ANNUAL REPORT 2017
ON THE ACTIVITIES, PROGRESS, IMPACT AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF SWISS CHURCH AID

ZURICH/LAUSANNE, APRIL 2018
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1 Summary

In 2017, HEKS/EPER and its local partner organisations implemented more than 200 projects in 33 countries for the benefit of around 945’000 individuals. Development cooperation (DC) projects reached 498’000 people in 21 countries, in the frame of humanitarian aid (HA) HEKS/EPER provided support in 14 countries for 422’000 people and with Church Cooperation HEKS/EPER was active for 25’000 people in 9 countries. Details per objective according the results framework see chapters 5 (DC), 6 (HA), 7 (CC). Reports per country and map see Appendix A.

This HIP annual report documents activities, progress and perspectives of the HEKS/EPER international division’s projects and programmes in 2017, the first year of the phase 2017–2020. It aims to support internal learning and steering decisions in order to improve effectiveness and relevance of all endeavours in favour of people and communities HEKS/EPER works with.

The overall volume of international programme spending increased from CHF 36.25 million in 2016 to CHF 42.4 million in 2017; including CHF 11.25 million for HA and 2.4 million for CC. Total ‘DC South’ project costs amounted to CHF 21 million, while ‘DC East’ project costs totalled CHF 6.3 million. In 2017, SDC contributed in total 26% of these costs; 29% in the previous year (detailed finance table see Chapter 9.5).

HEKS/EPER ID works mainly in fragile contexts, which involve risks such as lack of security, trust, and/or reliability and lack of progress, combined with difficulty in providing proof of impact. Nevertheless, and different to 2016, programme implementation according to the planning for 2017 was possible.

For the first time, the annual report is complemented by findings from our global digital key indicators system (more chapter 9.4), and by insights generated through ‘rigorous’ impact evaluations. The findings and learning promoted through these two innovative M&E approaches are important value additions to our global ‘evidence’ base. They help us better grasp projects and programmes in terms of what works and what not, and why, and to what extent.

Progress in development cooperation

In 2017, HEKS/EPER’s development cooperation (DC) projects and programme analysis focused on three thematic hallmarks, i.e. improved access to land; inclusive and efficient market systems; and empowered human rights-holders (chapter 5).

Regarding access to land, 41 projects in 12 countries have been supporting people and communities in securing their rights to access land through different approaches, as outlined in chapter 5.1.1. On one hand, key indicators data show that in most projects improved access to land has been observed, comprising 27’160 persons benefitting from 25’913 hectares land (use rights and/or transfer rights). In 2017, HEKS/EPER defined core demands specifying its call for access to land, which will contribute to sharpen HEKS/EPER’s specific institutional profile: i) Human Right to Land; ii) Promote and protect common land management; iii) Protection of people who stand up for their land rights.

Facilitating access to services (chapter 5.2) is a complex field of work as ‘basic services’ can be access to social assistance schemes, to education and vocational trainings, health care, private or governmental employment services (job mediation) or infrastructure such as electricity, water, roads, etc. The people receiving access to services through HEKS/EPER projects is almost four times higher than 2013, reaching 116’000 individuals in 2017.

In almost all countries HEKS/EPER is working, the livelihoods of local communities largely depend on agricultural production (chapter 5.3). Even though access to resources may have been successfully achieved farming conditions remain often difficult due to unfavourable conditions, lack of skills and low access to advisory services. Applying the HKI on agro-ecological production in 11 countries, HEKS/EPER stated that more than a ¼ of surface of supported farmers fulfil the set criteria of agroecological production practices, whereas conservation methods are applied by almost all of the producers, more than 80% apply measures to manage ecological relationships and nearly all monitored producers do not use GMO on their plots. 2/3 also fulfil the criteria non-use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

In rural areas, agriculture and small trade form the basis for work and income. HEKS/EPER projects and programmes promote an inclusive market system (chapter 5.4) development approach that strengthens the accountability of rural families and communities, and aims to upgrade value-chain governance for the benefit of producers and consumers. The approach aims at increasing the income of people and at market systems delivering products or services more efficiently for them. Based on data from 31 projects in 11
countries, about 55% of the targeted beneficiaries\(^1\) state that their income increased in the reporting period 2017 (41.8% medium increase and 12.7% massive increase), which is 8% points higher than the yearly target of 47%. 30% of the persons stating a positive change in their incomes explain this increase by more outputs; 20% by the increase of market prices. The additional income was used by 40% for consumption, about 35% made savings, 16% reinvested it and 5% used it for education purposes.

Concerning HEKS/EPER’s global objective to empower rights-holders, as part of a comprehensive human rights based approach, projects have been striving for strengthening the capabilities of people and communities to demand and use their rights. More details are outlined in chapter 5.6. To trace outcomes concerning empowerment focus is put on looking at changes in rights-holders regarding the level of self-awareness and awareness of rights, and related changes of attitude and behavior. In 2017, data from nine projects in six different countries indicate that about 90% of the nearly 700 claims made and/or approved are individual claims, and focusing on the subject access to land. In total, 61'497 beneficiaries were reached. In addition, longitudinal data at the individual level of rights-holders reveal that since 2016, out of a total of about 1'200 claims made by rights-holders, more than 400 claims got approved by duty-bearers.

With its two core topics rural development and conflict transformation HEKS/EPER identified a diapraxis approach to represent a particular organisational added value to improve inter- and intra-group relations (HIP DC goal 8: chapter 5.8). A joint goal and joint practical work are the means to enhance trust and having antagonistic groups living together in peace. This concept can be applied to counter conflicts within smaller communities as well as between broader identity groups. There are 36 projects in 12 countries focussing on this goal 8 out of which 17 states to make use of the diapraxis approach. Interesting but not

\(^1\) Based on a sample of 3'077 individuals.
surprising is the fact that the enthusiasm to apply the approach more broadly is quite high. Almost half of the countries felt that the approach should be applied throughout the programme.

To promote public commitment to peace (chapter 5.9) HEKS/EPER does focus on peace education in order to form a value base on peaceful living together and activate a critical mass to engage for peace. HEKS/EPER sensitizes on HRBA and on identifying key drivers of conflict to address them. During this first year, four countries and nine projects submitted their data showing that they facilitated 484 events addressing 11’197 rights-holders and 1’247 duty-bearers.

Progress in humanitarian aid
In 2017, HEKS/EPER projects in humanitarian aid (Chapter 6) were implemented in 14 different countries. Focus lay mainly in two regions of the world: East Africa and the Middle East. HEKS/EPER strengthened its response to the crisis in Syria and the neighboring countries opening a regional office in Amman to support the projects in Iraq, Lebanon and Syria. The focus on conflict-affected countries compelled us to pay a greater attention to conflict-sensitivity, one the cross-cutting aspect in all our projects. In the Philippines, HEKS/EPER handed over to the local authorities three schools with shelters, successfully concluding a four years post Haiyan intervention. In Haiti, the interventions following the 2016 cyclone Mathew continued but the shift towards a country programme focused on increasing the resilience of the population of Grand’Anse has started. Altogether, more than 422’000 people have benefitted from HEKS/EPER humanitarian aid projects in 2017.

Progress in church cooperation
In 2017, HEKS/EPER’s church cooperation (Chapter 7) enlarged after a pilot phase its operational area to the Middle East with new church partners in Syria and Lebanon. In its three main CC countries – Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania – HEKS/EPER works through coordinated country programmes with focus on social inclusion (Chapter 7.1) of the elderly, handicapped and minorities through projects providing home care, fostering inclusion of Roma or refugees, supporting the handicapped or projects protecting and counselling victims of domestic violence.

HRBA and the development power of civil society
A free and strong civil society is a prerequisite for sustainable economic development. Without co-determination and personal responsibility on the part of the population, the work of HEKS/EPER will have no long-term effect. In many HEKS/EPER project countries, however, the political participation of civil society is severely restricted – not least because of poor governance. Inefficient state structures and a lack of legal certainty make it difficult to demand fundamental rights and lead to a climate of mistrust that makes cooperation between civil society and local authorities impossible and fosters conflicts. In order to support the public in demanding their right to co-determination, HEKS/EPER promotes dialogue with the authorities. They are made aware of their duty to respect human rights and of the central importance of legal certainty and living democracy for economic development. More: chapter 4 and 5.6 (empowered rights-holders, accountable duty-bearers).

Managing the HEKS/EPER international programme
Chapter 8 outlines the Institutional evolution of HEKS/EPER and how it manages its programmes and projects. In 2017, the roll-out of the PCM with onsite training for all CO staff and M&E specialists of the POs were completed. In addition to building its global M&E plan for the HIP, ID has been investing heavily into building a global body of evidence, which is equally needed to be able to assess ID’s yearly global performance (Chapter 9.4).

Also, HEKS/EPER fully revised its Field Financial and Administrative Guidelines were brought to the country staff with several capacity building workshops in 2017. This policy does establish and maintain an administrative management system which facilitates an effective and economic utilisation of resources available to HEKS/EPER. It fosters an optimal internal control system promoting good governance. HEKS/EPER has zero tolerance against any misuse of power with policies and code of conducts addressing explicitly discrimination and bullying/mobbing, sexual harassment and exploitation, corruption, child protection, violation of national and international legislation. A whistleblowing reporting system has been set up and in each priority country an anti-corruption officer has been appointed.

Monitoring and evaluation – new digital data collection and impact studies
HEKS/EPER’s performance assessment is based on the triangulation between findings from annual country and project monitoring reports, evaluations, most-significant-change stories, knowledge sharing workshops
on various topics involving staff, partners and external stakeholders. For the first time, this is complemented by findings from our digital key indicators system (HKI), and by insights generated through ‘rigorous’ impact studies. The learning promoted through these innovative M&E approaches are important added value to our global evidence base. They help to better grasp projects and programmes in terms of what works and what not, and why, and to what extent. And they help to understand projects and programmes’ pathways of contribution to observed changes. Considering that scale of this comprehensive institutional process, the introduction of these two M&E approaches takes place gradually, with 2017 having been the transition year. By the end of 2018, our aim is that ¾ of our global project portfolio are fully integrated into our global performance assessment system. More info in chapter 9.4 and a detailed M&E performance chart 2017 with targets, results, appraisal and steering decision is documented in appendix D.

Challenges, opportunities and perspectives of international cooperation
In 2017, the HHQ team identified 11 key patterns (Chapter 11.2) emerging from and around HEKS/EPER’s international cooperation activities. HHQ analysed the five most relevant emerging patterns which may hamper or foster the implementation and the sustainability of projects and programmes and will continue to include them in its future activities:
- Being flexible – adapting strategy, programme and activities to the changing context.
- How to include business thinking in NGO logic.
- How to reach duty-bearers and how to facilitate dialogue?
- Promoting the systemic approach – advocacy for rights.
- Communication tools and strategies for development.
- Innovative approaches to enable access to land.
- Reaching out for the rights-holders and how to empower them?
- From emergency aid towards long-term development.
- A free strong civil society enables development.
- Income and employment for the marginalized and landless.
- Criticism and cost pressure targeting international cooperation.

The HIP annual report 2017 closes with the perspectives for 2018 onwards which are in line with the starting perspectives in the HIP 2017-2020 (Chapter 12).
2  Context of international cooperation related to HEKS/EPER’s activities

In 2017, HEKS/EPER launched its new international programme 2017–2020 (HIP). Key topics addressed such as human security, equal rights and prosperity cross border and require internationally coordinated commitments. In order to play an appropriate and relevant role in a world that is increasingly complex and multi-polar, HEKS/EPER continuously reflects on the international context, especially on how to contribute to the Agenda 2030, and adapts its strategy and implementation. The global trends HEKS/EPER refers to are summarised in this chapter.

FAO estimates, that ‘around 815 million people suffer from hunger with 489 million living in conflict countries. 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. Syria\(^2\) Iraq or South Sudan\(^3\) provide illustrative examples of conflict’s destructive impact on agriculture, food systems and poverty. \(^4\) 2017, world hunger has increased once again after declining for 15 years driven by conflicts and the impacts of climate change. The food security situation has worsened in particular in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, South-Eastern Asia and Western Asia, and deteriorations have been observed most notably in situations of conflict and conflict combined with droughts or floods.\(^5\)

Malnutrition affects almost one in three people on the planet. With overall 1.6 billion people living in multidimensional poverty, it remains a major challenge for the global community. Poverty strikes people in fragile contexts most heavily, with 72% of all poor people living there.

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.\(^6\) 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.\(^7\) HEKS/EPER therefore works in rural areas to fight poverty and hunger as well as to enhance food sovereignty and self-determination in inclusive sustainable agriculture supporting small-scale farmers in access to land, production and access to markets.

Worldwide, 663 million people have no access to safe drinking water and 2.4 million people have no access to proper sanitation.\(^8\) 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. Access to land and resources is likely to become increasingly disputed due to environmental stresses, degradation, demographic pressure, land grabbing, etc. (chapter 5.1.1). With natural resources diminishing and a third of the soil worldwide degraded and affected strongly by flood and drought,\(^9\) 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.

The FAO states that GDP growth originating in agriculture is at least twice as effective in reducing poverty as growth generated in non-agriculture sectors. Nevertheless, the promotion of non-agricultural activities and production cycles in rural and peri-urban areas remains important for diversifying income sources, creating employment and contributing to food security for families (small businesses, artisans or other service

\(^2\) FAO (2017): Formerly a vibrant middle-income economy, 85% of the population of Syria now live in poverty.

\(^3\) FAO (2017): In February 2017, more than 4.9 million people, over 42% of the population, were severely food insecure.


\(^7\) WFP (March 2016). Website: https://www.wfp.org/hunger/who-are


providers, which are important for a functioning society.\textsuperscript{10} Therefore, agricultural and development policies need to incorporate multi-functionality in rural areas into their actions and thinking.

**Inequality** with respect to the fulfilment of fundamental rights, discrimination and absolute economic inequality are on the rise and remains a key obstacle to enhancing sustainable livelihood opportunities. More than 75\% of households live in societies where income is more unequally distributed than in 1990.\textsuperscript{11} Since 2000, 50\% of the increase in global wealth benefited only the wealthiest 1\% of the world’s population. Conversely, the poorest 50\% of the world’s population received only 1% of the increase.\textsuperscript{12} Although there is evidence that some gains have been made in narrowing disparities in life expectancy, education and health, the need to enhance equality to foster lasting development has come to be recognised globally, as the SDGs\textsuperscript{13} show. Multiple sources of evidence indicate that discrimination remains a driver of exclusion in both developed and developing countries. Therefore, HEKS/EPER with its HIP continues to strive for equal rights (Chapter 3) with the human rights-based approach as the overarching approach for all programmes and projects (Chapter 4).

Over the past ten years, 0.7 million people have lost their lives, over 1.4 million have been injured and 23 million have been made homeless by disasters. **Risk exposure** is high, with more than 1.5 billion people having been affected in various ways. Disaster trends are increasing worldwide with more than one-third of the world’s poor living in multi-hazard zones. Climate change, limited land use, land degradation and lack of governance are risk drivers. Resilience building is key for any development. As such, HEKS/EPER will continue its strategy to mainstream resilience building in its DC and HA programmes to enable people and communities to withstand shocks and stresses related not only to environment or economy, but also to conflicts (Chapter 7.4).

**Climate Change** is real. With 330 Billion USD in losses, 2017 marks the second highest year on record regarding disaster loss. 97\% of loss events were being caused by extreme weather events. The floods in South Asia caused by prolonged monsoon rains (2700 people killed), the four consecutive hurricanes: Harvey, Irma, Jose and Maria all category 4 and 5 which devastated the Caribbean and the US (costliest hurricane season on record with 215bn USD loss) or renewed drought in Australia or renewed drought in Australia and the ones captured by media attention, not to mention all the small-scale events such as more localized floods, landslides or drought. Even though individual events cannot be directly traced to climate change, experts expect such extreme weather to occur more often in future, as air and sea temperature are rising constantly (currently approx. 1 degree warming on global average). The reinsurer MunichRe therefore states that ‘2017 gives a foretaste of what to expect in the future’.\textsuperscript{14} Impacts are forcefully felt by the most vulnerable.

Of the people living in poverty, 70\% are female and are hit harder by social, economic and political inequalities, often facing discrimination and violence. Women often work informally and are unpaid. Most relevant for HEKS/EPER, working with rural communities and duty-bearers, is for example the lack of female participation in communities as well as in regional and national decision-making bodies. Therefore, working on gender equality remains key when aiming for prosperity and equal rights for ‘all’ (see chapter 8.1).

Inequalities and disenfranchisement weaken social cohesion and security, encourage inequitable access to land, services and resources, and hamper sustainable development and peaceful societies. Social fragmentation, political unrest, extremism, insecurity, armed conflicts and even risk exposure are ‘fostered’ by inequalities, often combined with a lack of good governance. Therefore, HEKS/EPER notes that it is increasingly challenging for NGOs and CSOs to promote peace and human rights. Conflicts, criminality and governments introducing restrictive laws shrink the space for civil society and its organisations (chapter 5.5). Democracy and rule of law is at stake – not only in LICs and MICs, but also in developed or ‘Western’ countries in the wake of ‘combating terrorism’ and the rise of right-wing populism and autocratic regimes. Amnesty International stated in its annual report for 2017 that it ‘saw a record numbers of individuals come

\textsuperscript{13} See SDG no. 10.
under attack for taking a stand against injustice, with more than 312 killings recorded in 2017, up from 281 the year before”.

The global trend of shrinking space for civil society action has increasingly become one of the key obstacles to implementing development or humanitarian aid projects. There is a risk of weakening the influence of civil society and democratic decision-making. The role of civil society is disputed by new and more restrictive laws, including NGO regulations, which shrink the manoeuvring room for local communities and community-based organisations. This is in spite of the fact that the international community has recognised CSOs as development actors in their own right. They act as a catalyst for social progress and economic growth. They play a critical role in keeping governments accountable and help to represent the diverse interests of the population, including its most vulnerable groups. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acknowledges the role of civil society in implementing the SDGs in several paragraphs.

The links between achieving sustainable and equitable development and the principles of good governance is gaining some acceptance with the introduction of goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies and accountable and transparent institutions in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. However, the intrinsic value of civic freedoms (i.e. freedoms of expression, assembly and association), as part of this agenda is very weakly embedded. This is despite the fact that the Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda called not only for ‘a fundamental shift – to recognize peace and good governance as core elements of well-being’ but specifically that ‘responsive and legitimate institutions should also encourage freedom of speech and the media, open political choice, access to justice, accountable government and public institutions’. There remains thus the risk that these important civic freedoms will receive less importance in a sustainable development agenda if more attention is not given to researching the value of these freedoms, particularly in the long-term, for ensuring success, stability and sustainability of both development efforts and national and foreign investment for these purposes. As has been seen with the inequality agenda in recent years, understanding and researching some of the more instrumental and economic arguments for upholding these universal values might assist in broadening levels of support among other actors.

To counter these trends, a broad reaffirmation of human rights is urgently needed. Governments founded on human rights are better placed to hear their citizens and recognise and address their problems. HEKS/EPER, being a civil society organisation, seeks to cooperate with civil society actors and partners to implement its programmes and projects. HEKS/EPER is certain that INGOs representing civil society and working with local civil society organisations promoting dialogue between duty-bearers and rights-holders are an asset for conflict transformation, the protection of human rights and human rights defenders.

The lack of economic and social prospects – combined in many contexts – and violent conflicts lead to internal (urban-rural) and international migration. Currently, 65 million people are refugees or displaced people – the most since the Second World War. Of these, 86% are hosted in developing countries, which is an additional burden. In addition, many more people seek to gain individual and/or economic security abroad due to poverty and limited prospects in their countries.

In Syria, over half of the population has been forced from their homes, and many people have been displaced multiple times. 1.5 million displacements took place from affected areas of northern and southern Syria, in 2017 only. More than 5.6 million Syrian refugees are in five countries: Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. The number of people displaced within Syria is estimated to be up to 8.7 million by the end of 2016. According to OCHA, 13.1 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria, including close to 3 million people in need trapped in besieged and hard-to-reach areas, where they are exposed to grave protection threats. HEKS/EPER increases its endeavours in the Middle East with actions in humanitarian aid, but also church cooperation.

The civil war in South Sudan with millions of displaced within the country and 1 million fleeing to Uganda and another 1.4 million to Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia and Kenya. It led to 7.1 million people in South Sudan

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heading towards severe food insecurity. In 2017, HEKS/EPER shifted towards humanitarian activities in both countries, South Sudan and Uganda.

**International aid landscape and HEKS/EPER**

A **changing aid landscape** sees a structural shift in the organisation and the use of economic and political power. The rise of emerging economies and the new role of the private sector results in countries or businesses becoming stronger actors in development cooperation. They pursue their own political and economic interests and new approaches, with not all of them working according to the principles of human and international rights. But in a world, that is increasingly socio-politically and economically interlinked, and with challenges not only being restricted to local areas but being influenced and influencing contexts abroad, only joint efforts can tackle challenges.

A landmark was the **Paris Climate Agreement** with the aim of keeping global warming under 1.5 degrees. At the **UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn** (2017) the 197 Parties achieved not real progress on implementing the Paris Agreement. At least, the Talanoa Dialogue aims to encourage the international community over the coming year to take more ambitious action to close the global climate mitigation gap. More momentum was celebrated outside negotiations: The #WeAreStillIn campaign including the ‘American Pledge Report’ of US governors, mayors, economic leaders and many others proofed that the Paris spirit is alive in the US, despite the Governments exit. At the same time, more than 300 cities and regions launched the ‘Bonn-Fiji-Commitment’ at a climate summit of local and regional leaders.

**2.1 Agenda 2030 – SDGs**

In September 2015, the UN countries agreed on the **2030 agenda for sustainable development (SDGs)**. This agenda came into effect in 2016 and will address the most burning issues to improve the situation of human beings globally.

Based on analysis of its programmes and the contexts HEKS/EPER is working in, the sustainable development goals and targets have to be understood as a non-dividable overall intervention strategy. This mind-set was reflected in HEKS/EPER’s former international programme, and is also reflected in the new programme for 2017–20. It seeks to create internal synergies between its three sections – DC, HA and CC – and

![Figure 1: HEKS/EPER contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and the corresponding targets.](image)

**Blue:** SDGs and targets HEKS/EPER contributes towards.

**Dark blue:** SDGs HEKS/EPER has a specific focus according to its ToC/objective framework (contribution to more than half of the corresponding targets of a SDG).

**White:** SDGs/targets HEKS/EPER has no substantial contribution to.
promotes a holistic and systemic perspective in order to contribute to the equal rights and prosperity of people and communities despite shocks and stresses. Within the SDG framework, Figure 1 (previous page) shows the interconnectedness of the SDGs and the corresponding targets, and which SDGs and targets HEKS/EPER contributes towards.

Switzerland’s contribution to the SDGs

The Swiss Government emphasizes that ‘the SDGs are to be achieved around the world, and by all UN member states, by 2030. This means that all states are called upon equally to play their part to contribute. Switzerland is also required to implement the Goals on a national basis. In addition, incentives are to be created to encourage non-governmental actors to make an increasingly active contribution to sustainable development.’

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. They had the opportunity to demonstrate their contribution to achieving the SDGs and to comment on the government’s priorities. The results of the consultation serve as a basis for Switzerland’s first Country Report 2018 for the attention of the UN and as an orientation for the further implementation of Agenda 2030. HEKS/EPER also took part in the consultation and intends to contribute to the SDG as an overall institution at both national and regional level.

Switzerland had been very active in formulating the ambitious goals of the agenda 2030, but the real progress to implement those actively in Switzerland is neglectable. In order to emphasize the importance of the SDGs 40 Swiss organizations, amongst them HEKS/EPER, formed in 2017 the ‘Civil Society Platform Agenda 2030 for sustainable Development’. The platform, based at the alliance sud office, shall elaborate and Switzerland is also required to implement the Goals on a national basis. In addition, incentives are to be created to encourage non-governmental actors to make an increasingly active contribution to sustainable development.’

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Key SDGs HEKS/EPER is contributing towards

In the frame of the consultation and in coordination with civil society platform, HEKS/EPER defined the five most important goals it strives to contribute towards in the coming year on international and Swiss level.

Goal 1.4

By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

- **Goals HEKS/EPER:** Practical and legal access to land and resources and their sustainable use as well as secure access to services (infrastructure, education, social security, etc.) are key objectives of the HEKS/EPER foreign strategy in order to promote economic prosperity and food security. HEKS/EPER strengthens small farmers and producers in rural areas in land law (individual land titles as well as land used collectively), production, market access and helps to resolve land conflicts.

- **Contribution HEKS/EPER:** Between 2009 and 2017 HEKS/EPER enabled access to land for more than ½ million individuals – 2017, 12 countries worldwide, 41 projects were dealing to various degrees and with different approaches with the topic of access to land. In addition, HEKS/EPER is working to ensure that land can be used profitably for the rural population with measures for sustainable agro-ecological production and market access. HEKS/EPER is involved in global processes such as the VGGT, the introduction of the UN declaration for Peasants’ Rights or the Global Convergence on Land & Water Struggles.

Goal 2.3

By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

- **Goals HEKS/EPER:** HEKS/EPER is committed to the prosperity and quality of life of the rural population – especially small farmers and marginalised people through secure access to land, resources, inputs and infrastructures. It promotes know-how in agro-ecological production techniques and advocates product diversity in order to minimize environmental and market risks. HEKS/EPER strengthens the market knowledge of smallholder families and promotes fair market systems, among other things by mediating between producing companies and customers.
• **Contribution HEKS:** More than 100 HEKS/EPER projects contribute to improved agricultural production and higher income from smallholder households – including access to and protection of land/resources, improved production, access to locally adapted seeds. Improved access to the market system is promoted in 53 projects through M4P, value chains for those affected by poverty, access to institutional and international markets, certification, inclusion of marginalised people.

**Goal 4.5**

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

• **Goals HEKS/EPER:** HEKS/EPER is working in Switzerland through projects and campaigns to ensure that socially and economically disadvantaged people (including migrants, people with a deep educational background, discriminated groups) have access to education, work, state offers and services and also to the labour market. Abroad, HEKS/EPER strengthens marginalised people so that they have access to public services such as education and offers practical vocational training and after-school classes.

• **Contribution HEKS/EPER:** HEKS/EPER offers various educational courses for the socially disadvantaged in Switzerland. HEKS/EPER provides foreign-language parents with knowledge for the targeted promotion of their children in preparation for school entry. HEKS/EPER also supports young people looking for an apprenticeship. Qualified migrants from third countries receive support in HEKS/EPER projects in order to better contribute their professional skills to the Swiss labour market.

**Goal 10.3**

Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

• **Goals HEKS/EPER:** In the HEKS/EPER strategy, the social integration of disadvantaged population groups – alongside the advocacy of the socially disadvantaged – is one of the two thematic priorities of domestic work. The focus is on the social integration of disadvantaged people and minorities. HEKS/EPER is also committed to ensuring that even the most vulnerable population groups can actively demand and realise their rights in its foreign strategy.

• **Contribution HEKS/EPER:** Swiss Church Aid is politically (consultations, position papers, etc.) and socially (programmes and projects) committed to inclusive participation of all people in society. In Switzerland, HEKS/EPER focuses its work on the following topics: Work integration, access to justice, housing, language and everyday knowledge, intercultural interpreting and mediation, early support for children and parental education, age and migration. HEKS/EPER also runs an advisory centre against discrimination.

**Goal 16.3**

Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

• **Goals HEKS/EPER:** With its human rights-based approach, HEKS/EPER aims at sustainable changes in inequalities and the fight against violations of rights. International law, international agreements and the national/local legal framework form the guideline. Compliance with human rights standards – such as participation, accountability and representation of interests, equality and non-discrimination – are objectives of HEKS/EPER and are integrated as a method in all phases of the programme process.

• **Contribution HEKS/EPER:** In 33 countries (2017) HEKS/EPER networks people and grassroots organisations who are peacefully committed to codetermination and rights. HEKS/EPER educates local people about their rights and promotes dialogue between the population, government and business at local, national and international level. In Switzerland, HEKS/EPER contributes to equal access to justice for all people through its legal advice centres for asylum seekers, among other things.
3 The HEKS/EPER International Programme

According to the foundations’ statute, HEKS/EPER has the mandate to act on behalf of the Protestant churches of Switzerland. It is the Assembly of Delegates of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (FSPC) which 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 the principles of universal human rights and it is also reflected in basic Christian values.’19 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 be able to live a life in dignity and of 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 from outside aid. This is why schemes and projects are developed in a spirit of partnership and run in liaison with those affected.’

3.1 Theories of change

The year 2017 marks the first year of the HEKS/EPER International Programme 2017–2020, elaborated during 2016. Building on the strengths of the International Programme 2013–2017, HEKS/EPER adapted and supplemented its strategy gradually by refining objectives, approaches and principles more specifically. Both the adaptations and continuations are based upon learning from promising practices, evaluations, progress monitoring, but also from experiences gained from failures and challenges and assessing the fast-changing context documented in the appendix of the HIP 2017–2020. The programme document serves as a guideline for the HEKS/EPER International Department in Switzerland and abroad as well as for its partner organisations. Furthermore, it is ‘strategy statement’ for the SEK, 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 operates in three sections, development cooperation (DC), humanitarian aid (HA) and church cooperation (CC). In 2017, HEKS/EPER and its local partner organisations implemented 207 projects in 33 countries. Figure 3 allows to get an overview on 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 as well as 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. *(progress 2017, chapter 5)*

- **Humanitarian aid (HA):** HEKS/EPER’s humanitarian aid saves lives, alleviates suffering, restores livelihoods and rehabilitates infrastructure by providing and improving access to live-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. *(progress 2017, chapter 6)*

- **Church cooperation (CC):** The contribution of reformed churches to their societies is recognised as relevant. *(progress 2017, chapter 7)*

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

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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 check lists 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 the programmatic steering, using tools to monitor, learn and steer in order 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 2017 with its approach to act 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, rural families organised in locally rooted organisations of civil society such as CBOs, associations and producer groups. Implementing partners are local or national NGOs or lobbying platforms and networks. If there is no specific qualified partner organisation present in the programme region, HEKS/EPER can act as a self-implementer through a project implementation unit (PIU), as it is the case in a few priority countries.
Figure 2: HEKS/EPER’s results framework of the HIP 2017–2020 for the activities in development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Development cooperation (DC)</th>
<th>Humanitarian aid (HA)</th>
<th>Church cooperation (CC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ToCs</td>
<td><strong>Equal rights &amp; prosperity</strong> despite shocks and stresses</td>
<td><strong>Life saving, recovery, preparedness &amp; prevention</strong></td>
<td><strong>Contribution of reformed churches to their societies is recognized as relevant</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Human rights-based approach**

**Cross-cutting issues**

**Resilience building / Gender / Conflict sensitivity**

**Principles**

**Programmatic objectives**

**Development of rural communities**

**Access to land, resources, services**
1. Secured access to land and resources.
2. Secured access to basic services.

**Production & market systems**
3. Sustainable agricultural production.
4. Inclusive & efficient market systems.

**Civil society & governance**
5. Enhanced security & space for civil society.
7. Inclusion & participatory governance structures.

**Living together in peace**
8. Improved intra- & inter-group relations.

1. **Life saving through access to water, food, shelter, sanitation.**
2. **Rehabilitated livelihood opportunities.**
3. **Reconstructed public and private infrastructure.**
4. **Increased prevention and preparedness.**

**Institutional objectives**

1. The impact of HEKS/EPER interventions on access to land, territories and resources gained acknowledgement in the development sector and public visibility.

2. International division programme work is relevant, effective and implemented professionally.
3.2 Approaches and perspectives

HEKS/EPER works with a holistic and systemic perspective as well as the human rights-based approach, which shall foster dialogue between duty-bearers and rights-holders as well as 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 leads to impacts on large numbers of people, either in their attitudes and values, material conditions, behaviour or access to information, services and products. Systems analysis which examines social, political and economic value systems, the diversity of different groups of stakeholders with different attitudes, interests and behaviours as well as their relationships, provides important entry points for interventions in terms of possible paths and channels to change the system. HEKS/EPER is in constant search for 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). In order 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 physically attacked. This is a precondition for empowering rights-holders and holding duty-bearers accountable. (More on HRBA, see chapter 4.)

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 not only means making use of the synergies between the thematic fields of action but also 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 which entails commitment and public attitude of striving for equal rights and living together in peace provides a backing for vulnerable groups to claim rights and the motivation of duty-bearers to stick to their responsibilities of fulfilling rights in a mutual constructive dialogue enabling inclusive and participatory governance structures.

3.3 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.

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 elderly 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.
4 Human rights-based approach

HEKS-EPER started to apply the human rights-based approach (HRBA) in 2005 and elaborated till 2011 its own rights-based strategy learning from its longstanding practical experience and became a cross-cutting mainstreaming topic. With the current strategic phase 2017–2020 HRBA became the overarching approach for all international HEKS/EPER projects and programmes. 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. Working with human rights as a base, HEKS/EPER aims to achieve more sustainable and systemic development changes by analysing and addressing violations of rights, inequalities and unjust power relations.

In 2017, HEKS/EPER thematic services aimed at capitalizing the years of experience to extract lessons learned, successes, challenges that have been accumulated over the last 6 years. The in-depth experience capitalization has been carried out including the knowledge of partner and network organizations, country offices, the HEKS/EPER conflict transformation advisory group and HHQ staff. Interviews have been done in all HEKS/EPER priority countries. In-depth ‘promising practice’ documentations have been done in Bangladesh, Kosovo, Zimbabwe, Israel/Palestine and Honduras. The aim was to learn from these experiences and practices and to elaborate perspectives for the future of HEKS/EPER’s activities.

Promising practices on HRBA

- Empowered rights-holders in the marginalized communities, although not all the people that we work with have been ready to stand up to duty-bearers and make demands, there are numerous examples from Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Kosovo, Philippines, among others where one can state that the people of our concern are aware of their rights, have been empowered and made legitimate claims.
- Calling duty-bearers into account in terms of sharing costs on projects, a concept which also ensures ownership. This was particularly clear in Kosovo, where the Scholarship Fund for the Roma was not only institutionalized but there was also commitment from the government to continue funding this scheme.
- Access to land improved. For example, the reimbursement of land fees in the Philippines to PooC that had been forced to pay rents for land that they owned or the return of up to 8 hectares of land in Bangladesh.
- Increase in the ability to network with like-minded organizations. The clustering of NGOs in Israel/Palestine as well as in Honduras have been useful for increasing the reach of HEKS/EPER’s constituencies advocacy goals.
- Changes in mindsets and behaviour – reconstruction of relationships. This takes time until a whole society has been transformed but what remains important is that HEKS/EPER has been able to contribute towards building bridges between the rights-holders and duty-bearers.
- Policy change at a state level was the case in Brazil, India and the Philippines.
- In Kosovo, the Roma Inclusion Strategy was established – recognized on Municipal level and funds for it provided by the state.

Limiting factors and challenges

- In countries like Ethiopia where the topic of human rights is forbidden and in countries like South Sudan in which due to the dominance of service delivery thoughts on HRBA where neglected. There is thus a need to clarify how this concept can be worked with in such contexts, considering the security implications.
- Tense political atmospheres – Failed states and authoritarian states. It is important to make the separation between states where no structures stand, where it is not clear who the duty-bearers are and the states where it is very difficult to approach the duty-bearers.
• Shrinking space for civil society – assumption that NGOs are opposition. Because NGOs in many cases advocate for accountability and change, they become unpopular with governments and speaking of human rights can in a number of countries lead to being blacklisted as NGO. The world looks a lot different today than it did 10 years ago and the space has significantly shrunk; see chapter 5.5 for more details on that.
• Mindset – lack of trust in government systems – mistrust in the societies. There are 2 levels of trust, the first is that people do not trust politicians and find it pointless to ask them for support as for example in Honduras. The second level would be in the societies, for example in Cambodia or Zimbabwe where past atrocities are not dealt with or even tabooed and still cause tensions.
• Legal illiteracy – interpretation of laws is difficult when not translated into simpler language
• Accessing duty-bearers – What is in it for them? – Lack of political will. In many cases HEKS/EPER encounters duty-bearers that are not interested in the concerns of the people of our concern and motivating them to act can prove difficult when there is no direct benefit for them.
• NGOs with different approaches also working with the people of our concern – not speaking with one voice. This can lead to contradictory efforts for example, HEKS/EPER working to ensure that the government takes responsibility of education projects in Kosovo while other NGOs would like to ensure that they remain able to financially support the projects.

Lessons learned
• HRBA can be a very useful entry point as it provides structure to projects as seen among other with Israel/Palestine, Zimbabwe, Honduras.
• Specific guidelines are good for calibrating principles and courses of action as well as for defining the target groups and those responsible. With the HEKS/EPER HRBA implementation concept, practitioners have the guidance that they require for approaching duty-bearers and rights-holders.
• The tool kits developed by HEKS/EPER and the gender inclusive HRBA toolkit developed together with ACT alliance are excellent resources to develop an adopted country specific approach.
• Ensuring that the local office is well equipped is key for adapting the concept to local contexts – one can only work with rights-holders as far as they understand what you are talking about and even more so, as far as the staff of HEKS/EPER offices understand.
• Operate on different political levels and parties in case power shifts – HEKS/EPER should always make sure to be and to be perceived as, as nonpartisan, neutral party and a bridge builder.
• Not to give up the fight even when the context is difficult, eventually a window of opportunity opens and when it does, we should be ready to act on it. Actualized context and conflict sensitivity analysis are crucial to detect new entry points, especially in dynamic contexts.
• Grounding trainings in the laws of the country is of high importance as it addresses the notion of it being a foreign imposed concept. Bearing in mind that international law is the starting point, links to the national law can be established and this provides space to act as for example the work in Zimbabwe proved very well.
• Informal exchanges with duty-bearers beneficial, not always in spectrums where they are in a defensive stance provides for good space to create relationships and enquire on issues that would otherwise have no space for discussion.
• It is important to train both the duty-bearers and rights-holders to ensure understanding of rights and obligations from both sides.

Recommendations
• It is important that we as HEKS/EPER monitor our own accountability as well as monitor accountability of duty-bearers.
• Continue and foster exchange on challenges and successes of HRBA on practical level in CT Advisory Group and other exchange platforms.
• More efforts should be put in trust building between duty-bearers and rights-holders to bridge the mistrust gap.
• Religious leaders (churches, mosques among others) should be used as facilitators that can apply soft pressure to governments.
• When working with duty-bearers, it is of added value to identify those that are motivated and using their momentum to gain more on board.
• Through context analyses, we can identify key actors that would have influence then approaching them for possible collaborated efforts.
• There is a need to foster more peer to peer exchange within HEKS/EPER for the sake of exchanging on the different experiences and challenges that are faced in the field, that we may capitalize on the existing experiences.

