

HEKS/EPER thematic factsheet 2022



Humanitarian Aid

HEKS/EPER Global Cooperation's strategy, promising practices, achievements and perspectives on humanitarian aid.

Why Humanitarian Aid Matters

Global Challenges – Context¹

The world is in a grave state of humanitarian crisis. In January 2022, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated that 274 million people worldwide will need humanitarian assistance in 2022. This represents an **increase of 333% compared to the number of people in need in 2015** and the number is likely to increase with the massive number of people in need after the escalation in Ukraine on 24 February 2022.

During the last decade, the **main driver behind this trend were conflicts** that often led to protracted crises keeping people from covering their basic needs and positively transforming their societies. Some examples include Syria with 6.7 million internally displaced along with 6.6 million Syrian refugees worldwide, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with conflicts in the region of the great lakes, South Sudan where 2 million people have been displaced internally, and 2.3 million to neighbouring countries, and the massive displacement of Rohingya from Myanmar to Bangladesh. After one month of the war in Ukraine, there are already more than 4 million refugees and 6.5 million internally displaced people, and there are no promising signs that the conflict will soon be resolved, and humanitarian needs to be fully addressed. An estimated 82.4 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced, 56 million within their countries, and 26.4 million across international borders. In many cases, their **displacement** is linked to a conflict, but an increasing number of people are forced to leave their homes due to **disasters caused by natural hazards and the effects of climate change**. As per the World Bank, climate change could force 216 million people to migrate to their own countries by 2050.



Senegal: Effects of climate change reduce access of people to natural resources such as soil, water or wood. Agricultural production and food security are hampered.

The impacts of climate change 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 disasters 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 on the rise. 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.

Hunger is on the rise, with 283 million people suffering from food insecurity at the end of 2021. Fuelled by variants and a lack of vaccines, **COVID-19** continues claiming huge numbers of lives and devastating economies and livelihoods. E.g., in Lebanon, shaken by an economic and political crisis and the Beirut Blast, a required heavy lockdown strongly contributed to a large part of the population becoming dependent on aid. 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.

How HEKS/EPER responds – Strategy

The provision of humanitarian aid worldwide is one of the mandates HEKS/EPER given by the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (EKS). HEKS/EPER has carried it out over the past decades in many small- and large-scale emergencies worldwide and renewed it in the new HEKS/EPER International Programme. The humanitarian aid is anchored in the HEKS/EPER International Programme (2021-2024) global results framework as outcome 1, **'Basic needs during the crisis are covered'**. The outcome aims to be achieved by two outputs addressing different phases after a crisis.

HEKS/EPER's strategy output 1.1 'Means for basic needs are provided': HEKS/EPER responds to conflicts, disasters, and protracted crises and encompasses interventions to cover the basic survival needs of affected population groups in a timely and professional manner according to Sphere (core humanitarian) standards. HEKS/EPER works through

¹ Data from UNHCR, OCHA's Global Humanitarian Overview 2022, and the World Bank's updated Groundswell report.

international alliances, direct implementation or local partners, whose capacity are actively enhanced. HEKS/EPER is committed to the **localisation agenda** and working with local partners/CBOs/civil society organisations is our priority. Where HEKS/EPER is present with its development programmes, we are relying on the network of long-term local partners to deliver humanitarian aid. Usually, these partners are part of the Disaster Response Plan and capacity strengthening on humanitarian aid is done ahead of a crisis. Where external conditions allow (e.g., functioning banking system and competitive markets), **cash-based approaches** are the preferred implementation methods as they allow recipients greater flexibility and dignity. In most crises, the host communities have been just as severely affected as the refugees or IDPs. Thus, HEKS/EPER addresses the needs of host and displaced communities and **acts in a conflict-sensitive manner**. Irrespective of the nature of life-saving interventions, emphasis is put on linking these with the subsequent phases of rehabilitation, livelihood recovery, and development, focusing on increasing the affected population's resilience to future threats. **People in hard-to-reach areas** are often even more affected by a crisis than those in more easily accessible locations. However, support by humanitarian actors is predominantly provided in areas where organisations can easily and safely operate. In the past, in humanitarian aid and development settings, HEKS/EPER committed itself to **serve the most vulnerable**. To continue doing so, and with more and more people being affected by conflicts, HEKS/EPER works in more complex and risky environments.

HEKS/EPER's strategy output 1.2 'Livelihoods and infrastructure are restored': Disasters and humanitarian crises often result in massive destruction of private and public infrastructure and means of livelihoods. Communities and local authorities are usually not resilient enough to anticipate and independently recover. Therefore, **HEKS/EPER continues implementation beyond relief**. During the rehabilitation phase, the livelihoods of the most affected and most vulnerable groups are enhanced, and private houses and public infrastructure are reconstructed. Committed to the human rights-based Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS), HEKS/EPER applies principles like participation, empowerment, accountability, equality, and non-discrimination.

