iNGOs. A joint problem of refugees and host are their struggle to provide enough income to secure their families' livelihoods. A market assessment identified refugees' skills in farming are poor, the facilities affect quality and subsequently price of produce; and language barriers alienate refugees from the market.

This project of 3 specialised NGOs aims to improve the everyday lives of refugees and host communities in Rwamwanja by jointly undertaking peacebuilding and livelihoods activities. ACORD focuses on improving group relations building bridges between the differing Congolese group and the hosts enhancing traditional structures for conflict resolution and encouraging institutional actors to be conflict-sensitive in their approach. LWF improves the entire value chain, from cropping practices to language skills for participating in the market. HEKS/EPER takes the responsibility for project management and contract compliance backing the partners with administrative and conflict transformation expertise.

Diapraxis is key to achieve the project goal using the farmers' groups as an entry point, which are formed of members from a variety of different communities (50% refugee communities, 50% host communities) residing in and around Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement. As they work collectively to increase their knowledge and skills for improved income, they will simultaneously be encouraged to take the lead in the community-based conflict resolution structures, peacebuilding dialogue meetings and community sensitization meetings that are carried. Taken together, the lives of Congolese refugees and host communities will become much more peaceful and sustainable. Young people are central to changing attitudes and perceptions towards peaceful co-existence. An opportunity exists also in schools where refugee children and host community children interact to address these misconceptions. Changing attitudes amongst children in schools will influence parent's attitudes and perceptions and thereby promote and build a culture of respect and harmonious co-existence for future generations.

10.1.6 Demography, mobility and migration

Promising example DR Congo – HRBA and policy dialogue on the right to land in a fragile, conflict affected context to prevail displacements and hunger. In the North Kivu, the situation is complex and highly fragile due to the long-lasting conflict about resources (extractive industry), land and power that involves armed groups, the army, state authorities, private business as well as local communities. The region has been the epicentre of conflict and violence through the past decade.

Despite and because of human rights abuses and the fragile situation, HEKS/EPER and its partner Aide et Action pour la Paix' (AAP) are promoting a human rights-based land tenure security, the peaceful resolution/mediation of land conflicts and the participation of the vulnerable rural communities to the national land reform process. Most farmer families have no rights to the fields they cultivate, and therefore no secure access to land. AAP informs local population about their land rights and capacitates them to claim these rights from the authorities. Peasants involved in land conflicts receive legal advice on how to get a land title or lease their land at good conditions. AAP and HEKS/EPER work also with duty-bearers, sensitizing the province and local authorities about the peasants rights to access to land, and organize with 'open days' a very effective dialogue platform about land governance where authorities and farmers meet, inform, exchange and discuss with each other; ideally resulting in concrete actions to secure land for the rural community members.



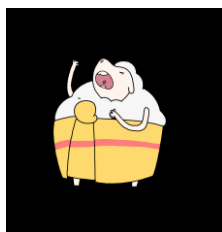
Access to their land by a dialogue with State authorities and by mitigation of land conflicts is vital for small-scale farmers to ensure food security; and protects them from being displaced.

In 2019, the project has secured new land rights (248 ha) for 472 vulnerable people (203 women) in North Kivu. 10'042 small-scale farmers have been sensitized about their land rights. In 15 education events and trainings, carried out in the year 2019, more than 1000 rights holders and 174 duty-bearers were sensitized and capacitated. As part of the objective to promote the participation in the land reform process of the rural communities in the North Kivu, 17 out of 18 recommendations formulated by these communities have been taken in consideration for the second draft submitted to the national consultation.

However, there are many challenges related to HRBA's work in the DRC; insecurity for human rights defenders, they are subject to intimidation and threats; local communities are mostly excluded from the elaboration of policies and laws, (often politicians are themselves implicated in land rights violations through); the absence of state authority outside the main cities (armed groups imposing their laws in some places) and a weak justice system (corrupt and politically motivated).

However, there are many challenges related to HRBA's work in the DRC; insecurity for human rights defenders, they are subject to

10.1.7 Digital technology and media use



The story board of the financial literacy bot contains different characters leading the farmers through the tool to learn more about financially well-informed decision making.

Promising example Myanmar – Business knowledge online to provide improved livelihoods of small-holder farmers through well-informed financial decisions and a better access to financial resources. A desk review as well as observations of the ongoing market projects have shown that small-holder farmers in Myanmar are still relatively weak on financial literacy reducing their chances to produce

enough quality and quantity as well as to make profit not being able of well-informed financial decisions. This know-how gap becomes apparent when making the calculations of input costs, loans, selling, income, etc. with the farmers and reflecting on their rationale for decision making. This is all the more disturbing reflecting the limited budget and the high dependency on income through agriculture.

In the past the standard NGO approach to these issues was to provide trainings and occasionally also mentoring. Although the on-site instructions and face-to-face interaction with the people of concern

certainly have their advantages, the outreach of such trainings remains limited to a small circle of people, who are invited, have the time, and attend the training.