4.1 Perspectives on HRBA
The results of the experience capitalisation were introduced and discussed with great interest during the IDF 2017 (see also chapter 9.4.1).

It was concluded that the institutionalisation of the human rights-based approach (HRBA) has helped to implement the concept and made it easier since there was clarity. There was good shift ever since the implementation concept has been introduced towards also focussing on duty-bearers and holding the accountable. It was observed, that as soon as people of our concern where elevated by knowing their right and gaining self-esteem their participation increased, and legitimate demands increased.

For future application the most important methods to empower rights-holders were subsumed to be information sharing, trainings and workshops in local languages, capacity building of NGOs working in the same area, creation of self-help groups, lawyers accompanying rights-holders to advocate for their rights, use of media to raise awareness. It was stated that a comprehensive capacity building with frequent follow up and tutoring is key.

To approach duty-bearers the following strategies where emphasised: leveraging the constitution in trainings and workshops, peaceful demonstration and meeting stakeholders in the presence of higher powers, political games → charming of politicians, building bridges with mainstream organizations, putting stereotypes against duty-bearers in question, using media more broadly including social media as an advocacy platform.

In the discussion the challenges in particular tense political atmospheres, shrinking space for civil society, lack of trust in government systems, accessing duty-bearers, security frequently came up. It became also clear how difficult it was to include the voice of marginalised in multi-stakeholder initiative due to underlying power dynamics.

It was suggested that local offices shall be well equipped on knowledge about HRBA and there should be an advisor in charge in each office. Country programmes shall operate on different political levels (in case of power shifts. Trainings have to be grounded in the laws of the country and in international law. Informal exchanges with duty-bearers in unofficial less politically charged spectrums is beneficial. Context analyses including power analysis shall be as the basis for marking where to intervene. Partners shall be well versed with the legal framework policies and language of the field.

Discussion further revealed that some of the HEKS/EPER offices are more aware that the implementation of the HRBA is mandatory and that there are minimal standards than others. In humanitarian aid, the HRBA approach is not applied systematically. For example, templates of other back donors do not include HRBA, as it is not a transversal theme. Therefore, it was suggested to develop minimum standards for humanitarian aid. Furthermore, it shall be more clearly defined what it means that HRBA has been lifted to an overarching approach for our work.
5 Progress in development cooperation

This chapter outlines the main progress and changes observed in 2017, and how HEKS/EPER contributed to them. Global progress and change assessment is made against the four operational areas and 9 objectives outlined in development cooperation’s results framework. The assessment is primarily based on the triangulation between findings from country and project monitoring reports, and evaluations as well as learnings from knowledge sharing workshops on various topics involving partners and external stakeholders.

For the first time, this is complemented by findings from our global digital key indicators system (more chapter 9.4), and by insights generated through ‘rigorous’ impact evaluations. The findings and learning promoted through these two innovative M&E approaches are important value additions to our global ‘evidence’ base. They help us better grasp projects and programmes in terms of what works and what not, and why, and to what extent.

In 2017, HEKS/EPER’s projects and programme analysis focused on three thematic hallmarks, i.e. improved access to land; inclusive and efficient market systems; and empowered human rights-holders.

Access to land

Regarding access to land, 41 projects in 12 countries have been supporting people and communities in securing their rights to access land through different approaches, as outlined in chapter 5.1.1. On one hand, key indicators data show that in most projects improved access to land has been observed, comprising 27’160 persons benefitting from 25’913 hectares land (use rights and/or transfer rights). In addition, there is ‘evidence’ that such changes are largely the result of projects’ direct influence. In Senegal, for instance, without projects’ promotion of people’s participation in the formulation of suggestions to be included in the land reform policy document, most likely these suggestions would have never found their way into the land policy. And in Israel/Palestine, to mention but another example, the motivation and capacity and initiatives of project beneficiaries (34%) to claim their land rights would likely be less, as compared to the people (24%) living outside project areas.

Niger: Scarce landscape in rural Maradi region.
On another hand, when it comes to analysing the above findings through a performance lens, i.e. the question of the extent the projects were effective and impactful, key indicators data show a mixed scenario. This is indicated by comparing planned target values with achieved values. From the globally targeted 49’714 individuals supposed to benefit from expected 19’297 hectares land, only 27’160 persons could benefit from 25’913 hectares. Despite overperformance in terms of hectares land, there is room for improvement when it comes to reaching beneficiaries, since this is what counts at the end of the day.

Inclusive market

In terms of inclusive and efficient market systems, HEKS/EPER has been aiming, among other things, at increasing peoples’ incomes. Accordingly, more than 125’000 producers in 14 countries, as described in detail in chapter 5.4, were supported for example through the promotion of value chains and sustainable agriculture. Similar to the topic access to land, the data from digital key indicators and impact studies show a tendentially positive scenario in terms of beneficiaries’ increased incomes. In addition, performance has been relatively high and consistent. This is indicated by data from 31 projects in 11 countries: about 55% of the 54’408 targeted beneficiaries state that their income increased during the reporting period, which is 8% higher than the yearly target of 47%.

When it comes to projects’ pathways of contribution, however, the collected ‘evidence’ reveals a mixed picture. For instance, in Bangladesh the increase in income of 84% of the beneficiaries through bull-fattening is directly attributable to HEKS/EPER support. In contrast, only 19% of their peers, i.e. those who were not favoured by HEKS/EPER interventions, were able to increase their income. Findings from an impact study in Kosovo, however, indicate that there is no evidence of overall impact from different types of educational and vocational skills training provided, with no overall improvement in beneficiaries’ socio-economic status and their competitiveness in the job market. Considering the complex and dynamic nature of contexts projects interact with, these mixed findings underline the importance of regularly testing one’s own assumptions, especially the one that projects contribute positively and directly to sought changes.

Empowered rights-holders & accountable duty-bearers

Concerning HEKS/EPER’s global objective to empower rights-holders, as part of a comprehensive human rights based approach, projects have been striving for strengthening the capabilities of people and communities to demand and use their rights. More details are outlined in chapter 5.6. To trace outcomes concerning empowerment focus is put on looking at changes in rights-holders regarding the level of self-awareness and awareness of rights, and related changes of attitude and behavior. These questions capture often a lengthy process from early reflection towards fighting and claiming for one’s rights.

In this sense, global key indicators of progress and changes include, for instance, access to number of basic services, and numbers of claims made and/or accepted. In 2017, 116’376 people of marginalized minorities such as Roma in Eastern Europe, Dalits and Adivasi in India and Bangladesh, benefitted from improved access public services, especially related to social assistance, followed by education and health. Concerning claims, the data from nine projects in six different countries indicate that about 90% of the nearly 700 claims made and/or approved are individual claims, and focusing on the subject access to land. In total, 61’497 beneficiaries were reached. In addition, longitudinal data at the individual level of rights-holders reveal that since 2016, out of a total of about 1’200 claims made by rights-holders, more than 400 claims got approved by duty-bearers.

Findings from several impact studies reveal indications that projects play a role in directly contributing to empowered rights-holders through facilitating access to basic services and claiming rights. Jointly, projects in Senegal were able to facilitate the documentation and approval of 200 land rights claims on the part of duty-holders as a result of trained and motivated rights-holders aware of the importance of making land rights claims. And the findings in Palestine/Israel generally indicate that the target communities throughout the last project phase have already taken multiple land rights claiming actions, and a fraction of those likely having been instigated directly by HEKS/EPER project interventions.
5.1 Access to land and resources

5.1.1 Access to land

Securing land and resource rights is key to eliminating poverty, strengthening food security, reducing inequality and conflict, advancing gender equality, and conserving biodiversity and ecosystems. Rural communities with secure tenure rights together with a sustainable management of the natural resources help create more resilient landscapes that directly contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In addition, the right to use, manage, and exclude others from a given natural resource asset has powerful implications for communities, governments, and private actors alike. By defining who owns and who controls a given resource, property rights and tenure systems ultimately determine who benefits and what benefits they are able to access. However, cases of conflict between local communities and more powerful actors are pervasive, and illustrate in many of HEKS/EPER countries the negative consequences of insecure community tenure rights for all involved, including for natural resource systems themselves.

With the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) in 2012 food security cannot be achieved without tenure security. Without secured rights to the lands and resources communities depend on for their livelihoods, their food sources – be it from agriculture or from wild gathering – will stay constrained. Over 80 percent of the food consumed in the developing world is produced locally by some 475 million smallholder farms, involving the contributions of over 2 billion rural people.

HEKS/EPER’s call for access to land – three core demands

In 2017, HEKS/EPER defined core demands specifying its call for access to land, which will contribute to sharpen HEKS/EPER’s specific institutional profile on the topic, give conceptual guidance and will also help to communicate on the achievements and major findings of its interventions in the field of access to land:

**Promote the Right to Land**

HEKS/EPER requests that the right of every person or community to access, use and manage these resources are respected, protected and fulfilled. Land is the base to fulfil the right to food and food sovereignty. Land must serve the nutrition, the way of living and the cultural identity of local communities.

**Enable Common Land Use**

HEKS/EPER is convinced that community-organised forms of management lead to sustainable use and conservation of finite resources and public assets such as land, water, forests and biodiversity. HEKS/EPER wants to promote and legally protect 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.
Programmatic achievements

Throughout 2017, HEKS/EPER continued supporting people and communities in securing their customary and legal rights to access land and affiliated resources such as water, seeds, forests, pastures or farmland. In **12 countries** worldwide, **41 projects** are dealing to various degrees and with different approaches with the topic of access to land with the aim of (see Figure 3) ...

- Supporting people and communities in their legitimate endeavours to have secured access to land and resources.
- The enhancement of processes and institutions resolving land conflicts and the corresponding harmonisation of rules and laws.
- Assisting populations that have access to land and that use its resources in safeguarding it against outside interests on the basis of the laws in force.
- Supporting people and communities in investing in land and in managing land productively and sustainably (see also Objectives 2.1 to 2.3).

In the following, specific programmatic achievement in selected countries are highlighted.

**Senegal – inputs to land reform process**: Within the framework of the national land reform, HEKS/EPER partner organisations are committed to its design and elaboration for the benefit of smallholders as well as pastoralists. Throughout 2017, through the conduction of different multi-stakeholder fora, meetings and various radio broadcast allowed the sensitisation and participation of rural population in the debate on the ongoing land reform and the formulation of concrete proposals, which were largely taken into account in the land policy document submitted to the Head of State. In addition, a document analysing and proposing legal improvements on the draft pastoral code, taking into account the concerns of pastoral populations was handed over to the Minister of Livestock and Animal Production.

Further, with regard to the pastoral land, 87’500 ha of land with a pastoral vocation (ranch of Dolly, area of pastoral retreat in the Ferlo zone), threatened in the past by decommissioning for agricultural needs, are in the process of getting secured to preserve its pastoral vocation. However, advocacy work still needs to be upheld as an official decision by the public authorities attesting to the ranch’s pastoral vocation is still missing.

In total – from the three ongoing projects on access to land in Senegal – 1’676 beneficiaries got use rights to 549 hectares\(^20\) of land.

\(^{20}\) Whereof 10% (55 ha) are collective and 90% (493 ha) are individual land rights.
Niger – major steps forward to secure land rights for pastoralists: During 2017, it was particularly important for HEKS/EPER to allow the various groups of sedentary peasants and pastoralist communities to guarantee a fair access to scarce land, water and other natural resources. In 2017, cattle corridors of 315 km in length were able to be negotiated, secured by legally binding contracts and physically marked, which benefitted about 41’000 people. In addition, 8 distinct cattle grazing grounds in three districts were secured. With all these measures, the living conditions of sedentary farmers and pastoralist communities as well as their peaceful coexistence could be further improved.

A major step in 2017 was also the signing of a bilateral agreement in July 2017 between the Maradi region in Niger and the state of Katsina in Nigeria on the organisation and management of cross-border transhumance between the two regions. The agreement, which is the culmination of a nearly two-year long search for solution to the spate of regional and trans-border criminal activities by cattle rustlers and other outlaws, aims to foster and strengthen socio-economic activities between the two states and emphasises free movement of people and animals in line with the ECOWAS charter.

Brazil – Governance of territories and natural resources: The governance of territories and natural resources by indigenous and other traditional peoples and communities continues in the centre of HEKS/EPER access to land interventions in Brazil. Some significant milestones could be achieved during the reporting period. The National Council of the Traditional Peoples and Communities (CNPT) could intensify its links to the UN process on the Declaration of Peasants Rights. During a side event of the UN working group in Geneva which was organized by the Bolivian embassy and HEKS/EPER in September 2017, a representative of CNPCT highlighted the importance to recognize collective land rights as a relevant human right at international level.

In the Serra do Espinhaço region, a regional network of flower picker communities (CODECEX) started an innovative process to protect their territories and traditional land use and local land governance systems by launching an initiative to elaborate a Biocultural Community Protocol (BCP). In cooperation with specialized NGO’s, CODECEX developed a first action plan, which summarizes communal agreements and commitments for the use of the natural resources of their territories. This process is gaining visibility and support at national and international level by connecting the BCP process to FAO’s initiative to implement a pilot experience in Brazil for the promotion of a first Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) in the country. The GIAHS label recognizes and protects globally important agricultural heritage systems throughout the world. CODECEX’s candidature will officially be launched and submitted to the International GIAHS Secretariat at FAO headquarter in Rome in June 2018.

In the field of advocacy, one of the advancements was the official acknowledgement of receipt of the Guarani-Kaiowá Petition, which denounces the genocide of these indigenous peoples, by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, of the Organisation of American States (IACHR). This official receipt is important and represents the continuation of persistent and consistent work of previous years. With this new step, momentum is accumulated in the direction of the commission possibly asking the Brazilian state with an interpellation to take action and guarantee Guarani Kaiowá’s territorial rights. Another positive result that can be highlighted is the articulation work in Human Rights, with the participation of several partner organisations of HEKS/EPER. These organisations influenced the Council of Human Rights of the UN, which notified the Brazilian State with 246 recommendations in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).
Colombia – Reservas Campesinas: In Colombia the access to land topic is closely linked to the implementation of the process of the peace agreements of Havanna. In the reporting period, HEKS/EPER’s programme partners ACVC in cooperation with its umbrella organisation at national level, ANZORC, realized the 6th National Congress of the Reservas Campesinas (RC). This congress was an important milestone to strengthen the advocacy work of the ‘campesino sector’ for a better recognition and amplification of the RCs as a substantial model of a territorial land governance approach in the context of the first peace agreement which intends to implement an Integral Rural Reform in the country.

At regional level, HEKS/EPER’s partner ACVC could ratify community agreements and sign a three-year partnership agreement for the protection of biodiversity in their Reserva Campesina for the conservation of wildlife, the construction of a research station on biodiversity, waters and tropical diseases. Furthermore, ACVC successfully negotiated with the National Land Agency a land titling process for 80 families in the county of Yondó. Another positive example comes from HEKS/EPER’s partner organisation Fundaesxpresion where the network of the ‘Colectivo de Reservas Campesinas’ supported in 2017 the declaration of 14 new reservas in their region of intervention.

India – successes of the Tamil Nadu People’s Forum for Land Rights: The HEKS/EPER India programme has been supporting local communities to get secured access to land through the establishment of so-called Land Forums which conduct lobby and advocacy towards the local and national authorities for land rights.

Tamil Nadu People’s Forum for Land Rights (TPFLR) is one the three land forums initiated with the support of HEKS/EPER India. In 2007, the Government of India had introduced the Scheduled Tribes and Other traditional Forest Dwellers ACT. Based on this Act, TPFLR has been creating awareness among Adivasi communities and has been supporting them to claim their land rights. Although the act was implemented in other states of India and land titles were distributed to the Adivasis, the Government of Tamil Nadu did not take efforts to issue land titles based on this Act to Adivasi communities. Due to continues lobby and struggle by TPFLR, in February 2016, the Supreme Court issued an order directing the Government of Tamil Nadu to issue land titles to the Adivasis with immediate effect. Based on this Court order, efforts were taken to revamp the forum in 2016. All these efforts led in to the issue of legally binding land titles for 132 ha of land to 268 Adivasi families. After year-long struggles the land rights forum of Tamil Nadu secured access for 268 Adivasi families.

Israel/Palestine – baseline study Open Forum Programme: in 2017, HEKS/EPER has commissioned a detailed baseline study of its Open Forum Programme in Israel and Palestine as part of a final impact study. The Open Forum serves as an ‘open’ space for partner organisations of the HEKS/EPER country programme in Israel and Palestine to share experiences, develop synergies, and engage in co-operations. It provides an institutionalized space for developing joint strategies and alternative rights based models for improving access to land, housing and public space, and for planning and implementing common projects around specific problems of access to land, housing and public space. One case study within the analysis allows focusing on the effect of the Open Forum in a focused geographical area, through the study of two different projects implemented in a common limited area. Both projects seek to enhance the resilience of Palestinian communities in the Etzion Bloc (western and southern Bethlehem21) against the Israeli policies of forcible transfer, through activities of land rehabilitation, capacity-building in relation to advocacy and campaigning, and awareness as well as knowledge raising regarding the rights of Palestinian population.

21 Maan target villages: Wadi Fukin, Battir, Um Salammouna, Al-Khader; Badil target villages: Wadi Rahal, Beit Zakariya, Al-Jeba’, Shoshahla
The study showed that about 40% of the target group member possessing / using land for their livelihood experienced restrictions of access to these lands in the twelve preceding months and that 33.9% have needed permits to access part (30.2%), or all (3.7%) of the lands they possessed / used for their livelihood in the same period of time. In addition, about 20% of the target group experienced restrictions of access to residential land and public space in the twelve preceding months. A further assessment of the extent to which land rights are respected in the communities showed that 57% of the target group community state, that rights to land are not at all (41.9%) or very little (15.3%) respected.

The baseline survey further covered a preliminary analysis of the following three questions: i) Is there an increased motivation / capacity to claim rights? ii) Is there already a successful claiming of land rights? iii) Did media and civil society pick up project spurred initiatives, which later influenced responsible duty-bearers? A qualitative analysis of these questions generally indicates rather moderate levels of knowledge and motivation to claim rights among the wider population in the project region (question 1), but that the target communities throughout the last project phase have already taken multiple land rights claiming actions (question 2), a fraction of those probably having been instigated by the bilateral intervention of the project. Further land rights are addressed to a large extent by civil society, and to a considerable extent by media, but not specifically at project area level so far (question 3).

The results of the baseline study will be used to further shape the proposed interventions with regards to improve access to land for the communities in the project region and provide a detailed analysis of the current situation in Israel and Palestine and especially the communities to be targeted related to key indicators of the programme theory of change in order to contribute comparative data to the end line study in 2020.

Institutional achievements related to access to land

To strengthen its core competences and the network relations, HEKS/EPER organised and actively contributed to different processes and events related to access to land in 2017. The main outcomes and findings in three key processes have been:

1) HEKS/EPER Land Forum

At the first ‘HEKS/EPER Land Forum’ in Berne, on June 20, experts on this issue of different Swiss-based NGOs, research institutes, SDC and guests from different countries came together with HEKS/EPER employees to discuss issues around the topic inclusive governance of land and natural resources by traditional and local communities. The discussion was organised around the following three key questions:

- Which are the most adequate strategies or instruments to deal with pressures over land and resources?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of collective land use practices on the way to a more sustainable, equitable and efficient governance of land and resources?
- How can local and traditional communities be strengthened in their efforts to claim and secure their rights and to have access to land and natural resources?

These questions were discussed based on three key expert inputs from India (‘Customary tenure and community land rights – Institutions of land governance in India’), Brazil (‘Public policies and inclusive land governance – 10 years of National Policy for Traditional Peoples and Communities in Brazil’) and Europe (‘Traditional local communities, land governance and law in Europe: some national experiences’).

The organisation of the Land Forum in Switzerland was an important milestone to present some of HEKS/EPER’s experiences and institutional learnings on the topic of access to land to a broader national and international public. For the future, it is intended to organize the HEKS/EPER Land Forum on a regular basis to amplify and qualify the public visibility of HEKS/EPER’s activities related to access to land.
Visit of a common land use system in Switzerland: The day after the HEKS/EPER Land Forum, a HEKS/EPER delegation and additional experts moved further into the heart of Switzerland and took a field tour to get a picture of common land use management in Switzerland: the so-called ‘Allmenden’, pasture or forest areas, which had to be open to all members of a certain group, were always a central component of Swiss agriculture. Already in the 18th century, such areas were fenced as private grounds almost everywhere in Europe during privatisation. However, in some regions, particularly in the Swiss Alpine region, the ‘Allmenden’ could still hold to this day. One of these examples is the ‘Oberallmeindkorporation’ in the canton of Schwyz with a history of 900 years.

2) Contribution to the preparation process of a new UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people living in rural areas

Together with various social movements from farmers and other civil society organisations working on the issues of food and agriculture, human rights and development, HEKS/EPER is actively supporting the elaboration process of a new UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people living in rural areas. The declaration is of particular interest for HEKS/EPER as it is analysing Human Rights from the particular perspective of HEKS/EPER constituencies: peasants and other people living in rural areas. This particular perspective similar to for example the perspective of women through the CEDWA convention or the perspective of indigenous people, highlights the particularity of the needs of HEKS/EPER people of concern. In this regard it is not surprising that the draft document is the only UN document explicitly mentioning the ‘right to land and other natural resources’ in its article 17.

HEKS/EPER has participated and supported the organisation of an international congress on the ‘UN peasant rights declaration’ in March 2017 in Schwäbisch Hall in Germany. One of the aims of the congress was to discuss the draft version and to enhance the voice of peasants from different countries around the globe to bring in their own experiences. The outcome of the different workshops relating to the different articles of the declaration have been captured and brought into the negotiation process at the UN in Geneva led by the intergovernmental working group. HEKS/EPER welcomed a delegation from Brazil, Honduras, Cambodia and Zimbabwe. Partners form Zimbabwe have been put in touch with regional networks from Southern Africa and discussed joint advocacy measures in order to strengthen the commitment for peasant rights in the region.

Subsequently, HEKS/EPER has been able to promote collective land rights during the session in Geneva and with a side event on collective land rights during the Human Rights Council meeting in October 2017. The side event was visited by numerous government representatives and highlighted the fact that although formerly there has been a resistance to accept the collective nature of some rights, collective land rights are still a reality of a high proportion of peasants globally and are also a common practice in Europe and Switzerland. A good example which emphasizes the relevance of common land use practices and collective land rights, not only for indigenous peoples but also for other local communities, was presented by HEKS/EPER’s partners from Brazil. The experiences coming from traditional peoples and communities organized in a National Council and recognized by the Brazilian government through a national policy, which recognizes their specific rights to ancestral lands and common territories became an important reference at global level.

The activities towards advancing the peasant rights declaration including international and national advocacy has also led to an increased cooperation with other Swiss NGOs, and HEKS/EPER has been able to organise a discussion at the foreign ministry on the official Swiss position in order to strengthen the voice for the declaration.
3) International Colloquium on Traditional Peoples and Communities in Hofgeismar

Between the 23rd and the 26th of June, HEKS/EPER co-organised the V. International Colloquium of Traditional Peoples and Communities in the city of Hofgeismar, Germany. About 100 people from local communities, NGOs and academia gathered to discuss issues of identity, tradition, territories and territorial rights and their threat and economic perspectives based on concrete experiences in Brazil, West Africa, Southern Africa, India and Europe. Overall conclusions were as follows:

- A collective identity of communities based on traditions is constantly changing and evolving,
- territories and collective land rights are key for local communities but also main issue of conflict, which is linked to tremendous threats and violence towards local communities,
- a stronger representation of these issues in international debates is essential and
- the strengthening of civic rights related to land and resources instrumental.

Some of the most important recommendations to further develop the initiative of the International Colloquium are:

- constitute a steering committee to prepare further activities of the colloquium at regional and global level as well as to ensure and amplify the internationalisation of the process;
- maintain and strengthen the three pillars of the colloquium which are: i) exchange and dialogue between research institutions, development agencies and grass root movements, ii) promotion of political networking and advocacy on the topic of traditional and local communities, iii) exchange of experiences and good practices between the communities;
- promote thematic working agendas also at regional level to strengthen networking and prepare the next colloquium.

HEKS/EPER will actively contribute to follow up these recommendations in close cooperation with the involved partners and networks.

Progress ‘access to land’ (HKI)

- **Number of hectares of land to which number of people have secured access.**

Overall, HEKS/EPER facilitated in 2017 access to 27'160 ha land for 25'913 people. In terms of secured access to land, between 2013 and 2017 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 (12 out of 16). Accordingly, the number of projects focusing on access to land has increased over the past to 41 projects in 12 countries in 2017. From 2009 till 2017, land projects led to improved access to land for about half a million individuals.

Based on digital HKI data from 12 projects in 5 countries22, HEKS/EPER together with its partners facilitated access to 1’325 hectares of land covered by different access rights. 92.1% (1’220 ha) of this surface is covered by individual and 7.9% (104 ha) by collective land rights, and 78.6% (1’040 ha) are use rights for the people living on and from the land and 21.4% (283 ha) are transfer rights, with substantial differences between the analysed countries (see Figure 4). In total, about 3’432 people benefitted from these newly acquired access rights.23

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22 Based on a sampling frame of 116'111 people, whereas 1’607 individuals have been sampled in 2017 from a sample size of 1’888 people.
23 1563 from individual land rights, 1869 from collective land rights, whereas 2’008 are women.
Figure 5 shows the status of land rights of the land secured for these 3'432 people in 2017. For about 70% of the people, the land rights are implemented and adjudicated – meaning that their land right is a legally binding right, usually documented and assigned by a legal authority and implemented in the sense that the concerned land is de facto utilised. 13.4% of the people’s land rights are implemented but not adjudicated and 12.4% in the process of being adjudicated. This shows that despite the difficulties and complexity of addressing land rights issues in many context HEKS/EPER is working, substantial progress could be achieved during 2017 and security of access to land – individually or collectively – increased.

Based on a sample size of 758 people, 69.3% of the land rights monitored are documented in the name of men, 19.7% in the name of women and 11.1% in the name of both (man and woman). Thus, the fact that only about 20% of the documented land rights are in the name of women show the high vulnerability of women in the case of for example a change in their marital status or in context where the heritage systems is in
favour of men, which is still the case in most of HEKS/EPER countries. Figure 6 shows the results of this aspect differentiated by five analysed countries.

- **Number of official claims related to land made/accepted with the contribution of HEKS/EPER and partners.**

In addition, within 9 projects from 6 countries 229 new claims and 298 still relevant claims related to access to land have been submitted to the respective duty-bearers. About 2/3 of these claims are already accepted by the duty-bearers and 97% are of a binding character. The vast majority of the claims related to access to land are individual claims but comprise also group and national claims and in total shall benefit 4'222 households of the different project regions.

### 5.1.2 Access to water

During the year 2017, in many HEKS/EPER focus countries, access to water was an increasing challenge for families and communities. Improved and secured access to water for human consume, but also for animals and for small-scale agricultural production, is an important issue in the countries Niger, Senegal, Brazil, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Zimbabwe, Israel/Palestine, Honduras and Colombia. HEKS/EPER is giving the thematic issue of access to water and participatory control by the local communities a higher priority in many country programs. In Niger, Ethiopia, Brazil and Honduras. HEKS/EPER’s role, additionally to financing improved WaSH infrastructure and enhancing the capacity of local communities to handle their infrastructure of access to water, is also networking: HEKS/EPER intensified his role as facilitator among interested actors with excellent knowledge and profound understanding of the contexts concern in the topic of access to water.

By the end of 2017, HEKS/EPER concluded the projects financed by the Swiss Water Consortium, Phase 2. The participation in the Consortium was an excellent space for exchanges of best practices, to improve networks of knowledge sharing, most of all in Eastern and West Africa. On the basis of the improved and established networks, HEKS/EPER is in best conditions to participate actively in the third phase of the Swiss Water Consortium.

In Brazil, Honduras and Niger, HEKS/EPER partner organisations are playing a crucial role in accompanying local communities in strengthening their capacity for negotiation with the local authorities in order to protect their access to water. In Brazil, the HEKS/EPER partners have played an important role in opposing the ‘mineroduto’ project, including the articulation of different communities of the Rio Pardo basin in Minas and Bahia, an experience that provides a good base of learning to give water a better place.

HEKS/EPER had the responsibility of financing, accompanying the implementing partners as well as enchanting the experience sharing with other interested actors.

**Global networking**

In the year 2017, HEKS/EPER joined the international network of Blue Community. This network is focused on advocacy for the human right for access to water and on awareness creation on water as a common and public good. By joining this network, HEKS/EPER has taken the following responsibilities which are defined in the entrance self-declaration for all Blue Community members …

- Recognizing water and sanitation as human rights;
- Banning or phasing out the sale of bottled water in municipal facilities and at municipal events;
- Promoting publicly financed, owned and operated water and waste water services;
- Promoting public-public partnerships among actors responsible for assuring access to water.

Cambodia: Watershed assessment with partner organizations enabling HEKS/EPER to progress with its ambitions to mitigate conflicts on resources and securing access to land and resources for local communities.
HEKS/EPER will make special emphasis in the task of fostering public-public partnership among organisations responsible for the facilitation of access to water. HEKS/EPER is sure that the Blue Community Network has a great potential to promote awareness and to support concrete ongoing and new initiatives to materialize the human right of access to water.

During 2017, HEKS/EPER has prepared its participation, together with the Swiss Coordination of Blue Community in the Global Water Forum, WWF of March 2018 and the Alternative Water Forum which will take place at the same time as the WWF in Brasilia.

HEKS/EPER also continues to be actively involved in additional WASH-related networks, namely AGUSAN and solidarit’eau Suisse.

Progress ‘access to water’ (HKI)

- Number of individuals with access to improved drinking water sources.

In the year 2017, a total number of 60’000 directly benefited persons got access to water, by establishing and improving irrigation systems, fountains and wells through DC projects in 11 countries. Ethiopia (28’000), Brazil (9,500), Niger (nearly 7’000) and Zimbabwe (10’000) were the four countries with most people benefitting. HKI were documented for 4 projects in 3 countries (Cambodia, Honduras, Zimbabwe) with only sedentary households profiting. In Zimbabwe 80% (new tubes or wells) and in Cambodia 100% (new water collection systems) of the access has been provided with new infrastructure – in Honduras 55% of the access was enabled through rehabilitation of water collection systems or spring water mounting.

5.1.3 Access to seeds

Access to seeds and protection of biodiversity is a crucial to secure food sovereignty and the rights of rural communities to their land and resources. Particularly in Latin America, several programme partners have a strong focus on these topics. In Honduras HEKS/EPER’s partner organisation PRR made significant progress concerning the development of locally adapted seed varieties. The participatory plant breeding initiative, where the local farmer research committees (CIAL) are engaged in the development of seeds that show a higher tolerance against increasing soil temperature is being introduced in the southern provinces of Honduras and first CIAL groups began to work in the region. PRR also made important advances in the production and marketing of these improved criollo seeds, particularly in the Lake Yojoa area where 40 CIAL farmers could sell their seeds on the institutional market to local governments, the World Food Programme (WFP) and other buyers. This is an important step forward to guarantee seed stocks that can be distributed to local communities in times of droughts or other hazards.

At regional level, the ‘Colectivo Semillas’, a network composed by organisations of 8 different countries in Latin America launched a video in 2017: ‘Seeds: A common good or corporate property?’24 The video, available in 5 languages, summarizes different experiences in Latin America organized by peasant movements and other civil society actors that are engaged in their countries and regions in the monitoring of national legal frameworks for the seed sector and support farmers movements in their advocacy work for the rights of the peasants to produce, access, protect and share their own traditional seeds. The video initiative has been supported by HEKS/EPER, in cooperation with Bread for All, and includes relevant experiences from Honduras (ANAFAE), Colombia (Grupo Semillas) and Brazil (ANA).

In Niger smallholder families are fighting climate change and need to adapt their seeds so that they can harvest enough. The HEKS/EPER partner ‘SahelBio’ supports 1500 farmers in 20 villages of the Maradi region in their efforts to develop new seed varieties. Particularly pearl millet and cow bean varieties have been tested to evaluate which seeds are better adapted to increasing temperature and the lack of water. The farmers who participate in these activities observed a significant increase of the millet and cowpea yields varying from 44 to 47% of the new varieties which have been developed by the farmers in cooperation with the National Research Institute for Agriculture. ‘My production has tripled compared to what I used to harvest on the same area’, has been an impressive testimony of Sakina Osmane, a 48 years old female peasant in Maradi region. (More on the SahelBio Project see Appendix E).

5.1.4 Perspectives ‘access to land and resources’

In future, HEKS/EPER will further expand its existing project portfolio of interventions facilitating access to land and resources based on its extensive experience gained in recent years. The support of projects and

24 Link: https://vimeo.com/232364093
initiatives which target the development of sustainable land governance systems for peasants and rural communities based on equitable access to natural resources – including seeds, water etc. – of the land and the territories will receive specific attention. Specific attention will also be given to further develop significant ‘flagship projects’ which aim to sharpen HEKS/EPER’s specific profile on access to land. Such projects will be based on the core messages for access to land, outlined above, which have been developed in 2017. In 2018, besides the general commitment to further advance the discussion on access to land in the various countries on all levels a specific focus will be put on advocating for the adoption of the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people living in rural areas and the transfer of its content to the different contexts HEKS/EPER is working – including a discussion on what the Declaration mean for Switzerland’s work in international cooperation.

5.2 Access to basic services

Facilitating access to services is a complex field of work as ‘basic services’ can be access to social assistance schemes, to education and vocational trainings, health care, private or governmental employment services (job mediation) or infrastructure such as electricity, water, roads, etc.

As documented in chapter 5.2.1, in Zimbabwe the indicator access to basic services documents access to water and hygiene. Not included in the data are the partners’ endeavours in 2017 on social inclusion (HIP objective 7) and to empower communities to enter into a dialogue with local authorities to claim rights (HIP objective 6). These activities resulted in successful claims enabling access to education, the acknowledgement of the State natural resource policy giving communities access to these resources, the inclusion of disabled in development plans as well as access to birth certificates and identity papers (read more in chapter 5.6.1).

The example Zimbabwe shows very well the holistic interconnectedness of the HIP goals and one indicator being a progress marker for various country objectives. Generally, access to services can be enabled not only by infrastructure projects (building schools or drilling bore-holes), but rather through a human rights-based approach facilitating a dialogue between communities and authorities.

An observation HEKS/EPER makes also in Eastern Europe with its projects on social inclusion of Roma providing equal access for marginalized to basic rights and services like education, housing, health and social services. Remarkable progress on access to services and institutionalizing these have been made in the frame of DC Roma inclusion programme in Romania, Serbia and Kosovo. Read more in the special chapter 5.10 on Roma inclusion. Or access to social assistance and health as provided through the homecare activities in Moldova, where the partner organisation CASMED continued also to actively lobby for updating and improving the legal regulations and standards for social and medical service provision in Moldova – another example of HRBA and pursuing HIP objective 6. In Kosovo access to education and housing is also proof of the holistic approach (read more in chapter 5.6, objective 6).

Even in fragile context were State authorities are either absent, weak or repressive negotiating access to services is possible – even though on a small-scale and linked to iNGOs commitment to finance infrastructure. It seems crucial not to focus on service providing through donors and partners, but to insist on HRBA and to make authorities accountable to fulfil their duties towards the communities. In DR Congo, HEKS/EPER was able to facilitate access to health services, education and even to vocational trainings to improve access to the labour market.

In Ethiopia the CO reported access to services mainly in the frame of access to drinking water schemes, accompanied with continuous awareness raising campaigns on hygiene and sanitation, or access to electricity. Both components improved by the local communities in collaboration with responsible government bodies. Here again, the access to this service was also provided with investments construction of physical structures (e.g. water points, pipe installations, reservoirs, public latrines, etc.).
In Niger, the partners enabled access to hygiene, water and health for 27’000 people still through HEKS/EPER financing and not being able to hold authorities accountable to provide this infrastructure which is, of course, very difficult with a Government lacking finances to cover the needs of the communities.

The CP of Senegal does not have a project with a focus on access to basic services. However, given the fairly high level of illiteracy among the pastoralist populations of Ferlo and the difficulty of accessing care, especially among women, partner CERFLA included literacy and matron training into the projects in order to enable rural populations to read, write and calculate in their local language and to enable women to be assisted during childbirth in remote villages. Literacy is key that small-holders are able to learn about animal health, dairy processing, financial management of their activity and to be able to advocate with local and administrative authorities for the improvement of their living conditions.

Also in Haiti, HEKS/EPER fostered infrastructural services such as access to sources by footpaths and small roads important to the rural communities, access to education through building/rehabilitating community buildings, but also enabling communities to pay fees for teachers. There is still a lack of willingness and capacity of the communities, local or regional authorities to provide and maintain these infrastructures, neglecting the rural communities or following a complete different development plan focusing on centralizing services in bigger villages or towns.

In India, 3 projects report around 14% of its project participants had access to resources thanks to capacity building for sustainable land management and income generation. The two land forums of Andrah Pradesh and Karnataka as well as the cashew value chain project mobilized State resources for 5317 families for land development, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, farm pond and canal desilting, community borewells, fodder, weighing machines, sprayers and saplings.

5.2.1 Progress ‘basic services’ (HKI)

- Number of individuals with access to basic services.

The people receiving access to services through HEKS/EPER projects is almost four times higher than 2013, reaching 116’000 individuals in 2017. HKI data were collected in 6 projects in the countries Bangladesh, Moldova, Zimbabwe and DR Congo.

Overall access to social assistance and health care the services mainly provided – certainly to home care activities in Moldova combining social assistance and health care representing ¾ of the submissions. Also in the DR Congo both components dominated.

In Bangladesh, in ⅔ of the 7’000 cases of improved access to services, access to education has been improved, mainly through the partner ESDO. Partners mainly enabled access to various services through claims in the frame of HIP objective 6 (empowered rights-holders and accountable duty-bearers) or HIP objective 7 (inclusion & participatory governance structures), also enabling access to social welfare schemes and health care for the marginalized minorities of Adibashi and Dalit.

In Zimbabwe access to services meant to facilitate access to water and sanitation (infrastructure). The same in Haiti, Niger and Ethiopia.

Impressive are the figures for Kosovo with 4’264 individuals having access to housing and education and in Serbia with 4’996 individuals (housing: 520; 1’976 schooling; 2’500 MCC).

5.2.2 Perspectives ‘access to services’

HEKS/EPER has to differentiate on how to use the indicator access to basic services and when allocating it either to the HIP objective 2 (basic services) or when to objective 1 (access to resources/water) and how to better describe endeavours towards objectives 6 and 7 which at the end also may result in access to services as proof for successful negotiations between rights-holders and duty-bearers or for a better inclusion of marginalized communities and individuals.

