



**Belgium**  
partner in development

## Call for Proposals

### Policy Supporting Program 2023-2027

*Draft Terms of Reference (vs 12/12/2022 including comments from matchmaking session)*

#### CONTEXT AND PRINCIPLES

Based on lessons learned from evaluations and assessments of various policy supporting initiatives in the past, DGD developed a new program envisaging scientific support for its strategic role in policy preparation and dialogue, positioning in international fora and financing decisions regarding international cooperation programs and projects.

With this scientific support program, DGD seeks to establish sustainable **cooperation networks in the longer term, producing various types of scientific support and deliverables** (original research and studies, as well as reviews of existing research, input for answers to policy questions, training, input for missions to partner countries or international institutions, contributions to relevant thematic platforms, contributions to evaluations, etc.) , to be fleshed out in varying ways for each of the 3 thematic areas. The program seeks **a win-win situation**, serving DGD while also strengthening the capacities of the academic partner institutions and increasing their relevance and impact in society.

**Partnerships** will be encouraged between HEIs and the administration DGD. Each thematic network will need to include HEIs across language borders in Belgium and at least one HEI partner in the global South. Beyond the financial relation between DGD and the HEIs involved (via VLIR/ARES) other actors are invited to join the networks.

DGD is the first beneficiary of the use of the policy support and therefore the thematic areas are defined following Belgian development cooperation policy priorities and DGD's strategic capacity needs and. However, the benefits are mutual and the program will develop in co-creation over the years.

The program is financed within the framework of the existing academic cooperation program 2022-2027 between resp. VLIR and ARES and the DGD.

#### GENERAL OBJECTIVE

VLIR/ARES launch a call for proposals towards their members, focusing on the following **general objective**: The Belgian development cooperation strengthens its contribution to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by underpinning its decision making and activities with scientific evidence.

Proposals are welcomed in three thematic areas :

- Climate & Environment
- Fragility & Resilience
- Social Protection, Inequality & Inclusive Growth

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

**The knowledge and the evidence base related to the three thematic areas are deepened and strengthened, with the aim of (i) improving strategic decision making on the programming and financing of actions of the Belgian development cooperation; (ii) enhancing policy dialogue and strategic positioning of DGD in bilateral and international fora; and (iii) facilitating a better implementation of related concepts, methods, and tools in their local context**

## **EXPECTED RESULTS**

- DGD is strengthened in its capacities to formulate strategic policy advice, to prepare programs, informed policy decisions and legislation reforms related to the three thematic areas, based on research outcomes and recommendations
- DGD (and other actors involved) are enabled to better design and target their field activities and advocacy initiatives in these thematic areas, both locally and in national and international fora,
- The network between involved actors is strengthened and this leads to more synergy and complementarity in their mutual contributions and activities
- Academic cooperation between HEI in Belgium and the global South in this thematic area is strengthened
- Academic work in the domain of international development gains relevance and impact in society

## **PART A. GENERIC TERMS OF REFERENCE (*draft*)**

### **Criteria re. Quality of partnerships /collaboration networks**

- proposals include, obligatorily, a partnership with at least two HEI partners from involved partner countries, incorporating genuine contributions from their side at all stages of the research process (research design, data collection/analysis, results dissemination)
- proposals demonstrate team diversity re. gender, origin and academic discipline
- HEIs accept active participation in the steering committee (composition: DGD-focal point and colleagues from DGD-units and embassies involved, participating HEIs, other stakeholders);
- proposals involve at the minimum 1 HEI from the French speaking and 1 HEI from the Dutch speaking community

### **Criteria re. Uptake and outreach**

Proposals need to provide a knowledge uptake & communication plan including activities for a broader public of development professionals throughout the 4y program. The research team will invest in specific uptake activities useful for a broader public, such as seminars and presentations, policy briefs, synthesis presentations, "how-to"-notes, participation in debates, engage in op-eds, etc.