As face-to-face trainings are costly and take time, their outreach is limited. An ICT solution could be an efficient and impactful alternative. The social-enterprise 'Opportunities Now' has successfully developed and rolled-out a Facebook-Messenger Bot solution on Financial Literacy for urban entrepreneurs. HEKS/EPER adapted this to the needs of the farmers and provided a combination of face-to-face gatherings and timed digital messaging to increase financial literacy. 'Opportunities Now' is reinvesting 50% of profits into creating new ICT tools for solving entrepreneurial challenges in Myanmar. The other partner 'Tun Yat' enables the first online platform which connects farmers (who want to rent agricultural machines) and machine suppliers (either big suppliers or individual suppliers.) HEKS/EPER has provided Tun Yat with loan-based seed capital. Tun Yat's field agents will ensure the link of 'Opportunities Now' with the pilot target farmers.

D) Institutional Governance

HEKS/EPER's strategies, policies, guidelines, and tools to manage its international programme; including reports, promising practices, as well as global frameworks relevant to international cooperation

International cooperation is very complex and dynamic. It is a challenge to plan and implement projects, even more to prove impact and effectiveness. To ensure quality and relevance of its portfolio, HEKS/EPER International Division (ID) developed management procedures together with strategies & guidelines for staff and partners. Being accountable to donors and project participants, HEKS/EPER publishes its success and failures, as well as learnings and steering decisions.

Programmatic strategies & guidelines

The **strategies** of HEKS/EPER set mid- and long-term theories of change and objectives for its international programme. They also describe **cross-cutting approaches and issues** as well as **implementation standards**. HEKS/EPER and the implementing partners are fully committed to apply these. **Thematic guidelines** together with the strategies aim to increase quality, expertise, and joint understanding towards core topics such as inclusive market systems, resilience, conflict transformation, and many more.

Values, Mission, Strategies

- [Constitution Swiss Church Aid](#)
- [Swiss Church Aid Foundation regulations](#)
- [Values](#)
- [Mission Statement](#)
- [Swiss & International Strategy 2018-2022](#)
- [HEKS/EPER International Programme \(HIP\) 2017-2020](#)
- [HEKS/EPER International Programme \(HIP\) 2020-2024](#)
- [Church Cooperation Programme](#)

Thematic Guidelines

- [Access to Land - Land Tenure Security Framework](#)
- [Acquisition Guidelines](#)
- [Advocacy Approach](#)
- [Civil Space Policy Paper](#)
- [Conflict Sensitivity Standards and Online Course](#)
- [Conflict Transformation Approach](#)
- [Gender Implementation Guideline](#)
- [HRBA \(Human Rights-Based Approach\)](#)
- [Market Systems Development Guideline](#)
- [Microfinance Concept](#)
- [Resilience Building](#)

Relevant External Frameworks

- [Agenda 2030 \(SDGs & Leaving no one behind\)](#)
- [UN Charter on Human Rights](#)
- [Peasants' Rights Declaration](#)
- [Swiss Constitution – Art 54](#)
- [Climate Change: Kyoto Protocol & Paris Agreement](#)
- [CEDAW \(Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women\)](#)
- [ILO Convention 169](#)
- [FAO Guideline for responsible Land Tenure](#)

Management Policies

The mandatory policies of HEKS/EPER emphasize principles, regulations, and procedures by laying down the course of the organisation's actions, streamlining processes and providing hands-on tools for staff and partners to deliver high-quality adaptive management. The key documents are the **FFAG** (Field Financial and Administration Guidelines) together with the annexed code of conduct, and the **PCM** (Project/Programme Cycle Management), both containing clear standards and procedures which contracted staff and partner organisations have to comply with. All policies ensure good institutional governance, especially covering the topics of corruption, misuse/abuse of power, PSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment), and how HEKS/EPER does report, learn, and adapt to it.

FFAG (Field Finance and Administrative Guidelines)

- [FFAG Document and Annexes](#)
- [Codes of Conducts](#)

PCM (Project/Programme Cycle Management)

- [Templates](#)
- [Guidelines](#)
- [Key Indicators](#)
- [PCM Manual](#)

Security Policy and Tools

- [HEKS/EPER Global Security Policy](#)
- [HEKS/EPER Security Risk Management Guidelines](#)
- [Security Risk Management Guidelines Annexes](#)

Gender Policy

- [HEKS/EPER Gender Policy including Gender implementation Guidelines](#)

Further Policies

- [Sustainability Policy](#)
- [Transparency Code](#)
- [Due Diligence Scanning Tool](#)
- [Data Processing Policy \(digital data system\)](#)
- [Corporate Design](#)
- [Good Governance Policy](#)

Links to External Standards

- [CHS \(Core Humanitarian Standards\)/Sphere](#)
- [The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)

Reports, Factsheets, Evaluations and Promising Practices

Our reports are transparent and serve mutual accountability towards donors and project participants; documenting evidence for progress, effectivity, sustainability, and impact. However, we also set forth on how we follow-up on projects and programmes collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data with professional monitoring tools such as the digital data system and do evaluations and scientific impact assessments. All, to learn and to steer our activities for the benefit of people and communities.