Nevertheless, access to basic services will become more important in the future. But focus must lay on facilitating access with duty-bearers made accountable and providing and financing education, infrastructure, health, social assistance, etc. Providing basic services should not be substituted by iNGOs such as HEKS/EPER. Giving incentives with initial financing or to co-financed projects/services (duty-bearers, community members, private sector and/or iNGOs) for a clearly limited time.
5.3 Sustainable agricultural production

In almost all countries HEKS/EPER is working, the livelihoods of local communities largely depend on agricultural production. Even though access to resources – such as land, water and agricultural inputs – may have been successfully achieved by individuals, families and communities, farming conditions for families are often difficult due to unfavourable locations, insufficient or unproductive land, changing climatic conditions, inappropriate techniques and lack of skills, knowledge and access to efficient advisory services. As such, HEKS/EPER strives for customised land management and production practices in accordance with the location, which are based on agro-ecological principles and take into account the risks associated with external shocks and stresses (e.g. droughts, floods, changing weather patterns).

As examples from selected countries, HEKS/EPER experiences and achievements throughout 2017 is described in the following …

**Senegal – participatory guarantee system for organic certification:** At the end of 2016, a new project with the goal of developing a participatory guarantee system for organic certification under IFOAM standards started in Senegal with the National Federation of Organic Producers (FENAB). In the first phase of the project, the certification process will be focused on vegetable and fruit production, covering about 500 producers, and will also include the promotion of organic production and the organic label in Senegal. During 2017, the manual of procedures of the new participatory guarantee system has been agreed on, a control bodies have been trained on these procedures and already 266 producers have been provisionally certified organic producers by the PGS control system.

**Niger – food security through agro-ecological intensification:** The project to support food security through agro-ecological intensification began its second phase in May 2017. In 2017, the project carried out its activities in 60 villages in two regions: About 2'700 producers were sensitized on the negative effects of climate change; about 8'000 producers trained on agro-ecological technologies; four seed sales outlets organised which recorded a sale of 574 kg of improved seeds; 1'129 demonstration plots totalling 564.5 hectares were set up. Monitoring results show an average yield increase of 632 kg/ha for millet and 497 kg/ha for cowpea. In addition, a marketing circuit has been set up with a network of 75 farmers’ organisations and 3 unions; 2'690 producers have been sensitized and trained and 123.8 tons of millet and 25.7 tons of cowpea have been collected and stored.

**Zimbabwe – strengthening sustainable agriculture and marketing:** In 2017, an end of project phase evaluation of a project with the aim to improve the food security and socio-economic status of women and men in Matobo district through increased sustainable agriculture and marketing of organic produce was conducted. The evaluation revealed the evidence, that the participatory approach adopted by the project was conducive to long-term sustainability due to high-levels of buy-in and engagement that was encouraged from the onset from all relevant stakeholders. One of the strengths was demonstrated in terms of the projects capacity to mobilise communities and other key agriculture stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable agriculture.

**Georgia – pest management as challenge for organic production:** The HEKS/EPER project on the development of organic and fairtrade hazelnut sector in Georgia was highly challenged by the widespread occurrence of the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB), *Halyomorpha halys*, in Georgia, which is a very damaging insect pest. In spite of the fact that the Georgian state, with the support of the USAID, was implementing active measures against BMSB, unfortunately those were only focused on the application of broad-spectrum chemical insecticides (based on Bifenthrin), as no effective organic alternatives were tested in Georgia so far. This approach, although having potentially a quick effect, can have long lasting environmental and human health impact and can lead to the further resistance of the bug against pesticides. Moreover, the challenge caused by BMSB and the governmental programme against it, is particularly relevant for organic production – organic farmers not only loose the harvest, but certification (including 3 years on conversion period), which enabled them to have access to premium markets and obtain better income. Accordingly, the project worked in three main directions: 1. Tried to convince the government to
introduce also an organic approach into the state programme – unfortunately without success so far; 2. Set up and implement field trials to test organic alternatives against BMSB in farmers’ fields and laboratory; 3. Envisaging the development and implementation of an integrated organic pest management strategy against BMSB on smallholder level in the project region, through field experiments, training, technical support to organic farmers, as well as advocating the government, to introduce organic pest management strategy in state programmes against BMSB. All these strategies will be pursued during 2018.

Brazil – implementing social water technologies: In the semiarid region of Minas Gerais in Brazil, HEKS/EPER’s partner CAA could amplify the implementation of social water technologies of the Brazilian Semiarid Network (ASA). In 2017 CAA started to implement the first 19 pilot initiatives to filter and reuse the grey water coming from toilets, tanks and showers. These technologies have been recognized in 2017 by the World Future Council with the Future Policy Silver Award 2017 as outstanding experiences and good practices of sustainable water management. CAA’s and ASA’s expertise also gained recognition by FAO. As FAO is also focusing its work on resilient agricultural systems and restoration of water ecosystems, CAA and ASA have been invited to cooperate in an initiative which aims to disseminate these social water technologies through a process of exchange and knowledge sharing between Brazil, Western Africa and the dry corridor of Central America. This process should start in early 2018.

5.3.1 Progress ‘production’ (HKI)

- Number of farmers / households applying agroecological production practices.

In recent years HEKS/EPER developed a specific key indicator on the application of agroecological production practices by farmers and households. Throughout 2017, this indicator was introduced in and monitored by 11 projects in 6 countries worldwide, which all have the objective to increase the knowhow and application of agroecological practices in the respective project regions. The 11 projects cover a total production area of 2'743 hectares, with an average of 2 hectares per producer (in total 1'347 producers). During 2017, it could be achieved that more than a ¼ of these surface (754 hectares) fulfil the set criteria of agroecological production practices, whereas resource conservation methods are applied by almost all of the producers, more than 80% of the producers apply measures to manage ecological relationships and nearly 99.9% of the monitored producers do not use GMO on their plots and 2/3 of the producers also fulfil the criteria non-use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. However, there are substantial regional differences in the degree of fulfilment of the criteria ranging from 3.3% of the covered surfaces in Moldova to 100% in Colombia (see Figure ).

The most prevailing soil conservation methods applied compared over all different contexts are minimal ploughing (applied by 63% of the producers), crop associations (31%), hoeing (30%), composting (29%), adding recycled manure (26%). In addition, about 1/3 of the monitored producers apply crop association and intercropping as measures to better manage ecological relationships within a field and about ¼ make use of crop / livestock integrated systems and apply an integrated pest management approach.

25 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.

26 Cambodia, Colombia, DR Congo, India, Republic of Moldova, Niger and Senegal

27 Ranging from 0.15 ha in Cambodia to 3.2 ha in Moldova on average per producer
Percentage of people reporting a change in their agricultural and/or non-agricultural yields.

Another HEKS/EPER key indicator measures the self-perceived change in agricultural yields and its explaining factors. Data from 10 projects in 10 countries show, that 65% of the asked producers state a medium or massive increase in their agricultural yields compared with their last agricultural season (see Figure 8). The explaining factors for these increases in yield are quite diverse: about half of the producers’ state that the increase in yield can be explained by better access to resources such as water, good soil conditions or seeds and also half of the producers’ state that it is due to improved technical factors such as better soil management, pest management, irrigation practices or general improved production skills. About 10% of the asked producers in the different regions state a decrease in their yields. Here, the main explaining factors are either production loss due to diseases or unfavourable climatic conditions.

5.3.2 Perspectives ‘production’

Traditionally, agro-ecological production is an objective present in most development cooperation programmes. It is key to enable food security and improve livelihoods of local communities. In the future, HEKS/EPER wants to link its production oriented objectives even more with its objectives access to land and inclusive markets, as without this holistic perspective agriculture, it is not possible people and communities do profit. In addition, the benefits of an agro-ecological production have to be brought closer to the producers, but certainly to the buyers and other market actors. Further, agro-ecological production measures contribute to safeguard biodiversity and increase the resilience of local communities towards external shocks and stresses (see also chapter 8.3 Resilience building).

5.4 Inclusive and efficient market systems

In rural areas, agriculture and small trade form the basis for work and income. HEKS/EPER projects and programmes promote an integrated market systems development approach that strengthens the accountability towards rural families and communities, and aims to upgrade value-chain governance for the benefit of producers and consumers. The market systems development approach ultimately aims at increasing the income of people and at market systems delivering income or services more efficiently.

As such, HEKS/EPER strives for changes to the structures and dynamics of market systems. Good vocational training and the ability of people to run their businesses successfully and to survive on the free labour market are central to this. HEKS/EPER supports them in improving their employability or in setting up a small business. But strengthening their competences alone is often not enough. In a free market aimed at maximising profits, the poorest and marginalised population groups are the first to be excluded. The private sector could only benefit from an inclusive market system: If everyone participates in the market, productivity and thus purchasing power and growth will increase. HEKS/EPER therefore sensitises the authorities and economic actors to the added value of inclusive market systems and tries to win them over to include the poorest by changing market conditions.

Among others, the following results have been achieved during 2017 in selected countries.

Moldova – development of the berry sector: Through a market systems development in the berry sector, HEKS/EPER strives to improve the economic and social living conditions of the rural population in the central

28 986 out of a total of 1’529 producers asked from the following 7 countries: Armenia, Cambodia, DR Congo, Honduras, India, Senegal)
and northern part of the Moldova – regions where berries mostly grow. In order to increase market access for smallholder berry farmers, the project team is focused on establishing better relationships between berry farmers and potential buyers and developing the existing markets by stimulating the consume and changing the paradigm of traditionally critical view of processed (e.g. frozen or dried) berries. In the first project year of 2017, significant impact on the visibility of the berry sector has been achieved, confirmed by increased interest in the sector from various donors and agriculture-oriented programs. At the same time, crucial state institutions in the field, such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry (MAIA), the National Agency for Food Security (ANSA), the Agency of Interventions and Payments for Agriculture (AIPA), have expressed greater interest in field regulation and development. Another important result of the project activities was the consolidation of the young field association ‘Pomusoarele Moldovei’ (Berries of Moldova). Having only 5 to 10 members in March 2016, the Association reported 130 members by the end of 2017. The association has already been invited and successfully participated in important meetings about the development of the regulatory framework held at the MAIA and AIPA. Already during this first year of operation, a substantial number of farmers could increase their sales of berries on different markets (direct sales from the field, wholesale market, sales to processors, sales to supermarkets).

Georgia – major improvements within the local animal feed market: Within the SDC-funded HEKS/EPER project ‘Market Opportunities for Livelihood Improvement’ (MOLI) (2015–2018), one specific objective is to improve the animal feed market in the project region. In 2017, a study was conducted to analyse the contribution of the MOLI-project to the further development of the local animal feed market. A baseline conducted in 2012 showed that less than 20% of farmers have access to vitamin-rich concentrated animal feed and only 8% of farmers use it. The study showed, that the number of farmers using concentrated feed has tripled since 2012. Crucial factors for this increase are the appearance of new players in the animal feed market – specifically feed mills, a general increase of the availability of concentrated feed and a rise of awareness and knowledge among users and producers. The study has shown, that feed mills now provide in-depth consultation to users and could increase trust and knowledge among them. Finally, the study revealed that concentrated feed is one of the most important factors of growth of profit of household.

Niger – moringa, base to enhance food and nutritional security: A project in the two regions Maradi and Zinder with the objective to strengthen the food and nutritional security of the population of eight villages in two communes through the promotion of the Moringa sector and support for market gardening started in 2017. In this first year of operation, the production of Moringa significantly increased compared to the previous year – from 4.2 t/ha to 4.9t/ha on average, with a gross production of more than 100 tonnes of Moringa, from which 71% was dedicated to the own consumption needs, 10% processed and 19% sold at markets (collection centres and sales counters) as leafy vegetables. The average income from the sales per producers is estimated at about 170 Swiss Francs. About 60% (820 out of 1’369 producers) of the monitored producers state that their income increased compared to the previous year. In addition, based on interviews with involved farmers, positive observed changes during this first year have been the first inclusion of small farmers in the market system in general; the creation of counters and centres for the collection and sale of gardening products and moringa products; the organisation of product marketing through various trainings (pricing techniques and stock management).

Cambodia – Memot pepper market development: The project ‘Upgrading Memot pepper value chain for the benefit of rural smallholder producers’ has the goal to increase incomes and improve livelihoods of 1’000 smallholder pepper producers in Memot district, Cambodia. During 2017, significant collaboration with private sector and state actors were established. In addition, already almost half of the targeted farmers apply GAP standard in pepper production and post-harvest management thanks to the provision of extensive
training. In addition, the project closely collaborates with the Ministry of Commerce and other partners/pepper sector stakeholders in organizing different national and sub-national events including the first national forum on pepper in order to promote Cambodian pepper products as well as to share experiences in pepper production and trading. Through these workshops, the stakeholders agreed to newly establish the Cambodian Pepper Federation (CPF) in order to lead the Cambodian pepper sector to be smoothly developed. Monitoring data show that 70% of the involved producers stated a change of their agricultural yield and a substantial increase in household income from $'$900 / HH at project start in July 2015 to $'$700 / HH by the end of 2017.

India – cashew to improve livelihoods of Adivasi smallholders: A HEKS/EPER project on cashew value-chain in Andhra Pradesh aims to improve the livelihoods of 4’000 Adivasi smallholder farmers through enhancing the cultivation, harvesting and post-harvest management as well as through better market access. After a pilot phase in 2014, the project was officially launched in 2015. In two years’ time it was scaled up from 1’533 to 3’500 Adivasi smallholder farmers focusing on the two districts of East and West Godavari. Main activities for improving the cultivation of cashew-nuts consisted of trainings and guidance on agro-ecological tree-and pest management. The project works closely with local authorities, finance institutions as well as middle-men and processors to improve the support services for the cashew-producers. Thereby, the Adivasi cashew-producers could improve their access to agricultural inputs as well as strengthen their market position.

In addition, intercrops represent a source of nutrients but also an additional income. Around 50% of the involved farmers have taken up intercropping and are thereby making use of the bare land between the cashew trees. Most farmers cultivate different pulses as intercrops. Out of 1’533, 604 farmers could improve their income through intercropping in 2017.

The project achievements for 2017 are very satisfying; out of the first group of 1’533 farmers, 1’437 have participated in collective procurement and the sale of about 300 tons of raw cashew nuts in 2017. Through an improved production and marketing, all farmers could thereby increase their income by 20–30%. In the same year, 62 new village level farmer producer groups for an additional 2’000 farmers were formed and trained. Furthermore, the project supported Adivasi farmers to access agricultural inputs through government schemes worth the amount of around CHF 20’000.

Colombia – organic farmers’ markets and PGS

In Colombia HEKS/EPER’s partner CORAMBIENTE co-organized a first national meeting to discuss progress and challenges to develop organic farmers’ markets in Colombia. The meeting focussed on three main topics: Agro-ecological Production, Commercialization and Participatory Guarantee Systems. The workshop brought together the experiences of different networks in Colombia that are engaged at national level in the promotion of organic farming and the commercialization of organic products. The meeting also allowed to discuss the efforts made to develop a national policy on PGS which was presented by the Ministry of Agriculture during the meeting.

Honduras – Fruits, seeds and peanut pilot

APRAL has diversified its supply and demand of processed fruit in major cities in the southern and central region and moves towards positioning itself as a benchmark in fruit pulp processing and marketing and
meeting its goal of achieving financial sustainability. The product range was diversified from 7 types of processed fruit in 2016 to 13 today. Regarding the institutional markets (IM), APRAL could renew a purchase/sale agreement for the supply of complementary foodstuffs (fruit pulp, eggs, dairy products) to the school feeding programme in 148 schools in four municipalities. Besides the IM, APRAL also was successful to amplify its portfolio of frozen pulp buyers currently having nine main clients in the country who purchase an average of 3000 pounds of frozen fruit weekly.

HEKS/EPER’s partner PRR successfully continues to sell improved criollo corn and bean seeds. PRR completed the construction of a seed processing and marketing centre that began operating in 2017, where around 280 producers use the centre to store seed and grain and offer such products. Some 40 farmers have earned income from the sale of seeds to municipal governments, NGOs and individual producers in the Lake Yojoa area.

Envisaging alternatives for inclusive markets also at international level, HEKS/EPER in cooperation with its programme partner ANAFAE, started first activities to launch a pilot experience on peanut production and peanut value chain.

5.4.1 Progress ‘inclusive markets’ (HKI)

- **Percentage of people stating a change in their income.**

Based on data from 31 projects in 11 countries, about 55% of the targeted beneficiaries\(^{29}\) state that their income increased in the reporting period 2017 (41.8% medium increase and 12.7% massive increase), which is 8% points higher than the yearly target of 47% (see figure 9).

About 30% of the persons stating a positive change in their incomes explain this increase by increased outputs and about 20% by the increase of market prices. The additional income was used by about 40% of the people for consumption purposes, about 35% saved the money, 16% stated to have reinvested it and 5% used it for education purposes.

A third of the sampled individuals stated a negative impact to their incomes, mainly due to decreased outputs because of diseases and unfavourable weather conditions and increased production costs – especially transportation, animal feed and other input costs.

The set of possible HKI to describe progress for this objective is rich, yet not applied fully …

- **Percentage of people stating a change in their income.**
- **Observed changes in structure and dynamics of market systems**
- **Percentage of people stating a change in their livelihoods.**
- **Perception of the effectiveness of training programs, especially related to economic security.**
- **Number of people who increased their practical knowledge about (a) value-chain development; and b) value-chain development supporting areas / non-formal education.**
- **Quantitative change in hours of household labour and care work by time and task allocation, disaggregated by sex.”**

\(^{29}\) Based on a sample of 3’077 individuals.
5.4.2 Perspectives ‘inclusive markets’

Over the past years, HEKS/EPER gradually shifted in many contexts from a production oriented approach to a more market-oriented approach, which comprised also a switch in the roles HEKS/EPER and its partners fulfill in the implementation of projects towards a role as facilitator in a multi-stakeholder market setting. Facilitation of market development aims inter alia to assist market actors to build relationships, to undertake collaborative action, the provision of infrastructure and the introduction of new technologies. In future, HEKS/EPER will strive to adjust its project portfolio to include even more projects that focus from the onset on addressing systemic constraints and opportunities in the entire market system be it in agriculture-based markets or in non-agricultural based markets by looking for additional employment and income opportunities.

Particularly in Latin America, it will be a challenge for HEKS/EPER to better understand the role of the organic farmers’ market sector and the logic of an ‘economia campesina’ in general. There is an interesting dynamic and a growing movement in a lot of Latin American countries to further develop market strategies of farmers’ groups and farmers’ cooperatives as well as the relation with consumer groups, for instance in the field of PGSs, a phenomenon which also receives specific attention from international organizations, such FAO, which focusses on the promotion of short-circuit markets.

5.5 Enhanced security & space for civil society

Shrinking space for civil society action has been identified a key obstacle in HEKS/EPER annual report synthesis workshops since 2009. However, it is to say that the situation in a number of HEKS/EPER countries severely deteriorated during the last one to two years as for example in Honduras, Cambodia, Israel and Palestine.

‘A new area, new measures. It is easy to see a pattern here: an intentional, coordinated, strategic campaign against human rights organisations and individuals’ (SSI, March 2017). This is for example clearly visible looking at the special ‘anti-BDS’ task force which was announced by Prime Minister Netanyahu, and activated in June 2015 by the Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs. The unit started work with ten new staff and a budget of around US$ 25 M (INSS, 2015).

According to the CIVICUS Monitor report, more than 3.2 billion people live in countries where the rights to protest, organize and express one’s opinion, even if unpopular, are currently restricted. Restrictions to these freedoms include but are not limited to the following: the use of anti-terror laws to limit freedom of expression; the use of public order laws to restrict the right to peacefully protest; the use of NGO legislation to stigmatize civil society associations as ‘foreign agents’ and to create administrative barriers for accessing foreign funds; and use of legislation to illegitimately restrict their access to online media.

HEKS/EPER has been engaged in mapping civil society space in its focus countries during the last years and has explored promising practices to protect and enhance space (see ACT 2011 and ACT 2015 ③0). A number of studies have been a starting point in strengthening the work on the topic as for example in Zimbabwe, Honduras and Israel/Palestine, where efforts have been taken to put recommendations into practice.

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One of the findings of the Honduras study, which was published in 2017 was the strong need to increase protection of Human Rights processes more broadly instead of individual defenders only. Another finding was the fragmentation of CSO as this puts another obstacle to defend and enhance space for rights based programming. In this regard HEKS/EPER successfully put efforts towards bringing different organisations together into one umbrella project providing a platform of cooperation and mutual support in Honduras. In 2017, despite the contradictory legal framework, different organisations joined forces and advanced according to their objectives and capacities as summarized below: COFADEH has accompanied the hearings of the two ADEPZA members who have been convicted as guilty of the crime of usurping land, which they have held for generations. In 2017, it is the first time that HEKS/EPER supported the emergency fund for the protection of human rights defenders. Through this common fund a total of 88 people; 45 women defenders and 43 male defenders who have been threatened were supported. This process has been accompanied by about 21 civil society organisations working towards the realisation of Human Rights. It is important to mention that 51% of the cases accompanied have been defenders of land and common goods, as well as members of human rights organizations, peasants and indigenous people, journalists and social communicators, LGBTI community, women’s movement that have been threatened.

HEKS/EPER office in Jerusalem together with Dan Church Aid and other ACT members engaged in preparing an updated summary of a study finalised in the previous year and started to coordinate advocacy and facilitate collaboration. ‘The Protection of Space for Civil Society and Human Rights Defenders-The Case of Israel and Palestine’ shows how both Palestinian and Israeli organisations and journalists face mounting hurdles, legal restrictions, stigmatisation and danger in their ongoing work on poverty alleviation, humanitarian assistance and combatting injustice in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The report comes up with recommendations to countering the stigmatisation campaigns targeting human right defenders and CSOs as for example exposing and responding to disinformation aiming at delegitimizing the work of NGOs and individuals or the rejection of external demands to introduce politically-motivated funding requirements while standing firm on the principles of freedom of association, assembly and expression and support for all non-violent strategies to address rights violations.
Cambodia: In 2017, HOC has continued to work with NGOF on land, agriculture and environmental issues. As a result, HOC and its partners have been actively engaged in policy dialogue and joined the NDF-C, IPFN and LAHRIN network meetings as well as meetings with the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction, the National Advocacy Conference, the 7th national Farmer forum, exposure visits and evidence-based research. Through all these working platforms with NGOF and other CSOs networks, HOC and its partners can take advantage in effectively link grassroots efforts and national policy efforts in the land, agriculture and natural resource management. However, all these opportunities have been affected by the negative political climate in Cambodia.

5.5.1 Progress ‘security & space for civil society’ (HKI)
Not enough HKI gathered yet to make a relevant contribution to the report.

5.5.2 Perspectives ‘security & space for civil society’
While HEKS/EPER together with ACT alliance alongside various other organisations facilitated research (see ACT 2011 and ACT 201) to document the extent of these limitations on the enabling environment for civil society, there has little emphasis to explore and document why these freedoms are important for ensuring in the long-term more equitable, peaceful and sustainable development.

Thus, HEKS/EPER together with its colleagues from the Act Alliance Community of Practice on Human Rights in Development, has embarked on a solid research to strengthen the narrative of the importance of a vibrant civil society for long-term sustainable development: a long-term development that leaves no one behind. This narrative is needed to counter a narrative of development focused primarily on technological innovation and a narrative that suggests that shrinking space for civil society can foster instability that is harmful for development and investment. For this reason, HEK/EPERS took the lead in designing and organising an in-depth study with ACT alliance and the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. A particular focus is put on the SDGs of particular interest of HEKS/EPER which are SDG 2 which involves access to land, SDG 8 decent work and economic growth and SDG 10 reduced inequality. SDG 16 on peace and justice of course plays a role as a crosscutting issue. The study is meant to be the main pillar for an international joint advocacy strategy together with the ACT community of practice addressing UN and EU institutions, donor coordination meetings as well as individual national governments.

The study is expected to be launched in the beginning of 2018, however a scoping study including 12 countries globally has been elaborated and identified pathways to track the impact of shrinking civic space on the achievement of the sustainable development goals. In a second step, pathways in four countries, Zimbabwe, Cambodia, Nepal and Brazil are further examined within in-depth studies. Development outcomes may be affected through restrictions on civil society and other actors’ capacity.

The methodology of the study is influenced by HEKS/EPER experiences and takes emphasis on the ‘fit of civil society’ analyzing the relationship between actors. This is very much related to the HEKS/EPER equal rights and conflict transformation implementation concept and visible in the HIP with goal 8 ‘improved intra- & inter-group relations’. In this view it is not so much the uncoordinated and autonomous actions of CSOs as it is the ‘fit’ between state and civil society actors – how successfully state and civil society interact to enable economic growth and human development – that shapes the inclusiveness of the development process. At times, the state may create wider and more enabling space for civic action, and this may lead to progressive and redistributive programmes and policies as political actors respond to newly salient voices. At other times and in other parts of the system, the ‘fit’ is tighter, as civil society actors collaborate with states or the administration in the co-production of services. At key moments of contention, the ‘fit’ is in gridlock, such as when civil society clashes with the state, politicians, or powerful economic interests defending the rights of the less powerful.

‘Distance and proximity from but also capacity to engage with, state and market are critical to the role of civil society in galvanizing inclusive development. If civil society is too small and weak to engage, the state and/or market may capture the process without concern for societal interests. If civil society is big or strategic enough to stall the machine, preventing business or governments from operating in their individual or joint interests unfettered, this may retard inequalities and unjust development policies, avoiding corrupt extractive or land deals and the ecological impact of unregulated development, and encouraging further resistance.

Apart from international level advocacy, HEKS/EPER offices from Latin Amerika are about to draft a concept to enhance the security of human right defenders. Furthermore, the topic will be a priority at HEKS/EPER’s conflict transformation advisory group meetings in order to identify strategies to protect and enhance space for rights based programming.
5.6 Empowered rights-holders & accountable duty-bearers

HEKS/EPER aims at holding duty-bearers accountable in order to obtain justice and the fulfilment of human rights and ensuring they are answerable for the observance of human rights standards. Accountability means that duty-bearers are answerable to rights-holders for what they do (or don’t do) towards fulfilling their human rights obligations. Therefore, accountability also requires the development of frameworks. This starts with practices and procedures and may later on be institutionalized in policies and laws. Or it may be the other way around that laws and policies need attitude, behaviours and subsequently reoccurring practices to be implemented towards the fulfilment of rights.

In addition, HEKS/EPER strives towards empowering rights-holders, especially the most vulnerable. Empowerment is a process by which the capabilities of people and community to demand and use their rights are strengthened. The goal is to ensure that all have the power and capabilities to change their own lives and hold those responsible to account of the obligations. The starting point for empowerment and accountability is the transfer of information on human rights, equality and conflict transformation to both rights-holders and duty-bearers. Information and trainings are meant to trigger self-reflection, attitude change and change in behaviour. This resulting action accompanied with advocacy and change in relationship aims at reform of practices and laws. Subsequently transformation of polices, laws and practices combined with values guiding individual’s behaviour are granting the fulfilment of rights. In order to trace the outcome of empowerment and accountability we accordingly focus on the following fields of observation:

Empowerment of rights-holders: looking at changes in rights-holders. The question is the level of self-awareness and awareness of rights. Secondly the question in how far this awareness lead to firstly change of attitude and secondly behavior. This field of observation captures a sometimes-lengthy process from early reflection towards fighting and claiming for one’s own or the communities’ rights.

Accountability of duty-bearers: assess changes in duty-bearers. Capacity building as well as lobby work is carried out to trigger reflection towards acknowledging the beauty of mutual respect and equality. New attitudes are supposed to lead to action towards the fulfillment of rights.

Relationships: A number of relationships are key in building structures and practices of accountability. The relationship between rights-holder and duty-bearers in many cases is tense and characterized by asymmetry, mistrust or even abuse. In order to strengthen advocacy, the cooperation of communities or civil society movement are of importance thus horizontal linkages to likeminded are another important point to look at.

Policies and Structures: This field of observation looks at institutionalization practical and theoretical in forms of laws and policies.

The degree to which progress has been made in the different country of course depends on the starting point and the political settlement.

Empowerment of rights-holders

Investment in capacity building is bearing fruits. In particular the systematic role out of the Gender Inclusive Human Rights Based Approach Tool with training, tutoring and peer to peer learning elements over 1.5 years in Zimbabwe has proven to be an excellent starting point for empowerment as an assessment in Zimbabwe has shown.

There was an increase in the number of people that were then able to stand up for their rights. As an example, in Matobo people of our concern stood up for their rights and defended their rights. People of our concern drew their defense of their rights from the Constitution and the District Administrator (duty-bearer) had to step in to stop the interference with the farming. This is a significant change and would not have been possible had the PooC not known their rights, but was exercised having received training form the trainer partner organizations.

One of the paralegals in Zimbabwe explains his change in attitude and already links it to behavior: ‘I have learned about rights this was important. The big change is knowledge on how to treat children and women and this has led to a change how we think about women to be treated. And we can even observe there is less violence. Formerly we would have heard of a number of cases, but this has ceased. Also concerning politics. People were beating up each other’s because of party politics formally but until now it stopped although we are going towards elections.’

This observation was in line with a considerable number of other most significant change interviews as for example the statement of a ward councilor shows: ‘The people in the community today, they know about each other and they come together to make decisions jointly. This increased unity lead to a decrease in human rights violations in our community. For example, people now about women’s rights and child rights and thus there is more respect. And also, more knowledge about political rights. Previously, people were
beaten up for being in the wrong party. Interestingly the statement also hints to the strong interconnectedness of empowerment and relationships.’

Another example from Zimbabwe shows how parents dared to sue a teacher who was diverting funds. The teacher was released from his position the court case is ongoing.

In Cambodia HEKS/EPER partners (AK, SACRED, SK, and BCV) are providing access to information through public fora. Various meetings, and training, have been an important first step towards building accountability relationships. In short, community members are gaining knowledge on how to be active citizens, how to access information, and in some cases how to build better relationships with local authorities, which is a precondition to demand accountability from them. In this manner partners have helped PooC to raise their concerns/voices to solve conflicts and improve public services. Based on observation, the visited PooCs have learned to speak out and they have more confidence to advocate for their needs.

Also in Brazil the human rights-based approach is very much present in the process of using innovative tools for the process of building the instruments, which makes communities reflect on their identity, history, rights and relationship with society as a whole.

Even in difficult contexts as Ethiopia where space to talk about rights is extremely limited HEKS/EPER and its partners work with community leaders & institutions, to make them aware of their rights – in the process to demand services from duty-bearers (often, government). For instance, in Kofele a water project where the promise of connecting the water pump with main grid took nearly 3 years. HEKS/EPER (with ROBA) has been successful in empowering community leaders to appeal before the government in consistent and persuasive manner. Towards the end of the 2017 the good news of the approval of the measure was announced.

Accountability of duty-bearers

In the past most efforts by civic society were targeted at rights-holders while it is assumed that the duty-bearers know their obligations, or they will be trained by their parent Ministry of Local Government. This flawed approach to development has brewed conflict in the communities as it creates enclaves of rights-holders who are knowledgeable and set them against the duty-bearers who have less knowledge about their obligations and the legal framework in which they operate. The HRBA project in Zimbabwe therefore sought to balance this equation by targeting the supply side (the duty-bearers) and enhancing their knowledge and skills. This was aimed at supporting the accountability of duty-bearers as they will be aware of their obligations. To encourage duty-bearers to be accountable, the benefits of accountability were explained. Although there have been resistances since long as Human Rights were per se seen as the agenda of the opposition it has been possible to attract duty-bearers and make them understand that rights based programming is not necessarily linked to party politics. This change in general attitude towards rights based programming has been a great success although not all duty-bearers have been fully convinced. Apart from a change of attitude changes in behaviours have been observed. A head man in Matobo for examples has managed to set up a local sub registry office in his ward which has been demanded by people of our concern as the long distance to travel where an obstacle for example to obtain birth certificates which are again the starting point to access rights (for example education and election). Duty-bearers from Mangwe, Gwanda and Bulilima have already invited civil society to participate in budget-making processes. The Matobo RDC identified corruption as a threat to development in the district. They committed to putting in place mechanisms to address these challenges.

Relationships

The change in attitude has also resulted in a change of relationships. As a ward councillor in Zimbabwe reflects the changes he has observed in himself after having applied the rights based approach in his own ward. ‘I have also changed myself. I am more tolerant of alternative views. Community members now dare to tell me if they have a different opinion and I would consider this and provide more room for alternative thinking. We can mutually correct each other and work together now.’ This new relationship was the starting point for cooperations in development and helped the community to get a school after they have been trying for more than 10 years.

HEKS/EPER facilitates a platform (NNMC) for the diverse Dalit and Adibashi groups in the North East of Bangladesh. The major purpose is to raise collective voice in favor of Dalit and Adibashi and to work on policy issues. NNMC this year took part in decision making process (agenda setting, consultation / dialogue, elaboration of policy proposals): Through NNMC 15 Upazila and District level Advocacy Platforms have been formed with a view to pursue Dalit and Adibashi rights mainly by civil society effort. A total of 205 civil
society actors have been involved with the process and they are very much willing to work in favor of Dalit and Adibashi. This year, NNMC has been closely worked for preparing Universal Periodic Review-UPR report with the active participation of Dalit and Adibashi representatives. A shadow report has been submitted to the UN system mentioning current reality and recommendations.

Another change in relationships was for example observed in Cambodia, where the local authority started to listen to BCV community journalist and focal point persons and started to proactively pass on information while they have never cared before.

**Policies and Structures**

It seems self-evident, that it takes longer until rights based programming results into new policies and structures. However, there are also some achievements during the last year. In Zimbabwe, Matobo, a CLS paralegal reported how capacity building on rights led to a process in which a community started to draft a bylaw: ‘The village head wanted to draft a law for his community but since he wanted to make sure that it is in line with the constitution he invited me to support this process. I think it is a very good opportunity to reduce conflicts. I think it can really contribute to peace as we all mutually agree on rules and regulations and this is in line with the constitution, but it is also made and agreed upon by the villagers themselves this will bring unity and development.’

In Bangladesh partners have successfully capacitated and formed Village Development Committees VDC, Human Rights Protection Committee (HRPC), and the advocacy platforms of Network of Non-Mainstreamed Marginalized. This are institutionalized structures bringing duty-bearers and rights-holders together. Furthermore, HEKS/EPER raised awareness of various government stakeholders on rights of minority people through several initiatives: Meeting with prime minister office, discuss the situation with advisor of prime minister, work jointly for land rights and against political violence upon the plain land Adibashi communities. The demand of separate land commission for the plain land Adibashi communities has become a popular campaign. Besides, HEKS/EPER has organized several meetings with APPG secretariat, CSA and other civil society organisation to strengthen the demand of establishing different institutional mechanism for Adibashi and Dalit of plainland. In order to institutionalize fair budgeting, social audits as advocacy instrument on union level was introduced. A total of 26 social audits have been conducted at the Union level to track the quality of annual budgets in line with the rights and entitlements of Dalit and Adibashi.

One of the greater successes in Kosovo was that the legal basis for the institutionalization of the after-school classes has been established with the approval of the Ministry of Education. There are plans to establish a multi stakeholder initiative including Roma which works with the responsible person in the ministry. However, the unstable political environment and the many personnel changes among contacts and key personnel are major challenges.

5.6.1 Progress ‘rights-holders & duty-bearers’ (HKI)

- Number of rights and conflict transformation education events conducted and/or funded

As knowledge about rights is starting point of the HRBA implementation, HEKS/EPER has started to gather key data on the number of trainings in the field of human rights and conflict. During this first year, four countries and nine projects submitted their data showing that they facilitated 484 events addressing 11’197 rights-holders and 1’247 duty-bearers. This finding is in line with the qualitative assessment of the experience capitalisation in which it has been positively noted that the inclusion of duty-bearers into HEKS/EPER engagement has increased.
• **Number of own initiative taken for equality and non-violence.**

![Figure 10](image1.png)

**Figure 10:** Initiatives of communities or individuals towards equality, taken up independently or supported.

An important point to measure the success of capacity building endeavours is to follow up in how far own initiatives are following after trainings. These own initiatives show commitment as well as behavioural change and are thus an indicator for the possible sustainability of the project. Data gathered from 6 projects in 4 countries show that 79 activities have been traced (see figure 10).

• **Number of official claims reflecting the interests of PooC made and accepted with the contribution of HEKS/EPER/partners.**

![Figure 11](image2.png)

**Figure 11:** Initiatives of communities or individuals towards equality, taken up independently or supported.

An indicator that gives evidence regarding empowerment is the number of claims which have been made (see figure 11). 9 projects in 6 different countries have collected data accordingly. Most claims made have been in relation to land (94.7%, see also chapter 5.1).

What has been surprising was the fact that the number of claims made was mainly linked to binding claims (97.4%). This has been discussed and there are different interpretations. An interpretation from Zimbabwe was that since the rights awareness has increased civil society was better able and confident enough to do binding claims as they were able to link their claims to existing laws. Another interpretation is that it is comparatively more difficult to assess non-binding claims and non-binding claims may not be valued equally. However, practice from the past shows the value of non-binding claims as in some cases it is rather a value framework instead of a legally binding framework which impact on the fulfillment of rights. In these cases, non-binding claims are made rather vis-a-vis traditional or religious leaders.

95.4% of the claims are individual claims and only the remaining are collective. In total the 9 projects addressed 61’497 are direct beneficiaries.
Four examples of claims made in Zimbabwe

1. Right to Education: This claim relates to children who were denied access to write examinations because they had not paid school fees. One of the parents of the children, a paralegal, realizing that this was violation of children’s rights, mobilized other parents to approach the school. The school authorities did not listen to them. This prompted the parents to approach CLS to help them file an Urgent Chamber application with the High Court. The hearing was held in Chamber and the Judge called in the Headmaster of Dubula Primary (the affected school), the District Schools Inspector, Lawyers and parents. The Judge ruled that barring of children from school and writing of exams was illegal and unconstitutional and ordered that the children be allowed to go back to school. Resulting from this CLS was asked to facilitate a training of school heads and school development committees on the rights of children especially to education. 210 people were trained. Part of the recommendations from the training was that parents and schools should enter into contract to protect children. Parents were also reminded of their obligation to pay school fees for their children.

2. Locals to benefit from natural resources: A claim was made through a position paper presented to the Matobo Rural District Council and the District Administrator, concerning locals to benefit from natural resources. The claim was accepted and the RDC has since asked for assistance from HEKS/EPER partners to draft a Natural Resources Policy to guide how natural resources are utilized and local benefit. The position paper was presented by action teams in ward 16 and 17.