The uptake & communication plan must also include activities directed to local beneficiaries.

All research output will be freely accessible for DGD and involved stakeholders (existing or creation of sharepoint or other easily accessible digital platform).

### **Criteria re. methodology, approach, relevance of sub themes, activities and deliverables proposed**

Proposals need to be *future proof*: including innovative research and approaches that anticipate on new perspectives in the rapidly evolving landscape of international cooperation.

Links and synergies with current projects and programs financed by DGD (action research) are welcomed.

More specific ToR for each thematic area are elaborated in part B, see infra.

### **Budget**

Proposals provide an indication of the budget in gross categories, including the fair compensation of involvement of HEI-partners from the global South, taking into account the following conditions:

- the budget for the PSP totals +/- 4.000.000 EUR enabling work in 3 thematic areas over 4,5 years, representing approx. 300.000 EUR per year per thematic area
- authorized expenditures: respecting modalities managed by VLIR/ARES respectively, within the broader university development cooperation program
- funding is organized via VLIR/ARES to their respective members. DGD is not directly funding the members, nor other actors in this program. VLIR/ARES members can involve other actors and compensate them as far as this is allowed within the VLIR/ARES arrangements.

### **Timeframe, follow up & monitoring flexible planning**

Proposals fit in the timeframe of a 4,5 year partnership (starting with an inception phase in 2023 and ending in 2027), providing a balanced set of activities and output throughout this period, taking into account important local and international moments and events for this thematic area (Belgian EU-presidency, relevant international summits (UN, OECD, WB, ...), local policy and political agenda in the partner countries involved, DGD-programming cycle, ...). Planning will be flexible with adjustments and finetuning in the steering committee; but participating HEI engage for the full 4,5 year period.

Each thematic steering committee starts with an inception phase leading to the validation of a 4-year plan, and organizes a permanent follow-up including a mid-term assessment, allowing for adjustments if necessary. In case of fundamental disagreement, decisions on adaptation or suspension will be made by an ad hoc committee of DGD/ARES/VLIR representatives

### **Application form**

Interested HEIs (faculty, research group, department, ...), being members of VLIR/ARES, respond to the call with a joint proposal covering HEI-collaboration from both language groups and from the Global South, formulated as a Letter of Intent.

The proposal document does not exceed 12 p. (while annexes can be used for details re. publication lists, past research experiences, ...). Taking into account the generic criteria as well as specific ToR for the thematic area concerned, the proposal describes:

- motivation, expertise and capacity:
  - relevant northern and southern HEI 's expertise and experience in the light of outcome objectives formulated in the ToR
  - network involvement and multidisciplinary across the teams
  - relevant research projects already ongoing
- demonstration of diversity of the teams (gender, North/South involvement)
- demonstration of how proposed research topics and other scientific support activities fit in the ToR
- demonstration of how the methodologic approach corresponds to the ToR
- proposed division of labour between involved Belgian and Southern HEIs and demonstrated prior collaboration or existing agreement
- gross timing and budgeting of activities and output delivery within the timeframe of 4.5 years (adjustable); with more detailed action plan for the first 6 months (inception)
- uptake & outreach plan
- declaration confirming the engagement of the team in an evolving process, including active participation in the steering committee piloted by DGD,

The PSP is not looking for elaborated full-fledged projects but for demonstrated expertise and experience matching with the generic ToR and theme-specific criteria developed in this call, proven partnership relations and willingness to engage in a 4,5 year path of co-creation of scientific support

### **Application modalities :**

Compliance with administrative modalities managed by VLIR/ARES respectively, within the broader university development cooperation program

## **PART B: SPECIFIC TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE THREE THEMATIC AREAS (draft)**

### **I. CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT**

Thematic axes 1 to 3 hereunder, considered as the priority domains of the policy note of Minister Kitir, are the main themes for proposals. Additionally, the thematic axes 4 to 6 described below can bear to be considered as well but as a subtheme under one of the main themes.