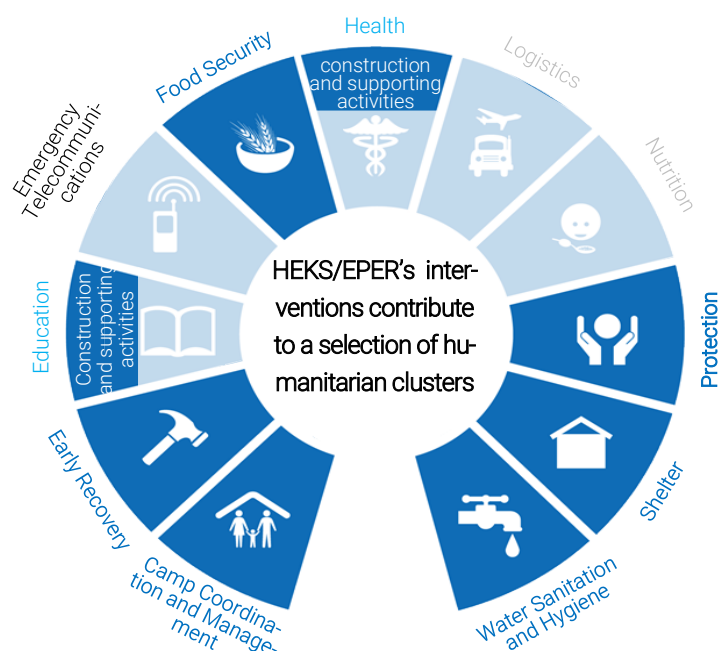
In all reconstruction projects, HEKS/EPER emphasises **'building back better'**, ensuring that the rehabilitated infrastructure can withstand a future disaster. Preference is given to locally available and environmental-friendly construction materials and traditional construction technologies, which will be improved where required. Ownership of households is increased by applying owner-driven approaches and flexible construction designs, coupled with technical support and capacity building to ensure high-quality buildings.

In order to lessen a disaster's impact on the local population, HEKS/EPER works with communities and local actors to strengthen their resilience and be prepared in the event of a disaster. These efforts are formally a part of our development programs, but this conceptual attribution loses its significance with our increased efforts to strengthen our triple nexus programming.

Contribution to effective coordination: HEKS/EPER closely coordinates all its humanitarian interventions with respective governments, local authorities, and humanitarian coordination bodies.

With its projects, HEKS/EPER primarily contributes to the food security, protection, shelter, WASH, camp coordination and management, and early recovery clusters, and actively takes part in the coordination mechanisms. HEKS/EPER provides partial support to the health and education sectors by constructing and providing equipment to schools and health facilities and supporting the continuation or resumption of school classes or health services. Service provision and capacity building is left to specialised agencies.

Crosscutting issues and quality assurance: As a member of the CHS Alliance, HEKS/EPER commits to the Core Humanitarian Standards on Quality and