3. Inclusion of disabled persons: Vernon Ntaiisi is the Vice Convener of the Ward 16 Action Team. He is a person living with disability. This issue of exclusion of people living with disability from village and ward level development structures was identified and presented as a policy issue through a position paper. This claim was accepted at ward level and the ward councillor agreed with other local leaders to give priority to persons living with disability so that they are not left out of development projects. After an analysis of the district it was then noted that this issue was affecting many people in the district. A claim was lodged with the District Administrator, to formulate a district level Disability Policy. This claim was accepted, and the DA requested assistance from Habakkuk Trust to draft the Disability Policy.

4. Claims for birth certificates and Identity documents were also made. The claims increased due to the election project which was encouraging people to get these documents so that they can register to vote under the new BVR process. Two petitions were filed with the Parliament of Zimbabwe. One by YETT working with 30 youth organisations on the need to ease the voter registration process to make it youth friendly and another by HT and CLS on the need to review the births and deaths registration act in order to make the process of acquiring birth certificates and death certificates easier.

5.6.2 Perspectives ‘rights-holders & duty-bearers’

The application of a rights based approach has proven to yield a number of good results, in particular on local and provincial level although the political atmosphere puts its obstacles. However, country offices are committed to frequently watch out for windows of opportunity for higher level advocacy and constantly test ways to apply the concept on lower levels. The aims of accountable duty-bearers, improved relationships between rights-holders and duty-bearers and tangible changes in policies and structures will be pushed on in future. The respective knowledge in the HEKS/EPER offices increased which is an opportunity as well. The facilitation of cooperation between different CSO on country levels has also enhanced voice of people of our concern on higher political level as examples above show. Since there are a lot of good guidance’s and tools available it is planned to enhance a more systematic role out of the concept for the future.

5.7 Inclusion & participatory governance structures

Generally speaking, discrimination and exclusion are the key underlying causes of vulnerability. Inclusion is determined firstly by economic, judicial and societal structures secondly by cultural psychological social values. In 2017, HEKS/EPER continued to support and facilitate processes towards enhancing the fulfillment of rights for discriminated minority groups such as Dalit, Roma, Adivasi and other indigenous or traditional communities in Latin America and Africa and Asia. For example, in the elaboration of the new land strategy for Cambodia, which included interviews with various NGO and Government offices it became clear, that a stronger emphasis is to be put on indigenous people and collective land rights. Subsequently a project focusing on this target group has been set up. In order to measure inclusion of minorities groups in Bangladesh the country office traces the number of Dalit and Adibashi representatives included in
committees. In 2017, a total of 496 Dalit and Adibashi have been included in the different decision-making committees, among them 313 were male and 183 were female. From Adibashi community 208, and from Dalit community 104 persons included in the different types of committee which includes: school management committee, environment and tree plantation committee, women and child welfare committee, agriculture and fisheries committee, disaster management committee, market committee, cooperative committee, temple committee, social club, Hat Bazar committee, legal aid committee through union parishad, upazila parishad and district level administration. They have been linking through different interventions of the projects like advocacy, linkage, workshops/meeting, awareness sessions resulting in quality leadership, improved negotiation skills, collective voice raising ultimate to the social inclusion. This increased inclusion has furthermore lead to improved relations between our people of our concern and the mainstream society. They have now taken initiatives to solve community problems. Some comprehensive insights on HEKS/EPER social inclusion endeavours and lessons learned are to be found in the separate chapter on Roma inclusion.

5.7.1 Progress ‘inclusion & governance’
See progress analysis of ‘access to basic services’ (chapter 5.2.1) as well as ‘rights-holders & duty-bearers’ (chapter 5.6.1), where the indicators describe forms of inclusion or claims to promote inclusion.

5.7.2 Perspectives ‘inclusion & governance’
Social inclusion will be key in the coming HEKS/EPER Eastern Europe (Roma) inclusion strategy linked with fostering good governance animating municipalities and national State services to co-finance or fully finance activities enabling social, but also economic and political inclusion of marginalized, certainly Roma (more chapter 5.10).
Generally, HEKS/EPER is convinced working towards good governance and inclusion fosters systemic change towards a more equitable and prosperous society in the respective countries. Inclusion forms win-win situations as empowered marginalized contribute certainly economically to the well-being of the whole society. Therefore, Government’s funding for inclusion will give a return in investment. Inclusion also foster peace and peaceful society are more effective actors in their own development.

5.8 Improved intra- & inter-group relations
Fragmentation within communities and cleavages between communities have been identified as key obstacles to development endeavours. Promoting mutual recognition, respect and cohesion within and between groups means building and reinforcing shared values. The experiences in South Sudan seem to provide a showcase for the need to focus on nation building instead of state building. Hesitancy towards nation building has been visible in the political culture of power dynamics resulting in personalist politics and the tendency to consolidate power to the exclusion of opposition and minority voices. Furthermore, a reluctance to engage in explicit reconciliation efforts to address grievances caused by the war and ongoing perceptions of unfairness and bias contributed to tainted inter-ethnic relationships and – in many cases – the establishment of armed militias. According to HEKS/EPER’s assessments individual and collective trauma are seen as key obstacles to improve inter group relationships in South Sudan. HEKS/EPER partner reconcile applies a comprehensive approach in which community healing and quiet diplomacy enhances relationship between communities. In the spirit of a common humanity (Ubuntu), People-For-People, Peace-Building seeks the healing of wounds, redressing the imbalances and restoring the relationships. The process involves victims, offenders, communities, and government to build peace. Although the implementation has proven difficult due to ongoing violence and the fact that a number of staffs are still in exile it was a success that quiet diplomacy activities led to enhanced access to conflict prone villages also for humanitarian access.

In Zimbabwe, Habakkuk trust is striving to unite different groups along political lines through a diapraxis approach. This approach puts a joint practical goal into the center instead of beginning with dialogue. In Matabeleland development used to been seen an arena of political fight and violence. Those cleavages lead to obstruct most development efforts. The identification of joint aims – as for example the desire to build a clinic or school has been ‘used’ as a motor to unite people across political lines. ‘Now we are exchanging salt with our neighbors’ and ‘development has no political party; our community is development driven now’ are statements from the communities proving the betterment of intra group relationships.
Another interesting project in this regard is the joint project between Badil and Zochrot, where partners are empowering Israeli communities and Palestinian refugee communities to envision the return to demolished villages while taking into account each side's perceptions and fears. The alternative models and visions of return are utilized and used advocacy tools by the communities and partners to further push the relevant duty-bearers to take responsibility to the right of return of Palestinian refugees. Within the joint action of Zochrot and Social TV (Odna Israeli), Zochrot managed to recruit around 30 Israeli persons to join the Return council, that will initiate activities and products to reach more Israelis. Moreover, the council’s messages will be accompanied and intensified by a campaign that will carefully deal with the taboo of return among Israelis, while taking into account fear and rejection to deal with the return as a critical condition for sustainable peace. Israel social TV, within the same joint action, produced few media products within a joint project with Zochrot that document the work of youth groups at ODNA project, discussions with Israeli members of the parliament about the right of return.

5.8.1 Progress ‘group relations’ (HKI)

With its two core topics rural development and conflict transformation HEKS/EPER identified a diapraxis approach to represent a particular organisational added value. The HEKS/EPER diapraxis approach identifies practical endeavours, such as for example vegetable gardening to increase income as connector in order to enhance relationships between societies. A joint goal and joint practical work is the means to enhance trust and having antagonistic groups living together in peace. This concept can be applied to counter conflicts within smaller communities as well as between broader identity groups. Therefore HEKS/EPER has been promoting the diapraxis approach at aims at measuring its application as an institutional indicator. There are 36 projects in 12 countries focussing on HIP goal 8 improved inter and intra group relationship out of which 17 states to make use of the diapraxis approach. Interesting but not surprising is the fact that the enthusiasm to apply the approach more broadly is quite high. Almost half of the countries felt that the approach should be applied throughout the programme. Another 6 country offices plan to apply the approach from one third two thirds of the project and only one country found the approach irrelevant for its programme. In more than a quarter of countries the approach is already included in all projects and in 25% of the countries two thirds of the programmes already apply the approach. Although the approach seems to be seen as promising it is to mention that it partly seen with scepticism. In situations where power imbalances are high, and cleavages are deep and human rights violations are ongoing it may be difficult for partners to sell – cooperation with the enemy in a joint practical project to its constituencies as it is for example the case in Israel/Palestine.
5.8.2 Perspectives ‘group relations’

See chapter 11.3: the pattern on ‘Reaching out for the rights-holders and how to empower them?’ shows the challenges and opportunities on how to improve inter- and intra-group relations.

5.9 Commitment & public attitude towards peace

Human rights and justice are an important foundation for peace. However, peace is more than justice. It is a value system which guides individuals and groups and determines the peacefulness of a relationship. During an analysis conducted to develop the conflict transformation implementation concept a ‘culture of violence’ has been identified to be a key driver of conflict. Therefore HEKS/EPER strives to promote peace education in order to form a value base on peaceful living together and activate a critical mass to engage for peace. A particular focus is placed on the integration of the voice of young people into those initiatives in line with UN Resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security.

The ‘Youth for Peace’ project in South Caucasus is a good example for HEKS/EPER endeavours in this regard. An external evaluation carried out in June 2017 revealed the project objectives to be consistent with and meaningful to the existing possibilities of peace building in South Caucasus. The need and potential for, as well as the possibilities conflict transformation are still immense. Limitations lie with the highest level of systems and institutions, perceived as ‘hard-to-reach’ and not to be challenged. Therefore, the greatest impact was measured on grassroots level, in the communities the youth involved in the Project are coming from, where substantial social capital is being built. It is reflected in personal changes with the Project beneficiaries. It arises from challenging three major dividers on the level of systems and institutions: old-fashioned education system, militarism and propaganda. Information dissemination is the most way common this impact is communicated to a wider grassroots audience. The bottom-up direction of the Project impact caused middle-level opinion leaders with the grassroots to support it extensively after seeing the impact it had on the youth. The new project puts efforts on reaching out to socio political level in a sensitive manner. Implemented under CREATE project the Peace Bus uniting Georgian and Abkhaz co-performers (Andrea Gvelesiani, Giorgi Tskhadade, Marta Tsvijba, Zlata Tujba (2 Georgian and 2 Abkhaz performers) travelled from Tbilisi to Marneuli, then to Gyumri and Yerevan. The concerts were broadcast live and all the photos were posted on IMTD Facebook page. Facilitators had opening and closing speeches, as well as small discussions on the role of art in conflict transformation with the visitors. Armenian Round table succeeded in the implementation of CT course at Slavonic University, which became an obligatory for the students of International Law and Relations. The CT course in Slavonic university seems to be quite sustainable and interesting for the students. As a result of the course students of Slavonic University, having met with Azeri youth in the third country managed to have constructive and conflict free conversation on the topic of Nagorno Karabakh.

In Cambodia, BCV has been working well to contribute to the establishment of conflict transformation networks at various levels through their focal point persons and community journalists. These efforts also focus on community development and peacebuilding to improve social relations in the villages. As a result...
of training and awareness raising, domestic violence has decreased in BCV project areas [confirmed by commune chief as well]. Also, the community dares to discuss with local authorities when they face any concerns and they started a dialogue for solving the issues. In addition, after understanding the peacebuilding concepts, 70% of focal points persons and community journalists have changed their attitude in increasing good relationship and communication among community members and become respectful to each other as well as changing their behaviour to participate more in social activities. This is raised by community facilitators in the four target communes.

In Bangladesh, 617 activities have been carried out in order to create a critical mass in favour of Dalit and Adibashi people for striving for equality and non-violence. People of our concern have taken initiatives for equality and non-violence in the frame of periodic meetings with mainstream community representatives. In case of Human Rights violations against Adibashi and Dalits CSOs jointly organised rallies, human chains (such as –protest on Gobindaganj issue and human chain for Sukhiya Rabidas murder) and the greater community joined in different day observations and programmes, (Human Rights Day, International Indigenous day etc.) memorandum submission and practicing diapraxis approach on different development issues.

5.9.1 Progress ‘peace’ (HKI)

It is the same indicator on trainings as used to describe progress for the DC objective 6 on rights-holders & duty-bearers, chapter 5.6.2. During this first year, four countries and nine projects submitted their data showing that they facilitated 484 events addressing 11’197 rights-holders and 1’247 duty-bearers.

No other HKI have been gathered yet.

5.9.2 Perspectives ‘peace’

The Goal 9 ‘Commitment & public attitude towards peace’ is currently a focus in the conflict transformation advisory group which enhance exchange between country offices. The South Caucasus CT advisor presented the vast experiences to other country offices during our monthly skype. Discussion reaffirmed the main challenge is to lift the attitudes for peace from individual level to socio political level. HEKS/EPER is currently exploring strategies to enhance the impact of its peace work on main stream discourse. In this regard new media are also explored. In the planned conflict transformation advisory group meeting which aims at fostering exchange between countries the topic of – public attitude towards peace will a priority.

5.10 Special Chapter on Roma inclusion

Within HEKS/EPER both section, DC and CC, are working on the Roma inclusion topic. The DC programme includes the activities of partner NGOs in Serbia, Kosovo and Romania. In line with national and European Roma Inclusion Strategies, the Regional Roma Inclusion Programme of HEKS/EPER continued to focus on improving the situation of Roma communities in the areas of education, housing and employment. The CC partners in Hungary, Slovakia and the Ukraine work mainly on community level in the domain of after-schooling and creating room for exchange between Roma and non-Roma. HEKS/EPER strives for synergies between all partner activities providing capacity building and experience exchange.

DC Roma Inclusion Programme

1) Housing: Overall, more than 200 families upgraded their houses with expertise and building materials provided by the programme. The programme was able to mobilize between 30% and 50% of co-funding by municipalities.

In Serbia, a promising pilot developed procedures for house legalisation and thus can be seen as a good example on the practical implementation of the human rights-based approach and a successful dialogue with duty-bearers. The pilot which was implemented in Babusnica in partnership and co-financing with the municipality enabled the legalization of 26 illegally built houses in two Roma settlements, by providing legal and technical advice for the families in the process of obtaining the documentation needed for house
legalization according to existing laws. The partner organisation EHO is working on a guide on house legalization in order to influence respective policies and practices all over Serbia.

In Kosovo, HEKS/EPER partner VoRAE successfully implemented the dweller-driven house upgrading in selected municipalities; mobilisation of self-contribution of municipalities was successful; connecting Roma settlements to basic infrastructure in most cases also implemented, in some cases, municipalities are delaying the processes.

2) Education: Overall, some 5’000 students benefitted from afterschool and tutoring support as well as from measures towards a more inclusive school system.

In Kosovo, the project advocated successfully for the creation of a legal basis for the institutionalization of Educational Centres for afterschool support into the school system. The legislation was under threat after the change of Government in 2017, but a clever advocacy strategy focusing on a variety of stakeholders and putting emphasis of a common voice of civil society made it possible that the sub-legal act was passed. Partner NGO VoRAE continued to run 19 educational centres in 12 municipalities with the municipalities contributing to costs with 10%. 500 secondary students received scholarships.

In Serbia, inclusiveness of schools was increased by offering intercultural education trainings for teachers and by supporting schools in developing school development projects. 306 teachers from 40 schools participated in ICE trainings, 19 schools developed their own ICE projects/initiatives. Policy paper for mainstreaming ICE in Serbia has been drafted by an expert group. An advocacy plan will show directions for better inclusion of ICE principals in mainstream education system. The mentoring and tutoring support by pedagogic assistants reached 602 students. 5 municipalities have been supported in creating local action plans for reintegration and in building up an outreach service to reach returnees/migrants.

In Romania, the partner NGO increased advocacy for supplementary educational support such as after school classes, catch-up summer kindergartens, examination preparatory support, fostering cooperation between schools and parents, improving quality and efficiency of supplementary educational support. The summer kindergarten continued in Cluj, Bihor and Salaj county in 18 locations with the financial participation of municipalities. 2’500 children and teenagers in 100 groups could visit after school classes increasing school capacities and social inclusion.

The unpredictable political and economic environment is affecting in a high degree the co-funding level from local and regional administration. Further more, the increase of salaries in public sector is shrinking the allocated local budgets for investments and services.

3) Income & employment: In Romania, job mediation was successful and to a lesser extent also in Kosovo. The employment component increasingly active in facilitating the transition from education to employment, e.g. by offering/facilitating career education and counselling, cooperating with vocational training institutions, sensitizing public and private employers, offering soft skills trainings certainly for young Roma and in some cases by supporting self-employment. In Kosovo, strategic partnerships were established with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare as well as Regional Training Centres and Professional Vocational Schools which enhanced their registration for professional training courses. In Romania, the lack of employment opportunities for Roma and other marginalized groups ask for action of HEKS/EPER to foster employability with trainings reaching 140 Roma. There were 316 job mediations which lead to 64 persons employed in road constructions, cleaning, mechanics, security and other.

CC activities

In Hungary and Slovakia, Roma projects are part of Church Cooperation and as such fostered the inclusion of Roma in the respective churches by supporting congregational projects. In Slovakia, the evaluation of the first project phase showed that the involved congregations made significant efforts to include Roma, be it through their diocesan work with children and youth or through integration of Roma families in church activities. Experience in both Hungary and Slovakia shows that changing attitudes of the majority takes time, but is increasingly happening. In Hungary, the Roma project expanded its objectives to promoting inclusiveness of reformed schools.
In the Ukraine, in September 2017 a project with afternoon classes in three localities to improve the inclusion of Roma in the school system has been launched.

5.10.1 Key data DC on ‘Roma inclusion’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of direct beneficiaries Individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of individuals perceive their income increased</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of individuals perceive their yields</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of individuals whose access to public services was facilitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of individuals whose quality of life in conflict situation has improved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of individuals whose livelihoods have improved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of individuals whose access to water was facilitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>4’706 181 0 4’264 0 0 443 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>9’723 588 0 3’935 5’000 200 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>6’901 0 0 4’996 1’806 0 60 95 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21’330 769 0 13’195 6’806 200 503 95 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13: Roma inclusion – indicators of HEKS/EPER DC projects in Eastern Europe; not including CC inclusion efforts.

5.10.2 Perspectives for social inclusion in Eastern Europe

In all countries, Roma inclusion activities of HEKS/EPER successfully advocated with duty-bearers on municipal and regional level for the introduction of above mentioned models for social inclusion and for financial contributions from municipal/state funds. This HRBA is promising and HEKS/EPER wants to capitalize on these first successful systemic steps forward. Nevertheless, advocacy on national level remains a challenge in both Serbia and Romania, while in Kosovo, due to the smaller size of the country, HEKS/EPER’s partner organisation made significant contributions to the National Strategy on the Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities 2017–2020. The strategy was approved by the Kosovo government in April 2017. The programme is now supporting municipalities and local CSOs in developing local action plans for the implementation of this strategy.

HEKS/EPER is about to develop a new phase of the regional programme on social inclusion with a focus on Roma minorities in Eastern Europe and will include the learnings of the current phase, capitalized in separate a workshop, as well as evaluations done previously to define the frame and objectives of the coming phase. HEKS/EPER will continue working towards the institutionalization of successful models of social inclusion in the sectors of education, housing and income & employment, contributing to more inclusive institutions and markets. Advocacy processes for policy changes and funding by authorities will continue to be important components, as well as strengthening representative structures of civil society and participation of and ownership by marginalized groups. Also funding of the programme, itself got to be secured accessing funds from EU, SDC and other potential donors.

Regarding I&E, HEKS/EPER wants to grow and intervene in a systemic and sustainable way, working with local actors especially in the areas of job mediation and transition from education to employment. This might be complemented with a more business-minded approach (see also chapter 11.2.2 on patterns). It will be key to have incentive structures in the countries which make taking a job more attractive than depending on welfare. On the other hand, addressing discrimination and building trust between communities and institutions / employers remain key issues to address exclusion.

In some cases, HEKS/EPER also needs to increase participation of Roma in its own projects, from planning, to implementing till learning from and documenting a project. Public sensitization on the importance and relevance of social and economic inclusion influencing policy making shall be strengthened. The future regional programme will include both DC and CC partners implementing well-coordinated the various projects. Strategic alliances for policy dialogue or joint learning or programming are helpful (e.g. Euro-Diakonia, other Swiss organizations). HEKS/EPER will need to clarify if it sticks to today’s countries or if additional areas/countries will be included.

In Eastern Europe, HEKS/EPER also works towards social inclusion and access to basic services for other marginalized groups in the domains homecare, domestic violence and people with disabilities. This is mainly
done by CC projects. Synergies with Roma inclusion are possible and access for Roma to these basic services will be fostered; framed in the coming Eastern Europe inclusion strategy.
6 Progress in humanitarian aid

Although we have been lucky enough not to witness major rapid onset disasters in 2017, HEKS/EPER still responded to the survival needs of the most vulnerable with numerous projects, distributing life savings items, food, cash, seeds, providing access to water and sanitation, livelihood recovery and rebuilding schools. Our focus was mainly in two regions of the world: East Africa and the Middle East. HEKS/EPER strengthened its response to the crisis in Syria and the neighboring countries opening a regional office in Amman to support the projects in Iraq, Lebanon and Syria. The focus on conflict-affected countries compelled us to pay a greater attention to conflict-sensitivity, one the cross-cutting aspect in all our projects.

In the Philippines, HEKS/EPER handed over to the local authorities three schools cum shelters, successfully concluding a four years post Haiyan intervention. In Haiti, the interventions following the 2016 cyclone Mathew continued but the shift towards a country programme focused on increasing the resilience of the population of Grand’Anse has started. Altogether, more than 422’000 people have benefitted from HEKS/EPER humanitarian aid projects in 2017.

6.1 Life-saving through access to water, food, shelter, hygiene

In 2017 HEKS/EPER was able to provide live saving services to over 174’000 people in 9 countries as the floods, droughts and conflict (e.g. Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Syria, Haiti and South Sudan). Almost all of these responses were characterized by a cash based approach, ranging from cash for work, cash for assets and unconditional cash support. The implementation modalities ranged from distribution via rechargeable ecards to credit issued to beneficiaries’ mobile phones (e.g. Nigeria). In addition to the cash based interventions, HEKS/EPER also provided WASH in South Sudan/ Uganda through the rehabilitation and drilling of new bore holes, building latrines and hygiene promotion. The context of Syria, however, has limitations in implementing cash-based projects, due to restrictions by the authorities for iNGOs and/or the lack of appropriate distribution mechanisms and low capacities of possible partner organizations.

In the light of the intensifying of the conflicts in many countries, like Iraq, Syria and South Sudan, conflict sensitivity is becoming increasingly important for HEKS/EPER’s work. Years of conflict and abuse and disrespect for humanitarian law, have completely eroded the social fabric in these countries, therefore HEKS/EPER’s intervention need to increasingly focus at promoting social cohesion through their activities. However, not only countries with ongoing conflicts need to look into conflict sensitivity, as the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh clearly shows that there is still a lot of work to be done in this area. This is partly due to restrictions imposed by the authorities but also due to the programmatic focus of HEKS/EPERs partners on other minorities. A conflict sensitive approach always needs to take the host community into account. In Lebanon HEKS/EPER is achieving this goal by including the host communities into the activities and letting members of both communities work side by side to improve their common living conditions through cash for work. Preliminary results show that, this has contributed to reducing tensions considerably.
The volatile security situation and political instability continues to be a major constraint for HEKS/EPER and its partners in the provision of humanitarian assistance, especially in Syria, Iraq and South Sudan, where frontlines are constantly changing displacing increasing numbers of people and overwhelming the humanitarian community capacity to respond. Alone in Syria, Iraq and South Sudan account for almost 28 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.

6.1.1 Key data ‘life saving’

With various activities summarized in the objective ‘life saving’ HEKS/EPER reached in 2017 approximately 175’000 individuals – included are first response distributions of food/water or non-food items such as hygiene items, blankets, stoves etc. The sheer number of people reached does not reflect the duration and scale of an intervention. In Aleppo, Syria, HEKS/EPER organized two distributions in 2017 providing mainly hygiene kits, mattresses and clothing and reached 25’200 individuals with less finances and resources than the 9’800 people in Lebanon with a more sophisticated, more expensive approach providing also more assistance per person. So, numbers always have to be put into context – duration, scope, finances, approach (sheer distribution or cash system or food for work, etc.), accessibility, kind of items, etc. have its influence.

6.1.2 Perspectives ‘life saving’

Taking into consideration that HEKS/EPER is working in a lot of contexts which have become a protracted crisis (e.g. Syria and Iraq), HEKS/EPER is shifting its attention towards longer term solutions for the affected population, exploring other areas of intervention to accommodate the need of the people of our concern to become less dependent on humanitarian assistance. Access to the labour market, agriculture and inclusive markets will play an increasing role in HEKS/EPERS humanitarian work, however the need for life saving assistance will continue to persist and complement the above-mentioned interventions. The increasing complexity of these protracted crisis, necessitates the putting more expertise into the regions, closer to the field as well as a process of decentralization, giving the country offices more responsibility to raise funds on their own. This is especially the case for the countries in the Middle East. The long-term engagement for HEKS/EPER in Lebanon and relative stability provides the opportunity for the Lebanon programmes to become forerunner for the region.

6.2 Rehabilitated livelihood opportunities

Livelihoods of population affected by natural disasters or conflicts are massively disrupted or transformed entirely. Formerly viable livelihoods become no longer reliable or feasible. In the immediate aftermath, during the relief phase, support is often given in the form of cash-for-work programmes (e.g. clearing debris, repair of community infrastructure or rebuilding family homes), in-kind distributions and cash transfers. All these approaches allow families to recover and increase household income.

However, as these programmes are often short-term and close to immediate ‘life saving’, they need a follow-up. The affected households do not only need support to re-establish their livelihoods, but as circumstances might have changed it is necessary to diversify livelihoods and income strategies to lessen future impacts of natural disasters and/or conflicts on the overall livelihood strategies of households. Empirical studies have shown that households with diversified livelihood incomes can more easily cope with the impact of disasters as the diverse incomes allow households to rely on secondary or tertiary income sources. These households also have more resistance against negative coping mechanisms such as borrowing money (often with very high interest rates), selling household assets and labour migration.
To enable households to avoid the vicious cycle of transformed and disrupted livelihoods and negative coping mechanisms, in 2017 HEKS/EPER supported disaster-affected populations in 3 countries as soon as possible in restoring their livelihoods.

In Iraq, HEKS/EPER continued its agricultural food security project in 4 regions – with the construction of small dams, irrigation systems, the renovation of public infrastructures and agricultural advice for local farmers. Benefitting from this were mainly formerly internally displaced returning now to their home area.

In Haiti after Matthew, HEKS/EPER provided seeds for farmer families (4’200 individuals profiting) enabling the recovery of agricultural production and therefore, food security as well as income.

In the Sudan crises about 3’900 individuals could restart their agricultural livelihoods after seed and tool distributions.

In Italy HEKS/EPER supported the reintegration of 5 ex-convicts into jobs and facilitated their social reintegration. On the whole 5 families found an entry gate into a decent life again.

6.2.1 Key data ‘rehabilitation’

Restoring livelihoods in 2017 did focus on Haiti after Matthew, South Sudan during the ongoing civil war and Northern Iraq enabling returnees to retake agricultural production. Key element of all these interventions was to enable agricultural production thanks to seed distribution and rehabilitation of needed infrastructure. Linking rehabilitation towards long-term development was not part of the portfolio 2017, apart from some promising aspects in Northern Iraq and the ‘institutionalization’ of depot seed banks in Haiti.

6.2.2 Perspectives ‘rehabilitation’

HEKS/EPER strives for a shift from first response distributions and cash programmes towards more sustainable livelihood activities. Therefore, LRRD must be the future key approach (see chapter 6.4.2). Apart from re-launching agricultural or non-agricultural productions, HEKS/EPER wants to promote functioning value chains. HEKS/EPER DC knowledge on inclusive markets shall ‘inspire’ HA projects.

6.3 Reconstructed public and private infrastructure

Rehabilitating infrastructure is a prerequisite for restoring livelihoods and the prior status quo ante after disasters strike. Moreover, the building back better approach contributes to improvements of living conditions and better chances for the communities affected.

In Iraq 4 water dams and one village irrigation system have been reconstructed. These interventions benefitted 450 families (2’600 persons) in rural areas of Northern Iraq, mainly in the Kurdish area, where both IDPs and host communities benefitted from improved agricultural infrastructure.

In Haiti more than 4’400 children have started their educational courses in 11 rehabilitated multipurpose community and educational centres and more than 12’000 families gained safe access to 9 repaired community water reserves.

In South Sudan access to water for 11’000 persons has been improved and 25’000 persons gained access to safe sanitation facilities. In the neighbouring Uganda, HEKS/EPER intervention in the refugee camp of Bidi Bidi provides water access to more than 26’000 South Sudanese refugees and host population.
In Lebanon the project achieved to rehabilitate the housing of 80 of the most vulnerable refugee families (approx. 200 individuals). Making their homes safer, provide more dignity and improve the health conditions of families living in these shelters. These objectives could be met, and the living conditions of the targeted families considerably improved.

In Pakistan, overall 105'000 persons benefitted from access to safe drinking water and safe sanitation units. Most of infrastructure has been created in 2015/16 but the final lot WASH-units for another 50'000 have been completed in early 2017 (see also chapter 6.4).

In the Philippines more than 900 persons benefit from multipurpose structures, which are used as schools and flood shelters.

In Serbia 822 persons benefitted from WASH support with water supply constructed in camps.

In Zimbabwe nearly 4’000 school children benefitted from safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.

6.3.1 Key data ‘reconstruction’

The ‘big numbers’ were reached with road and community centre infrastructure re-built after Matthew – so event the activities were quite straight forward.

6.3.2 Perspectives ‘reconstruction’

Reconstructing and rehabilitating public and private infrastructure will remain a major element of HEKS/EPER humanitarian work beyond 2017. The dilapidation and destruction of infrastructure is a major reason for slow recovery of societies hit by disasters. While reconstruction after natural disasters mainly poses managerial, financial and technical challenges, fragile contexts after man-made crisis additionally major impediments are security and complex political, social and economic challenges, which pose high risks to investment. Since HEKS/EPER is well experienced in a conflict sensitive project-approach, we are not avoiding reconstruction and rehabilitation.
in fragile and insecure environments, but we are well aware of the challenges and risks. Therefore, we keep this working field further on our agenda, but we assess carefully where and how we intervene and support in this field, in order to assure the highest possible degree of sustainability.

6.4 Increased prevention and preparedness

HEKS/EPER’s humanitarian aid department addresses future emergencies on two levels. As in development cooperation, resilience and/or DRR is mainstreamed in disaster response projects to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts of hazards. Additionally, the country offices and local partners are systematically prepared to implement emergency response projects in case of emergency.

Zimbabwe and Bangladesh were the first pilot countries where HEKS/EPER implemented a humanitarian aid training for country office and partner staff. The training does not only increase the disaster response capacity of training participants, but institutionalises preparedness. After the trainings, country offices develop Disaster Response Plans (DRP), in which the country's disaster risks are analysed. Based on this analysis and the capacities and strategic priorities of HEKS/EPER customized response strategies are designed for different disaster scenarios. Having a response plan will allow the country office to quickly and efficiently intervene in case a disaster happens. The plan also ensures that HEKS/EPER is represented in relevant coordination mechanisms, and observes early warning systems, even at times when emergency response is not required.

In DC resilience is mainstreamed into project to be able to react better on shocks and stresses likely to occur in the future or permanently occurring (slow-onset disasters). In HA, once a major disaster event happens, HEKS/EPER is implementing a response projects. E.g. in Pakistan, where the WASH project in Sindh has a disaster preparedness component with a wide spread training input in all 290 project villages. Overall, 105'000 individuals benefit from better community preparedness in case flooding of wider scale strikes again – 50'000 were reached with sensitization in 2017.

In Northern Iraq’s Kurdistan region, HEKS/EPER has built four water dams and rehabilitated a canal system for water distribution. This has benefitted 450 farmer families (2'700 persons) directly, both IDPs and host communities, in rural areas. The dams store sufficient water to sustain agriculture during the whole year, since green houses are attached to the drip irrigation systems. The combination of water storage, efficient distribution water systems and innovative practice (green houses and drip irrigation) prevents communities from falling victim to droughts and food shortage. The sales of vegetables and other crops provides sufficient income for families to sustain their existence and makes savings possible. Hence, people could not only overcome a crisis but have become more resilient to future crisis.

In Haiti, the people benefitting from HEKS/EPRE support in five communities are making use of the capacities they acquired in cash-for-work projects and trainings on sustainability and maintenance of basic infrastructure, personal and environmental hygiene, soil conservation and water management. In practice, measures such as supporting walls, planting of green species for soil consolidation, and earthquake and hurricane proof building techniques were adopted to extend the life cycle of rural basic infrastructure such as schools, rural trails and market stalls. The local population is now equipped with tools to maintain and clean rural infrastructure and fields in case of a disaster. Moreover, the rehabilitation of rural trails has brought vulnerable communities closer to basic services, drinking water sources, markets and schools which helps to improve their preparedness in case of a disaster.
Emergency aid and long-term development

19 of the 21 largest humanitarian crises in the world have already lasted more than five years – including in the Middle East, where HEKS/EPER is providing emergency aid in Iraq, Lebanon and Syria and helping people to survive as much as possible. How should HEKS/EPER deal with this permanent crisis? How can people’s livelihoods be sustainably improved? The aim is to strengthen the economy and society in the long term, for example by creating income opportunities or promoting peaceful coexistence. However, the development of long-term development projects requires an expansion of human resources and an increase of the financial base by international donors. HEKS/EPER must strengthen its presence in the region and, in addition to supporting partner organisations, increasingly implement its own projects. HEKS/EPER is therefore setting up coordination offices with local staff in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. The aim is to develop a regional strategy that creates synergies between the areas of humanitarian aid, development cooperation and church cooperation.

In general, the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) approach that HEKS/EPER is committed to links the activities in the different phases in order to provide sustainable long-term solutions to affected people and communities. Therefore, it is key to build on and intentionally strengthen local capacities in cooperation with local communities (participation), partners, authorities and other INGOs. Relief, reconstruction/rehabilitation and development do not always follow a direct line from relief activities after a disaster to reconstruction to development. In practice, development and relief may coexist. A disaster can disrupt the daily life of people and communities to such an extent that relief is necessary. Economic activities in war-torn regions continue despite the crisis and alongside relief interventions. The idea of humanitarian aid and development work take place at the same time, side by side in the same communities, is thus more appropriate than that of a single line.

6.5 Whole of Syria

The Syria crisis is entering its seventh year and it does not seem to be coming to an end soon. This not only has implications for the more than 13 million affected people inside the country, but also for the over 5 million Syrians which have been able to flee into the neighbouring countries in the past years. The international community is starting to acknowledge that for the neighbouring countries, which have generously allowed so many Syrians refugee within their borders the negative impact on their economies and increasing tensions in the host communities due to competition for the already scarce resources. There is also an increasing acknowledgement that the focus cannot only be on refugees but must also accommodate the needs of the vulnerable host communities.
Weak economic growth, stressed public finances and export disruption have long been major challenges facing these economies, in some cases threatening development gains. In the case of Lebanon, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has fallen by more than 50 per cent since the beginning of the crisis. In Jordan and Iraq, the additional population pressure has taxed both public infrastructure (e.g. roads, health, water) and private infrastructure (e.g. housing), with the government facing significant pressure to maintain the quality of services and infrastructure.\footnote{http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/the-3rp/}

Hence, a focus is shifting towards livelihoods, employability and improving access to markets for refugee and local populations. HEKS/EPERs humanitarian aid can benefit from the vast experience of the development cooperation department in these thematic areas.

Despite this shift, there are still large urgent unmet needs both inside and outside Syria which still require life-saving humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable populations. In order to address the complexity of the needs and situation in and outside of Syria, HEKS/EPER is shifting. The complexity of the situation in around Syria, also necessitates from HEKS/EPER to change its implementation modalities and also include more self-implementation. In a step towards this goal, HEKS/EPER has started to register in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq (Central) as well as in Jordan. The complexity will most probably need a mix of self-implementation and working with local partners, who have better access to hard to reach areas and are less exposed to security threats.

**Linkages to church cooperation**

While the work of church cooperation is completely different to humanitarian aid, the pilot projects initiated by CC in 2017 inside Syria and Lebanon play an important role in promoting social cohesion. Afternoon classes for children of different faith and denominations are vital to rebuild trust between different religious groups, which have been eroded through years of war inside Syria.

**Northern Iraq**

Iraq: 2017 in Iraq saw the continuation of our LRRD strategy in combination with an engagement for IDPs from Mosul, Diyala and other areas of Iraq, who had been displaced to the Kurdistan region of Iraq. HEKS/EPER supports about 50’000 IDPs in camps with WASH and 3’000 non-camp IDPs (after the October 2017 referendum crisis). After the earthquake of November 2017 HEKS/EPER intervened with Cash and resilience training to benefit earthquake victims.

Since the liberation of Nineva and the Hawija area from the Islamic State, return is high up on the agenda of the international community and the Iraqi government. HEKS/EPER is therefore preparing sustainable returnee projects in Nineva, Salah-al-Din and Diyala through an integrated gradual approach, where emergency livelihoods, rehabilitation and sustainable (agricultural) livelihoods are combined; application of these components is depending on the given security situation and access opportunities.

HEKS/EPER is pursuing a growth strategy in Iraq. The country office in Erbil is going to expand with the recruitment of an international team (currently national coordination), where international technical experts are supporting self-implemented projects and/or will backstop the implementation by national Iraqi partner organisations. HEKS/EPER is aiming at international project funding of major international donors such as the EU, the US and others.

**6.5.1 Perspectives ‘whole of Syria’**

HEKS/EPER will continue to increase its HA response in 2018 and the response to the crisis within Syria and in the neighbouring countries. HEKS/EPER is currently in the process of getting its registration in Syria, once this is completed an office will be set up allowing projects implementation with a close monitoring by HEKS/EPER. Links with the ACT network will be increased, more partnership will be sought.

In Lebanon, HEKS/EPER presence with an expatriate humanitarian delegate will also be strengthened. New partnerships with local NGOs and networks to extend our geographical and thematical coverage will be developed.

Iraq: With the liberation of wider areas from the subjugation of the Islamic State in June 2017 (Mosul/Nineva) and September 2017 (Hawija) opportunities for return of large groups of IDPs have become feasible and agencies are already implementing or preparing major returnee programmes to these areas. Since HEKS/EPER will expand her personnel base in Iraq with international staff on the ground, we plan to access funding for the wider returnee programmes. However, HEKS/EPER will keep up her strong working relationship with her
national partners in Iraq and also further on cooperate closely with international partners of the ACT Alliance in-country.

HEKS/EPER is registered with Kurdish regional government since March 2016 as an international NGO and we are currently pursuing registration with the central Iraqi authorities in Baghdad. HEKS/EPER has her country office currently established in Erbil and operates a satellite office in Suleymania; it envisages programming in humanitarian aid in Iraq until end 2020 with the likely option to extend her engagement beyond.