Since all thematic axes described hereunder are interrelated, proposals may look into synergies and therefore touch at several themes.

It will be important to link the theoretical research with action-research on the ground. Collaboration with Belgian development actors and partners should be strived for, in order to identify case studies which maximize the potential for useful lessons learned, that are applicable to the context of the Belgian development cooperation.

#### **Thematic axes and subthemes**

1. The themes have been formulated very specifically targeted at the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, research proposals should take into account a holistic perspective, given the indivisible nature and interconnectedness of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of this agenda. **Sustainable management of biodiversity and eco-systems including forests and soils**

**Context and explanation of the first axis:** biodiversity is an essential element of life, the very fabric of "natural capital." The enormous variety and complex interactions between species, no matter how small or insignificant they might seem, keep our ecosystems functional and make our economies productive. Nature provides nutritious food, supplies clean air and water, sustains livelihoods, mitigates climate change, and acts as a buffer against extreme weather events.

Our biodiverse planet is threatened by unprecedented pressures from land use change, overexploitation, pollution, climate change, and invasive species – driven mostly by human activities. One million animal and plant species, out of a total estimate of 8 million, risk extinction, many within decades, according to the latest report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

The global decline in biodiversity and ecosystem services is a development issue, which is likely to affect the poorest countries the most. The loss of ecosystem services has negative effects on food security, water supply, livelihoods, and output of many economic sectors.

The World Bank estimates that crimes affecting natural resources and the environment inflict damage on developing countries worth more than 70 billion US\$ a year. The loss of coral reefs has significant physical and economic consequences for 350 million people living in coastal areas by reducing coastal protection and habitat for fish. Deforestation and land conversion contribute about 25% of global greenhouse emissions, and the loss of biodiversity reduces the resilience of ecosystems to climate change and other disturbances.

Integrated approaches are needed to address the interrelated issues of climate change and nature loss.

**Potential research questions:**

- A thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health in the context of climate change.
- A thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. Identifying policy options for the Belgian development cooperation on how to better address these drivers in programs and projects
- Case study related to best practices for nature based solutions with social and environmental safeguards. Identification of policy options on how best to support these.
- Case study of solutions for domestic resource mobilization in developing countries and how to support implementation of biodiversity finance plans
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- A methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people.
- Innovation and harmonization of methods and tools for collection and management of biodiversity monitoring data based on a limited set of headline indicators.
- Addressing knowledge gaps on biodiversity status, dynamics, and trends to reverse biodiversity loss.
- A stock take of progress based on national reports and available scientific information in our partner countries,

**2. Resilience and integrating agroecology in climate-smart agriculture**

**Context and explanation of the first axis:** rising temperatures and extreme weather events are increasingly affecting food security, because they have a negative impact on the productivity of crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture. The changing climate also influences the emergence and re-emergence of vector-borne diseases. The management of agricultural systems and natural resources needs to be urgently improved to ensure that farming communities and practices are sufficiently resilient and sustainable to cope with the impacts of climate change. This includes among other the early and rapid identification of disease vectors and pathogens, and the containment of transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases.

Climate change impacts agriculture in every region of the world. Based on current trends, climate change is projected to lead to a 17% reduction in global yields by 2050. Rising temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns have not only ecological impacts but also increased risks and uncertainties for producers, leading to greater instability. Decisions made in the wake of disasters or crises can have consequences that lead households into long-term "poverty traps". For example, farmers or business owners might lose their assets—such as land, trees, or water sources—or overuse or trade those assets in order to meet their immediate needs. This depletes critical resources for agricultural productivity, a negative feedback loop that can lead to further degraded lands and declining crop yields. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, a third of the planet's soil is now moderately to highly degraded, and more than 90% of the planet's soil could be degraded by 2050

**Potential research questions:**

The research will focus on agroecological practices that are resilient to climate impacts like heat, drought and new disease patterns. Many research organizations, government agencies and farmers are already developing new climate-resilient technologies and practices.