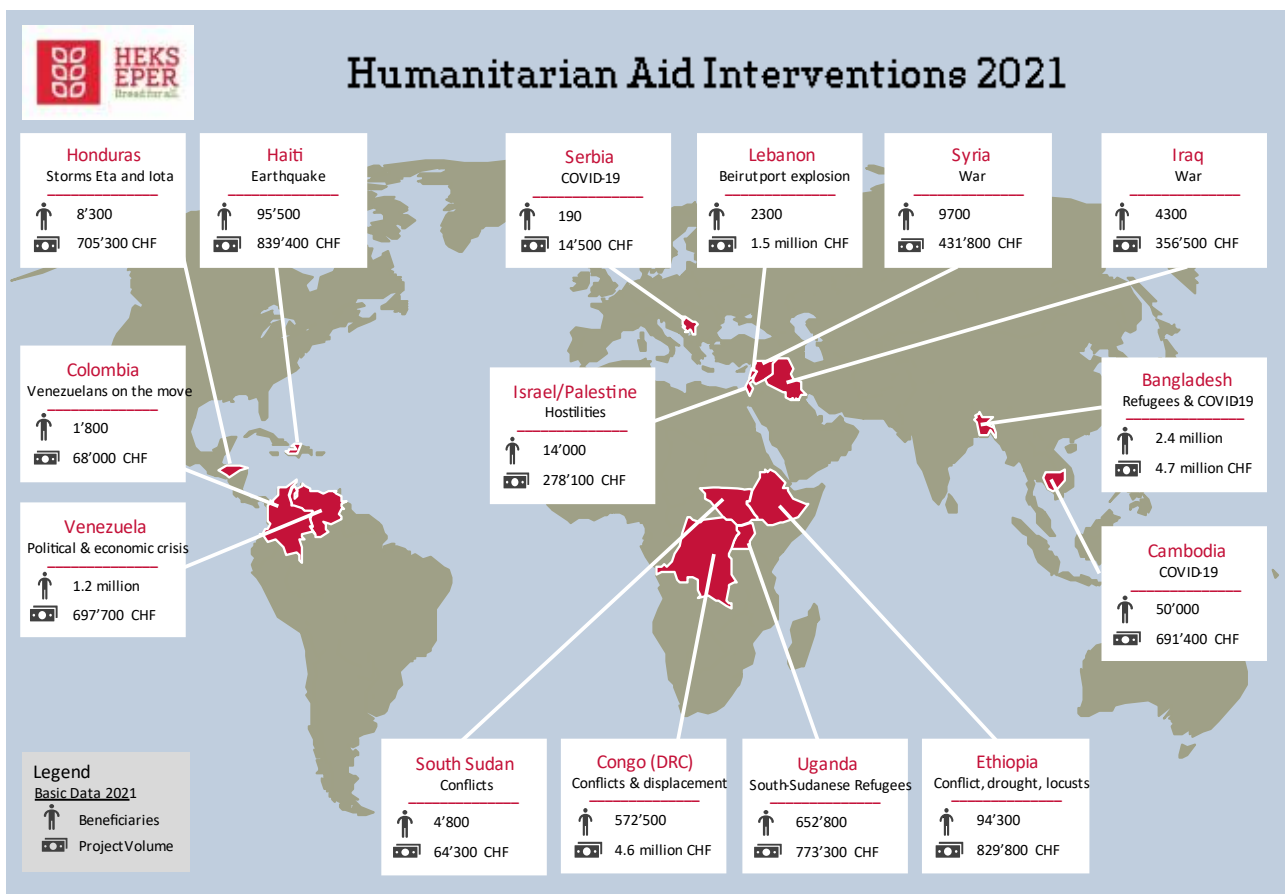
HEKS/EPER is active in eight out of eleven humanitarian clusters.

Accountability (CHS) and aligns its interventions with the Sphere Standards. Projects comply with national law and consider respective donor standards.

Before any humanitarian aid intervention, HEKS/EPER conducts a needs assessment and analyses the working area's power dynamics. The projects are planned and implemented in a **conflict-sensitive** manner. By consulting the affected people already in project planning, understanding and addressing their concerns through complaint mechanisms and conducting post-distribution monitoring or equivalent evaluation tools, HEKS/EPER is mainstreaming **accountability**. HEKS/EPER exclusively provides **needs-based humanitarian aid** and never makes religious affiliation a criterion in beneficiary selection. The principle of non-discrimination will also be followed for other characteristics, including age, gender, colour, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language, disability, health status, political or different opinions, and national or social origin. HEKS/EPER's behaviour and interventions are subject to the imperative need to follow, and be perceived as following, the core humanitarian principles of **humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence**.

Where HEKS/EPER works

HEKS/EPER responds to humanitarian crises, where HEKS/EPER is already present with a development cooperation office and in additional countries, if needs on the ground justify doing so and if the national government and civil society do not have the capacity to assist crisis-affected populations. The following map shows for each country where HEKS/EPER has provided humanitarian aid in 2021, the number of participants, the funds invested and the type of intervention according to our organizational theory of change.



Main HA interventions in 2021 – additionally HEKS/EPER was also active in **Myanmar** covering the economic crises with social schemes and food security crumbling after the coup d'état of the military and due to the pandemic.

Promising Practices Worldwide

Bangladesh – Rohingya refugee camps

More than one million Rohingya displaced from Myanmar stay in refugee camps near Cox Bazaar. Both the Rohingya, but also the host community require humanitarian support. With Bangladesh insisting on repatriation of Rohingya to Myanmar and Myanmar not providing the required safety and rights to the Rohingya, the refugees will likely stay in the camps and remain dependent on support for years to come.

With **24'000 households supported to repair and upgrade their shelters in 2021**, HEKS/EPER manages an extensive caseload in the Rohingya response. In 2021, vegetable gardening on the shelter's roofs improved nutrition and reduced the heat in the shelters. Settlement interventions (drainage, pathways, stairways, bridges, slope protection) improve safety in the camps, especially during the monsoon season. In 2021, HEKS/EPER focused on improving **hygiene and infection control in 400 health facilities in host communities** by training health staff and improving hygiene infrastructure. In addition, and as per the needs and in consultation with the competent authorities, distribution of a comprehensive list of hygiene items in health facilities has started. COVID-19 prevention messages are also strongly promoted in the host community. Interventions in Bangladesh are currently supported by IOM.



The Bangladesh government allows Rohingya to construct shelters only from temporary materials and respecting its objective to repatriate the refugees. HEKS/EPER trains households and provides construction material to do essential constructions and repairs for quality shelter.