Example Lebanon: ‘We offer refugees hope’

Leila El Ali is the Director of ‘Najdeh’, a HEKS/EPER local partner organisation in Lebanon. ‘Najdeh’ supports families seeking protection in Beirut from the war in Syria. ‘They have no work or future prospects and live in grinding poverty’, says Leila El Ali.

The Shatila refugee settlement in Beirut was set up in 1949, originally for some 3,000 Palestinian refugees. Since then its population has multiplied. There were over 16,000 people already living in Shatila before the Syrian war. Since the outbreak of fighting in Syria, thousands more refugees have come. Today there are 22,000 people living in Shatila in extremely cramped conditions.

Due to uncontrolled construction, formerly two-storey houses have now been converted even into five-storey structures in some cases. No sunlight reaches down into the narrow alleys. Not infrequently, people are electrocuted by dangling powerlines. Herself a Palestinian child refugee, Leila El Ali grew up in Shatila. ‘The exponential population growth has brought Shatila to the verge of collapse.’

A decent home

There is hardly any living space for the newcomers. They pay exorbitant rents to live in damp, half-finished buildings, in storerooms without windows or in stairwells. There is mould growing everywhere and many refugees suffer from acute asthma. ‘Living conditions in Shatila have deteriorated steadily over recent years.’

HEKS/EPER and ‘Najdeh’ have therefore launched a project to improve the precarious living conditions. Together with local tradespeople, themselves having arrived in Shatila as refugees, run-down dwellings are being made habitable. This entails repairing roofs, insulating walls, putting in windows, laying power cables, repairing water mains, installing boilers, and putting in gratings to keep rats out.

Serving the community

It is almost impossible for refugees to find legal work. Because the Lebanese government has closed its borders with Syria and officially is no longer receiving refugees, they do not have either residence or work permits. ‘With some luck they may find illegal work, with no contract of employment and at a starvation wage.’ They do indeed receive financial assistance from UNWRA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees – but it is by far not enough for survival. ‘Najdeh’ therefore supports 1200 of the neediest families with an allowance of US$50 per month, which enables them to pay rent or buy food.’

‘As there is no official waste removal service, HEKS/EPER launched a ‘cash for work’ programme for 160 refugees from Syria and 240 members of the host community. They collect garbage in the streets and take it to the garbage dump earning an extra income of US$50’ Thus, they are helping to improve hygiene conditions in the camp. The inclusion of the neediest of the host community reinforced peaceful coexistence between generations of refugees.

A small sign of hope

HEKS/EPER and ‘Najdeh’ can at least help alleviate the plight of Palestinian refugee families from Syria. This may be woefully insufficient given the bleak outlook for integration and employment. Yet for the families concerned, it means more: ‘We are giving them a small sign of hope – hope of leading a life in dignity in Lebanon’, says Leila El Ali. The international community should stop turning a blind eye to their plight. It is unacceptable for refugees in Lebanon to have no right of self-determination.’
7  Progress in church cooperation

In 2017, HEKS/EPER’s church cooperation (CC) was able to further enlarge its programme, geographically definitely entering the Middle East and in some countries also content wise, with more home care and a new Roma inclusion project in the Ukraine and projects on migration/refugees in Hungary and the Czech Republic. The financial and thematic backing of HEKS/EPER allows open-minded persons and church organisation to enter in new critical fields allowing a critical inner-church dialogue on the role of Churches in society.

Middle East

The HEKS/EPER’s board of trustees decided to add to its ‘traditional’ geographic CC area Eastern Europe the Middle East. This, based on the positive evaluation of the pilot phase with projects in Syria and Lebanon. The partners deliver quality work, adapt to the standards of HEKS/EPER implementing projects professionally. HEKS/EPER will continue working with the umbrella organisation Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC) as well as the two member churches, the National Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) and the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE). The war in Syria also weakened the presence of the Christian minority, which is the main reason for the expansion of CC. The partner churches are playing a relevant role in their societies and that they are willing and able to implement project on a professional level. In Syria, during 2017 the fighting in the regions of our partner churches has almost stopped. Few people are returning already to their homes, but the majority is still waiting. HEKS/EPER’s partner churches restrain to political statements. But in the current situation they tend to stick to the regime providing some security. A critical eye must be kept on this. Furthermore, 13.1 M people or more than 80% of the Syrian population are dependent on humanitarian aid (see HEKS/EPER humanitarian activities in chapter 6).

Eastern Europe

In its three main CC countries – in Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania – HEKS/EPER works through coordinated country programmes with focus on social inclusion of the elderly, handicapped and marginalized through projects providing home care, fostering inclusion of Roma or refugees, supporting the handicapped or projects protecting and counselling victims of domestic violence. More on Roma inclusion see chapter 5.10.

2017 has confirmed that governments of Eastern European countries tend towards autocracy and are very critical of refugees. The ‘Visegrad countries’ are very reluctant to participate in a more systematic way of distribution migrants amongst EU countries. Also, NGOs are increasingly coming under pressure with Governments accusing them having a ‘western agenda’ not respecting the ‘Eastern values’. This results in restrictions and decreasing access to State funding. CC partners can play a crucial role in mitigating these conflicts.

In 2017, CC extended its support for projects addressing the topic of migration and refugees. In the Czech Republic the project fighting trafficking and labour exploitation of Romanian and Bulgarian workers continued. And since 2017, the Diakonie and parishes have been implementing a project for the integration of refugees at six locations. The focus is on mutual contacts between the locals and the refugees (see chapter 7.1).

In Hungary, the implementation of the new phase of the country programme 2017-2020 has started. In addition to the Roma project, a refugee integration project with the Reformed Church of Hungary and the NGO Kalunba as implementers has started in March 2017.

In Slovakia, the evaluation of the first project phase of the Roma project showed that the involved congregations made significant efforts to include Roma, be it through their diaconal work with children and youth or through integration of Roma families in church activities.

Although the war in the Ukraine disappeared almost completely from the news, the life in Transcarpathia is still very much affected by the weak economy combined by an inflation of 13% and an ongoing exodus of people, who are working in foreign countries. HEKS/EPER extended its programme. The two partners contracted in 2016 improved in 2017 remarkably in the fields of homecare and inclusion of children with disabilities. In 2017, HEKS/EPER successfully launched a Roma inclusion project, also in the Ukraine.

In Romania the first country programme was evaluated with good results. The strategic approach of HEKS/EPER is appreciated. During the period of the country programme also the quality of the project could be improved, mainly in homecare and for victims of domestic violence.
7.1 Strengthening and inclusion of disadvantaged

CC promotes social inclusion of marginalized in 6 Eastern European countries focusing on 3 areas: i) home care for elderly and people in need of care in Romania, Ukraine and Serbia; ii) Roma inclusion in Hungary, Slovakia and in the Ukraine; and iii) migration/refugees in the Czech Republic, in Hungary and Serbia. In Romania and Ukraine CC is working with handicapped and also on the topic of domestic violence. Schooling projects exist in Lebanon and Syria.

In the Czech Republic a project of the Diakonie of ECCB focus on migrant workers, mostly coming from Bulgaria and Rumania, who are in danger to be exploited or trafficked. In 2017 a new office was started in Brno to cover the eastern part of CR with field work.

Since 2017, the Diakonie and parishes have been implementing a project for the integration of refugees at six locations. The focus is on mutual contacts between the locals and the refugees. Cooking and sewing courses, sports events as well as musical and cultural events take place. At the same time, refugees are informed about living together in the Czech Republic, state benefits, the role of the family and the woman. 200 migrants and 500 locals were reached. During a study trip to increase, Czech project coordinators visited integration projects of HEKS/EPER Switzerland and parishes in the cantons of Zurich and Vaud in 2017. There they received valuable ideas on how to improve the integration of refugees in the Czech Republic.

In Hungary, the Roma project continued to support 100 students with afterschool activities targeting both at improving school performance and at fostering life skills and perspectives. 3 Tanodas (communities) formerly supported by HEKS/EPER won EU tenders. They remain part of the network, but no longer receive financial support from RCH or HEKS/EPER. 2 new congregations from the Northeast of the country joined the project in 2017. As part of the refugee’s project, 60 children and 35 adults improved their knowledge of Hungarian language or school subjects in order to integrate in to the Hungarian school system or to pass an 8th grade equivalence test (adults – precondition for getting jobs).

A refugee integration project with the Reformed Church of Hungary and the NGO Kalunba as implementers has started in March 2017. The project managed to be present with sensitization activities at a big reformed youth festival and to recruit committed volunteers to expand the afterschool support for refugee and migrant children in cooperation with the Scottish mission. The Roma project expanded its objectives to promoting inclusiveness of reformed schools.
In **Slovakia**, 5 congregations were involved in activities for Roma children and youth. The external evaluation showed that in the first project phase, the congregation managed to reach out to Roma children and youth and in some places also to families and adults. In most places, attitudes towards Roma started changing.

In **Transcarpathia (Ukraine)** the cooperation with new project teams for the day centre for children with disabilities and homecare is good. Homecare had an excellent start and could already expand their service to a second place. In September, a project with afternoon classes in three localities to improve the inclusion of Roma in the school system could be started. Homecare services in Transcarpathia can be extended much quicker than expected. Already in May 2018 the service was started in a new place with extra funding from Church of Scotland.

The evaluation of the country programme **Romania** confirmed the former strategy to focus on inclusion of old and care dependent people with homecare, on victims of domestic violence and on people with disabilities. Despite the ongoing difficult situation with state subvention the homecare services could be expanded and is present now in 182 localities. In Bihor the network amongst public and private stakeholders, involved in domestic violence, could be strengthened. In Oradea, Sf. Gheorghe, Regin and Brasov the number of jobs for people with disabilities could be extended from 8 to 14.

In **Serbia**, about 500 elderlies and care dependent people benefited from homecare support. The external end of phase evaluation showed that the EHO Diaconia Home Care Service operated on a high-quality level and managed to increase co-funding by municipalities.

In **Italy**, the Centro Diaconale in Palermo continued with the support of HEKS/EPER a centre of integration of ex-prisoners. The 5 beneficiaries live in an apartment, do some volunteer work in the centre and are supported to established relationships to their families and to find a job. Beside of this project the Centro Diaconale is involved in inclusion of children with disabilities and migrants in school classes, minor refugees and women in crisis.

Social inclusion is also a topic in **Lebanon and Syria**. In Beirut HEKS/EPER supports mostly refugee children in their school performance through afternoon classes for elementary (40 students) and intermediate level (8 students). A rest home for old people could be expanded with 10 new residents. This strengthen the economic base of this institution, by using better the basic services and gives to 4 refugees a new job.

In Syria a scholarship programme for 1.500 students in ten church schools could be started. With the programme the inclusive approach of these schools, where two thirds of the students are Muslims, should be maintained. Although the focus of the programme for activities for children and youth in 12 Syrian congregation is on strengthening the church live, the project has in inclusion component. Through the programme the partner congregations gather children from different denomination.

### 7.1.1 Key data ‘inclusion’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>18,364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>1,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,364</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inclusion projects reached more than 23’000 people, being the largest programme component (in 2017, CC reached 25’000 individuals overall). ‘Unconditional support’ of marginalized is a key factor to strengthen credibility of churches in their respective society and HEKS/EPER does focus on supporting such diaconal activities.

13’500 individuals received support through home care services in Romania, another 545 in Serbia and 90 in Ukraine. 700 individuals were reached with Roma projects by CC activities (compare Roma inclusion chapter 5.10). Various schooling projects for marginalized groups did improved learning and inclusion skills for 2’000 children or young adults.

### 7.1.2 Perspectives ‘inclusion’

In **Transcarpathia (Ukraine)** the extension of the homecare services will continue with opening work points in two new localities. Roma inclusion is new to the Ukrainian partners, goodwill of church community and society has to be increased, exchange with other CC countries working on the topic can help. In **Romania** inclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable people will continue with a further expansion of homecare and establishing job mediation for people with disabilities. CC partners will also in the future contribute to the
new (Roma) inclusion strategy in Eastern Europe, which HEKS/EPER is about to elaborate (see also chapter 5.10.2).

Besides of the launched projects in Lebanon and Syria, it has to be explored, how the programme can be developed with new innovate projects in the existing countries.

7.2 Strengthening church life

The war in Syria is affecting partner churches, not only in Syria, but also in Lebanon. With many international stakeholders from outside involved in the conflict, many Christians feel forgotten by Western countries and their religious institutions. HEKS/EPER’s partner churches refrain from making political statements and being exposed to the various groups such as the opposition forces, the many Islamic extremist groups or the Syrian army and government. The partner churches say that neither Western countries or Churches nor the Syrian government can protect their existence in the region. It is only possible with peaceful cohabitation with the various moderate Muslim groups. Contributing to maintaining an active daily church, for example with youth programmes or social activities for elderly, is an important asset to encourage church members as well as their Muslim neighbours in coping with the violence and insecurity.

In Syria, 12 congregations in different areas have project activities for children and young people, which are attended weekly by 1'500 pupils. Due to the support of HEKS/EPER, these programmes, which were before traditional Sunday school activities for the children of the church members, were extended to half-day programmes also attended by many children from other denominations. The children play, do handicrafts and eat together. In the war situation in Syria, such programmes, where churches can offer community, a peaceful atmosphere and at least for some hours a normal life, are highly sought-after.

In the Czech Republic 4 ECCB-congregations could be supported to improve their infrastructure and Romania 5 congregations. In the Czech Republic and Romania supports congregations of the partner churches to renew their building. The purpose of these projects are not the buildings, then much more to strengthen the church live, for which a good infrastructure is needed. In the Czech Republic 3 ECCB-congregations could be supported to improve their infrastructure and Romania 6 congregations.
In **Hungary and Slovakia**, most congregations of the Roma Project are engaged in some kind of joint activities between Roma and Non-Roma. The activities range from joint celebration of Holidays to joint volunteer days and in some congregations also to the emergence of new forms of joint religious services. In both Hungary and Slovakia, inclusive youth and children’s activities of the church such as camps, youth clubs, play houses or religious education classes are supported. The refugee project also contributes to strengthening of church life by encouraging volunteering and by bringing refugees and migrants into existing church events such as the Starpoint Youth Festival 2017.

Programmes for children and youth are also in the **Czech Republic**, in Transcarpathia and in Syria an important contribution to strengthen the church life. The youth and education department of ECCB organized 2017 camps for 1'667 persons, thereof also children with disabilities. In Transcarpathia, HEKS/EPER contributed to youth camps for 1’990 persons of the Reformed Church (RCT). In Syria, 12 congregations in different areas have project activities for children and youth, which are attended weekly by 1’500 persons. Due to the support of HEKS/EPER these programs, which were before traditional Sunday School programmes for the children of the church members, could be extended to half-day programs. Beside of worship the children play, do handicrafts and eat together. Further the programmes are attended by many children from other denominations. In the war situation in Syria, such programs, where churches can offer community, a peaceful atmosphere and at least for some hours normal life, are highly requested.

### 7.2.1 Key data ‘church life’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total individuals: 9,791</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>2,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>2,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If churches want to be relevant in their society and contribute to a better inclusion of disadvantages, it is important that these churches have active members and are attractive for others to participate. An important door to reach people are programme for children and youth, in which churches are traditionally well experienced. HEKS/EPER contributed to weekly programmes, camps and training courses for young leaders, which reached 5'157 children and young persons; included are also children with disabilities and many, who do not belong to the partner churches. An important condition for lively congregations are appropriate buildings. In 9 congregations contributed HEKS/EPER to reshape a community house, a manse or a church. The objective of these construction measures has to be always a contribution for an active church live.

### 7.2.2 Perspectives ‘church life’

Programmes for children in **Syria, Ukraine, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic** remain an important instrument to strengthen the church live. In **Romania** the formation programme for pastors will be extended to other employees of the church like cantors and religion teachers. Construction projects in **Romania** and **Czech Republic** shall provide an adequate infrastructure to give space to develop activities.

### 7.3 Churches in dialogue

Mainly through our formation programme, CC can influence the attitude of the partner churches. In Romania the formation programme for pastors developed very well. The mainly practical orientated trainings were attended by 415 participants. As in previous years HEKS/EPER supported a seminar for female pastors with participants of Hungary, Slovakia, Transcarpathia/Ukraine and Transylvania/Romania as well as a retreat for pastor’s wives in Transylvania.

A second instrument to facilitate a critical dialogue, are also projects to include vulnerable people or minority as Roma, refugees or victims of domestic violence. The RCH confirmed us multiple times, that the commitment of HEKS/EPER for Roma was an important leverage to strengthen RCH’s approach for Roma, and that the initiative of HEKS/EPER regarding the new refugee project was very important for strengthening the ownership of the church for the refugee work. In Romania projects for victims of domestic violence focus their sensitization activities deliberately also on church groups.

To work with different groups of the Syrian civil society on a common social contract is the objective of the dialogue project of the World Council of Churches, which is also supported by HEKS/EPER. Local dialogue
groups of Syrians in Syria, Lebanon and Turkey as well as the group with representatives from different groups in Geneva discuss, how close in a future Syria religion and the state shall cooperate or about the obligation of the state in the field of social affairs.

7.3.1 Key data ‘dialogue’

It is difficult to measure the people, who have been involved through the programme of HEKS/EPER in critical dialogue and what is its impact. But it can be said that the long-term commitment of HEKS/EPER in Eastern Europe established a base of trust, which allows to be also critical to each other. This long cooperation is important that the Reformed Church in Hungary strengthened the inclusion of Roma and refugees. It is also a result of a regular exchange that in Romania the Reformed Church has project for victims of domestic violence – a topic which is normally not on the agenda. To have a reliable international partner encouraged also the partner churches to touch critical points. The Waldensian Church in Italy or the Evangelical Church in Czechia would have this commitment for refugees, not knowing that they can count on an international network.

7.3.2 Perspectives ‘dialogue’

Beside of the dialogue project between different stakeholder of religious communities in Syria, HEKS/EPER leads the dialogue with the partner churches and their organisation in the frame of the different programmatic approaches while elaborating and implementing concrete country programmes or projects. In the new concept of CC dialogue on attitudes, values and positions might be not any more a separate goal, but a cross-cutting issue mainstreamed in all programmes and projects. HEKS/EPER as a development agency does not have the mandate to lead a debate on values and theological issues – this would be other institution within the Swiss reformed church.

7.4 Sense of belonging to the same church family

Currently, CC is accompanying 22 partnerships between parishes and institutions in Switzerland and Eastern Europe. 3 congregations stopped their partnership in 2017.

In 2017 several exchange initiatives could be supported by CC: So a trip with representatives from Terre Nouvelle to Romania and Transcarpathia, a group from the canton of Graubünden to Hungary, an exchange visit of the project team for integration of refugee in Czech Republic to Switzerland, exchange visits of nurses to the homecare project in Romania as well as other visits of congregations (e.g. Pieds du Jura with 20 people to Hungary, Pratteln with 60 young and adults to Romania), which were not organized by HEKS/EPER.

7.4.1 Key data ‘church family’

From exchanges and partnership profited members of Swiss parishes as well of churches and church organisations in Eastern Europe. Either through direct contacts or other forms of exchange and/or support.

7.4.2 Perspectives ‘church family’

Swiss congregations will be supported to establish and maintain twinning with congregations of partner churches. It is very much appreciated by both, the Swiss as well as the parishes abroad. With exchange visits on topics like inclusion of refugees, partner churches in Eastern Europe as well as the churches in Switzerland shall be strengthened in their attitude to meet the challenge of migration. The exchanges also help to bridge cultural and socio-political gaps between Western and Eastern Europe with mutual learning and respect.
8 Cross-cutting issues

In its projects and programmes, HEKS/EPER includes four 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 of the issues.

8.1 Conflict sensitivity

On institutional level HEKS/EPER has progressed in capacity building on conflict sensitivity by making the conflict sensitivity online course (which has been jointly developed with Swisspeace, Helvetas and Caritas) compulsory for all staffs. Subsequently during the year almost half of the staff has completed the course and out of these 90% submitted actions plans for follow up. In some cases, staff did the course jointly with partners and came up with inspiring plans to improve performance on conflict sensitivity as it was for example the case in DRC. HEKS/EPER is still an active member of the conflict sensitivity hub which involves plans on joint capacity building on conflict sensitivity in focus countries and advocacy for conflict sensitivity vis-a-vis donors as for example at the European Parliament.

Although the importance of conflict sensitivity is highlighted permanently in different debates on development and humanitarian, HEKS/EPER notices in its working context insensitive planning causing grievances and conflicts. For example, in a conflict analysis in Zimbabwe interviews revealed that often in HA projects the food distribution along political lines (not in HEKS/EPER project). It was seen to be one of the key drivers of existing conflicts.

Also in Zimbabwe partners are exploring means to advocate against the instrumentalisation of aid for political ends. It is to mention that the conflict sensitive staffing in Zimbabwe which was introduced with the start of the last programme phase in 2014 is bearing its fruits now. Unlike most other NGOs HEKS/EPER country offices are run by local people instead of by Shona the dominant group of the capital and ruling party. The new trust and recognition with people of concern translates in improved outcomes in peace and development work.

Humanitarian aid

HEKS/EPER got to acknowledge, that in particular in humanitarian aid even sensitive planners are sometime unable to ensure sensitive implementation with well-done beneficiary selection and fair distribution. Under this circumstance, the do-no-harm approach seem to stand against the humanitarian imperative. HEKS/EPER works on impartial aid, as it was for example the case in South Sudan, where access to certain areas was extremely difficult. However, with the help of our local conflict transformation partner Reconcile some areas which were not under government control have been made accessible through the quiet diplomacy project.

Furthermore, conflict sensitivity trainings have been carried out with staffs and partners, for instance in Northern Iraq and in Uganda/South Sudan. Local partners responded very positive to such capacity training. HEKS/EPER was cooperation in Iraq with NCA, experienced in camp management taking into account the differing needs and values of the camp inhabitants.

Church cooperation

CC’s partner churches in ME are in a very conflictual situation. Although they are under pressure to support these churches might also create conflicts. With the programme activities for children and youth in Syria the churches almost only reach children from Christian families. Although the programme is open and in cases, when Muslim children participate, they rather speak and sing of God than of Jesus the savior, participation of Muslim children might cause difficulties for their parents, when Muslim extremist get to know that a Muslim child attends a programme of a church. Also, the participation of children from different denominations might be delicate. Not for the moment, but when a young person decides to become member of another church. Also, social programme, run by churches, might be in danger to be involved in conflicts. The Social Action Centre of the UAECNE has in Brouj Harmoud in Beirut excellent social programs, but they limit their Muslim beneficiaries on maximum 20%, because they fear, to get under pressure of different Muslim groups, when they involve more.

In the field of education, the partner churches in Syria are used to a conflict sensitivity since many years as two thirds of the students in their schools are Muslim.
In Hungary, conflict sensitivity and HRBA and respective analytic tools were subject of trainings for the project managers of local Roma projects. While an analysis of inclusive/exclusive factors is now included in all proposals and reports, HRBA remains a challenge with some of the congregations (see below).

8.1.1 Perspectives ‘conflict sensitivity’

HEKS/EPER elaborated challenges and opportunities to be tackled in the near future …

- HEKS/EPER needs always to discuss internally about CS in the respective context and be clear about it approach and possible capacity building before addressing partners.
- Clear rules and procedures on the procurement and supply chain are very important to make impartial distribution of goods possible.
- CS analysis shouldn’t be outsourced to external consultant, but rather be done by ourselves or PO. Have a prepared set of minimal questions for initial assessment, a quick assessment tool to define if we need light or in-depth assessment.
- HEKS/EPER staff in country should be trained in CS and be able to do a CS workshop with partners.
- Clarification on how to handle differing standards between HEKS/EPER policy and donor policy. How to deal with.
- Scarce financial and human resources may hamper conflict-sensitive implementation.
- Current implementation set-up is not up to the mark we need to implement our policies.
- CS in HA could become a HEKS/EPER expertise/niche, interesting for donors and paramount for implementation.

8.2 Gender

Gender inequality is rooted in unequal power relations and unjust power structures. In 2017, HEKS/EPER and its partner organisations continued to work towards equal rights and opportunities for women and men in rural communities, and therefore also were dealing with resistance and obstacles due to cultural norms and traditional practices.

In Niger and Senegal for instance, women rarely have access to land titles because of customary inheritance and property rights. Especially in Senegal there are many female-headed households because men migrate to the cities or to foreign countries for economic reasons. Societal structures are slowly transforming. Collective land use rights were given to 19 women’s groups to cultivate and gather medicinal plants and forest fruit, also aiming at sustainable management of communal land areas. In certain areas of Niger in 2017, women were given pieces of regained land in their name in order to grow ground nuts, sorghum and vegetables, and furthermore, some women could obtain land through inheritance, acquisition or rental, even though they have been neglected or ignored up to now.

In Church Cooperation, anti-liberal discourse in Hungary also affects concepts like gender equality and HRBA, as some congregations were reluctant to apply these concepts. HEKS/EPER has supported seminars and trainings for women, as well as gender sensitization among partner churches and other partner organisations, planning frequent follow-ups. Within Roma communities in Romania, Kosovo, Serbia and Hungary, equal participation of boys and girls has been achieved in the field of education (after-school programmes, scholarships, tutoring programmes). In Kosovo, a partner organisation has initiated a successful awareness-raising campaign on the importance of education especially for girls through a parenting-at-home programme in 18 locations. Concerning micro-lending, loans were given to Roma family businesses with men and women as partners.

The implementation of gender-responsive and gender mainstreaming approaches as well as gender analyses in particular are important to understand the dynamics and social and cultural references that describe the different roles of women and men within a context of conflict, and to avoid multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion. Civitas, a HEKS/EPER partner organisation in Palestine/Israel, included women IDPs living in caravans in Gaza through the research process in designing the relevant tools, data collection and analysis, which helped to reveal the hidden needs, concerns and gender dynamics involved during their displacement. This led to a better preparation for interventions, and women’s empowerment to fulfil their rights. The Bedouin community in the Negev was still subject of an ongoing state policy of house demolition. Marginalized Bedouin women were sensitized in gender and human rights and leadership, and they were able to maintain their organic gardens and contribute to food and nutrition security as well as to household
income through access to market opportunities, which raised their self-esteem and appreciation in households and communities.

The Habakkuk Trust partner organisation in Zimbabwe accompanied 15 community advocacy action teams, which advocated for access to birth certificates and health services or against child marriages. One third of these teams for policy dialogue are led by female conveners. ‘I am proud that I have been able to motivate and to accompany people to successfully obtain their certificates. I am very well known in the community and the fact that people are listening to me as a woman is very empowering for me and for young women in general. There is a new sense of freedom. Now people talk about rights.’

8.2.1 Progress ‘gender’ (HKI)

- % of women that report effective participation in decision-making bodies at community level.

Women’s effective participation in decision-making bodies has been applied in 8 projects in 6 countries so far. Many women feel that they are able to participate and have some moderate influence in community bodies; but the results vary greatly, and there are also disparate statements, e.g. from Zimbabwe: ‘Patriarchy is still dominant in ward 17 resulting in women’s proposals not being taken seriously by men. Men dominate most of the platforms of development and there are few women who participate in the forums that are male-dominated.’ It will be interesting to see whether women perceive effective participation in decision-making bodies, and to what extent and whether some women obtain membership at least when the end-line will be measured.

The sex-disaggregation of (most) of the indicators provides some interesting results and insights, as it makes visible the access to land (see figure 22 below), for instance how women have been benefitting especially from collective land use rights, which usually contain smaller lots. Men are privileged in accessing individual land rights. To monitor more gender-relevant observations and tendencies it is crucial to collect sex-disaggregated data from all the applicable indicators.

Figure 22: Gender-disaggregated HKI data show the inequality of land rights and also of production on land between women/men.
• % of women (self-perception) decisively taking part in key decision-making about household income allocation.

Data has been collected from 3 projects in 2 countries. So far there seems to be a tendency towards joint decision-making between women and men regarding household income, although this might vary due to regional and cultural differences. The type of household (extended family, nuclear/small family etc.) has to be taken into account as well.

8.2.2 Perspectives ‘gender’

In various contexts, HEKS/EPER partners were able to successfully combine sensitization on human rights with gender equality, or when facing resistance, addressing the duty-bearers in particular. Perseverance in the implementation of gender strategies is slowly contributing to societal transformation processes. Working towards women’s empowerment in decision-making in communities and households remains an important aim in HEKS/EPER’s gender approach. However, there are many challenges to face in the future, such as for instance child marriages and the protection of girls from early marriage in many HEKS/EPER countries. This and other issues remain on the gender agenda for the next years in consideration of the persistent cultural norms and habits, such as in Roma communities in Eastern Europe or in communities in Bangladesh.

There are major disparities between women and men in most project regions when it comes to land ownership and access to decision-making processes about land use. In 2018, HEKS/EPER places emphasis on gender and land rights and ensures that gender analyses and equality concerns are consistently considered in the field of access to land and resources.

In any case, further information and systematic programme/project reporting on gender inequalities and gender activities are needed to be able to observe, monitor and provide more evidence on gender progress and challenges within HEKS/EPER’s programmes and projects.

8.3 Resilience building

The impacts of the extreme weather events which dominated headlines in 2017 (see chapter 2), such as floods in Bangladesh after the prolonged monsoon rains or the renewed drought at the Horn of Africa, called upon HEKS/EPER humanitarian aid interventions and again highlighted the need for a consequent integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures in HEKS/EPER programmes to increase people’s resilience.

In many of the HEKS/EPER project regions it is particularly an increase of prolonged dry spells or even drought events leading to water scarcity, which is affecting the livelihood of our target group. On the other side they experience an increase in precipitation variability, with high intensity precipitation events leading to localised flood events which make it difficult to make productive use of the rain. Hence, also in 2017 the measures of climate change adaptation and risk reduction were focussed on measures in the field of natural resource management, for example building of anti-erosive structure, terracing and soil bunds, reforestation, rainwater harvesting structures (Niger, Senegal, Ethiopia, Honduras) and the promotion of climate resilient agriculture for example conservation agriculture, adapted seed/varieties, intercropping (Niger, Senegal, Honduras, Brazil, Cambodia). One promising practice which was tested in Brazil in 2017 is the use of greywater for irrigation purpose. It needs to be seen if this can be applied in other contexts also. On the level of community preparedness, it is particularly in the Asian context (Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Pakistan) with a high risk for sudden onset disasters where formation of Disaster Management Committees on community level play a prominent role. Risk transfer measures, particularly the building of seed, food or fodder reserves are applied in some contexts such as Cambodia, Bangladesh, Honduras. Risk Governance or the application of a rights based perspective risk reduction/resilience building is particularly strong in India and Bangladesh where the projects strive firstly for a greater risk awareness amongst marginalised parts of society and secondly, their inclusion into official risk management structures or advocacy to improve risk reduction and risk management efforts on all levels (from national to local and for all parts of society).

Whilst most countries have adopted a risk perspective in their programmes there is still much scope for a more systematized application of an adaptation/risk reduction lens. Systematic community based risk assessments including an identification of adaptation/risk reduction measures, are only done in a few

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32 Example seeds and resilience in Niger see Appendix E.
contexts (see box above). Furthermore, while prevention/mitigation measures are applied in many country contexts they often lack scale, e.g. natural resource management measures are only applied in a small part of a watershed or around an immediate water source, without taking the whole system into account. Also, particularly on the level of preparedness and risk transfer there is scope for more activities in HEKS/EPER programmes, for example in the field of early warning, community preparedness, formal/informal insurance mechanisms, etc.

With regard to activities in the Swiss NGO DRR Platform, HEKS/EPER was particularly involved in two central processes: The E-Learning Course which was developed under HEKS/EPER lead was launched in August 2017: http://www.drrplatform.org/learning.html. In December 2017 the Swiss NGO DRR Platform published its first book: Where people and their land are safer – a compendium of good practices in disaster risk reduction, http://www.drrplatform.org/publications.html for which HEKS/EPER documented good practice examples in Niger and Cambodia.
8.3.1 Progress ‘resilience’ (HKI)

- Type and # of community based resilience building measures integrated into the project.

Analysing the resilience building measures collected through the HKI show a clear strength of HEKS/EPER in the natural/environmental sector, where most measures are applied. To achieve an overall resilience strengthening of the other sectors is needed, particularly with regard to early warning, safety nets, risk transfer, risk governance. These can be linked to activities in the environmental/natural sector further emphasising this clear strength of HEKS/EPER.

- Observed changes in the adaptive capacity of rural communities

The key indicator on adaptive capacity was conceptualized in Palestine during an M&E workshop. Whilst the indicator needs to be conceptualized in each context according to the prevailing risks and is therefore quite complex, it offers a great opportunity to gain awareness about the meaning of resilience in different contexts.

8.3.2 Perspectives ‘resilience’

The clear strength of HEKS/EPER regarding climate change adaptation and risk reduction for increased resilience lies in the natural/environmental sector. Here we should look further into the relatively new concepts of ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and adaptation and see how far they offer a bridge between the topics of resilience and access to land. Another strength of HEKS/EPER which should be applied in all context is the application of a rights based approach also in the field of resilience, to make people aware of climate and disaster risks as well as the structures in place to protect them from the existing risk, or to support target groups in the call for appropriate structures to protect them from current and future climate and disaster risk.

Another important step will be to systematize the application of a risk lens in all projects – this calls for a more systematic application of the community based risk assessments, which were introduced in all countries in the resilience building workshops and which are integrated in the HEKS/EPER Guideline for Building Resilient Communities. 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. Hence, HEKS/EPER is currently developing a list of indicators which can be integrated in different projects and which would allow a certain level of benchmarking between projects.
9  Management for quality, learning, progress and results

9.1  Institutional evolution

This chapter describes how HEKS/EPER fosters the relevance and efficiency of its activities as postulated in its institutional objective. HEKS/EPER had a good start in the strategic phase 2017–2020. The new strategy is built on previous experiences and existing competences and therefore considered as a continuation of the previous phase. However, certain milestones were achieved as documented in this report as well as new strategic topics were emphasized.

Regional thematic meetings: In 2017 Regional Meetings were held in Prague, Addis, Brasilia and Dakar for the desk officers and the country directors as well as their respective finance officers. The main purpose was to introduce the revised FFAG (field financial and administration guidelines) and to build up capacity in important topics such as HR, finances, controlling, procurement and good governance (more chapter 9.5.1). Furthermore, we promoted peer learning and intervisio as well as exchanging about good practices in the field of acquisition.

Staff changes on management level: The past year has also seen several changes on the management level about which we have informed SDC on a regular basis. After the withdrawal of the previous HEKS/EPER director at the end of 2016, one of the executive board members served as interim director and ensured continuation together with the managers and all staff member. The previous head of the international division, Peter Merz, has been chosen by the foundation’s board of trustees to serve as the new director of HEKS/EPER and the previous head of Asia&Europe department as new head of ID. The vacancy for ‘Asia&Europe’ was also filled with a qualified internal candidate. The new management on all level has already contributed significantly to a positive and forward-looking atmosphere to set up the organisation for its growth ambition and the challenges ahead.

From development to aid and back: In 2017, we have seen again development cooperation contexts fall back into a humanitarian situation. As organisation we are challenged to set up our offices and to maintain staff capacities in such a way that we are able to respond efficiently irrespective on where the context stands on the relief – development continuum (see chapter 6.4.2). The humanitarian department at HEKS/EPER supported the office in Bangladesh to respond quickly to the Rohingya crisis. The staffs and many of our partners relocated from South Sudan to Uganda, so they were – together with support from HHQ – were able to respond to the refugees coming in from South Sudan in Uganda.

Promoting innovation: The topic of innovation has gained momentum in 2017. Several managers of the organisation attended workshops about innovation topics. When it comes to new technologies and poverty reduction, HEKS/EPER met with thinktanks, start-ups, tech and other private sector companies to discuss together how new technologies such as artificial intelligence, distributed ledger technology (e.g. blockchain), new communication tools (see chapter 11.2.5), drones or precision farming can help fight poverty and injustices. During a study day staffs of the international division with the support of a facilitator of the Gottlieb-Duttwiler Institute discussed global mega trends and the importance of ‘virtual spaces’ for our work. In 2018, HEKS/EPER will launch an internal innovation programme to foster a more innovative culture and to make the organisation fit for the challenges and changes in our sector ahead of us.

Inclusive business and impact investments: Related to innovation HEKS/EPER has studied different actors and business models in the field of impact investments. From a programmatic perspective a more ‘business approach’ to the market system development projects of HEKS/EPER that would include also different financing instruments such as equity and loans could help in some instances to strengthen financial viability and sustainability of value chain projects. In promoting more inclusive businesses HEKS/EPER sees potential to further improve its impact on market systems as well as eventually interest new donors/investors in these projects. HEKS/EPER has started exchanges with other ACT members as well as impact investors about this topic. Further conclusions are expected for 2018. (More info on inclusive business in chapter 9.4.1 and chapter 11.2.2)

Supporting systems: HEKS/EPER has launched a cloud based file and communication platform using Microsoft Sharepoint Online. For the first time the country offices of HEKS/EPER have access to the same files as the staffs at HQ. Additionally, the staffs benefit from new cloud-based collaboration, sharing and synching possibilities. Especially during proposal development and reporting processes staff appreciate the simultaneous working on the same documents.
9.2 Programme management

HEKS/EPER continues to implement coherent country, regional and thematic programmes under its global HIP strategy. It also constantly seeks to identify and use synergies between its 3 domains of work, development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation as to deliver professionally implemented and relevant programme and project work. To achieve this, qualified staff and implementing partners are required. Finding suitable HEKS/EPER staff was an ongoing challenge in 2017. In various countries, new programme and admin staff were recruited in the HEKS/EPER offices and new partner organisations selected.

In 2017, HEKS/EPER ID intervened with 169 international employees and 40 HHQ staff (many of them working part-time) in cooperation with almost 100 partner organisations in 33 countries through 207 projects (150 DC, 26 HA, 31 church cooperation projects. HEKS/EPER has local coordination offices for 17 priority programmes, and 3 HA delegations. Reports by country and map see appendix A.

Totally HEKS/EPER has invested CHF 42.4 million in 2017 in its programmes globally. This is 15.3% more than the previous year. However, securing financing the growth in the development cooperation remains a challenge (see chapter 9.5.) The average financial volume per country has increased as planned. In 15 countries, the yearly expenses 2017 were above one million Swiss francs (14 countries in 2016). Since 2013, the ratio of large vs small DC projects in country programmes has improved gradually, from less than 30% projects with a volume of more than CHF 100,000 in 2012/2013 to 58% in 2017, meaning that interventions have become more efficient and gained relevance. In 2017, 77% (69% in 2016) or more than CHF 20 M of the DC overall volume was implemented through projects with a yearly project amount above CHF 100,000. 22 projects invested more than CHF 250,000; 7 more than 400,000. The overall ratio between HQ costs and total portfolio volume is below 14%.