- Options for innovative climate-smart and ecological agriculture practices including conservation agriculture and water harvesting that can improve resilience and adaptation to climate change, in the context of a just transition to a carbon-neutral, resilient society.
- Develop climate relevant indicators, baselines and targets to measure climate impact on agriculture.
- Design, implementation and harmonization of monitoring & evaluation systems for climate resilient ecological agriculture.
- Identify, analyze and evaluate opportunities for agriculture to contribute to climate change mitigation, either by reducing its emissions or through carbon sequestration within agricultural biomass and soils and to climate change adaptation.
- Provide insights in the social and environmental safeguards needed to frame nature based solutions related to agriculture and/or forestry (see also definition on NbS adopted at UNEA-5).

### **3. Sustainable urban economic growth including Circular Economy (CE), green jobs, youth participation, societal development**

**Context and explanation of the first axis:** cities are at the forefront in tackling diverse issues ranging from energy transition to affordable housing to environmental and social concerns. The number of people living in cities is expected to reach 6.3 billion by 2050 globally and will predominantly involve cities which have less than 500,000 inhabitants. Under a business-as-usual scenario, the annual resource requirement of cities – encompassing materials, water, and energy – will exponentially increase from 40 billion tons in 2010 to 90 billion tons by the mid-century, prompting major concerns for climate mitigation strategies. Cities that can successfully achieve compact urban growth and resource efficiency stand a chance to reduce energy use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 36% - 54%<sup>1</sup>.

Besides this, there is a need to recognize that this rapid, often unplanned urbanization brings risks of profound social instability, risks to critical infrastructure, potential water crises and the potential for devastating spread of disease. These risks can only be further exacerbated as this unprecedented transition from rural to urban areas continues.

Developing countries and emerging markets are the current centers of production and the future centers of consumption. If there is to be a fundamental shift in consumption and production patterns at a global level, the success of circular economy models in these countries will be key. Despite this, there has been scant focus on developing countries and emerging markets from existing circular economy analyses.

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<sup>1</sup> [Sustainable Urban Development Supports Creation of Circular Economy and Promotes Resilience - Database and Programmes : ERIA](#)

**Potential research questions:**

The research will focus on the importance of how a global narrative on the circular economy can be made relevant at the local level. In one or two cities in one of our partner countries and will explore opportunities will be explored to harness existing circular practices in developing-country settings and to scale up circular value chains at the regional and global level. Policy options can be explored on how to The research further includes assisting support the local authorities to analyse their initial readiness to realise realize a circular economy followed by identifying the costs and benefits and lastly, setting common targets and addressing policy gaps. Special attention will be given to policy choices that promote green job creation (especially for young people) in this fragile, urban context making the link with social friction, conflict and migration and social protection, poverty-environment action..

- If resource-efficiency is maximized, which global value chains could have the highest poverty reduction impact?
- Which recoverable waste streams (ie. agricultural, municipal, industrial, construction, electronic, batteries, vehicles, plastic etc.) and which secondary raw material (ie. nutrients, water, minerals, metals, chemicals, textile etc.) have the highest development impact potential
- Which qualities related to circular initiatives (ie. population size & geographical spread, business scale & volume significance, monetary value & level within the supply chain, degree of process sophistication, job creation, hazardous risks avoided, reproducible pilots etc) offer the highest development impact potential if prioritized?