DR Congo – covering basic needs in hard-to-reach areas

The **Democratic Republic of the Congo**: Over decades, the Eastern Congo has been destabilised by conflicts in the great lakes region, primarily due to global economic interests related to the exploitation of natural resources. Outbreaks of Ebola, Cholera and Measles from 2018 to 2021 and climate-related shocks add additional layers of complexity and vulnerability. In the whole country, more than 5 million people are internally displaced and almost 16



HEKS/EPER engages to **restore road infrastructure**, so people in remote areas have access to economic centers to sell their agricultural products. Designed as a cash-for-work programme the project participants also gain direct income.

million are food insecure. The needs in the DRC exceed the capacities of the international community, which has led to organisations mostly implementing projects in easily accessible and safe areas, leaving those most heavily affected in the hard-to-reach zones behind.

In 2019, HEKS/EPER adjusted its strategy in the DRC to **provide support to those living in hard-to-reach areas**. HEKS/EPER expanded its presence in DRC and since 2020 – in addition to its 'development cooperation' office – **also runs a 'humanitarian aid' office based in Goma**. This office manages new large-scale emergency interventions in hard-to-reach areas of North Kivu. Being on the ground with experienced expatriates who know the conflict

and the actors allows HEKS/EPER to roll out need-based aid actions in conflict-affected zones. ECHO, BHA-USAID, SDC and UNICEF currently support the programme and made it possible for HEKS/EPER in 2021 to assist more than 460,230 vulnerable people affected by the conflicts in hard-to-reach areas of North and South Kivu and the internally displaced people around Goma following the volcanic eruption. In the DRC, HEKS/EPER cooperates with DCA (Dan Church Aid) and PIN (People In Need), and further increases its collaboration with ACT Alliance Network members. In 2021, the HA volume invested in DRC increased up to CHF 4.6 million.

Iraq – supporting returnee families re-building their lives



Distribution of seeds to restore agricultural production – to ensure food security but also additional income.

Three years have passed since the defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in 2019. The subsequent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, falling oil prices, severe currency devaluation and sharp rises in food prices halted an already precarious recovery process and deepened existing socio-economic vulnerabilities in north-central Iraq. 1.3 million people remain displaced, most in informal sites, two thirds of whom cannot meet basic needs. Among the 4.7 million returnees, two out of five lack adequate housing, economic self-reliance, and access to basic services. Continuing ethno-sectarian tensions and a resurgent ISIL maintain a climate of insecurity. There is a widespread inability to resume traditional livelihoods due to lack

of resources to replace lost assets, revive or start new businesses in the target areas of Salah ad-Din, Kirkuk and Diyala governorates in northern Iraq. Environmental factors, including extreme temperatures and drought create further challenges for agricultural livelihoods.

HEKS/EPER will continue to prioritise highly vulnerable households based on criteria and scales aligned with the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). In 2021, HEKS/EPER predominantly reached **IDPs and returnees**, the most vulnerable communities in the target area. The provision of **tangible protection services, back-to-school initiatives and food-security interventions** were the three major pillars of HEKS/EPER's intervention in Iraq all throughout 2021. The financial support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein was instrumental in having a tangible impact on the ground.

Syria – still more than 13 million people in humanitarian need

The war in Syria is entering its 12th year, and still, over 13.8 million people need humanitarian assistance. More than 13 million people have fled their homes internally or towards other countries. The population has insufficient access to food, shelter, water, protection and health services. 7.9 million people suffer from food insecurity².

HEKS/EPER has been responding to the Syrian crisis since early 2017, supporting local partners to provide life-saving food, non-food items (NFI), shelter in government-controlled areas of Aleppo, East Ghouta, Dara'a, Al Hassakeh city, and Al Raqqa. HEKS/EPER supported 100'000 people in need over the past three years.

Since January 2020, **HEKS/EPER is officially registered in Syria** and is now one of the few international NGOs that can legally operate in government-controlled areas of Syria, where more than 80% of those in need of humanitarian assistance are residing. This allows HEKS/EPER to implement projects directly or through partners. HEKS/EPER will continue to meet the needs of the most vulnerable underserved populations in Syria, with a focus on **WASH, shelter, NFI and livelihoods**.



East Ghouta experienced devastating bombings driving away residents. HEKS/EPER enables the return for more than 100 families providing rehabilitated shelter.

² Syrian Arab Republic: Humanitarian Response Plan (December 2020)

Lebanon – Syrian refugees, a devastating economic crises, the pandemic and Beirut’s port blast

Lebanon is grappling with economic and financial meltdown, COVID-19, the disastrous impact of the Beirut Port explosions and continued impact of the Syrian crisis. In addition, political deadlock fuels popular protests and hampers meaningful reform and recovery efforts. In the last two years, Lebanon’s economic crisis has continued and caused the country’s currency to further collapse and send the price of food, fuel and other basic goods soaring. This pushed an estimated four million families into poverty. With the uncertainty on the further evolution of the situation families already struggling to afford food, electricity, and fuel are falling deeper into poverty.