Annual Reports

International Division Annual Reports

- [2007-2019](#)

HEKS/EPER Annual Reports (CH & International)

- [Annual report 2015](#)
- [Annual report 2016](#)
- [Annual report 2017](#)
- [Annual report 2018](#)
- [Annual report 2019](#)

Thematic Factsheets 2021

- [Development needs a strong civil society](#)
- [Gender equality](#)
- [Human Rights-Based Approach](#)
- [Humanitarian aid](#)
- [Inclusive markets](#)
- [Land and natural resources governance](#)
- [Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning](#)
- [Non-discrimination and inclusion](#)
- [Resilience to climate and disaster risk](#)
- [Sustainable food and agriculture systems](#)

Access to Land Working Papers

- [Access to Land, Laying the Groundwork for Development, 2012](#)
- [Assess and Enhance Land Tenure Security, 2015](#)
- [Access to Land in the Philippines, Capitalisation of HEKS/EPER Experiences, 2017](#)
- [Securing the Mobility of Pastoralists, Capitalisation of HEKS/EPER Experiences, 2019](#)
- [Custodians of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, 2019](#)

Evaluations and Assessments

- [Capitalization of Experiences on Impact Assessment \(2018\)](#)
- [Meta-Evaluation on Evaluations 2007-2015 \(2016\)](#)
- [Meta-Evaluation on Evaluations 2016-2018 \(2019\)](#)
- [Impact Assessment Access to Land Senegal – Policy Brief 2020](#)
- [Capitalization of Experiences Market Development \(Dairy & Meat\) Georgia \(2018\)](#)

Research, Studies and Promising Practices

Research & Studies

- [Civic space & SDGs](#)
- [Compendium Good DRR Practises](#)

Promising Practices

- [Ethiopia: Biodiversity & Sustainability](#)
- [Cambodia: Access to Land & Conflict Transformation](#)
- [Peasants' Rights: UN Declaration towards Land Rights, Agroecological Production and Food Security](#)
- [Bangladesh: Dialogue for Rights Enabling Social inclusion](#)
- [DR Congo: more yields, quality and income thanks to agroecological production and market inclusion](#)

E) Acronyms

| | |
|--------|--|
| A2L | Access to land |
| AAR | After Action Review |
| ACT | ACT alliance (coalition of faith-based organisation working in international cooperation) |
| BfA | Bread for All |
| BI | Business intelligence |
| CC | Church cooperation |
| CBO | Community-based organisation (grassroot organisation) |
| CD | Country Director HEKS/EPER |
| CfW | Cash for Work |
| CO | Country office (of HEKS/EPER in priority programme countries) |
| CP | Country programme HEKS/EPER (DC or HA) |
| CS | Conflict sensitivity |
| CSO | Civil society organisation |
| CT | Conflict transformation |
| DC | Development cooperation |
| DB | Duty-bearer |
| DRR | Disaster risk reduction |
| ERP | Enterprise resource planning |
| FBO | Faith-based organisation |
| FFAG | Field financial and administrative guidelines |
| FIAN | Food First Information and Action Network (international organisation for the right to food) |
| HA | Humanitarian aid |
| HHQ | HEKS/EPER headquarters (in Switzerland) |
| HIP | HEKS/EPER international programme |
| HKI | HEKS/EPER key indicator |
| HRBA | Human rights-based approach |
| I&E | Income and employment |
| IB | Inclusive business |
| ICT | Information and communications technology, |
| ID | International division (of HEKS/EPER) |
| IDMT | International division management (of HEKS/EPER) |
| iNGO | International non-governmental organisation |
| KS | Knowledge sharing |
| L4S | Learning for steering (adaptive project/programme management) |
| LIC | Low Income Country |
| LNOB | Leaving no one Behind (main pledge of Agenda 2030) |
| M4P | Making markets work for the poor |
| MEL | Monitoring, evaluation and learning |
| MIC | Middle Income Country |
| MSC | Most significant change |
| MSD | Market system development |
| NFI | Non-food items |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| PCM | Project or programme cycle management |
| PIU | Project implementation unit |
| PSEAH | Preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment |
| RH | Rights-holder |
| SDC | Swiss agency for development and cooperation |
| SDG | Sustainable development goals (Agenda 2030) |
| UNDROP | United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Peasants |
| WASH | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene |
| WCC | World council of churches |
| WFP | World Food Programme |
| ZEWO | Swiss certification foundation for non-profit organisations collecting donations |