**4. Climate and security**

**Context and explanation of the first axis:** climate change, in both scale and potential impact, is a strategically-significant security risk that will affect our most basic resources, from food to water to energy. Climate change can incite local and regional conflicts while increasing the risk of the displacement of people. National and international security communities understand these risks, and have already taken meaningful actions to address them. However, progress in comprehensively preventing, preparing for, adapting to and mitigating these risks will require that policy-makers, thought leaders and publics take them seriously and act accordingly. (cfr TEI rond klimaatverandering, conflict en gedwongen verplaatsing in de Sahel)

**Potential research questions:** build further on preliminary results concerning the link between climate, security and displacement (klimsec):

- Reveal and understand existing or potential climate driven or related social friction, conflict and migration dynamics in geographical intervention areas of BE devco.
- Chart (potential) risks and impact on society, environment and BE devco (and its actors), identify hotspots. Tap into existing/developing early warning systems



- Take stock of existing coping mechanisms (local & international), investigate & rate existing & new 'solutions' to existing or simmering climate related situations of social tensions, conflicts, instability and displacement. Formulate potential geographical and thematical BE support/intervention, needs based and taking into account BE expertise or new added value, with a focus on existing instruments, funding, and on restoring environmental integrity.
- If needed, develop proposals for new instruments to tackle environmental degradation/ climate driven instability and displacement to complete Belgium's devco policy and its existing instruments.
- Investigate where added value of Belgium's devco could play a role in the context of the EU's 'integrated approach on climate, security and displacement'.

Note: => This makes the link between priorities 1 & 2, i.e. climate/environment & fragility/conflict/instability & resilience.

**Related to this or to be expanded with:** develop new indicators on climate-related natural hazards:

- Climate related hazards (extreme temp, extreme precipitation, drought, wildfire...)
- Climate related disasters (occurrence, human casualties, direct and indirect economic losses, non-economic losses...)
- Exposure of people, produced assets and natural assets to these hazards
- Socio-economic inequality exposure to climate related hazards

## 5. Loss and Damage

**Context and explanation of the first axis:** in Glasgow, developing countries introduced a proposal for a Glasgow Loss and Damage Facility to be established to provide finance for loss and damage (L&D) to vulnerable developing countries. This proposal was blocked by developed countries, however, and as a compromise, the Glasgow dialogue was established.

The statement at the CoP: *"Decides to establish the Glasgow Dialogue between Parties, relevant organizations and stakeholders to discuss the arrangements for the funding of activities to avert, minimize and address loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change..."*

Climate change has eliminated one fifth of the wealth of the V20 (Climate vulnerable forum – 48 economies) over the last two decades. Initial evidence shows that the V20 would have been 20% wealthier today had it not been for climate change and the losses it incurred for poor and vulnerable economies. Economic losses cut GDP growth in the V20 by one full percent each year on average.

**Potential research questions:**

The research will focus on a number of key topics, framed hereunder, that will provide us a better understanding of the challenges related to loss and damage and allow us to formulate informed advice in upcoming policy/ strategic discussions in the near future :

- Enhance the understanding of how loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change affect particularly vulnerable developing countries
- Enhance the understanding of comprehensive risk management and response approaches (including assessment, reduction transfer, address and build long term resilience of countries, vulnerable populations and communities damage through: (i) emergency preparedness, including early warning systems, (ii) measures to enhance recovery and rehabilitation and build back/ forward better and, (iii) social protection instruments including social safety nets.
- Enhance data on and knowledge of the risks of ‘slow onset events<sup>2</sup>’ and their impact
- Enhance data on and knowledge of ‘non-economic losses<sup>3</sup>’ associated with the adverse effects of climate change
- Enhance the understanding of the capacity and coordination needs with regard to preparing for, responding to and building resilience

**6. Migration as an adaptation strategy:**

Rationale: Migration is a valuable strategy to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change (and a changing environment) and is already taking place in many countries within the African continent. Available literature on climate induced migration indicates that migration will mainly occur within national borders. According to the Groundswell report large in and out migration hotspots will emerge from 2030 onwards. People will move away from certain areas to settle elsewhere, in order to escape the negative impacts of climate change. This will create additional pressure on already densely populated regions: considering the natural population growth and the geographic location of the migration 'in-hotspots' which are mainly urban areas.