Since August 2020, HEKS/EPER and its local partner Najdeh are implementing a multipurpose cash assistance project aiming at supporting the most vulnerable households living in areas affected by the Beirut blast. HEKS/EPER will continue supporting vulnerable people in Lebanon with **cash assistance**.



The blast in Beirut’s port left many people with their homes or businesses destroyed. Rehabilitation takes its time, as economic situation is deteriorating pushing lots of former middle-class families into poverty.

Venezuela – economic melt-down and protracted conflicts lead to humanitarian crises

The situation of Venezuelans continues to be critical. In the last two years, the economy has contracted a staggering 33%, and significant salary increases (317% in 2021) are still below inflation. The poverty rate has reached 93% of the population, and almost 8 million people in need of assistance are targeted by humanitarian agencies.

HEKS/EPER was officially registered in Venezuela in June 2021. By December it partnered with UNICEF and OCHA and managed to position itself as a significant humanitarian actor responding to uncovered priority needs.

In 2021, HEKS/EPER delivered **food and hygiene kits** for extreme hardship cases of the crisis-affected population in Greater Caracas and Barquisimeto, and **meals** to elderly people in El Nula, Apure State.

20’000 patients and a catchment population of 150’000 people have benefited from WASH interventions in health centres in Apure State. HEKS/EPER repaired **water supply systems**, installed sustainable **solar energy**, and provided a comprehensive solution for **waste and wastewater management by introducing innovative technologies**. Moreover, cleaning and disinfection sessions helped to improve the **prevention of diseases**.³



Building a flood-prevention wall in El Amparo.

In El Amparo, a flood prone village along the Colombian border, HEKS/EPER has provided more than 550 crisis affected IDP’s with **shelter assistance, NFI, emergency WASH installations and DRR measures**. A new flood-prevention wall prevents the Arauca River from continuously threatening the precarious installations of the local migrant and host communities. These measures also had a mitigating effect on tensions between the two communities over the limited resources in the area.

³ A short video summary of HEKS/EPER’s intervention in Venezuela can be seen on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wG7Ubk4AEF4>.

The 'hard-to-reach' approach

Building relationships with duty-bearers to secure access to people in need



Working in hard-to-reach areas requires discussions with all relevant actors, including to conflict parties, to allow for the implementation of interventions while ensuring safety of the team.

HEKS/EPER pays particular attention to the fact that people in hard-to-reach areas are often more affected by a crisis but receive less aid than those in more easily accessible locations. Working in such an environment where war, conflict or sometimes multiple crises are ongoing requires very different arrangements regarding security management, logistics, and conflict-sensitive programming.

HEKS/EPER closely assesses conflict and crisis-affected areas and its options to reach those people who are cut off from other support and services. HEKS/EPER deploys highly experienced staff and security policies are constantly improved, and a security focal point is active in the different security networks. HEKS/EPER thereby manages security risks while accepting that they cannot be completely avoided or mitigated.

HEKS/EPER aims to **strengthen its partnerships with large humanitarian donors** looking for agencies willing to operate in volatile environments by accessing hard-to-reach environments.

Contexts where this has proven particularly relevant are e.g., the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti. The approach complements HEKS/EPER's working approaches in less complex settings.

Infection control and prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of improving hygiene, infection prevention and control in health facilities for two reasons: To contain the spread of the virus among patients and to create a safe environment for health care workers so health facilities can remain operational for all kind of health issues.

In **Bangladesh**, HEKS/EPER has been piloting and applying WHO's and UNICEF's WASH FIT approach since 2019. Thus, HEKS/EPER is an established expert organisation on WASH in health facilities and in an excellent position to contribute to the safe functioning of health facilities during the pandemic (e.g., infection prevention and control). The projects were massively upscaled and provided formal training, on the job training, facility-level WASH improvement strategy development and construction interventions in all 439 primary and secondary health facilities in the Rohingya camps and the host community in Cox's Bazar district.

Another example is **Venezuela**, where in 2020, HEKS/EPER supported the update of the national disinfection protocol and the disinfection of more than 110'000 m² of surfaces in two major hospitals in Caracas, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the WHO and UNICEF. In 2021, 20'000 patients and a catchment population of 150'000 people have benefited from WASH interventions in health centres in Apure State. This effort was complemented by other preventive measures such as cleaning and disinfection sessions and hygiene kits distributions.

Trainings in health facilities



On the job training of health practitioners in a health facility in Bangladesh.

