

“DURABLE SOLUTIONS TO THE REFUGEE CRISIS”

**Evaluation of the Regional Development and Protection Programme
in Lebanon, Jordan and Northern Iraq**

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Overview of RDPP

- Multi-donor European initiative managed by Denmark
- Goals to assist the three countries to better understand, plan and mitigate the impact of forced displacement
- 41.6 million euros, running from July 2014 to June 2018
- Components on research, advocacy, protection and livelihoods
- As of June 2017 there were 33 projects being supported, run through a variety of partnerships
- Addressing both humanitarian and development needs
- Emphasis on the nexus and 'durable solutions'

Overview of the evaluation

- Conducted 3 years into the 4 year programme to inform a future phase
- Focus on outcomes and added value in relation to other initiatives and approaches
- Based on background analyses and field visits to Lebanon and Jordan during the Fall of 2017
- Methods emphasised contribution analysis and a ‘realist’ evaluation approach, recognising the broader context of humanitarian response and changing public policies

Programme-level results

- Strong results relate to:
 - Careful selection of partners
 - Close follow-up and dialogue, combined with foresight and commitments to ownership, i.e., a “thoughtful” approach
 - Trust and flexibility (in contrast to other modalities)
 - All of which foster readiness to innovate to address chronic issues
- Advocacy successful as an integral part of protection and in some cases livelihoods as well
- Gap filling is important in addressing the nexus, especially amid other narrowly restricted donor funding

Factors in ensuring relevance

- Recognition of the need to address and inform dynamic institutional change, rather than just undertaking service provision
- Focus on pertinence with regard to societal risks and cohesion
- Promising efforts to promote an informed dialogue on ‘durable solutions’
- Added value related to support for the ‘software’ of capacity development and sharing of knowledge
- Using evidence to contribute to policy dialogue where possible

Challenges

- Research should be an anchor for relevance, but it was challenging to put research into use –a clear theory of change for this process was lacking
- Despite a readiness to extend deadlines, the potential of RDPP to achieving its potential in supporting institutional change has been limited by attempting to reach developmental objectives within humanitarian timeframes –the ‘nexus’ can lead to unrealistic expectations
- Mixed results with regard to inclusion, affected by factors such as government policies and unclear ambition levels

Conclusions and lessons learnt

- RDPP is a largely effective and practical modality, but the qualities that underpin this success relate to trusting relations, foresight, flexibility and strategic gap-filling, rather than just the ‘nuts and bolts’ of the mechanism
- Linking research to advocacy and policy dialogue involves being savvy about how to position research, foster partnerships and provide voice for local researchers
- Small-scale programming can contribute to a more appropriate and informed dialogue on the ‘nexus’, but this is about learning and innovation –not just about scaling-up these small initiatives

Conclusions and lessons learnt

- Sustainability relates to space for capacity development, a process that transcends the narrow discourse on 'localisation'
- Genuine commitments to the nexus demand longer timeframes and empowered local partners
- 'Durable solutions' are likely to assume greater attention in the near future, both in the Syrian response and globally –RDPP exemplifies a cautious and constructive approach that can provide a basis for learning
- The RDPP model can and should be adapted for use elsewhere –but not simply replicated