Available literature shows that development assistance can play an important role in addressing climate induced migration. This by not only focusing programming on local adaptation, e.g. the introduction of more resistant crops and other strategies to increase resilience, but also by investing in early action, urban planning, job security, reskilling, diversification of economies, training... in ‘migration in-hotspots’.

Potential research Questions:

- Enhance the understanding of and expertise on how the impacts of climate change are affecting patterns of migration

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<sup>2</sup> Slow onset events by definition **occur gradually** and it might be expected that policy-makers as a result pay less attention to them than to immediate risks or ‘shock’ crises. If this is true and what can be done about it are important issues for climate change policy-making, given the gradual nature of many climate related issues.

<sup>3</sup> The concept of **non-economic loss and damage (NELD)** captures the impacts of climate change that are hard to quantify and often go unnoticed by the outside world, such as the loss of traditional ways of living, cultural heritage and biodiversity. It also encapsulates losses whose valuation raises ethical concerns – loss of life and human health.

- How can the Belgian development cooperation contribute to (intervention domains, comparison of policies and practices, ...) or address climate induced migration?
- What are the concrete implications for Belgian development cooperation? E.g. in terms of future programs, intervention domains, funding, ..

Other:

Questions not solely related to the topic migration as adaption strategy:

- Support with the preparation of BE positions on climate change and human mobility.
- Recommendations relating to climate change and human mobility that will allow us to take policy positions on this subject matter.

## FRAGILITY & RESILIENCE

### Thematic axes and subthemes:

1. **Enhancing our understanding of the concept of *localization* as a way of improving the political and economic stability of partner countries in fragile contexts**

**Context & explanation of this first axis:** An international evolution is taking place from a development approach that supports the central government in certain sectors towards **area based, more localized approaches** (which are multi-sector; multi-actor). In addition, many of the Belgian partner countries are in **fragile contexts** in which the central government lacks legitimacy and/or capacity, in which there is **political fragility** and instability (e.g. recent *coups d'état* in three of our partner countries). This context points at (the need for better exploring the topic of) **localization**. In OECD discussions, this concept is not limited to funding local NGO's, but is mainly about **stabilizing a state** and **strengthening governance** in cases where you cannot work through the central government (as it is lacking legitimacy, capacities, or it is going through a violent transition). Linked to this, there is a need to gain insights into how we should analyze and support the **political economy** of a vast countries characterized by high degrees of fragility.<sup>4</sup> **Such a bottom-up approach** of strengthening **governance** and the **economy** will be central in international discussions for years to come (e.g. OECD). The question of localization also includes an important question of how we can guarantee **funding** to countries whose stability should be enhanced or where there is a crisis at central level (cf. a violent transition of power).

#### What does this axis imply in terms of academic support?

- The DGD/Embassies need academic support in order to **get a clear/more complete view on the concept of localization and its positive and negative implications on state building/stabilization** (This includes the risks that may be associated with such an approach<sup>5</sup>). The PSP should stimulate our reflections and enhance our knowledge on the topic.
- The PSP can identify **challenges and good practices** (it is likely that some Belgian development actors already implement a localized approach with quite some success; or that others face important struggles in implementing localized approaches).
- The PSP could identify whether we have the right **knowledge and tools** to integrate state-building and bottom-up approaches in our programs.
- The PSP could assist embassies/teach embassies on **how to analyze and understand the Political Economy** of a country (PEA). Local researchers should be involved in such an exercise. Important elements of such a PEA: fiduciary risks, instruments (de recherche), ...
- ...

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<sup>4</sup> Note that during the previous discussion in July a need was identified to help embassies conduct a PEA.

<sup>5</sup> The risk of e.g. creating a state within the state; The risk of endangering the long-term objective of evolving towards a well-functioning state (at the central level); ...