Strengthen community resilience and preparedness

As many disasters and crisis can to some degree be anticipated or their potential impact can be analysed, HEKS/EPER works with communities and local actors to strengthen their capacities to prevent or mitigate disaster risks and be prepared in the event of a disaster. This provides the opportunity to lessen a disaster's impact on the local population. In Haiti e.g., HEKS/EPER builds local resilience through a series of different actions such as supporting local

production and protection of traditional seeds, improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene, strengthen local economies and food systems, building disaster-proof infrastructure to protect communities, their animals, crops and other essential livelihoods. Ideally, such prevention and preparedness measures would be fully assured by local actors. However, this is often not the case, and although local initiatives and resources are being prioritised by HEKS/EPER we still need to assure our own teams' and partners' preparedness to provide quick and effective support to local actors and populations in case it is needed. A network of more than a hundred community contact persons in all counties of Haiti's Grand'Anse department built by our team and partners, helped after several recent disasters to establish a valid needs assessment in the most hard-to-reach areas within few hours. In the case of the 2021 earthquake, this along with our local disaster response plan, the capacities of our team and partners both in development and humanitarian work and quick internal and external decision-making processes to allocate funding, allowed our team on the ground to provide humanitarian aid after little more than 48 hours after the disaster.



Including the local community is key to increase preparedness in the mid- and longterm.

Cash programming



Bangladesh: Cash for Work to maintain roads. A project participant receives its cash at the HEKS/EPER desk – this compensates his income after the COVID-19 losses.

In 2021, HEKS/EPER ran **cash programmes in 11 countries** in response to a broad array of crises: COVID-19 (Bangladesh, Cambodia), situations of conflict and displacement (Colombia, DRC, Palestine, Myanmar), environmental degradation (Niger, a DC project), desert locust invasion (Ethiopia) and natural disasters (drought in Ethiopia, earthquake in Haiti, storms Eta and Iota in Honduras) and an industrial disaster (Port explosion in Beirut, Lebanon). These used different disbursement modalities such as direct cash, mobile money, bank checks, payments through banks and vouchers. While both unconditional and conditional cash approaches were applied, there has been a considerable shift towards unconditional cash in recent years. Unconditional cash transfers have proven to be a vehicle to **promote social cohesion between host and refugee communities**, whereby both participate in joint activities to improve the living conditions for both communities but have been used also in other situations. Some cash and voucher assistance did include some type of condition, mostly linked to cash for work activities serving community rehabilitation works, but also individual business plans. A few projects involved restrictions in the options participants had when using the money (for specific products, providers or activities).

Cash and voucher assistance in 2021

Bangladesh: **unconditional unrestricted cash** responding to the consequences of COVID-19 in Kurigram and Cox's Bazar. Some **conditional restricted cash** to assure specific business support to individuals.

Cambodia: **unconditional unrestricted cash** for garment and informal workers affected by the consequences of COVID-19.

Colombia: **unconditional restricted assistance (vouchers)** for people on the move coming from Venezuela.

DRC: **unconditional and conditional, unrestricted and restricted cash and voucher assistance** for people displaced by conflicts in the eastern part of the country.

Ethiopia: **unrestricted cash** responding to drought (**unconditional**) and desert locust invasion (**conditional**).

Haiti: Mostly **conditional unrestricted cash** for people affected by the earthquake in Grand'Anse. **Unconditional cash** for disabled people and **restricted cash** for parents to assure enrolment of their children.

Honduras: **conditional restricted cash** for people affected by storms Eta and Iota.

Lebanon: **unconditional unrestricted cash** for people affected by the 2020 explosion in Beirut.

Myanmar: **Conditional** – Cash for Work in Northern Shan with the aim to ensure food security.

Niger: **conditional unrestricted cash** for small-scale farmers affected by environmental degradation (DC Project)

Palestine: **unconditional unrestricted cash** for small-scale farmers and livestock breeders affected by the conflict in Gaza