The newly established acquisition officer position has paid off and contributed a lot to making the organisation ‘fit for acquisition’. The newly acquired mandate of the EU for Georgia has taken off well in 2017.

Hub strategy of HIP 2017–20

The new HIP 2017–20 comprehends a hub-strategy that entails upscaling national intervention strategies to the regional level and making use of synergies between different country programmes. HEKS/EPER has identified the Mekong region as potentially suitable for such a regional approach and has therefore assessed possible countries that could thematically and strategically complement HEKS/EPER’s country programme in Cambodia. A thorough desk study combined with a scouting mission have shown that Myanmar is presently the most promising country for a possible extension of HEKS/EPER’s operation. The board of directors has approved a pilot phase of three years for further assessing potential working areas for HEKS/EPER as well as piloting first partnerships and interventions. HEKS/EPER’s first focus in Myanmar lies on market system development and promoting social entrepreneurship.

To become further acquainted with the Myanmar context and building up partnerships with local INGOs, HEKS/EPER intends to take up a first strategic partnership with DCA/NCA and maybe ICCO. Both have a longstanding programme in the country with similar approaches to HEKS/EPER.

Additionally, HEKS/EPER has identified Sub-Saharan Africa as well as the Middle East (‘whole of Syria’) as potential hubs to be developed further.

Security

HEKS/EPER’s security policy is in force since summer 2015. In the course of 2017, various activities were carried out. Employees of the ID who regularly travel abroad completed an online Security Induction Course. This online training was produced by the ACTAlliance Safety & Security Community of Practice and covers various topics with relevance for traveling and working in potentially dangerous environments.

Most HHQ employees completed security field courses where participants prepared for security incidents by means of theoretical information, practical exercises, video clips and discussions. In HEKS/EPER country offices, implementation of the newly established field security guidelines is an ongoing process. The HEKS/EPER Security Task Force is a crisis management team composed of members of HEKS/EPER management, among others the director and division managers. The task force is in charge of handling severe incidents such as kidnappings. In 2017, the task force managed a case in South Sudan with a local employee kidnapped with a positive ending.
9.3 Acquisition and fundraising

In order to remain relevant and competitive in the ever-evolving international development and humanitarian landscape, HEKS/EPER pursues a growth strategy to diversify its funding portfolio and scale up proven or promising projects or programmes through the acquisition of grants from bi- and multilateral donors.

2017 saw an intensification and systematization of acquisition-related activities at HHQ as well as at country level. The following priorities were pursued to create an ‘enabling environment’ for acquisition and improve HEKS/EPER’s readiness to respond to calls for proposals.

- Increase HEKS/EPER’s internal capacity to develop winning proposals for bi- and multilateral donors, notably through the development and roll-out of an acquisition guide and other useful resources, and hands-on support.
- Increase HEKS/EPER’s visibility vis-à-vis donors through increased and pro-active donor engagement, notably at country level, and professional communication on our core competencies.
- Set the ground for a diversification of bi- and multilateral donor funding by registering HEKS/EPER on various donor platforms, notably the application to ECHO to obtain a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) for humanitarian aid, as well as registration and passing of due diligence assessments with UNHCR and UN OCHA, and registration on SAM and grants.gov for US government funding.

Development cooperation

In 2017, HEKS/EPER managed 11 active development cooperation grants across 9 countries (see figure 23), signed 5 new contracts in Cambodia, Bangladesh, Colombia, Romania and Kosovo, as well as several contract extensions, notably for projects in Africa and Eastern Europe. A diversification of the current donor base was achieved notably by adding UNDP to the mix in Bangladesh in the field of disaster risk reduction and resilience.

Out of 16 proposals submitted to donors (not counting proposals to Swiss Solidarity for humanitarian aid projects), HEKS/EPER won 5, which constitutes an excellent win rate of 30%. Four proposals are still pending, out of which two have passed the first round of selection and are in full proposal development phase at the time of writing this report. The total income from grants amounted to CHF 1’629’000 in 2017.

Cambodia: Memot pepper plantation.
HEKS/EPER active grants 2017 – development cooperation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total budget*</th>
<th>HEKS/EPER co-financing*</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Duration from – to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Citizen engagement for economic development (PROCEED)</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>3'438'237</td>
<td>1'144'500</td>
<td>HEKS/EPER Romania, ELKANA</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
<td>01.12.2016-30.11.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Market opportunities for livelihood improvement</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2'499'978</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Direct implementation</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>01.12.2015-30.11.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Social inclusion and improvement of living conditions for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians</td>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>818'487</td>
<td>185'647</td>
<td>Terre des Hommes, VoRAE</td>
<td>FDJP Switzerland (SEM)</td>
<td>01.01.2016-31.12.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Social inclusion and improvement of living conditions for Roma and other vulnerable groups</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>7'010'000</td>
<td>1'000'000</td>
<td>FAER, Diakonia Romania</td>
<td>SDC East Cooperation</td>
<td>01.02.2015-31.12.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Improvement of living conditions of Roma and other vulnerable groups, prevention of irregular migration and support to reintegration of returnees</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>2'237'374</td>
<td>600'000</td>
<td>EHO</td>
<td>SDC East Cooperation &amp; SEM</td>
<td>01.03.2016/17–31.12.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Hydraulique Rurale Appui au Secteur Eau et Assainissement PHRASEA</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>707'414</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Helvetas PHRASEA</td>
<td>SDC via Helvetas</td>
<td>01.04.2017-31.03.2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Accès à l’eau pastorale, hygiène et assainissement WASH</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1'109'088</td>
<td>388'150</td>
<td>Caritas, Fastenopfer, HSI, Solidar, SRC, Swissaid, TdH</td>
<td>SDC (Swiss Water Consortium)</td>
<td>01.01.2015-31.12.2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>790'275</td>
<td>197'569</td>
<td>Caritas, Fastenopfer, HSI, Solidar, SRC, Swissaid, TdH</td>
<td>SDC (Swiss Water Consortium)</td>
<td>01.01.2015-31.12.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Climate resilience grants for climate resilient planning and budgeting at local government level</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>156'316</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Direct implementation</td>
<td>UNDP Bangladesh</td>
<td>01.01.2017-31.12.2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Plainland Ethnic Minority and Marginalized Peoples’ Adaptation to Climate</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>811'69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>BSDO, IRV</td>
<td>UNDP Bangladesh</td>
<td>15.08.2017-14.08.2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Water Study of CHAIN Project</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>56'590</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Swisscontact</td>
<td>SDC Cambodia</td>
<td>01.09.2017-31.12.2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total grants CHF 19'852'474 3'939'445

Figure 23: In 2017, HEKS/EPER implemented 11 grants with a total contract value of roughly CHF 20 Mio., contributing a total of 4 Mio. CHF in co-financing towards these projects.

* = Total budget (contract value) and co-financing over the entire project duration as indicated in the last column.

9.3.1 Learning from grant acquisition and management and outlook 2018

HEKS/EPER considers grants an important opportunity for organisational learning and development. While HEKS/EPER strives to diversify its funding portfolio and increase the volume of country programmes through an increase in grants, it pursues opportunities in a strategic way to ensure all acquired grants contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives set out in the HIP 2017–2020. As such, grants are a means to achieving greater programme impact and reach, and greater organisational capacity and effectiveness by aligning to often more rigorous reporting and evaluation requirements.
Some key learnings and consequences for 2018 are:

- **Donor engagement**: HEKS/EPER’s chances of acquiring new grants depend to a large extent on the quality of our relationship with a given donor. Donors appreciate regular, transparent and thematically competent communication, and are more likely to entrust funding to HEKS/EPER if they are aware of our strengths and capacities.
  
  **Perspectives**: Professional, pro-active donor engagement will remain a priority issue to further strengthen relationships and improve acquisition.

- **Donor requirements and compliance**: The increasingly diverse donor base brings with it an increasing complexity regarding grant management and reporting practices, as well as financial (accounting, audits), legal and overall compliance issues.
  
  **Perspectives**: It will be critical to train staff (notably DOs and Controlling) on donor grant management practices, ensure adequate institutional support for acquisition-related legal and compliance issues, and continue to adapt structures and processes to make donor reporting more efficient.

- **Average grant size**: In 2017, HEKS/EPER acquired several small- to medium-size grants. In order to achieve the desired growth and bring down the relative costs of grant application and management, the average size per grant needs to increase significantly.
  
  **Perspectives**: HEKS/EPER will apply a more selective approach to grant acquisition, aiming at higher volumes. Small grants may still be pursued if they are a strategic investment, either because they particularly advance our mission, fund a niche area (incl. innovation) or constitute an entry point to build a donor relationship.

- **HEKS/EPER added value and implementation approach**: HEKS/EPER missed out on some grant opportunities because our added value within a consortium approach with one or more local partner organisations was not clear to the donor. If HEKS/EPER strives to be an attractive implementing partner in terms of management, implementation and thematic capacity, more flexibility regarding its traditional implementation approach almost exclusively through partners is needed in favour of more direct implementation, especially in humanitarian but also in development settings.
  
  **Perspectives**: Mixed approaches (direct implementation, working alongside other INGOs and implementing through local partners) should be encouraged and explored. Investments into thematic capacity at regional or national level should be considered (see next point).

- **Strengthening thematic expertise**: Implementing grants at high levels of excellence requires expertise in HEKS/EPER’s core areas, such as market systems, access to land or conflict transformation. Building up such capacity has a positive impact on projects beyond the lifetime of a grant.
  
  **Perspectives**: It will be important to involve thematic advisors even more systematically in grant opportunity screening, proposal development and thematic backstopping during grant management. Continuing to build up decentralized thematic expertise remains of importance.

- **Fostering innovation**: HEKS/EPER has started internal conversations on how to foster a culture of innovation within the organisation. Grants from innovation funds provide an incentive to stay at the forefront of global development practice in HEKS/EPER’s core areas of expertise.
  
  **Perspectives**: HEKS/EPER will continue its discussions on innovation and seek grants to develop, pilot and scale promising approaches.

- **Strategic partnerships**: The trend of donors preferring to fund consortia of organisations who jointly implement large-scale projects or programmes persists.
  
  **Perspectives**: HEKS/EPER will continue to increase its efforts to build partnerships with organisations of complementary strategic value, such as other members of ACT Alliance, but also research institutions and the private sector.

### 9.4 Monitoring and evaluation, learning for steering

HEKS/EPER has consistently been striving for setting up a comprehensive approach to M&E that facilitates global performance assessment. This institutional effort takes place in line with a five-year M&E strategy (2014–2019), comprising two phases. The development phase (2014–2016) has been focusing on setting up the main structure and building blocks for a global M&E approach (PCM guidelines, digitalised key indicators, rigorous impact evaluations, etc.) and providing the necessary capacity building to the staff involved to be able to use these blocks. The concluding phase (2017–2019) is about consolidating these achievements, and finalizing pending issues (e.g. a PCM manual and digital HKI for humanitarian aid), and further promoting ownership, and building the capacity of main user groups (implementing organizations, and HEKS/EPER country offices and HQ) in terms of the professional use of the global approach to M&E.
The theory of change underlying this institutional investment in M&E, as indicated in the figure below, is that improving our global M&E system and our ‘evidence base’ will gradually, and partly indirectly lead to improved global performance assessment and increased project and programme quality. This is based on the assumption that key actors such as implementing partners, Country Offices and HQ staffs use our PCM guidelines and tools pro-actively. It is also based on the assumption that line management continuously reinforces their professional use of PCM/M&E standards. Considering these assumptions are largely beyond the control of the M&E unit, they are depicted outside M&E’s sphere of influence.

Implemented activities (blue boxes in figure 24) to reach these objectives include mainly: to commission impact evaluations in collaboration with local and international research institutes (e.g. INTRAC and Swisspeace); to put in place a standard set of digitalized HKI (DC, HA, CC) with external technical support (e.g. VisibleSolutions, INTRAC and Nadel); to keep up-to-date PCM guidelines and M&E concepts partly involving external support (e.g. INTRAC); and to conduct PCM trainings in-country and to provide technical M&E help-desk services at all institutional levels.

M&E related performance of 2017 is indicated in the figure below, and is outlined in more detail in appendix D. The implementation of most planned M&E activities has been delayed to some extent, but quality wise at satisfying levels. For instance, key indicators have a solid monitoring component, yet the cake charts on https://hekskeyindicators.org need to be correspondingly programmed yet. Most challenges, to mention but another example, were faced with regard to commissioning rigorous impact evaluations, ranging from very complex designing (e.g. does a counterfactual approach work in fragile advocacy contexts?) to delayed data collection and reporting.

Figure 24: Theory of change and progress status of the M&E investment project.
The general objective of improved global performance assessment has been achieved partly, meaning that most upstream objectives have been achieved partially (e.g. improved evidence base, better global M&E system, and professional use of PCM guidelines). 'Partly' however does not mean entirely off-track. For instance, regarding ID’s M&E system progress has been made in terms of (a) planning and implementing the key modalities more systematically, and (b) feeding these modalities more systematically into the HIP, as indicated by the present HIP report. However, there is scope for improvement. For instance, the system needs to define more clearly how HIP reporting is supposed to combine findings from all our institutionalized data collection channels, including MSC, standard evaluations, impact evaluations, digital key indicators, project/programme monitoring reports, and patterns and other insights from global learning spaces.

'Partly' furthermore means that certain parts of defined objectives have been achieved, and others less. For example, standard evaluation practice has improved to some extent (better TOR, introduction of inception reports, etc.), but the improvement does not reflect a critical mass of evaluations yet. Moreover, management responses and their capitalization need to be further promoted on the part of line management. In addition, our evidence base has improved in the sense that the few rigorous impact studies conducted produced a number of findings and lessons learnt considered of great value for project designing and steering as well as for our institutional learning (e.g. we have ‘evidence’ that HEKS/EPER interventions do directly contribute to observed changes like, for example, in Bangladesh Dalit women’s incomes increased through value chain promotion, or in Senegal farmers’ secured access to land improved due to rights awareness raising and making legally binding claims, or in Kosovo Roma’s job prospects have improved due to educational support programs). On another hand, our evidence base needs to be developed further (e.g. not all projects are enrolled in our digital HKI system yet, and we still have to improve our efficiency in terms of commissioning rigorous impact studies). And while PCM related knowledge and capacity have increased at all levels, ownership needs to be promoted further, to mention but another example.

In a nutshell, we are on-track with some delay, and if we keep sticking to the same quality standards and pace while implementing our planned activities we will most likely reach M&E unit’s key targets: by 2018, 60% of our global portfolio (about 150 out of a total of 250 projects in 30 operational countries covering DC, HA and CC) use our PCM guidelines and the digital HKI system professionally. It is, however, a much longer way to go in view of improved project and programme quality, since this is largely dependent on joint efforts heavily involving line managers reinforcing adherence to PCM standards and related capacity building.

9.4.1 Knowledge sharing and capacity building

HEKS/EPER strives to be a learning organisation promoting individual and team capacity, skills through trainings, incorporating external expertise, space for reflection and analysis, sharing knowledge and promising practices. Knowledge sharing shall enhance the learning4steering principle of the HIP and the PCM to increase flexibility, relevance and effectiveness. It enables meaningful target-oriented planning and adequate implementation of our programmes and projects with people and communities we are working with benefitting in the long-term. KS provides ideas and tools for learning, facilitation and networking.

In the countries capacity building touches topics such as the FFAG (see chapter 9.5.1), building resilience, disaster response plan, conflict-sensitivity, human rights-based approach, conflict transformation or inclusive market.

International department forum – IDF 2017

A key learning milestone was the biannual ID forum 2017 held in Basel. 40 employees from 20 countries gathered to learn from each other in order to do even more effective work – for the benefit of people and communities in the projects, but also for an effective use of the donations. The core topics were selected after a capacity building survey in the countries and according to the learnings of the annual workshop meetings in the beginning of 2017. 4 topics were addressed …

It became clear at the forum, that the human rights-based approach is the basis for all forms of positive development. The right to participation and co-determination, to land and water, to education and security are prerequisites for a society and economy without hunger, poverty and violence and give people prospects

33 Key modalities of ID’s M&E system include HKI, project and programme monitoring reports, and selected reviews and evaluations (incl. impact studies).
34 An overview list on commissioned standard evaluations in 2017 is enclosed in appendix B.
35 An overview list on commissioned impact evaluations is enclosed in appendix B.
for the future. However, those who stand up for these rights are often discriminated against and persecuted. HEKS/EPER employees from Zimbabwe, Palestine or Honduras reported impressively on the increasing restriction of freedom for the population. But encouraging examples such as those from Zimbabwe show that HEKS/EPER succeeds in mediating a dialogue between the affected rural population and ‘benevolent’ local or national authority members. This makes it possible to demand the rights of people enshrined in national laws. In Palestine, too, dialogue was sought with the Israeli authorities in order to secure people’s right to their land and their homes, for example. Legal certainty is also central to peaceful countries and so-called classical development projects, such as agricultural production and access to markets. Because without clear land use rights, without clear rules for producing businesses and without a legally secure, functioning market system, neither small farms nor local businesses can operate profitably. Without legal certainty, there is no investment and no prospects.

**Employment and income / inclusive business:** HEKS/EPER works primarily in rural areas where the economy and social fabric are closely linked to the agricultural sector. Production and processing offer opportunities for jobs and income – even for the landless or people who are not farmers. But this is not always easy. Often knowledge, finances or market contacts are missing to implement business ideas. Moreover, jobs are often poorly paid, and minorities are often excluded from the market system. The ID Forum in Basel discussed the opportunities arising from a wide variety of business models that specifically involve the poorest and serve the population.

**Community land use:** Access to land is the core theme of HEKS’ work abroad. Basel showed that HEKS/EPER is successfully involved in global processes that promote the rights of small farmers and the right to land through advocacy work. Promising – as examples from Brazil, Cambodia, Niger or India have shown – are projects that support the collective ownership or joint use of land (similar to Alpine cooperatives or common land in Switzerland). On the one hand, it unites communities and promotes their way of doing business and their way of life, and on the other it protects them better from land sales and land theft.

**Effective management** Another central topic of the meeting was the targeted use of HEKS/EPER funds. This is not only about low administrative costs, but also about the concrete impact of projects on society, the economy and politics for the benefit of the marginalized and the poor. To this end HEKS/EPER is looking specifically for partnerships with other organisations, civil society, the authorities and the private sector. Because HEKS/EPER projects should initiate positive changes beyond the duration and region of the project. Positive examples from Senegal, Bangladesh and other countries showed that this is possible.

### 9.5 Finances

HEKS/EPER’s overall expenditure in 2017 amounted to CHF 83.4 million (CHF 76 million in 2016). For activities in the international division including humanitarian aid, HEKS/EPER spent CHF 42.4 million (CHF 36.2 million in 2016). Total ‘DC South’ project costs amounted to CHF 21 million, while ‘DC East’ project costs totalled CHF 6.3 million. In 2017, SDC contributed in total 26% (25% DC and 1% HA) of the costs of DC South and East (29% in the previous year). The total contribution of SDC amounted to CHF 7.5 million which also includes CHF 0.5 million for the proportion of humanitarian Aid in DC projects.

As planned HEKS/EPER has constantly scaled its DC programmes and projects over the last 4 years (from CHF 24.5 million in 2014 to CHF 31.1 million in 2017 – incl. CC projects). At the same time, we are confronted with a decrease in funding income of DC projects (from CHF 25.5 million in 2014 to CHF 21.2 million in 2017). We have covered the negative difference from own funds obtained in the past. However, with the growing DC portfolio, these ‘reserves’ are depleted faster than anticipated if this income/expense ratio trend continues.

Therefore, we need to improve the balance between our spending and our income in order to achieve our growth and financial sustainability ambitions.

### 9.5.1 Controlling

**Capacity building on good governance to avoid misuse of power**

2017 was dominated by the topics good governance and the new FFAG (Field Financial and Administration Guidelines) which is a binding policy for HEKS/EPER in dealing with its staff, partners and suppliers. It contains clear regulations for its work in the countries. In 4 regional one-week workshops, HHQ controlling
team introduced the new guidelines/policy and practiced various new templates and processes with the participants, country directors and finance officers of all HEKS/EPER priority countries.

Special attention was paid to the new chapter on good governance covering the topics of corruption and misuse/abuse of power with the associated complaint mechanisms and how to put the policy into practice. HEKS/EPER’s code of conduct papers emphasise ‘zero tolerance’ against any misuse of power addressing explicitly discrimination and bullying/mobbing, sexual harassment and exploitation, corruption, child protection, violation of national and international legislation. A whistleblowing reporting system has been set up and in each priority country an anti-corruption officer has been appointed. This officer’s main task is to build up capacity in the country office and within the partner organisations to implement the HEKS/EPER good governance policy. Already in 2017, first country workshops with partners took place, this in cooperation with HHQ controlling ID or the national offices of Transparency International. HEKS/EPER is a member of Transparency International Switzerland since 2017. It is important that HEKS/EPER has not only relevant and clear policies in place, but puts into practice what is on paper and can prove and document the functioning of the systems and processes.

In 2017, HHQ controlling conducted internal audits in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kosovo, Brazil, Zimbabwe, Georgia, Moldova and Senegal. Not only the HEKS/EPER country offices, but also a selection of partner organisations have been examined carefully. The internal audit is also always linked to capacity building on policy, guidelines and practical implementation of various tools. Since HEKS/EPER often works with rather small partner organizations, there is a lot of demand on strengthening capacities. HEKS/EPER enables its partners to improve their financial and good governance processes.

HEKS/EPER has a policy of zero tolerance. If even small, but intentional irregularities or abuses of power in any form are detected, the necessary consequences according to the FFAG are immediately applied. In 2017, violations of the FFAG were discovered at 3 partner organisations and adequate sanctions were taken. Otherwise, the internal and external audits did not provide any indication of significant irregularities.

2018 will still be dominated by the consolidation of FFAG in the countries and the further dissemination of our good governance guidelines to the partner organisation (see also chapter 8.1 on how HEKS/EPER has been and still is dealing with the Oxfam case).

Controlling was also closely involved in the implementation process of the new IT project for the entire organisation of HEKS/EPER. This process is very time-consuming and labour-intensive; it will continue in 2018. The aim is that the country offices will be included as soon and best possible. A key step for better cooperation within the ID department has been done with all documentation and communication being switched from an internal server only accessible from Switzerland to the Microsoft cloud solution Sharepoint.

HEKS/EPER global: Faces of project participants.
**Figure 25**: Budget and closing of the HEKS/EPER International Programme 2017, including SDC contribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / programme</th>
<th>Budget expenses 2017</th>
<th>Closing expenses 2017</th>
<th>Closing SDC contribution DC 2017</th>
<th>% of SDC contribution DC 2017</th>
<th>Closing SDC contribution HA 2017</th>
<th>% of SDC contribution HA 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development cooperation South</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia general</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>93'808</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>1'375'601</td>
<td>1'427'979</td>
<td>343'445</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>1'262'601</td>
<td>1'423'258</td>
<td>413'101</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>933'601</td>
<td>770'463</td>
<td>239'998</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine/Israel</td>
<td>1'835'601</td>
<td>2'546'894</td>
<td>433'705</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Asia</strong></td>
<td>5'407'403</td>
<td>6'262'402</td>
<td>1'430'249</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo DR</td>
<td>885'601</td>
<td>995'443</td>
<td>280'273</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>1'112'601</td>
<td>1'039'282</td>
<td>210'883</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>1'555'601</td>
<td>2'273'129</td>
<td>729'337</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1'191'601</td>
<td>1'403'457</td>
<td>550'204</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sudan</td>
<td>1'280'601</td>
<td>757'698</td>
<td>226'628</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>164'497</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>1'301'202</td>
<td>1'055'793</td>
<td>449'892</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Africa</strong></td>
<td>7'327'206</td>
<td>7'524'801</td>
<td>2'442'217</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>164'497</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas general</td>
<td>120'000</td>
<td>128'914</td>
<td>83'794</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1'458'000</td>
<td>1'395'997</td>
<td>393'669</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>938'601</td>
<td>928'521</td>
<td>266'202</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>1'630'601</td>
<td>998'556</td>
<td>63'059</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>141'110</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>1'121'601</td>
<td>857'386</td>
<td>351'780</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Americas</strong></td>
<td>5'358'803</td>
<td>4'309'374</td>
<td>1'158'504</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>141'110</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total programme</strong></td>
<td>18'093'412</td>
<td>18'096'577</td>
<td>5'035'971</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>305'607</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total management</strong></td>
<td>2'842'475</td>
<td>2'870'540</td>
<td>1'264'029</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>76'707</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total DC South</strong></td>
<td>20'935'887</td>
<td>20'967'117</td>
<td>6'300'000</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>382'314</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC contribution*</td>
<td>6'300'000</td>
<td>6'682'315</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC contribution in %</td>
<td>30,09 %</td>
<td>31,87 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC mandates South*</td>
<td>500'000</td>
<td>121'617</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Development cooperation East | | | | | | |
| Europe general       | 470'601              | 502'918               | 66'344                           | 13%                           |                                  |                               |
| Armenia              | 415'000              | 436'706               | 42'620                           | 10%                           |                                  |                               |
| Georgia              | 1'360'000            | 1'379'068             | 175'873                          | 13%                           |                                  |                               |
| Kosovo               | 250'000              | 401'048               | 0                               | 0%                            |                                  |                               |
| Moldova              | 1'215'601            | 1'453'404             | 274'715                          | 19%                           |                                  |                               |
| Romania              | 1'790'601            | 1'297'580             | 0                               | 0%                            |                                  |                               |
| Serbia/Kosovo        | -                    | -                    | -                                | 0%                            |                                  |                               |
| **Total programme**  | 5'501'803            | 5'470'724             | 559'552                          | 10%                           |                                  |                               |
| **Total management** | 864'333              | 867'770               | 140'448                          | 16%                           |                                  |                               |
| **Total DC East**    | 6'366'136            | 6'338'494             | 700'000                          | 11%                           |                                  |                               |
| SDC contribution*   | 700'000              | 700'000               |                                  |                               |                                  |                               |
| SDC contribution in % | 11,00 %             | 11,04 %               |                                  |                               |                                  |                               |
| SDC mandates East*  | 2'113'350            | 1'623'105             |                                  |                               |                                  |                               |
### Humanitarian aid South

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Amount (CHF)</th>
<th>Expenditures (CHF)</th>
<th>Total Management (CHF)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2'000'000</td>
<td>368'518</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>2'050'000</td>
<td>1'519'155</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>1'525'000</td>
<td>1'464'497</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>200'000</td>
<td>19'746</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>100'000</td>
<td>511'158</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>150'000</td>
<td>118'607</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>600'000</td>
<td>29'004</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>500'000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>384'546</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>143'382</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sudan</td>
<td>100'000</td>
<td>2'817'324</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>572'629</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1'549'375</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total programme</strong></td>
<td>5'425'000</td>
<td>9'497'940</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total management</strong></td>
<td>852'268</td>
<td>1'051'545</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total HA South</strong></td>
<td>6'277'268</td>
<td>10'549'485</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDC contribution</strong>*</td>
<td>500'000</td>
<td>117'686</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDC contribution in %</strong></td>
<td>7,97</td>
<td>1,12</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Humanitarian aid East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Amount (CHF)</th>
<th>Expenditures (CHF)</th>
<th>Total Management (CHF)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>108'001</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>160'000</td>
<td>522'004</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total programme</strong></td>
<td>160'000</td>
<td>630'005</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total management</strong></td>
<td>25'136</td>
<td>69'742</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total HA East</strong></td>
<td>185'136</td>
<td>699'747</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDC contribution</strong>*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDC contribution in %</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Church cooperation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Amount (CHF)</th>
<th>Expenditures (CHF)</th>
<th>Total Management (CHF)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC Europe regional</td>
<td>177'000</td>
<td>91'702</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>270'000</td>
<td>260'355</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>220'000</td>
<td>235'961</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>53'000</td>
<td>53'626</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>10'000</td>
<td>14'955</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>453'000</td>
<td>437'928</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>630'000</td>
<td>663'928</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>60'000</td>
<td>32'987</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>95'000</td>
<td>301'590</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>256'000</td>
<td>273'830</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total programme</strong></td>
<td>2'224'000</td>
<td>2'366'863</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total management</strong></td>
<td>349'390</td>
<td>375'436</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total CC</strong></td>
<td>2'224'000</td>
<td>2'366'863</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDC contribution</strong>*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDC contribution in %</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Overview costs HEKS/EPER international programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview costs HEKS/EPER international programme</th>
<th>DC &amp; HA overall (without SDC mandates)</th>
<th>HIP overall: DC &amp; HA &amp; CC (including mandates)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total programme costs DC &amp; HA</td>
<td>29'450'865</td>
<td>32'064'215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total management costs DC &amp; HA</td>
<td>4'933'602</td>
<td>4'933'602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total costs DC &amp; HA</td>
<td>34'384'467</td>
<td>36'997'817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC contribution*</td>
<td>7'500'000</td>
<td>7'500'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC contribution in %</td>
<td>21,8%</td>
<td>21,8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*including SDC contributions to HHQ human resources, IT, managing board / no contribution to communication & fundraising. 2017: 370'000 / 2018: 390'000 / 2019: 400'000 / 2020: 400'000

1) **management** = programme management costs at HHQ / **programme** = programme implementation costs in the countries.

2) yearly reporting will distinguish between planning, budget, actual expenditures and identify SDC contributions.

#### 9.6 Alliances and networks

Since HEKS/EPER often works with community-based organisations and local partners, and is itself a rather small player – also when implementing directly – the integration of its activities into thematic or advocacy/lobbying networks is of crucial importance. Also

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 a more effective and efficient achievement of its set objectives. Through
networking, HEKS/EPER is committed to expanding knowledge and expertise for the benefit of its own international cooperation work, 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. In this section, the most significant national and international networks that HEKS/EPER belongs to are described. In addition, HEKS/EPER is a member of many national and multinational networks relating to specific priority countries.

Figure 26: Major networks/specialist groups HHQ participates in. At country level, COs engage in additional networks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT Alliance</strong> (ACT Alliance is an international coalition of more than 140 churches and affiliated organisations working together in over 140 countries to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalised people.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alliance Sud</strong> (policy platform of 6 big Swiss iNGOs advocating for just global structures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swiss NGO Platform</strong> (incl. subgroups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition</strong> (Initiative of public interest CSOs and social movements that recognize the need to act jointly for the realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swiss NGO DRR Platform</strong> (Its goal is to contribute to enhanced quality of our services, to promote the diversity of knowhow and experience, to provide guidance for increased effectiveness and to advocate for the importance of DRR and CCA for building resilient communities worldwide.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDC networks</strong> (member of various thematic networks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Sensitivity Community Hub</strong> (Joint learning, evidence building and the promotion of conflict sensitivity at policy and operational levels together with other Hub members aims at creating synergies and foster the application of conflict sensitivity globally.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services</strong> (Knowledge sharing on rural advisory services.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agusasan</strong> (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.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swiss Water Partnership</strong> (Multi-stakeholder platform bringing Swiss organisations from the academic, civil society, public and private sectors together to find innovative solutions for water challenges in developing and transition countries.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KOFF / Swisspeace</strong> (Dialogue and exchange network facilitated by swisspeace connecting Swiss state and non-state actors active in peacebuilding. Its mission is to ensure that Swiss peacebuilding activities are strengthened, relevant, and visible.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bread for All cooperation alliance</strong> (Dedicated to bringing about new models of food production and economies in all regions of the world.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EFEWCW</strong> (The ecumenical forum is an international, church-related organisation that is active in 30 European countries to promote initiatives for peace, justice and reconciliation; to commit ourselves to action on behalf of women’s rights, which are human rights)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transparency International</strong> (Transparency International gives voice to the victims and witnesses of corruption. It works together with governments, businesses and citizens to stop the abuse of power, bribery and secret deals.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAO NGO Working Group</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beam Exchange</strong> (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.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max Havelaar Foundation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intrac M&amp;E network</strong> (Thematic group meetings and/or a set of webinars with a vibrant network for interaction and debate on M&amp;E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Klima-Allianz</strong> (Participation in meeting, exchange on climate change and DRR related issues, support to campaigns/activities, link to Swiss NGO DRR Platform.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEVAL</strong> (Swiss Evaluation Society)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 Communication

HEKS/EPER’s communication department supports the activities of ID with fundraising, public events, media coverage, thematic campaigns and advocacy work. Below is a selection of the most relevant activities.

Media and public relations
In 2017, HEKS/EPER informed the public with media releases and the monthly newsletter on numerous topics relating to foreign work: including emergency aid for war refugees in Southern Sudan and Uganda, Syria, Lebanon and Northern Iraq, but also emergency aid for victims of the drought disaster in Ethiopia and the floods in Bangladesh. Since 2017, HEKS/EPER has also been supporting the persecuted Muslim minority of the Rohingya who have fled Myanmar.

HEKS/EPER also informed the public about its commitment to promoting access to land or about joining the Blue Community, an international network of civil society organisations and public institutions committed to the implementation of the human right to water as a public good. In the four issues of the magazine ‘handeln’ HEKS/EPER reported on other selected topics of its development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation.

Campaign on Syrian refugees in Lebanon
‘If you are wondering whether donations make sense – ask Leila’, HEKS/EPER called on the Swiss population in its 2017 campaign – and gave an answer on the campaign website www.fragen-sie-leila.ch based on its commitment to Syrian refugee families in Lebanon. Together with its partner organisation Najdek, HEKS/EPER supports the neediest families in their daily struggle for survival at the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut. The campaign was rounded off by a commercial, a documentary film about HEKS’ work in Lebanon, which was shown at cinema events in five Swiss cities, and extensive material for collection campaigns by the parishes.

Corporate responsibility initiative
HEKS/EPER supports the corporate responsibility initiative (Konzernverantwortungsinitiative) together with 79 other organisations. The initiative aims to legally oblige Swiss companies to comply with environmental standards and human rights globally. Companies should be liable for human rights violations and environmental damage caused by their subsidiaries. In October 2016, the corporate responsibility initiative
was submitted to the Federal Chancellery with around 120,000 signatures. While the Federal Council recommended the initiative for rejection at the beginning of 2017, the Legal Commission of the Council of States advocated the drafting of a counter-proposal. However, the Legal Commission of the National Council rejected this. A referendum is therefore expected to take place in 2019.

**Climate Alliance for a Just Climate Policy**

HEKS/EPER is a member of the Climate Alliance, a coalition of 70 organisations committed to a just and sustainable climate policy in Switzerland. It requires Switzerland to switch its energy supply completely to renewable sources by 2050 and to support developing countries financially in climate protection and adaptation measures. In 2017, the Climate Alliance continued to monitor the implementation of the Paris climate agreement in Switzerland and commented on the measures planned to implement the agreed climate targets. In a climate protection memento, together with 3,000 signatories, it also called on the Swiss National Bank to publish the CO₂ emissions from its portfolio and to develop an exit plan for companies that promote or trade in fossil fuels. As part of the ‘Pensions without risk’ campaign, the Swiss pension funds were also asked to sell their holdings in such companies.

**Public info appearances parishes**

HEKS/EPER employees regularly provide information about HEKS’ project work abroad at public appearances in parishes, at panel discussions or in confirmation classes. In 2017 HEKS/EPER reached 4,000 people with 132 appearances. So-called ‘lunch cinema’ events, where movies on HEKS/EPER campaigns and projects are shown reached 600 people.

**Eastern Europe Day**

What is the social role of the Reformed churches in Eastern Europe and Switzerland? How do they perceive their social responsibility today, 500 years after the Reformation? These were the questions addressed by some 130 participants on this year’s Eastern Europe Day. István Szabó, the leading bishop of the Reformed Church in Hungary, told how his church rediscovered its social responsibility after the fall of the Iron Curtain and how it fulfils it today. Andreas Zeller, President of the Synodal Council of the Reformed Church Bern-Jura-Solothurn, pointed out the social role of the Reformed national churches in Switzerland. Afterwards, various workshops provided the opportunity to learn more about the concrete social commitment of the Reformed churches in Eastern Europe and Italy.

10.1 **Indicators of communication**

- Public info appearances, e.g. schools, churches (# of appearances and individuals reached).
  132 appearances at churches/church organisations reaching 4,000 individuals and 5 ‘lunch cinemas’ reaching 600 individuals.

- E-newsletter (# of articles and individuals reached).
  28 Newsletter reaching 24,433 email contacts each. 15 newsletters with an international topic.

- Website (# of articles, clicks and individuals reached).
  516,156 hits on all websites of HEKS/EPER – 1/3 of the sites visited with topic of HEKS/EPER international.

- Social media such as Twitter, Facebook (# of activities and # of individuals reached).
  Facebook: 348 posts. Outreach: 460,000 individuals – 50% featuring HEKS/EPER international cooperation and 50% Swiss activities
  Twitter: 250 tweets. Outreach: 145,000 individuals - 50% featuring HEKS/EPER international cooperation and 50% Swiss activities
  (remark: outreach with the special topic ‘Farbe bekennen’ (for humanity in Switzerland, sensitization on the topic refugees): 1.2 million individuals.)
11 Emerging patterns of HEKS/EPER’s international cooperation

At HEKS/EPER’s headquarters, the 2017 annual country reports from DC country offices, humanitarian aid projects and church cooperation as well as the results of various M&E tools such as evaluations, HEKS/EPER key indicators, impact studies or field visit reports and ‘most significant change’ interviews were shared and analysed HHQ ID staff. As in previous years, emerging patterns of HEKS/EPER’s various interventions – either opportunities or challenges – most relevant to HEKS/EPER to act successfully according to its ToCs have been identified and are described in this chapter. HEKS/EPER will systematically address these identified issues during 2018 and onwards to make significant contributions to improving equality and prosperity among people and communities HEKS/EPER is working with.

- HEKS/EPER screens (M&E) and documents patterns (annual country reports, HIP reports and evaluations) and analyses patterns (HHQ ID workshops, partner meetings, DO and CO/CD meetings).
- Patterns of previous years and respective steering decisions are part of the analysis.
- Analysed patterns will be included in steering decisions and strategy adaptations at project, country and HHQ level – new guidelines, projects or initiatives and alliance may emerge.
- HIP patterns and steering decisions are incorporated into discussions/workshops in areas such as HHQ management meetings, CO/PO meetings in the countries, the biannual IDFs and of course bilateral between all staff involved in project and programme planning and implementation.
- 2018 four regional thematic meetings with HHQ management and thematic advisors as well as country staff will be held to exchange in-depth the topics ‘access to land’, ‘inclusive markets & business’, ‘conflict transformation’ and ‘Whole of Syria perspectives’, where these patterns will be part of the discussion.