## 2. Improving the way Belgium implements the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in its partner countries (strengths, weaknesses)

**Context & explanation of this second axis:** An elaborate (strategic) framework on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus exists at the level of the OECD-DAC: [the DAC recommendation on the HDP Nexus](#). This OECD legal instrument will be renewed in 2024. While the PSP cannot play a role in the renewal itself, however, the DGD/embassies have expressed a need for academic support **to analyze the more practical Belgian experiences with regard to the Nexus, focusing more in particular on experiences related to the (under-examined) soft aspects of the peace pillar** (peace with the lowercase p). Such a learning process that identifies both **challenges** and **best practices** and **possibilities to mainstream** the NEXUS in other instruments (sector strategies, e.g.) and help the DGD to make a link between the international discussions on the Nexus and its own practices in the field. It will allow the DGD/embassies to better understand to what extent they (already) implement the international discourse on the Nexus and where more progress should be made.

### What does this axis imply in terms of academic support?

- PSP researchers should conduct an **analysis of our good practices/challenges** related to the implementation of the HDP nexus; how to mainstream the NEXUS approach in other instruments (strategies, instruction letters, ... ) we use.
- PSP researchers could also conduct and/or teach Embassies how to conduct (improved) **conflict impact assessments/conflict analyses**. Such a support may reinforce the conflict sensitivity of our strategic thinking/our programs.
- Additionally, this PSP should **address the PEACE-aspect** of the Nexus, however **with a clear focus on the soft aspects of peace-building** (peace with the lowercase p). To what extent can development cooperation impact peacebuilding in a regional context like the one of the Great Lakes region? This question is linked to the EU Strategy on the Great Lakes and may benefit from an analyses of other donors/development actors practices. Soft aspects refer to, between others: support to dialogue within and between communities, negotiations at local level, ...)
- ...

Note that there is an important link between this topic and the previous one. Peace depends very much on strengthening the governance capacities in the full territory of a state and the stabilization of the state (not just at the central level) (cf. above). Researchers are asked to not treat both axes in isolation but to explore the links between them as much as possible.

**Note: Ensuring a link between the work in the group Fragility & Resilience and both the WG on Social Protection/inequality/inclusive growth and on Environment/Climate**

**Suggested methodology, activities, output,...**

- **Focus on collecting and analyzing data** on existing practices and challenges for the Belgian development cooperation linked to localization and state-building, the HDP Nexus, ... These analyses can be based on monitoring quantitative and qualitative data, mapping exercises, the role of strengthening civil registry (link with non-governmental cooperation via local authorities), evaluation reports (strategic evaluation, regular program evaluations), ... to start with an overview of places where to find the data. This focus on data collection should include an analysis of data collecting systems and innovations in this field. Bearing in mind, however, that BE is not focusing on strengthening statistical systems in partner countries).
- **Synthesis of desk studies and review of relevant existing research and other documents** on localization on the one hand and the Nexus on the other hand. This includes studies commissioned by other bilateral donors or multilateral organizations.
- If relevant, conducting **comparative analyses** (different donors), especially on putting the NEXUS in practice
- Contribution to the strategic framework revision (in particular for Central Africa)
- Field visits, consultations and in depth interviews with involved actors
- Presentation of best practices and challenges(contextualized),
- Formulating recommendations based on the above-mentioned analyses
- Uptake and outreach activities (seminars, lectures, contributions in publications both academic and for broader public; ...
- Possible involvement in steering Committee Fragility Evaluation (SES)
- to be discussed: possibility of a fellowship engaging in DGD
- The main focus is on the partner countries of Belgian development cooperation, but academic work should not be limited to these, as interesting developments in other countries can offer inspiration for the work in partner countries
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**Stakeholders to be involved (core members of the wg in bold)**

- **lead and focal point by D5.2**; coordination back up by by D0.1
- **Selected HEI in BE and partner countries (esp. in Sahel and Central-Africa; e.g. in Mali, BF, ...)**
- Other interested academic partners
- representatives and experts in relevant multilateral institutions (UN, OECD)
- **Belgian governmental cooperation** (DGD (**DGEO, D01, ...**), **Embassies** and ENABEL)
- Interested members of the CSC's in partner countries in the Sahel/Central-Africa
- other relevant Belgian ANGC involved not included in these networks/platforms
- International NGO's working on themes such as fragility/HDP Nexus/Peace Building (previously identified: Search for Common Ground, Safer World, Pole Institute, ...)
- ...