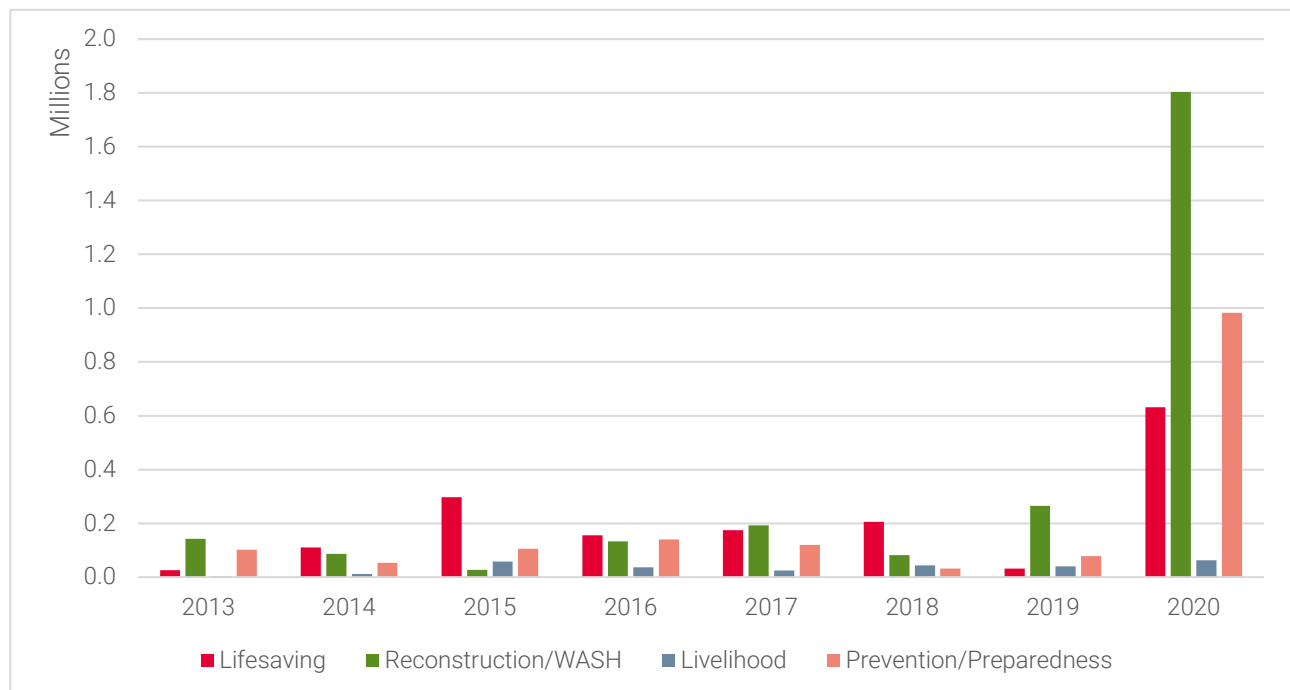
A quick but sound market analysis is required to decide on the appropriate cash method, if at all. It is often most effective to cleverly combine the cash approach with other activities and approaches and link it to pre-conditions. Cash programming offers fewer opportunities for fraud than in-kind distributions as procurement, transport and storage are not handled by the implementing organisation. HEKS/EPER has integrated post distribution monitoring (PDM) into its cash and voucher assistance, mainly, but not only, analysing what the money is used for by participants and what is their level of satisfaction and feedback.

HEKS/EPER is aware that cash programming does not replace working towards mutual accountability, participation and ownership as defined in the CHS. Having the right to choose goods freely does not automatically ensure ownership and decision power. Gender-sensitive cash programming remains a challenge, just as for in-kind distributions.

Achievements & Perspectives

Achievements in the past years

Between 2013 and 2020, HEKS/EPER assisted **5.5 million people** with **humanitarian assistance**. Thereof, **1.6 million** people benefited from **life-saving emergency activities**, including the distribution of food, NFI, WASH, and cash interventions. In addition, **278'000 people** were supported to restore their **livelihoods**, and **2.7 million** people benefitted from the **reconstruction** of their houses and 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 **1.6 million people** in the countries in which HEKS/EPER works.



HA data 2013-2020: Number of people reached through HEKS/EPER's humanitarian assistance. The high numbers in 2020 are related to the COVID-19 programming with comparatively low costs per person (like hygiene awareness or the rehabilitation of health centers in Bangladesh alone reaching out to almost 1.7 M people).

Achievements 2021

In 2021, HEKS/EPER reached with its **44 humanitarian projects** and a budget of **16.8 million CHF** directly **528'184** people. Indirectly, **4'475'560** individuals were reached, e.g. through rehabilitation of health infrastructure in a region (Bangladesh), rehabilitation of water and hygiene infrastructure (Uganda) or widespread hygiene education and COVID-19 prevention measures (Venezuela).

Humanitarian projects in 10 countries did cash programming. **27.2 % of the global HA** spendings were allocated this approach. Additionally – and not in the table – development projects in Niger also included cash components to support small-scale farmers affected by environmental degradation.

The newly introduced key indicator ‘satisfaction with assistance’ was piloted in 6 projects in Bangladesh with 1630 interviews of project participants, mostly linked to activities to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic. 88% of the people getting assistance in these projects were women. The assistance consisted of cash programmes and direct agricultural inputs, both mainly with the goal to ensure food security. 62% of the interview claimed to be very satisfied, 37 satisfied demonstrating the importance of the six projects to the communities. Yet, as only 3 persons out of all interviews claimed not to be satisfied, HEKS/EPER will critically review the quality of interviews to ensure there is no bias, and nevertheless to detect how we still can improve the quality of our activities.