11.1 Patterns from 2011 to 2017

Identified patterns from previous years proved to be landmarks for new developments within HEKS/EPER, refining its profile and actions. Figure 27 shows the ‘major pattern lines’ since 2011. HEKS/EPER ID used and uses these learnings for steering its programme, incorporating new guidelines, tools, capacity building measures and learning events such as the ID Forum 2017 (chapter 8.4.1). In 2017 two new patterns emerged: Communication4Development (chapter 11.2.5) and how to facilitate mutual dialogue between duty-bearers and rights-holders (chapter 11.2.3), rather as an opportunity than only a challenge. Below is a compilation of how HEKS/EPER dealt with the most relevant recurring patterns.

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Figure 27: At knowledge-sharing workshops during the reporting process, HEKS/EPER identified recurring patterns affecting negatively or enabling positively its work.
Access to land: As in previous years, the topic of access to land remains of key importance for HEKS/EPER’s work that combines various aspects: local and international governance, conflict transformation issues, economic and social empowerment and inclusion, the fulfilment of the right to food, etc. HEKS/EPER will continue to refine its profile with regards to access to land and further expand its thematic competence and experience (see also chapter 5.1 and chapter 9.1). In 2017, the challenge emerged how to find innovative approaches to enable and secure access to land as the topic is very sensitive, mostly linked to conflict, repression and imbalanced power relations with the rural communities under pressure (see chapter 11.3).

Systemic perspective: Achieving systemic change has become an overarching principle of HEKS/EPER’s programmes and projects with the new HIP 2017–2020. HEKS/EPER seeks to foster transformations in the structure or dynamics of a system that lead to a positive change for a larger number of people. HRBA and the HIP objectives inclusive market as well as the dialogue between duty-bearers and rights-holders and social inclusion/good governance are very much linked to the systemic perspective. Read also chapter 11.2.4, the special chapter 5.10 on Roma inclusion and chapter 5.2 on access to basic services.

Inclusive market: Analysing opportunities and challenges to increase income and improve living conditions of rural communities, over the past years, HEKS/EPER shifted from a food security strategy with focus on agricultural production more towards a value chain approach including marketing and today to a market-oriented approach that emphasises income generation and market demand striving to promote inclusive business and markets models. Therefore, with the HIP 2017–20, HEKS/EPER moved from the value chain approach towards adopting a systemic approach to an inclusive market system development. MSD strengthens the accountability of rural families and communities, upgrades the value chain structure to benefit producers and consumers, and therefore contributes to a strengthening of income-generating conditions for farming families. Systemic concepts of interconnectedness, interdependency and interaction of the system elements, and the inherent feedback loops which promote and inhibit change mean that in practice, market development practitioners should take into account critical actors, the relationships between them and the context that influences how they behave and interact in the market. Genuine participation, in the sense that the process of intervention planning and action is led by market actors – and therefore that they feel a strong sense of ownership over it – is essential to ensuring that the transformations persist. In 2017, HEKS/EPER focussed more on the inclusive business approach and reflected (e.g. at the ID forum 2017) on its own role as an actor not only of development, but as a market actor providing services (see chapter 5.4 and chapter 11.2.2).

Networks and alliances: HEKS/EPER’s endeavours to cultivate cooperation, partnerships, dialogue and networking contribute to more effective and efficient achievement of its set objectives, aiming at relevance, up-scaling and systemic change. Through networking, HEKS/EPER is committed to expanding knowledge and expertise for the benefit of its own international cooperation work and lobbying for the interests of the people and communities it works with. An important step made in 2015 and 2016 was the strengthening of cooperation with the ACT Alliance.

Rural urban interdependencies: The fast rate of urbanisation and rising migration to cities brings with it both risks and opportunities for migrants, communities and governments. HEKS/EPER identified that in its contexts, rural-urban migration leads to brain drain in rural areas, decreasing basic services, shrinking economic and social power and reducing prospects, especially for younger generations. Therefore, HEKS/EPER’s programmes have to be sensitive to the following topics: How to deal with projects where there are participants who ‘lose out’? How to work with highly ‘migratory’ communities (decreasing vs. managing migration)? In addition, HEKS/EPER decided to keep mainly to rural areas in the HIP 2017–2020, but of course took into account the linkages to local or national centres relevant for rural communities (markets, decision-making power, etc.).

Resilience building: Acknowledged as a key opportunity for people and communities to be able to withstand shocks and stresses, HEKS/EPER invested a significant amount of resources to mainstream resilience into its projects and programmes. This has resulted in meaningful progress at institutional level and encouraging initial results. Resilience has to be followed up with in this HIP phase (see chapter 8.3).

Insecurity and fragility: There is little evidence that the number of fragile or repressive states will reduce over the next half decade. Rather, it is the case that the pressure on resources will continue to increase, which in turn may result in further internal conflicts and these countries can barely provide the basic needs of its people, namely the poor. With HEKS/EPER operating in such contexts for many years now, it is of interest to understand how its projects still have a particular impact and if system change is feasible.

Enabling management: How to manage successful and effective international cooperation was and is an institutional key concern of HEKS/EPER. Therefore, HEKS/EPER has invested in new management tools (PCM, monitoring, guidelines, etc.), has held workshops at HHQ and in the COs to increase capabilities and has implemented its ‘focus strategy’ rigorously (Chapter 8.1).
11.2 Patterns related to HEKS/EPER’s work in 2017

In 2017, the HHQ team identified seven key patterns emerging from and around HEKS/EPER’s international cooperation activities. However, it analysed the five 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.

11.2.1 Being flexible – adapting strategy, programme and activities to the changing context

Working with programmes and project designed with a logframe for 3 to 5 years contains the risk to ‘stick to the plan’ instead of permanently adapt activities, approaches, targets and even the whole strategy. This is necessary to progress with the programme/project as the context is changing permanently.

To adapt for, you need an organizational structure (strategies, policies, guidelines, administrative tools, etc.), but also the individual and organizational mindset. In general, the HEKS/EPER PCM allows flexibility inviting the implementers to define a theory of change and objectives in broad sense leaving room for manoeuvre. HEKS/EPER strives to enable space for reflection to learn permanently and to analyze at least once a year the progress made. The annual reports should document this appraisal and also the steering decisions for the coming year or years. Decisions which shall put into action needed adaptions.

Nevertheless, HEKS/EPER has to be self-critical and check, if HHQ, the country offices and the implementing units and partner organisations have really this mindset and the capacity or knowledge to act flexible and if so, if the administrative burdens, management set-ups or financial constraints are not suffocating innovation and adaptions. Do we really have time and resources for reflective spaces to analyze progress, exchange on promising practices and screen for innovative approaches? And HEKS/EPER has to analyze, what set-up is most promising for effective implementation – e.g. through a PIU, a partner organisation or a strategic alliance. Also, while striving for effectiveness and adequate ratios between programmatic and management costs and therefore despite the tendency towards increasing financial volumes of project and country programme, HEKS/EPER must give smaller innovative projects a chance as they might be trendsetter for future promising programmes and strategies.

Some implementing partners still tend to focus on activities instead of following a goal-oriented strategy. There is the risk that the respective context is only analysed in the beginning of programme or project phase while writing the proposal and establishing the logframe. Especially in times of insecurity there is a tendency to apply a ‘wait’n’see approach’. And also during phases of stability having established good relations to duty-bearers you might get ‘lazy’ not screening the context and you might get caught by changes.

But, to discern and react to volatile economic, social and political situations is vital for reaching long-term goals. Furthermore, screening and analyzing context is not only a method to react on challenges of a changing context, but should be a tool to spot windows of opportunities. E.g.: In 2017, the resignation of Mugabe in Zimbabwe might be an opportunity for more space for the civil society.

HEKS/EPER is convinced, a systemic approach and good linkages to duty-bearers and ownership of many stakeholders can stimulate positive change and mitigate political and economic perturbances. Also, we got to keep in mind that ‘flexibility only’ does not guarantee success. Often, stamina and a long-term perspective is needed to realize systemic change and relevant so real scale. Multiple phases in projects allows adjustments in the process enabling success in pursuing the ToC. Being flexible, therefore, does not mean to change priorities as convenient, but to adapt approaches or management set-ups to be able to achieve systemic change benefitting the people and communities HEKS/EPER is working with.

Another reality is, that in many countries humanitarian and development work cannot be strictly separated. Resilience building is already an inherent part of HEKS/EPER’s development programmes. And ‘prevention and preparedness’ is one of the HEKS/EPER HA objectives. But in its interventions areas HEKS/EPER must be able to implement DC and HA. DC countries got be capacitated to react on conflicts and humanitarian crises as well as HA programmes must be able to link up with long-term development perspectives and moving from a first rehabilitation of livelihoods forwards to enable sustainable long-term development, certainly in the fields of production and inclusive market. Certainly. in the Middle East, where HEKS/EPER it is operating with HA projects, long-term perspectives for the refugees staying since years or even decades in Lebanon or for returnees in Northern Iraq after the cleansing of IS from their home territories are vital.
11.2.2 How to include business thinking in NGO logic

In the past, HEKS/EPER has mostly understood and implemented its projects in a ‘traditional sense’ – meaning engaging with the local civil society through classic local partner organizations. These organisations typically provided support to the people of our concern in a combination of soft skills development (trainings, coaching, etc.) and provision of inputs and/or infrastructure. Like all approaches, this has its pros and cons. On one side, the target group is well known and directly accessed, making it easier to oversee and control the impact of the work. On the other side, such a direct collaboration can only be upscaled by replication, and therefore its impact has limited scope.

Furthermore, the project directly intervenes in the system, which can potentially distort the system and create conflicts, as the NGO needs to select for whom it will work.

For a couple of years now, HEKS/EPER promotes a more systemic approach to different development issues, including market constraints of smallholder farmers. Through a market system development approach, farmers should not only gain better access to the market, but also receive improved support services from all different kind of actors. This systemic approach necessitates an understanding of all market stakeholders in the project, their issues and interests, and the long-term solution should provide a win-win situation for all involved.

To improve a system without creating new dependencies, HEKS/EPER and its implementing partners take up the role of a facilitator. Instead of classic trainings by NGOs, the NGO supports public and private sector partners to work differently, for the benefit of the people of our concern. The profound understanding of the market system and its dynamics, which is needed to develop such a project, requires that HEKS/EPER and partner organisations must be able to understand the mind-set of business actors.

But how do we further develop these new skills, and what does it mean for the future project set-up? Is it actually possible to remain a ‘neutral’ facilitator or are we automatically also a market actor? And of what value, and to who’s benefit, is our contribution? Is it legitimate to also work with large companies – at no cost – and improve their business – or should we demand remuneration for this service provision? Why not become a social enterprise and provide business-based solutions for our target group? Should we instead invest in such social enterprises?

These are some among many questions that HEKS/EPER is currently discussing. There is unanimous consent that HEKS/EPER must adapt its approach, as well as its role and self-understanding to the local context. A transparent communication of our own role is seen as key to success in this approach. And, last but not least, we strongly believe that we must adhere to a conflict sensitive approach, in order to create long-lasting results without creating conflicts.

11.2.3 How to reach duty-bearers and how to facilitate dialogue?

For our programmes it is necessary to reach also duty-bearers as they are mostly the decision makers and can influence the development of a society or even a country. HEKS/EPER therefore develops also projects with partners who have the ability to reach out to duty-bearers and to influence them. Of course, this is not always easy, especially in countries where the conflict is still ongoing or where the duty-bearers don’t feel responsible. Depending on the project country, various factors restrict the dialogue between disadvantaged communities and the ‘powerful’ from business, politics and society. Lack of will and prejudice can exist on both sides.

Local authorities or business representatives can be often easier be addressed, as they are confronted and linked with people and problems. While HEKS/EPER and its partners build good relationships with duty-bearers, they must pay attention to maintain independence. Another challenge exists in countries where positions in governments are personalized. After changes of power, established trust and cooperation can completely collapse if one has aligned oneself unilaterally.

We meet different settings with different challenges in reaching out to duty-bearers. As mentioned, in situations of ongoing conflicts, it is hardly possible for the weaker party to reach out to the duty-bearers of the stronger party, and often this is also a taboo in the own society. We should therefore pay attention to cross border partnerships where members of the stronger party can speak up on behalf of the weaker party.
Or we reach out to the duty-bearers via international duty-bearers who pressure on decision makers to stick to international law. Nevertheless, members of the oppressed party should also hold their own representatives accountable to claim rights.

In fragile contexts, which means mostly a lack of government structures, it can be more efficient to reach out to local authorities and also to offer capacity building to local authorities. This can develop into interactive platforms and participatory budgeting to ensure the accountability of the duty-bearers, especially on a local level. It is important to work transparent and professional to avoid the suspicion of corruption.

If HEKS/EPER projects are working in close cooperation with duty-bearers, including payments, we must define clear red lines for institutional support to maintain our independence. We must be aware of different scenarios how relationships can develop and withdraw if transparency is not given. We must be conscious of our role in conflicts and political interference and discuss it openly with our local staff and partner organizations.

As mentioned above, in development countries political and personal changes often mean not only the loss of the contact person but also the loss of the contact to the duty-bearers as such. In such settings it is important to support the ownership of the local population to guarantee continuity on at the local level and to develop a unified approach of a broad range of stakeholders to avoid dependency on one level of authorities. For institutional cooperation it might be advisable to have a memorandum of understanding.

In general experience tells us that multi-level advocacy and the use of opinion leaders can convince other duty-bearers.

11.2.4 Promoting the systemic approach – advocacy for rights

In more stable countries advocacy and concrete project work have enabled economic or political systems to change positively. Successful institutionalizations were possible with an improved education system for marginalized children in Kosovo, Roma settlement policy in Serbia or the financial participation of municipalities in Romania. Also in Niger, the national law and policy of the ‘code rural’ is an institutionalized base for facilitating the co-existence and prosperity of transhumant cattle owners and seditarian farmers.

In fragile and humanitarian contexts, supporting disadvantaged communities for more rights and better living conditions is more difficult. How can dialogue with decision-makers from business, politics and society be promoted in the long term? When establishing relations with the authorities or business representatives, HEKS/EPER and its partners must maintain their independence and not orient their cooperation too unilaterally. Because established relationships can be quickly destroyed by personnel changes as it happened in Brazil and Kosovo when the Governments changed. But Kosovo is a good example on how broad dialogue involving many stakeholders created ownership not only within the existing ruling Government, but also within key players of economy, administration, civil society and former opposition party members. The mapped institutionalization of a school reform, the HEKS/EPER partners was advocating for since years, wasn’t stopped, but passed legislation (see also special chapter 5.10 on Roma).

Many promising practices contain a multi-stakeholder approach creating ownership amongst various actors. To achieve this, donor and partner organisation coordination to convene on joint strategies and actions are paramount. Clever advocacy based on local and international experience addressing with the adequate form the relevant groups and opinion leaders help facilitating dialogue between duty-bearers and rights-holders. Multi-level advocacy on local, national, international level promotes systemic change (e.g. Kosovo, Brazil, Palestine, Bangladesh). Networking within NGOs and communities to get its key actors on the same page for joint action is also relevant.

In contexts such as Romania, Kosovo, Serbia HEKS/EPER managed to install co-financing of projects with authorities and individuals contributing to project costs. In the long-term promising practices shall reach a broad public, which is either benefitting or supporting such important initiatives. Only, if an initiative or projects is self-sustainable, replicated and institutionalized positively, it can be rated as a success. Working systematically and striving for institutionalization doesn’t mean to work only with State authorities, but with many relevant stakeholders.

To promote systemic change, an iNGO has to understand the local values, incentives and obstacles. Robust systems must be identified, and the decision on how to approach stakeholders and which system will be favoured and fostered is key to initiate progress and not doing harm. Context and stakeholder analysis as foreseen in the PCM is paramount for success.
11.2.5 Communication tools and strategies for development

Information and communication on rights, economic and social opportunities or on technologies and methods for production, processing and marketing are fundamental in HEKS/EPER’s role to facilitate change.

- First, they are 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.
- Second, they are key in informing right-holders about their rights, accessing public information and supporting them in holding duty-bearers accountable.
- Third, 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.
- And last, information and communication technologies and strategies are needed to reach out to a larger audience and gain useful publicity amongst targeted stakeholders.

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.

Using opportunities of new media

But, more recently SMS, websites and new media such as social media with Facebook, twitter, YouTube, blogs gain importance. However, there remains a large untapped potential in using more modern ICT in the project work of HEKS/EPER. Tailor-made apps for smartphones, mobile money transfer apps, new social media channels and even blockchain technologies could be used more effectively in reaching out to people, enabling access to information, facilitating interaction and communication among people. While in few project contexts some modern ICTs are already in use, other more remote contexts still suffer under a lack of infrastructure.

HEKS/EPER wants to engage more intensively with the opportunities modern ICT provide and the challenges this faces in remote project contexts. In which field are innovative information and communication technologies and methods relevant? How can they replace or be combined with existing practices? We argue for a continuous need of face-to-face communication, meetings, door to door campaigns etc. which remain important ways of communicating and disseminating information, but we are also eager to explore new opportunities through modern ICT. For this purpose, HEKS/EPER plans to take stock of how ICT is used in our existing projects and will identify in which field of intervention they are relevant. External support could further analyze the global trend of modern ICT in the development sector and stimulate reflection within HEKS/EPER of how to tap the full potential of ICT in our work with the most vulnerable groups.

11.3 Further patterns in 2017

Other opportunities identified for increasing the relevance of HEKS/EPER’s activities were:

Innovative approaches to enable access to land

Access to land is usually a very sensitive issue that causes repression and conflict. Because land means economic, cultural and political power. The demand for his right to land can be particularly dangerous for weaker groups or smallholders. HEKS/EPER must therefore find innovative approaches to overcome obstacles. There are promising examples of this. In Palestine, the right of access to cultural heritage has extended the freedom of movement of people. In Brazil, the GIAHS the protocols to the bio-cultural community, seems to be a starting point. In India, an organisation well networked with authorities on another issue was able to use the established contacts for a successful dialogue for better land and water access for Dalit and Adivasi. HEKS/EPER is also increasingly pushing for more joint (collective) rights of use for smaller or larger groups, which strengthens the bargaining power of the people and often also protects the land from a sell-out by individuals in economic need or under power pressure by big land owners or enterprises. (Read more chapter 5.1.1).

Reaching out for the rights-holders and how to empower them?

Not only facilitating dialogue between rights-holders and duty-bearers is a challenging task. But already reaching the communities and individuals and working with them can be very difficult. Only not considering the complex structures of a society broken down to community, village and even household level one might
think all people of certain socio-economic or ethnic group have the same interested. But communities are fragmented. Therefore, it is key to promote social cohesion and improve intra-group relations to be able to foster ownership for a joint development process.

Questions remain: Do we work with the people and communities we really want to work with – the most vulnerable or do we cooperate with the ‘capable’? E.g. – if we got innovative, income-generating, sustainable farming approach – how do we deal with reluctant/resistant farmers as maybe in Georgia? Do we only work with those coping with our mindset? And how do we empower – are we forcing individuals to fast into cooperatives, unify activities in forums/unions as maybe in the Indian land forum which know internal problems. Or in Congo, where we want to foster cooperatives, but have people ownership to join or is it a donor-driven approach? On the other hand, the Palestine/Israel practise with the Open Forum is promising as it strengthens coherence, capacity, effectiveness.

From emergency aid towards long-term development

Nineteen of the world’s 21 major humanitarian crises have now lasted more than five years – including in the Middle East, where HEKS/EPER delivers emergency aid and the essentials for survival in Iraq, Lebanon and Syria. How should HEKS/EPER deal with these permanent crises? How can livelihoods be sustainably improved? The long-term strengthening of economy and society is the key – for example by creating income-generating opportunities or promoting peaceful coexistence. However, sustaining long-term development projects calls for more human resources as well as expanding the financing base to international donors. HEKS/EPER must strengthen its presence in the region as well as implement more of its own projects, beyond strictly supporting partner organizations. HEKS/EPER is therefore currently setting up locally staffed coordination offices in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. The goal is to develop a regional strategy that creates synergies between the domains of humanitarian aid, development cooperation and church cooperation.

A free strong civil society enables development

A free and strong civil society is the precondition for sustainable economic development. The work of HEKS/EPER will remain ineffective in the long run without the involvement and ownership of the population. In many HEKS/EPER project countries, however, political participation by civil society is severely restricted – not least of all owing to bad governance. Inefficient government structures and the absence legal certainty make it difficult to claim fundamental rights, and instead create a climate of distrust that renders cooperation between civil society and local authorities impossible and foments conflicts. To support the population in claiming their right to participate, HEKS/EPER encourages dialogue with the authorities. The latter are made aware of their duty to observe human rights and of the pivotal importance of legal certainty and vibrant democracy to economic development.

Income and employment for the marginalized and landless

Agriculture and small businesses form the basis for work and income in rural areas. Key aspects of this are good vocational training and people’s ability to run their businesses successfully and to survive on the open labour market. HEKS/EPER supports them in enhancing their employability or in setting up small businesses. But upgrading skills alone is often not enough. In a free market driven by profit maximization, the poorest and marginalized communities are the first to be excluded. The private sector too would only stand to gain from an inclusive market system: market participation by everyone boosts productivity and hence purchasing power and growth. HEKS/EPER therefore raises awareness on the part of authorities and business people regarding the added value offered by inclusive market systems and strives to persuade them to change market conditions such that the poorest are also included.

Criticism and cost pressure targeting international cooperation

Questions are constantly being raised about the utility and sustainability of development cooperation: can development projects actually improve the living conditions of people in need? And is there not some seepage of funds in aid agency administration or in corrupt governments? Politicians, media and donors are now more critical than ever. It is becoming increasingly important for relief agencies to report transparently on their work. For many years HEKS/EPER has been systematically reviewing the outcomes of its projects, relying inter alia, on sound scientific methods, and has been continuously optimizing its work – not just in terms of quality, but also of efficiency. The cost pressure is indeed considerable and the donations market competitive. With its professional monitoring and evaluation system, HEKS/EPER is optimally equipped also to secure international funding for its development projects.
12 Perspectives on the implementation of the HEKS/EPER international programme

2017 was a successful year for HEKS/EPER being able to implement the volume planned with its programmes and projects benefitting the people and communities in 33 countries. As outlined in chapter 9.5, the international division realized a financial volume of CHF 42.4 million, this is plus +40% compared to CHF 30.2 million in 2014. CHF 11.2 million were invested to meet humanitarian needs, which resulted in a plus of 96% compared to CHF 5.7 million in 2014.

Therefore, the organisation continues to pursue its growth ambition to reach more people and communities and to respond to current global challenges utilizing its HIP 2017–20 strategy, its staff expertise and capacities as well as the organization’s thematic focus. The recent investments into our PCM and the practical M&E processes including the digitalisation of the indicator system together with impact assessments and contribution analysis also help us to reflect more in-depth about impact, to identify and communicate evidences of change and also to elaborate perspectives as well as taking steering decisions (see chapter 9.4).

In the chapters describing progress of DC (chapter 5), HA (chapter 6) and CC (chapter 7), the perspective for each HIP objective, but also for the human rights-based approach (chapter 4) and all cross-cutting issues (chapter 8) are identified. Especially, the chapter 11 on patterns gathers important challenges and opportunities HEKS/EPER did, does and will work on.

However, a number of contextual as well as organizational challenges for the remaining strategy period have to be stressed …

Management: 2017 saw a number of staff changes on mid and senior management level within HEKS/EPER. The new teams will need some time to adjust to new roles and responsibilities. The management team of the international division has started well and has a strong commitment towards efficient collaboration, the strategy and the growth ambition.

Finances: The humanitarian aid and the church cooperation sections were and are fully funded. The funding of the recent (planned) growth (+27% from CHF 24.5 M in 2014 to CHF 31.1 M in 2017) in the development cooperation section remains a big challenge. Funding efforts at HHQ will need to concentrate on the acquisition of new private foundations as well as new mandates from institutional donors in Switzerland, but also on country level. As in 2017, capacities for acquisition must be strengthened (see chapter 9.3).

Decentralisation/internationalization: To accommodate growth and to respond adequately and quickly to changes in countries and to grasp opportunities HEKS/EPER is considering further decentralisation and thereby strengthening its cooperation offices in regard to decision making, local fundraising and networking while at the same time centralising financial control and good governance systems and audits. This means also, HEKS/EPER strives to become an international organization, coordinated from HHQ, but with more competences in the countries. This includes also more inter-country collaboration creating synergies in capacity building, fundraising and regional structures providing support country to country according to the respective skills, which is in line with the hub strategy.

Innovation: The context of development cooperation and humanitarian aid is changing constantly and substantially. New actors are entering this realm. New technologies are available with potential to fight poverty and social injustice. HEKS/EPER started to study new actors, approaches, technologies and global trends and is reflecting on the consequences for its work. Practically, in the field of market system development HEKS/EPER is looking at new financing instruments such as equity and loans and the creation of new social and inclusive business models to broaden impact and foster financial sustainability of market initiatives. More see chapters 5.4.2 on inclusive market, 11.2.2 on business mindset and 11.2.5 on communication4development.

Evidence: With popular and constant criticism of the work in the international cooperation it is paramount that agencies such as HEKS/EPER are working more evidence-based. Therefore, the organisational commitment to further develop its M&E and impact assessment systems and processes will continue. Already established PCM as well as M&E process need to be stringently applied and the quality of information and its analysis needs to be monitored. Impact assessments including contribution analysis will continue. The digitalised system with tablets, mobile phones and web portal for key indicators needs to be applied consequently for all countries and projects, and the learning and steering shall start on project level creating ownership for progress. Additionally, HEKS/EPER would like to make this system and its experiences available to other interested organisations (see chapter 9.4).

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Strategic results framework HIP 2017-20: The first year of the new strategy period confirmed the relevance and applicability of the strategy HIP 2017–20. Therefore, 2018 and beyond HEKS/EPER will direct and shape its operational activities along the strategy guidance. Summarizing, the three domains of work and the synergies between development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation, the holistic approach linking conflict transformation work with access to land and markets, upscaling and institutionalisation of programmes, mainstreaming gender and resilience, the focus on rights-holders and duty-bearers will all remain very relevant.

Contribution towards SDGs: As laid down in the context chapter 2.1, HEKS/EPER views itself being an organisation fostering the SDGs in Switzerland and abroad. Therefore, HEKS/EPER must participates actively in the Swiss national process, but also in various country processes to promote the Agenda 2030, together with other civil society organisations.

Regional meetings: Several regional meetings are scheduled for 2018 where staff of headquarters and countries and, occasionally, partner organisations will work on HIP related topics and patterns 2017. These meetings will ensure strategic and programmatic coherence, mutual capacity building and joint endeavours implementing programmes.

Financial volume – development cooperation: As a result of the increased development cooperation spending last year, HEKS/EPER needs to temporarily scale back on further growth of its development portfolio until further income can be secured through fundraising, mandates and contributions of private foundations. This requires a more active financial steering of the development portfolio in the next 12 to 24 months. See chapter 9.5.

Mutual accountability Donor <-> NGO <-> people and communities: In some countries HEKS/EPER has already applied HAP principles and standards (e.g. proactive information sharing, participation, feedback/complaint mechanism) to strengthen its accountability towards project participants. Accountability self-assessments were conducted in South and South-east Asia. Corruption, power abuse and good governance were topics of many meetings in our offices as well as with partners. A recent abuse case at another iNGO triggered again a review of our polices, practices and proofs in this domain. HEKS/EPER is currently enquiring about becoming a member of core humanitarian standards.

Humanitarian Aid: The humanitarian aid programme is at a crucial juncture. In order to grow and expand further HEKS/EPER needs to diversify its donor base (e.g. ECHO, US, EU bilateral donors). Additionally, HEKS/EPER plans to step up its involvement in the ‘whole of Syria’ response with activities and presence in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Syria. The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh as well as the South Sudanese refugees in Uganda will also require the attention of HEKS/EPER. DC offices need to be able to respond efficiently irrespective on where the context stands on the relief – development continuum (the ‘nexus HA–DC’ see chapter 6.4.2).

Church cooperation elaborates in 2018 a new strategy on its focus and goals. Interlinkages with HA in Middle East and with DC in Eastern Europe (Roma inclusion and home care), but also unique-standing approaches and objectives got to be defined (chapter 7).
Syria: School in Kassab, supported by HEKS/EPER to enable children to have an open space.
The HIP annual report 2017 has been jointly elaborated by HEKS/EPER’s ID staff and was published in April 2018.

**HEKS/EPER – Swiss Church Aid**

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HEKS/EPER is a member of **actalliance**
13 Appendices

A) Activities by country (DC, HA and CC)

This chapter highlights the main activities and achievements according to the 32 countries HEKS/EPER was active in in 2017. The respective programme costs are published in Chapter 9.5. Key insights on programme progress are summarised in Chapters 5 (DC), 6 (HA) and 7 (CC) according to the overarching objectives. Interested readers can check the yearly country reports for 2017 for each DC priority programme and HA intervention, available on request (stefan.gisler@heks.ch).

Appendix, figure 1: Countries HEKS/EPER worked in with its three sections DC, HA and CC – December 31, 2016.

A. 1 Africa

DR Congo

In 2017, again the elections were postponed. This led to unrest and security incidents. The room for manoeuvre for the civil society to act and speak freely was further reduced. Therefore, it was important that HEKS/EPER succeeded in improving the social and economic conditions of rural communities in North Kivu – also, thanks to the new country programme with three new partner NGOs.

1,135 smallholder families in the HEKS/EPER projects increased their agricultural production. Manioc production in Masisi rose from 7.3 to 9.7 tonnes per hectare and in Rutshuru from 25 to 34.5 tonnes per hectare, while production of maize throughout the region increased from 3 to 3.7 tonnes per hectare and vegetable products from 13 to 15 tonnes per hectare. Important is the profitable sale of products and HEKS/EPER enabled 5 agricultural cooperatives to enter the market with attractive sales contracts with a local processing company. In addition, around 100 hectares of land for 361 small farmers (197 of whom are women) were secured in 2017.

The CRONG-D project to promote peace and conflict transformation helped through dialogue to stabilise the violent conflict situation between the communities of Nande and Hutu.
Ethiopia
The conflict between the authoritarian government and parts of the dissatisfied population escalated in 2017 with further youth protests, but also ethnic conflicts. The consequences: Hundreds of dead, hundreds of thousands on the run. In addition, the regime's very limited freedom for all NGOs hinders the practical implementation of development projects. In large parts of Ethiopia there was also a devastating drought in 2017. Nine million people had no access to clean drinking water. It was correspondingly difficult to support the people. For example, in peacefully demanding their rights vis-à-vis the authorities. Nevertheless, some 50'000 project participants stated that their living conditions had improved.

In general, HEKS/EPER has largely succeeded in implementing its national programme with 5 partner organisations and 7 projects. The focus was on promoting resource-saving agriculture, effective water management and profitable access to markets for small farmers. Measures to improve the livelihoods of pastoralists were important. In total, 1'000 hectares of degraded land were made arable again, 28'000 people were given access to drinking water and over 4'000 people benefited from higher incomes thanks to production and marketing measures.

Niger
The people of Niger are repeatedly confronted with droughts and food crises. Also in 2017 it rained insufficiently, the harvests were correspondingly poor. Thanks to improved millet and bean varieties adapted to climatic conditions and the cultivation of Moringa, around 2'200 smallholder families have been able to increase their yields and reduce food shortages with the support of HEKS/EPER. The livestock farming families also suffered from the scarcity of natural resources and their access to pastures and water was made more difficult.

HEKS/EPER supported the creation of through corridors over a total of 315 kilometres so that the livestock farming families can lead their herds directly to their pastures and water points. HEKS/EPER also supported the construction of a central water supply system in three villages for around 6'800 people and sanitary facilities for total of 1'100 pupils.

Nigeria
In Nigeria, millions of people suffered hunger as a result of a drought and the civil war triggered by the terrorist militia Boko Harem. In the north-east of the country alone, around three million people, more than half of them children, were on the run in 2017. HEKS/EPER supported an emergency aid project of the ‘Act Alliance’ partner ‘Christian Aid’, which has many years of experience in Nigeria and has been providing humanitarian aid in the region for several months, with 230’000 francs: 4’500 people received electronic food vouchers to buy the most urgently needed food on local markets.

The humanitarian involvement in Nigeria has been a helpful experience with a professional partner in electronic cash voucher systems (Segovia). Through the partnership with Christian Aid HEKS/EPER could get insight into electronic cash distributions in the setting of an emergency. Technical requirements are rather low, but a stable GSM-Mobile Network is required. Additionally, relative security in the administrative environment is needed, since Segovia relies on operating contracts with local mobile network providers. HEKS/EPER defined ‘new communication strategies’ as an emerging pattern of international cooperation to be followed up (see chapter 11.2).

Senegal
Land speculation and land grabbing are increasingly threatening the livelihoods of Senegalese smallholder and livestock farming families. Without official land titles, they run the risk of losing their land. The national land reform process was also delayed, in which the HEKS/EPER partner organisations played a major role and represented the interests of agricultural cooperatives and small farmers. A proposal has been on the table since April 2017. However, the President has not yet submitted it to the National Assembly for a vote. The long-awaited decree to grant the 80’000 hectares of the ‘Dolly Ranch’ to nomadic cattle ranchers for unrestricted use has not yet been issued, despite countless pleas and lobby actions.

HEKS/EPER supported around 1’700 farming families in obtaining a written land title for their plots totalling 550 hectares.
Another important goal of HEKS/EPER was the conservation of natural resources and better marketing of agricultural products. In 2017, 18,500 trees were planted for reforestation. And 245 producer families were supported in the organic certification of fruits and vegetables.

South Sudan/Uganda

In December 2013, a violent conflict broke out over access to power and resources, plunging Southern Sudan into a deep political, socio-economic and humanitarian crisis. The already fragile social cohesion in the young state was weakened even more. The civil war escalated in 2016 with devastating loss of life and devastation of livelihoods. In 2017, more than 4 million people will be displaced, around 1½ in the country itself and the others in Uganda.

HEKS/EPER had to close its office in Yei and opened a new coordination office in the southern Sudanese capital Yuba at the beginning of 2017. Development projects were no longer possible, but HEKS/EPER launched three major humanitarian projects supported by Swiss Solidarity - two in Southern Sudan, one in Uganda. Activities must be constantly monitored and adapted to ensure they are effective and safe. In Southern Sudan, HEKS/EPER improved access to water and hygiene for displaced persons, distributed food and organised ‘money-for-work’ programmes. In Uganda in the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement, HEKS/EPER renovated wells and also opened up new ones. With ‘money-for-work’ programs, latrines were built to improve sanitation in the settlement.

In Yei, a peace project was initiated with partner RECONCILE to improve the knowledge and skills of community leaders and local authorities on conflict transformation and trauma healing.

Zimbabwe

The year was marked by political instability, limited freedom of opinion and action, as well as the economic downturn and increased public debt. Prices for basic foodstuffs have doubled and the purchasing power of the poorest in particular has been weakened. The power struggle within the ruling party Zanu PF led to the resignation of President Mugabe in November 2017. Emmerson Mnangagwa now holds the presidency – but the future remains unclear.

The HEKS/EPER partners worked with rural communities to protect their rights to agricultural land and generally to strengthen their ability to defend their rights and concerns. HEKS/EPER also continued to work with farmers to improve the productivity of livestock and crops.

As part of the large water project, 20 new wells were drilled and 10 renovated. 369 latrines were built for households and 117 for schools. 9 rainwater tanks were installed at selected schools. These measures were accompanied by health and hygiene training.

Zimbabwe is repeatedly hit by natural disasters and droughts. In spring, HEKS/EPER provided food aid for 1’000 people in its project areas to bridge the drought. And because of the devastation caused by hurricane Dineo in February 2017, a flood protection project was developed to secure people’s jobs and incomes while at the same time providing protection against future flooding.
A. 2 Asia

Bangladesh

In 2015, the World Bank declared Bangladesh a middle-income country and the economy in this densely populated country continued to grow in 2016 and 2017, but by no means all profit. The Dalit (caste-less) and Adibashi (indigenous peoples) minorities are excluded. They do not enjoy the same rights and opportunities as the majority population.

HEKS/EPER launched a new national programme in 2017 with the aim of the social inclusion of Dalit and Adibashi in north-western Bangladesh. The programme intensified its advocacy activities: In total, 496 representatives of minorities were admitted to various state committees and 15 active advocacy platforms were established at community and district level, giving over 200 minority representatives the opportunity to advocate for equal rights. In addition, over 600 activities were organised in the villages for an equal and peaceful society. Official demands for public services were filed with the authorities against 5’000 people – 2’563 were approved, a success.

HEKS/EPER continued the project for bull fattening and chicken breeding – it successfully combines improved access to the market and income for marginalised Dalit and Adivasis with their higher social and economic acceptance by the majority population. Three quarters of the project participants were able to significantly increase their income. Thanks to the networking work, Dalit and Adibashi young people are now involved in a state vocational training programme, 68 have already found a job in companies and 31 are self-employed.

In August 2017, the HEKS/EPER programme area in the north-west was hit by floods. HEKS/EPER reacted by distributing hygiene kits for 1’000 families and cash support for 4’200 families. Following the influx of more than 650’000 Rohingya who have escaped the violence in neighbouring Myanmar, HEKS/EPER launched an intervention aimed at improving the miserable hygiene conditions for 13’500 people in the Jamtoli camp in Cox’s Bazar district.

Cambodia

The programme in Cambodia has grown in recent years, with more and more professional partners and projects and budgets. HEKS/EPER also supplemented the ‘classic livelihood security' with components of conflict transformation – particularly in the area of land conflicts. The contact became more demanding. The political freedom for the population and civil society organisations has clearly decreased. In addition, small farmers were confronted with more frequent weather extremes. While communities can protect themselves against the latter through targeted measures, the tendency towards authoritarian rule with the imprisonment of political opponents and human rights activists is a sensitive blow to fragile civil society. These unfavourable conditions have called into question the implementation of a human rights-based approach and thus had a negative impact on the HEKS/EPER conflict transformation projects. Nevertheless, HEKS/EPER Cambodia and its partner organisations have achieved or exceeded most of the targets set for the more than 40’000 people involved in the projects. An external evaluation gave positive feedback.

India

HEKS/EPER has now been in India for 60 years. The main goal in 2017 was to strengthen institutions and social movements that support the concerns of small farmers, including handing over responsibility to small farmers. This process is proving more complex than expected. Lack of political will and legal obstacles prevent the Land Law Forums from successfully claiming land titles for their members. In addition, the organisational development of some forums is hampered by competing self-interests of their members. In a political context of distrust of NGOs financed from abroad and negative economic development with demonstrations and tax increases, HEKS/EPER India and its partners fought to achieve the goals set.

The integration of resilience measures at programme and project level seems promising, especially as South India is increasingly suffering from permanent droughts. Furthermore, the cashew project with Adivasi
peoples in Eastern and Western Bodavari is proving very effective in terms of market integration and improving the livelihoods of marginalised indigenous farmers.