## II. SOCIAL PROTECTION, INEQUALITY AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

### Thematic axes and subthemes:

#### 1. Analysis of local social protection systems:

- Inventory of local health insurance schemes, saving groups, initiatives for education, ... including pre-distribution rather than just redistribution questions (on social citizenship, property rights, ...) influencing peoples security
- Understanding their coverage, accessibility, sustainability, importance and significance of these systems for local communities, inclusion (or not) of refugees, gender impact, presence and meaning of private market based (commercial) companies providing (health) insurance vs. public systems and non-profit private systems, ...
- How do local systems relate to the definitions in the ILO-convention
- Focused on the partner countries involved in the Thematic Portfolio Social Protection (Rwanda, DR Congo, Uganda) but open for comparison with other counties

#### 2. Strategic analysis of informal economies:

- political economy analysis of how the informal economy is organized locally; who is involved, what sectors, how is the link between formal and informal economic sectors, evolutions and trends, gender sensitive analysis...
- analysis initiatives to formalize the informal economy: possibilities and limits
- How did actors in the informal sector cope with COVID (strategies of actors and governments, like cash transfer programs, ..
- focus on (but not limited to) the partner countries of the Social Protection Thematic portfolio: research on developments in other countries to the extent that they can be inspirational

#### 3. Analysis of donor practices and international fora:

- comparison of vision and strategy of ILO and World Bank: exploring differences and common ground;
- comparative analysis of donor strategies and their evaluations: what works, what doesn't in various contexts and with various target populations, factors of success stories, e.g. cash transfers that DGD is supporting in some countries (in collaboration with UNICEF e.o)
- link with proposals for establishing a Global Fund for Social Protection
- link with health and UHC

4.[financing of social protection systems: analysis of gaps, opportunities and policy options (domestic resources mobilization for social protection; global financing (taxes, aid, philanthropy), proposals for a Global Fund for Social Protection ]

--> **uptake and outreach** should focus on synthesized notes strengthening common understanding; how-to notes on what works; guidance at program assessment level, advice and recommendations re. position papers, in program assessments; demonstrate success stories; other uptake and outreach activities including guided workshops, training sessions, contributions in publications for a broader public; ...

### Criteria re. Methodology

- documenting, data collection and comparison of local social protection systems and donor strategies: facts and figures on organization, institutional set up, coverage, inclusion, impact on resilience of members, including gender differentiation,...
- Synthesis of desk studies and review of relevant existing research and other documents on local informal economy, and related governmental and NGA-strategies,
- field visits enabling participatory research, consultations and in depth interviews with involved actors
- participatory research: action research involving partners and representatives from beneficiaries; focusing on research outcomes and recommendations in the field
- presentation of best practices (contextualized),
- to be discussed: possibility of a fellowship engaging in DGD

**Stakeholders to be involved (core members of the WG in bold, others depending on relevance and willingness to engage for specific periods, subthemes, activities)**

- **future lead and focal point by D2.5; temporarily uptake by D0.1**
- main focus on but not limited to stakeholders in the countries involved in the Social Protection Thematic Portfolio (Rwanda, DR Congo, Uganda): local governmental and non-governmental organizations
- **selected HEI in BE and partner countries**
- other interested academic partners
- representatives and experts in WB, ILO, other relevant multilateral institutions
- **Belgian governmental cooperation (DGD (DGEO, D2.5, D01), Embassies and ENABEL)**
- Members of the USP-platform
- Members of the CSC-Decent Work
- Because-Health platform
- other relevant Belgian ANGC involved not included in these networks/platforms