Countries (16)	Project Participants		HA net expenses (CHF)	Cash Programming (CHF)
	direct	indirect		
Bangladesh	120'000	2'300'000	4,675,817	30%
Cambodia	50'000	0	691,400	40%
Colombia	600	1200	67,947	0%
DR Congo	112'500	460'000	4,602,104	14%
Ethiopia	28'800	65'450	829,754	40%
Haiti	57'500	38'000	839,415	30%
Honduras	8'300	0	705,266	50%
Individuals benefitting from 44 humanitarian projects in 16 countries in 2021; and Overview on HA net expenses and percentages of cash programming costs.				0
Lebanon	2271	0	1,499,835	100%
Myanmar	45'000	0	94,651	30%
Palestine	3'950	10'000	278,125	10%
Uganda/South Sudan	19'690	637'880	773,266 / 64,347	0
Serbia	160	30	14,451	0
Syria	9659	0	431,824	0
Venezuela	235'500	963'000	697,664	0
Other payments			97'962	0
total	528'184	4'475'560	16'803'725	4'564'178
				27.2 %

Perspectives

The humanitarian situation worldwide is constantly being monitored and preparedness measures are being taken to the extent possible. HEKS/EPER will respond to new major natural or man-made disasters in countries without yet more likely with its previous presence with ongoing humanitarian or development programmes. In March 2022, HEKS/EPER has started an important response following the war in Ukraine. A response is being implemented in Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Ukraine, Check Republic and in Switzerland. This will likely be HEKS/EPER's biggest humanitarian aid intervention in 2022.

In 2022, HEKS/EPER increases its presence in humanitarian networks on policy, advocacy and operational issues. Among the key topics currently identified among humanitarian actors worldwide and followed up by HEKS/EPER, the focus for our learning and engagement in 2022 will be on:

- Localization of aid in its programmes.
- Strengthening the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding triple nexus in its programmes.
- Quality and accountability of our programmes building on the CHS self-assessment.

This is HEKS/EPER

HEKS/EPER is the aid organization of the Swiss protestant churches and operates toward a more equitable and peaceful world with resilient communities, supporting in 2021 with 58 projects in Switzerland about 602'000 people, and with 163 projects in 28 countries 1.173 M people directly in economic and social need. The operating income of the whole organization has risen to 98.8 M CHF and expenditure to 89.2 M – of which 45.3 M were costs for the international programme.

In the Global Cooperation division, HEKS/EPER ameliorated with 13.8 M (net costs) spent on 93 development projects the life of 612'900 people focusing on access to land and resources, securing basic services, fostering sustainable production, and inclusive market systems. It promoted also the social inclusion of marginalized, inclusive governance structures and conflict transformation. About 10.1 M benefitted indirectly – e.g., through successful advocacy for new rights (e.g., to land, water, education, health) or de facto access to territories for big communities.

HEKS/EPER's humanitarian aid was supported with 16.3 M CHF 44 projects reaching directly 528'184 M people affected by conflicts and disasters, another 4.476 M were reached indirectly with campaigns of health prevention or rebuilt public infrastructure.

In the frame of Church Cooperation HEKS/EPER enabled with 2.1 M CHF social work of Reformed Churches in Eastern Europe and the Middle East reaching out with 22 projects to 32'000 people.

HEKS/EPER strives towards systemic change with its human rights-based approach, also promoting ownership, innovation, and the nexus between humanitarian aid and development activities. Together with competent partners and well-interconnected alliances HEKS/EPER fosters constant dialogue between civil society, private sector, and Government actors enabling people and communities to advocate for their needs and rights. The international divisions' conflict- and gender-sensitive programming is risk-informed and evidence-based. A proficient institutional governance framework allows effectiveness and transparency. In 2021, 166.3 staff members (full-time equivalent) worked for development offices, 140.4 for HA delegations – 30 FTE at HQ in Switzerland.


In Switzerland, HEKS/EPER supported with 29.7 M CHF 60 projects in 15 cantons disadvantaged people in becoming socially and economically integrated by promoting equal opportunity and assisting jobless people, refugees, and other individuals by providing day structures, legal advice, vocational training, language courses, dialogue platforms, etc.

Strategies, policies, guidelines, reports published on ID's Governance Website: https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance

Published by HEKS/EPER thematic advisory and MEL units, June 2022, Zürich (Switzerland)

HEKS/EPER

Headquarters +41 44 360 88 00
Seminarstrasse 28 info@heks.ch
P.O. Box heks.ch
CH-8042 Zürich IBAN CH37 0900 0000 8000 1115 1

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Direktion für Entwicklung
und Zusammenarbeit DEZA**

SWISS CHURCH AID is member of
actalliance