India: Post card campaign for land mobilization in West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh.

Pakistan

Seven years after the major flood disaster in 2017, HEKS/EPER successfully completed its last project in Pakistan and handed it over to the population. Following the completion of emergency aid and reconstruction work, HEKS/EPER improved water supplies in various districts, supported the construction of sanitary facilities, raised people’s awareness of hygiene measures and improved disaster prevention. HEKS/EPER invested in 7 years a total of around CHF 5 million in the regions affected by the floods. Overall, 150,000 people benefited from this. HEKS/EPER ensured that maintenance of the water supply systems, training in disaster prevention and hygiene campaigns are continued by the population and the authorities. In the event of another disaster, HEKS/EPER, together with its two local partner organisations Norwegian Church Aid and Research and Development Foundation, could still provide rapid emergency aid in the coming years.

Philippines

2017 saw the end of HEKS/EPER’s intervention in the Philippines. This major humanitarian response focused on rebuilding homes and infrastructure, restoring livelihoods and preparing for disasters followed the devastating typhoon of 2013, Haiyan. Despite significant involvement by the Philippine government in disaster reduction, there was a significant lack of evacuation centres in three isolated, high-risk communities on the northern coast of Panay Island. In 2017, HEKS/EPER therefore completed the construction of three evacuation centres in this region. The main function of these buildings is to serve as schools and are only used as evacuation centres during disasters. Thanks to HEKS/EPER, 581 students and 21 teachers benefit from new and modern school buildings. In the event of a disaster, these buildings can accommodate 316 people for several days with kitchens, showers, toilets and large rainwater tanks. Maintenance committees are in place and will ensure that these centres are maintained in good condition.

Numerous evacuation simulation exercises have been organized to prepare the local population for the use of the centres in the event of a disaster.
A. 3 Middle East

Iraq
In 2017, humanitarian operations in Iraq were mainly influenced by the Mosul offensive against the IS. HEKS/EPER and Norwegian Church Aid provided clean water and improved hygiene for more than 10,000 displaced persons from Mosul and the surrounding area in the Nargizlia camp. Jezidi IDPs in Kabarto and Qadije camp also continued to receive support.

HEKS/EPER also continued its agricultural food security project in 4 regions – with the construction of small dams, irrigation systems, the renovation of public infrastructures and agricultural advice for local farmers.

The Northern Iraqi independence referendum in September triggered the hostile takeover of controversial areas by the Iraqi government, which led to new expulsions. HEKS/EPER and its national partner REACH supported 3,000 newly displaced persons with food and material to survive the cold winter (blankets, stoves, etc.).

HEKS/EPER is striving for a sustainable programme, away from emergency aid and increasingly towards securing livelihoods and building a functioning (rural) economy. It is important to enable displaced people to return to their homes so that people can develop a perspective.

Lebanon
1.2 million of Syrian war refugees were still in Lebanon in 2017. They represent a quarter of the population, a big challenge for the small country. During the year, HEKS/EPER provided ‘unconditional cash’ amounting to USD 50 per month to 1200 Palestinian refugees from Syria and 250 poor host families in the 2 refugee settlements of Shatila and Borj Boranje. This was supplemented by a ‘cash-for-work’ programme for 160 unemployed and needy refugees per month, but also for the 240 individuals from the local host population. Roads and settlements were cleaned, which indirectly benefited 60,000 people. The joint activities of refugees and locals also improved the relationship between the people, strengthened integration. Additionally, 80 shelters of refugees were renovated.

HEKS/EPER’s CC department also continued its cooperation with its church partners. This enabled the support of 50 children – mainly refugees, but also locals – with afternoon schools. In addition, a senior citizens’ residence was extended by 10 new places. 4 refugees from Syria found a new job there.

Palestine / Israel
At the beginning of 2017, many projects will start simultaneously as part of the ‘Open Forum’. Reaching the Israeli public within the framework of conflict transformation and promoting a human rights-based approach is a major challenge for NGOs in view of increasing repression. The Open Forum deals with the rights of displaced persons and refugees and access to land. Against the background of increasing expropriations and house demolitions, it is already a success to maintain the status quo. This is particularly true of the West Bank, but also of the Bedouin population in the Negev, the Arab urban planning in the heartland and affects a large part of the population in the Gaza Strip. In 2017, 5,000 people benefited from improved access to land.

The so-called cluster meetings of various partner organisations, which work on topics such as refugees and internally displaced persons or shrinking space as well as the ongoing expropriations, were very well received. The Israeli cluster is new so that Israeli partner organisations can discuss their specific concerns in a targeted manner. The clusters offer partner organisations a secure space where they can exchange ideas on successful examples and the best strategies. The mental support offered by such meetings should not be underestimated either. They also make it possible to discuss social taboos that make sustainable conflict transformation more difficult.

Syria
Since 2011, about half of the 1.8 million Christians have fled Syria. But the presence of the Christian minority is of great importance for the coexistence of the various Syrian communities. It stands for a diverse peaceful society – for open Muslim circles the Protestant churches are allies against radical Islamic groups. Since 2016 HEKS/EPER has been supporting two Protestant minority churches within the framework of church
cooperation – in 2017 HEKS/EPER decided to continue its commitment to social cohesion and strengthened church community life in Syria in the long term.

In 2017, 10 schools of the Syrian church partners NESSL and UAECNE were visited by one third of Christian and two thirds of Muslim students. Such institutions, in which students of different religious communities learn and live together, are important for a perspective of peace. Due to the war and the economic crisis, many parents have trouble paying school fees. HEKS/EPER supports the parents of 1,500 young people.

In addition, the children’s programme has developed successfully in 12 congregations, with 1500 children from various confessions, mostly even non-Christian, participating. After years of war, they long for community, a peaceful atmosphere and a few hours of ‘normal life’.

The ‘Battle of Aleppo’ by Russian-Syrian forces in early August led to massive displacement (over 120’000 people) and newly besieged areas. The infrastructure was further destroyed and the living conditions catastrophic. HEKS/EPER provided humanitarian aid and distributed food packages and blankets to 2000 families through its local partner. Later in the year, during the hard winter, HEKS/EPER distributed mattresses, bed linen, winter clothing and hygiene packages for women and small children to 11’000 people.

A. 4 The Americas

 Brazil

The political context has deteriorated further, which has led to massive setbacks in terms of social, political, ecological, cultural and economic rights for the people in the HEKS/EPER projects. In order to point out such human rights violations, three partner organisations have also contributed to the preparation of the report on the regular monitoring of the implementation of human rights, which was directed at the Brazilian government with 246 concrete recommendations. This cooperation strengthened the civilian population and enabled targeted advocacy work at national and international level.

HEKS/EPER and its partner Codecex have achieved an important success in the recognition of traditional communities in Brazil in 2017. The FAO Global Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) recognises the community of flower pickers in Diamantina, in the interior of Minas Gerais, supporting their rights and access to territories and resources and underlining the important roles of Traditional Communities, which are one of the focus groups of the Brazil National Programme, and their traditional agricultural systems for biodiversity conservation.

The eight projects were able to increase the income of over 8’000 people, and the harvests for 10’000 farmers were increased. Another 10’000 were given access to drinking water. And 6,400 people gained access to a total of 17’440 hectares of land.

 Colombia

2017 was marked by the uncertainties surrounding the implementation of the peace agreement between the government and the FARC rebels. The implementation of the ambitious agenda of the peace treaty, such as an integral land reform or transitional justice, is progressing only slowly. At the same time, peace negotiations with the ELN began with an uncertain outcome.

The situation in the conflict areas has worsened. Criminal gangs, paramilitaries, drug cartels or mega-project actors (agribusiness and mining companies) are increasingly filling the vacuum created by conflict resolution with the FARC. The security situation of human rights defenders has intensified, and the number of murders has even increased.

In this situation HEKS/EPER has strengthened its commitment to peace with three new projects. The aim is to strengthen the capacity of local rural communities to play their part in the planning and implementation of the peace agreement. Another important component is improving the security and protection of rural communities. HEKS/EPER is also increasingly focusing on access to land and inclusive market access for the rural communities. In 2017, 236 people had access to 509 hectares of land and 1 ‘200 people were able to increase their income thanks to better agricultural methods and market access.
Haiti

HEKS/EPER’s work focused on the remote Grand’Anse region, where Hurricane Matthew largely wiped out the livelihoods of the local population in October 2016. A severe blow – 75% of the population in Haiti live below the poverty line. Jovenel Moïse’s inauguration in February 2017 as 58th President of the Republic promised more political stability. However, the security situation has worsened, and the year ended with ongoing protests against the state budget.

Emergency aid and reconstruction after Matthew accounted for a significant part of HEKS/EPER’s activities in 2017. During the first half of the year, all resources were allocated to humanitarian aid, which will continue at the end of the year. Activities such as cash transfers, reconstruction work and the distribution of seeds, water purification tablets and agricultural tools have helped more than 15,000 families to restore access to clean water, their fields, markets and schools. These results were achieved thanks to the generous support of numerous donors and donors such as Swiss Solidarity, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Medicor Foundation.

The projects for the development of the rural regions of the Grand’Anse were resumed in June in a form adapted to the changed context and including the resilience component better into the activities. Progress is being made in particular in strengthening parents’ associations to assume more responsibility in supporting rural schools neglected by the state, and in promoting transparency of governance and participation of the population in local development. To secure access to drinking water and safe passage to access villages and markets the HEKS/EPER PIU continued to rehabilitate footpaths and small roads in the rural areas.

Honduras

The country programme focuses on the south of the country. This is one of the poorest regions in the dry belt of Central America. The focus is on food sovereignty, access to land, human rights and conflict transformation.

Politically, Honduras was marked by further militarization and a renewed increase in violence in 2017. The democratic mechanisms have been further undermined by the ruling elite. This culminated in election fraud in November, followed by bloody protests. Over 30 people were killed in demonstrations, most of them killed by the military police. Those who stand up for justice in Honduras live dangerously. Particularly at risk are people who are committed to land rights and environmental concerns.

HEKS/EPER reacted to this situation by focusing its commitment in the areas of defence of human rights and protection of human rights defenders and the affected rural communities. Food security, the promotion of indigenous seeds and the promotion of organic production were also important. Marketing and development of value chains for fruit processing and peanuts.

Climate change intensifies extreme climate events with periods of drought. The HEKS/EPER programme anticipates this foreseeable development by placing more emphasis on water management.

A. 5 Europe

Czech Republic

HEKS/EPER has maintained close relations with the Evangelic Church of the Bohemian Brothers for decades. The Reformed minority church is suffering as a result of its abandonment of tradition and its aging. Nevertheless, it has an above-average presence in society with its active communities and social work. HEKS/EPER supports them in this. The Diakonie supports migrant workers, mainly from Bulgaria and Romania, who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. Previously active in the Prague and Pilsen area, a team was set up in Brno in 2017 to support the rights of migrants in the eastern part of the country and to raise awareness among authorities and the public.

HEKS/EPER also took part in camps and training courses in which 1,667 children and young people took part and supported four parishes in renovating their building infrastructure.

Hungary

The Reformed Church Hungary is an important social institution. HEKS/EPER supported their work for the integration of Roma and refugees. Around 100 Roma pupils benefited from support classes and extracurricular activities. The aim was to improve school performance and to promote life skills and
prospects. 350 children and young people took part in youth groups and camps. More joint activities or events have emerged in the parishes. Two new communities from the north-east joined the project in 2017.

Refugee work in Hungary is a major challenge in view of the political environment. As part of the project to integrate refugees and migrants, 60 children and 35 adults have improved their knowledge of the Hungarian language or various school subjects in order to integrate into the Hungarian school system or to pass an equivalence test of the eighth grade, which is particularly important for adults in their job search. At the same time, the project supports volunteers in building up offers and encounters with refugees in parishes in Budapest. One focus of the project is on reducing prejudices and enabling personal encounters with refugees. In the first year of the project, it was possible to sensitize the participants of a large national youth festival to the situation of the refugees.

**Italy**

In the ‘Centro Diaconale’ in Palermo, the Waldensian partner church promotes social integration for released prisoners. They found accommodation there, became involved in voluntary work and the centre accompanied the integration into family and working life.

In addition, the Waldensians are involved in the accommodation and integration of refugees from Africa and the Arab world who arrived in Italy via a ‘humanitarian corridor’. The Italian state grants orderly and safe entry to selected refugees. With the help of HEKS/EPER, the Waldensian Church has been looking after 120 such refugees since October 2016. HEKS/EPER participated in the integration of another group of 150 refugees who arrived in Italy at the end of October 2017.

**Kosovo**

The living conditions of the Roma, Ashkali and Balkan Egyptians are characterised by poverty and social exclusion. The local HEKS/EPER partner VoRAE is committed to the social and economic integration of these minorities. It is gratifying that the National Strategy for Roma and Ashkali Inclusion 2017–2021, also supported by VoRAE, has now been officially adopted. And a great success was the creation of a legal basis for the institutionalisation of remedial education for children with little education. The support model developed by HEKS/EPER and VoRAE will thus become an official part of the school system. HEKS/EPER also made scholarships and mentoring possible for 500 secondary school pupils affected by poverty, while around 1’000 primary school pupils attend remedial education.

180 people were able to increase their income thanks to training and job placement with companies and authorities. It was important in 2017 that strategic partnerships could be concluded with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and with regional training centres and vocational schools.

In order to improve the precarious housing conditions in the Roma settlements, HEKS/EPER supports Roma families in the renovation of their houses. 70 families (350 persons) were able to renovate their houses with building advice and subsidies for material costs. The municipalities themselves rehabilitated the settlement infrastructure and financed one third of the investment costs.

In 2017, a total of 4’300 people were able to secure access to education and work or improve their living conditions.

**Moldova**

Political turmoil, a slowly recovering but still weak economy and a persistent lack of public funding prevented Moldova from making progress in 2017. HEKS/EPER aims above all to improve the poor living conditions of people in rural areas. 5’169 farmers have been able to increase their knowledge of agricultural production in the grapes, berries and dairy products sectors thanks to HEKS/EPER. 55.6% of farmers recorded an increase in their income compared to the previous year.

1’150 people in need of care were cared for by 44’522 visits, which is slightly below expectations. The homecare project carried out by CASMED faced great challenges in recruiting qualified nurses for the medical and social care of the elderly.

Finally, a newly launched project to strengthen local communities has succeeded in setting up four Local Action Groups, made up of representatives of local authorities, civil society and business, and developing local development strategies together.
Romania
The approximately 1 to 2 million Roma in Romania are poorly educated, severely affected by poverty and unemployment and have limited access to medical and social services. That is why HEKS/EPER is committed to the economic and social inclusion of this marginalized group. Around 9'700 people were part of such projects. In the field of education, HEKS/EPER partners organised 18 ‘summer kindergartens’ for Roma children. The year-round afternoon classes for 2'400 young people were successful, 700 more than in the previous year. The offer is supplemented by social work for disadvantaged families – 200 families at 20 locations were looked after. The housing programme for disadvantaged Roma families improved the housing situation for 28 families.

The HEKS/EPER partners also committed themselves to the economic inclusion of Roma through management consultancies, further vocational training and job placement – at 316 placements, 64 were given a job, a high rate. Micro-loans are also part of the measures to promote individual initiatives in small business.

As part of its church cooperation, HEKS/EPER supports Diakonia Romania in its social commitment to around 20'000 people.

The home care service for poor, sick and elderly people in rural areas was expanded – 13’520 people were visited in 182 villages (in 2016 there were 170).

In Brașov and Oradea, the projects of the church partners supported around 130 victims of domestic violence. They advise and strengthen the women and also provide emergency accommodation in Brasov. Lectures and campaigns are also used to sensitize the population and special church groups to domestic violence.

In four regions, Diakonie is committed to integrating people with disabilities into working life in protected jobs. Small projects also enabled 192 people with disabilities to be integrated into parish life. The public was also made aware of the concerns of disabled people.

The parish formation of the Reformed Church was institutionalized – in 2017 415 pastors attended various courses. And in 6 parishes church buildings were renovated.

Serbia
HEKS/EPER is active in Serbia with all its foreign areas – development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation. As part of the Roma programme, the partner organisation EHO and local authorities supported over 100 families in improving their housing and living conditions. The municipalities contributed 30 to 50 % of the funds – a promising pilot project for domestic legalisation.

In the education sector, the focus was on the training of teachers in intercultural education, the integration of Roma educators into the school system and the formation of parents’ councils. Assistance teachers were supported to offer remedial teaching and support children affected by poverty with small scholarships for school material. 2’000 children, teachers and parents benefited.

2’500 Roma received access to state services thanks to the migration advice centre of partner EHO and cooperation with municipalities.

Through the KIZA program, around 500 old people in need of care received care in their homes in 7 communities. The external final evaluation of the phase showed that the EHO Diaconia Home Care Service works at a high-quality level and that the co-financing by municipalities could be increased.

In 2017 HEKS/EPER improved the sanitary conditions in 5 refugee camps in Vojvodina in the context of humanitarian aid. Some 1’700 refugees, some of whom have been living in these centres for over a year, have benefited from this situation. In addition, 122 Roma and other disadvantaged people who lost their
homes in the 2014 floods were able to move into new social housing in October 2017. The rehabilitation project, with which more than 500 houses were renovated, was thus completed.

**Slovakia**

In southern Slovakia HEKS/EPER is supporting five parishes in setting up and implementing projects for and with the local Roma population. Volunteers organise leisure activities for children and young people. The annual summer camps were very popular. Project staff and volunteers participate in training events. The evaluation of the first phase of the project showed that the participating communities made a significant contribution to the integration of the Roma, whether through their diaconal work with children and young people or through the integration of Roma families in church activities. Prejudices could also be dismantled.

**South Caucasus (Georgia & Armenia)**

In 2017, economic development in the South Caucasus remained positive, but the devaluation of local currencies and high inequality are preventing this growth from reaching the rural population. In addition, conflicts between different ethnic groups and countries continue to smoulder. Due to security issues, a conflict transformation project had to be suspended. With its new South Caucasus 2017–2021 regional programme, HEKS/EPER aims primarily to offer poor rural households a decent life, an economic perspective and peaceful coexistence. Within the framework of the peace work, especially the young civil society of different nationalities were involved in projects. HEKS/EPER is continuing its work in Abkhazia, where dialogue between various groups such as Georgians, Mingrelians and Abkhazia is being strengthened.

Four external project assessments showed that HEKS/EPER was able to increase incomes in the agricultural sector and make a contribution to securing a livelihood – with fruit and fruit production in Armenia and livestock farming and dairy farming in East Georgia. HEKS/EPER is now continuing this approach in 2018 with four new projects. HEKS/EPER also cooperates with other donors within the scope of mandates and was awarded the contract for a project which brings ecologically produced hazelnuts to the international market.

**Ukraine**

The war and economic crisis in Ukraine are particularly affecting the poorest and older people – the partner church of the Hungarian Reformed minority also notes this in Western Ukraine. That is why it is important that the social projects of the Reformed partner church made important progress in Transcarpathia. The partner Transcarpathian Christian Foundation Diakonia was able to care for around 90 elderly and sick people in two villages in 2017 as part of the home care service that was only launched in 2016.

The day care centres for 70 children and young people with disabilities strengthen their abilities in order to lead a more independent life. HEKS/EPER also supported the work of the Diakonisches Zentrum in Beregszasz, where 280 extremely poor people and four schools receive a warm lunch. In addition, 20 women and their children found temporary refuge from domestic violence at the crisis centre in Beregszasz, but also help in their economic plight.

1’990 young people took part in the leisure camps of the partner church – these are very popular and an important part of the confirmation year keeping church life vivid.
# B) Evaluations of HEKS/EPER programmes/projects in 2017

In 2017, HEKS/EPER commissioned the following – mostly external – project and programme evaluations; including four impact evaluations, of which two are completely new.

**Standard evaluations (no evaluations were conducted in BAN; IND; IRAQ; MOL; SS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIP objectives</th>
<th>Project / programme evaluations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to land, resources, services</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Secured access to land and resources | Country programme Brazil 381200  
Country programme Cambodia 365200  
RDC 788355 droits fonciers  
Palestine/Israel Maan impact baseline/study  
Palestine/Israel Badil impact baseline/study  
Country programme Niger 756300  
Niger 756351 sécurité alimentaire  
Niger 756350 PAPIM Moringa  
Niger 756352 WASH  
Senegal 764316 ACCES |
| Secured access to basic services | Country programme Cambodia 365200  
ETH WASH sustainability study  
Country programme Niger 756300  
Niger 756351 sécurité alimentaire  
Niger 756350 PAPIM Moringa  
Niger 756352 WASH |
| **Production & market systems** | |
| Sustainable agricultural production | Country programme Cambodia 365200  
Country programme Brazil 381200  
RDC 788362 Sécurité Alimentaire  
Country programme Niger 756300  
Niger 756351 sécurité alimentaire  
Niger 756350 PAPIM Moringa  
Senegal 764332 FAPD  
Georgia 918036 value chain  
Georgia 904350 horticulture  
Zimbabwe Fambidzanai 768352 |
| Inclusive & efficient market systems | Country programme Cambodia 365200  
Country programme Brazil 381200  
Country programme Niger 756300  
Niger 756351 sécurité alimentaire  
Niger 756350 PAPIM Moringa |
| **Civil society & governance** | |
| Enhanced security & space for civil society | Country programme Cambodia 365200  
Country programme Brazil 381200  
Colombia OFP 842378  
Honduras B35389 Sociedad Civil  
Country programme Niger 756300 |
| Empowered rights-holders & accountable duty-bearers | Country programme Cambodia 365200  
Country programme Brazil 381200  
Colombia OFP 842378  
RDC 788338 Prevention violences sexuelles  
RDC 788339 Prevention violences sexuelles  
Honduras B35354 Derechos Humanos  
Palestine/Israel Impact baseline / study CFTA |
### HIP objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HA results framework</th>
<th>Project / programme evaluations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life saving through access to water, food, shelter, sanitation</td>
<td>Haïti Matthew Hurricane CdB Relance des moyens d’existence, Zimbabwe FPC 768374 Drought Response, Pakistan 666023 WATSAN floods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitated livelihood opportunities</td>
<td>Haïti Matthew Hurricane CdB Relance des moyens d’existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstructed public and private infrastructure</td>
<td>Haïti Matthew Hurricane CdB Relance des moyens d’existence, Philippines 668356 Infrastructure rehab (SWS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased prevention and preparedness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CC results framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CC programme – all objectives</th>
<th>Project / programme evaluations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening &amp; inclusion of disadvantaged</td>
<td>Romania 942380 Home of Hope, Romania 942382 Fundatia Crestina Diakonia, Romania 942396 Lampasi foundation, Romania 942399 Diakonia, Lebanon 66032 7 CAHL, Lebanon 600326 UAECNE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening church life</td>
<td>Romania 942392 Further education, Romania 942393 Infrastructure, Syria 600011 FMEEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches in dialogue with differing confessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of belonging to the same church family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Impact studies (baseline / end line)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / working section / design</th>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh / DC / quasi-experimental combined with contribution analysis</td>
<td>Value chains and social inclusion</td>
<td>Draft report available. Finalization ongoing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia / DC / quasi-experimental</td>
<td>Value chains</td>
<td>Planned: report in July 2018. Actual: final report postponed to 2020, as very bad harvests of previous two years render the planned study too costly, considering the relatively short time frame at stake (2 years) and compared to the added value of expected findings (bad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Senegal / DC / theory-based with contribution analysis and process tracing**

Access to land

Monitoring is ongoing, as per plan; final report expected in 2019/2020

**Palestine/israel / DC / mixed approach of counterfactual, theory based and network analysis**

Right to return, including access to land and strengthening civil society

Design stage and baseline report completed in 2017. Final impact study and report follow in 2021

**Kosovo / DC / tracer study focusing on contribution analysis**

Roma education and integration in labour market

Draft report available, final report about to be completed.

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**C) Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2L</td>
<td>Access to land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>ACT alliance (coalition of faith-based organisation working in international cooperation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Church cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community-based organisation (grassroot organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Country Director HEKS/EPER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Change monitoring system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Country office (of HEKS/EPER in priority programme countries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Country programme (DC or HA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Conflict sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil society organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Conflict transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Development cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Duty-bearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster risk reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAPPI</td>
<td>Ecumenical accompaniment programme in Palestine/Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBO</td>
<td>Faith-based organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFAG</td>
<td>Field financial and administrative guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIAN</td>
<td>Food First Information and Action Network (international organisation for the right to food)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HA</td>
<td>Humanitarian aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHQ</td>
<td>HEKS/EPER headquarters (in Switzerland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIP</td>
<td>HEKS/EPER international programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HKI</td>
<td>HEKS/EPER key indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRBA</td>
<td>Human rights-based approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I&amp;E</td>
<td>Income and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>International division (of HEKS/EPER)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iNGO</td>
<td>International non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ki</td>
<td>Key indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Knowledge sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4P</td>
<td>Making markets work for the poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC</td>
<td>Most significant change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSD</td>
<td>Market system development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCM</td>
<td>Project or programme cycle management</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIU</td>
<td>Project implementation unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RH</td>
<td>Rights-holder</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>Swiss agency for development and cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable development goals (Agenda 2030)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>World council of churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZEWO</td>
<td>Swiss certification foundation for non-profit organisations collecting donations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## D) M&E related performance 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives / Indicators</th>
<th>Baseline 2017</th>
<th>Targets 2017</th>
<th>Performance / appraisal</th>
<th>Steering decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall objective 1: Improved global performance assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator:</strong> ID global synthesis workshops and effectiveness reports refer more systematically to key data sources (i.e. our global M&amp;E system is actively used for analysis of CP / projects and leads to coherent steering decisions)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• ID effectiveness report’s line of evidence is still anecdotal;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• CP/project annual reports do not sufficiently report against HIP objectives;</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• logic models not coherent enough with HIP objectives;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• quality of many data sources still lacking (MSC, HKI, annual reports, evaluations(^{36})), not yet capitalized enough on rigorous impact evaluations</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID global synthesis workshop and effectiveness report 2017 are based on more systematic data collection, analysis and reporting against HIP through coherent logic models, conceptualized and digitized HKI, quality evaluations and annual reports (including MSC)</td>
<td>Partly achieved, and on-track, considering that:</td>
<td>In terms of using MSC further capacity building will be needed for line managers and implementing partners.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• through our revised PCM handbook, projects and CP are increasingly coherent (logframes) with HIP objectives, and reporting against them (follow-up matrix);</td>
<td>• many data sources have been improved (the way data are collected, compiled and used for reporting), especially HKI, annual reports, evaluations, and impact studies;</td>
<td>The pilot reveals we should opt for a compromise, pragmatically dispensing with complex inference statistics and promote triangulation between the data collected through our digital system and a certain amount of self-estimated data by projects. Focus should be put on the following 3 project variables: estimated yearly HKI beneficiaries covered; planned yearly target of HKI beneficiaries; and actual data collected through digital app on sample basis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• but no quality improvement has been observed in terms of MSC.</td>
<td></td>
<td>We will continue investing in impact studies, but we need to start publishing them in 2018 and make sure we share the related insights globally more effectively.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On this basis, our ID synthesis workshop was also able for the first time to more systematically reflect on global performance through our digitized HKI system, though only on pilot basis focusing 3 HKI.</td>
<td></td>
<td>As per plan, in 2018 we extend the HKI system to 3/4 of all DC projects (incl. humanitarian aid and church cooperation), using it appropriately at all levels, i.e. project, CP and HQ.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And our effectiveness report 2017 has become less anecdotal, as our HKI provide more evidence informed global data from projects and CP. HEKS/EPER is a pioneer with respect to HKI. The HKI e.g. access to land, income or access to services of around one third of the projects can be viewed and analysed at <a href="https://hekskeyindicators.org">https://hekskeyindicators.org</a>. And the insights gained through impact studies help us test and understand our impact hypotheses (‘evidence’ that our interventions contribute to improved access to land, for instance, is increasing).</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\(^{36}\) Though the external meta-evaluation conducted in 2016 rates 80% of our evaluations as methodologically satisfactory and beyond. In our management response we outline in detail why we believe this finding is overrated.
### Objectives / Indicators

**Baseline 2017**: 2017: M&E plan does not exist

**Targets**: 2017 Q4: global M&E plan of HIP is put in place

**Performance / appraisal**: Partly achieved, and on-track, considering that in 2017 we piloted the creation of a global M&E plan focusing on 3 strategically important HKI (improved access to land, number of claims made/accepted, and perceived income changes). We were not able to establish a full-fledged global M&E plan though. In this sense, the present report does not benefit from a capitalization of the global M&E plan. The lessons learnt from the pilot indicate that setting up a global M&E plan is possible, and digitally feasible. But in terms of conceptualization, methodology, capacity building it is far from being a straight forward exercise. Still open questions.

**Steering decisions**: The global M&E plan will be completed during 2018, and it is realistic to assume that the effectiveness report 2019 will be able to fully capitalize on this.

### Objectives / Indicators

**Baseline 2017**: Three impact studies:
- 2016 Q1: 1 finalized (LEB)
- 2016 Q3: 1 designed (GEO)
- 2016 Q4: 1 designed (SEN)

**Targets**: 2017 Q2: 1 finalized (BAN), in collaboration with CEval and INTRAC

**Performance / appraisal**: Even though we are on track from a bird’s eye view, the relevant targets were not achieved for the following impact studies: The Bangladesh impact study report has finally been drafted, but the final report is pending. The delay is largely due to HEKS/EPER’s M&E unit not having sufficient capacities to complete the report. The Palestine/Israel baseline study was designed timely, but report writing took longer than anticipated. On one hand, this is due to the sheer complexity of the programme assessed, and on another hand because the baseline study strictly speaking represents eight baselines. It should be noted that the evidence base created through impact studies such as in Bangladesh or Palestine/Israel is very useful. It is evidence that feeds back into programming, thereby facilitating adaptive management and improved effectiveness. In view of the 2018 target in relation to the ongoing Georgia impact study, in 2017 we revised the plan and postponed the final study to 2020/21.

**Steering decisions**: The report is about to be finished in the months to come. In future, we will have to make sure that the mandated external consultants themselves write the reports. The decision to further postpone the final impact study in Georgia to 2020/21 was made due to very bad harvests in the last two years and the correspondingly short time frame to evaluate. It does not make much sense to conduct a double-difference study under such circumstances. The flexibility in such decision-making is a privilege HEKS/EPER has.

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37 For example, shall the correspondingly required project and country programme data collection be organized in a decentralized or a centralized manner? And to what extent does the attempt to digitize and globally aggregate inference statistics make sense, considering the sheer complexity of the HKI concept and the practical challenges many of our partners are confronted with on the ground?
## Indicator: Quality of standard evaluations has improved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017 Q1:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of standard evaluations has improved</td>
<td>Revised Evaluation Policy April 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Though, barely satisfying quality of evaluation TOR (lack of method and line of evidence), absence of IR, little</td>
<td>Improvement since release 1 in terms of TOR, IR, and reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absence of IR, little consistence and analytical robustness of reports.</td>
<td>2017 Q2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Revised Evaluation Policy April 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Though, barely satisfying quality of evaluation TOR (lack of method and line of evidence), absence of IR, little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consistence and analytical robustness of reports.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Objectives / Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baseline 2017</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Performance / appraisal</th>
<th>Steering decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator:</strong> Quality of standard evaluations has improved</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2017 Q1:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Revised Evaluation Policy April 2015.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Though, barely satisfying quality of evaluation TOR (lack of method and line of evidence), absence of IR, little</td>
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<tr>
<td>consistence and analytical robustness of reports.</td>
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<td>2017 Q2:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Updated Evaluation Policy with release 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improvement since release 1 in terms of TOR, IR, and reports</td>
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<td>2018 Q1:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• All revised aspects in baseline show further improvement</td>
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</tbody>
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## Indicator: standard set of digitalized HKI is put in place (DC, HA, CC)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017 Q1:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>forms and dashboards in place for DC, partly for CC, and not in place for HA.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2017 Q4: Dashboards, incl. longitudinal tracking fully in place for DC, partly for CC / HA.</td>
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<td>2017 Q3: forms are in place for CC / HA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2017 Q4: most dashboards are in place for CC / HA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2018 Q1: dashboards in place for CC/HA</td>
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<td>2017 Q1:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017 Q4 – 2018 Q1: at least 60% of global portfolio use App and website, of which 30% feed these data into their AR logframe follow-up matrices</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018 Q4 – 2019Q1: 60% of global portfolio do the above mentioned</td>
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</table>

### Objectives / Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baseline 2017</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Performance / appraisal</th>
<th>Steering decisions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator:</strong> standard set of digitalized HKI (DC, HA, CC) is used effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017 Q1:</td>
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<tr>
<td>only used by Senegal through App and website. ZIM and CAM announced already they are ready (we are still testing that).</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017 Q4 – 2018 Q1: at least 60% of global portfolio use App and website, of which 30% feed these data into their AR logframe follow-up matrices</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018 Q4 – 2019Q1: 60% of global portfolio do the above mentioned</td>
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<tr>
<td>This ambitious target was not achieved, but the trend is very promising. Until today, about 30% of our global portfolio (less than anticipated) use the digital app and website, and about 30% of them (as anticipated) use the corresponding aggregate figures from the dashboard in their reports. But from an M&amp;E bird’s eye view we are on track.</td>
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</table>

**Expected outcome:** By 2019, ID’s global portfolio uses digital HKI system professionally

**Expected sub-outcome:** 60% portfolio rate by 2018

Along with the revised Evaluation Policy, the M&E help desk will continue to ensure that all TOR are prioritized and signed accordingly. It further ensures all Inception Reports are read and commented. Same holds true for evaluation reports.

**We a delay of approximately 6 months we will finalize the pending tasks during 2018. Note, our global target is that by the end of 2018 around ¾ of our global project portfolio use the digital HKI system professionally.**

**In the meantime, we will design a digital needs assessment questionnaire for emergency situations.**

It is key that same capacity building efforts are continued with the country office M&E counterparts in 2018, as was done throughout 2017.
## Objectives / Indicators | Baseline 2017 | Targets | Performance / appraisal | Steering decisions
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
**Expected outcome:** By 2019, ID’s global portfolio uses the revised PCM manual professionally  
**Expected sub-outcome:** 60% portfolio rate by 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revised state-of-the-art PCM manual</strong></td>
<td>2016: release of PCM 1.0 was in April 2015. The second revision of the PCM manual started in 2016, based on feedback (incl. online survey). Manual is more evidence based, simplified.</td>
<td>2017 Q2: By April, the PCM manual is revised accordingly and communicated officially</td>
<td>Achieved.</td>
<td>The M&amp;E unit is continuously collecting feedback on the PCM manual from partners and country offices. Necessary adjustments to the PCM manual will have to be made in 2018.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Key project and CP documents are used and have improved quality** | 2016: Before PCM release 1, M&E plans were absent, follow-up matrices not consistent, and logframes were not coherent with HIP objectives and mainly activity/output focused. | 2017 Q1: It is expected that improvement has been made between releases 1 and 2 in 2017. Improvement will be reported on in end-of-phase report (2014-2016).  
2018 Q1: all the listed documents in the baseline are accordingly used correctly and show improved quality. | Largely achieved, and on-track. End of phase report 2014-2016 as well as our observations from 2017 reveal that the quality of reports saw only a low to medium improvement, whereas the quality of evaluations and ProDocs has been improving gradually. Though there is still large scope for improvement, especially when it comes to capitalizing on findings from analysis and lessons learnt and using them for steering. | Further capacity building will be needed in the years to come, for instance in the form of M&E help desk services aiming at improving the quality of reports in terms of analysis and defining relevant steering decisions. |
E) Example Niger on seeds and resilience

SAATGUT

Die Menschen in der Region Maradi im südlichen Niger mussten schon immer mit wenig Wasser auskommen. In den letzten Jahren hat sich das Problem der Wasserknappheit indessen weiter verschärft und Dürreperioden sind häufiger geworden. «Die Regenzeit ist nicht mehr vorhersagbar, und wenn der Regen kommt, dann regnet es in wenigen Tagen so viel, wie es früher über die gesamte Regenzeit zwischen Juni und September geregnet hat», berichten Bauern. Das Wasser, welches nun als Starkregen auf die von der Düne ausgetrockneten Böden prasselt, kann von diesen nicht aufgenommen werden, und nützt so den Bauern wenig. Im schlimmsten Fall schwindet der Starkregen gar die fruchtbares Erde weg und überschwemmt das Hab und Gut der Bauernfamilien.


Immer weniger Land für den Anbau


Zabárou Sani zum Beispiel, der 35-jährige Bauer aus dem Dorf Zodi, der auf einer Fläche von 0,35 Hektar den Anbau von Hirse- und Mais in Mischkultur testet, schwärmt: „Ich habe noch nie so viel Hirse und Bohnen geerntet; das Ergebnis ist aussergewöhnlich. Es sind sehr frühe Sorten, die es mir ermöglicht habe, die Familie auch während der schwierigen Jahreszeit zu ernähren. Nachstes Jahr, wenn Gott will, werde ich auf dem ganzen Feld eine Mischkultur mit angepassten Hirse- und Bohnensorten anbauen.“

Für die restlichen drei Monate im Jahr müssen die Familien Nahrungsmittel zukaufen und auch hier bietet das Projekt Hand. Mit Eintreffer lassen sich je nachdem, ob die Futterblöcke für das Vieh oder menschliches Bedürfnis vorgesehen sind, Diese angepassten Sorten wurden über den internationalen Forschungsinstitut für Landwirtschaft (IFARI) gebracht, wobei in Niger herumgereiste Arten mit günstigen Eigenschaften wie Hitzebeständigkeit oder kurzen Zirkulation gekreuzt wurden.

«Meine Produktion hat sich im Vergleich zu dem, was ich früher auf derselben Fläche geerntet habe, verdreifacht.»

Salima Ousmane, 48-jährige Bauernin im Dorf Dan Gobiroua


Um diese erfolgreichen Praktiken auch in anderen ländlichen Regionen anzuwenden, die nicht an dem Projekt beteiligt sind, zugänglich zu machen, organisiert die UN (FAO) regelmässig Trainings in verschiedenen Dörfern einen Tag vor der offenen Tür, an welchem die verschiedensten Praktiken vorgestellt werden. Auch dies ist ein Erfolg, der immer mehr Bauern auch ausserhalb des Projekts einen Tag vor der offenen Tür, an welchem die verschiedensten Praktiken vorgestellt werden. Auch dies ist ein Erfolg, der immer mehr Bauern auch ausserhalb des Projekts und landwirtschaftlicher Forschungsinstituten und internationalen Organisationen wie IFARI gefolgt ist.

**NIGER**

**STABILE LEbensgrundlage für Bauernfamilien und Viehzüchter**

**Bewohner: 20,6 Mio.**

**Gesamt Mortalität: 94 Prozent**