



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

**ON THE ACTIVITIES, PROGRESS, IMPACT AND  
PERSPECTIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION  
OF SWISS CHURCH AID**

ZÜRICH/LAUSANNE, APRIL 2017

## Table of contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Context of international cooperation related to HEKS/EPER's activities</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>The HEKS/EPER International Programme</b> .....	<b>10</b>
3.1	Theories of change and objectives .....	10
3.2	Holistic approach in development cooperation .....	12
<b>4</b>	<b>Progress in development cooperation</b> .....	<b>13</b>
4.1	Access to land and resources/services .....	13
4.1.1	Main programme achievements .....	14
4.1.2	Institutional achievements .....	15
4.2	Value chain development .....	20
4.3	Overcoming violence .....	24
4.4	Strengthen civil society .....	27
4.5	Key data and progress assessment of development cooperation .....	29
<b>5</b>	<b>Progress in humanitarian aid</b> .....	<b>31</b>
5.1	Life-saving .....	31
5.2	Livelihood .....	32
5.3	Infrastructure .....	33
5.4	Preparedness and prevention .....	34
5.5	Key data and progress summary for humanitarian aid .....	35
<b>6</b>	<b>Progress in church cooperation</b> .....	<b>37</b>
6.1	Partnerships and dialogue .....	37
6.2	Social inclusion .....	37
6.3	Community development .....	39
6.4	Key figures and progress summary for church cooperation .....	40
<b>7</b>	<b>Cross-cutting issues</b> .....	<b>41</b>
7.1	Human rights-based approach .....	41
7.2	Conflict sensitivity .....	42
7.3	Gender .....	42
7.4	Resilience building .....	44
<b>8</b>	<b>Management for quality, learning, progress and results</b> .....	<b>45</b>
8.1	Institutional evolution .....	45
8.2	Programme management .....	46
8.3	Acquisition and fundraising .....	47
8.3.1	Learning from grants and applications .....	48
8.4	Monitoring and evaluation, learning for steering .....	50
8.4.1	Programme and project evaluations .....	51
8.4.2	Lessons learnt from MSC assessments .....	53
8.5	Finances .....	54
8.6	Alliances and networks .....	56
<b>9</b>	<b>Communication</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Emerging patterns of HEKS/EPER's international cooperation</b> .....	<b>61</b>
10.1	Patterns from 2011 to 2016 .....	61
10.2	Patterns related to HEKS/EPER's work in 2016 .....	63
10.2.1	Conflict sensitivity in humanitarian aid .....	63
10.2.2	Decreasing security and shrinking space .....	64
10.2.3	Inclusive markets – opportunities and limitations .....	66
10.2.4	Effective networks and alliances .....	67
10.2.5	Selecting and supporting competent staff and partners .....	68
10.3	Further patterns in 2016 .....	68
<b>11</b>	<b>Perspectives on the implementation of the HEKS/EPER international programme</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>Appendices</b> .....		<b>72</b>
<b>A)</b>	<b>Activities by country (DevCo, HA and CC)</b> .....	<b>72</b>
A. 1	Africa .....	72
A. 2	Asia and the Middle East .....	75
A. 3	Latin America and the Caribbean .....	77
A. 4	Europe .....	79
<b>B)</b>	<b>Evaluations of HEKS/EPER programmes/projects in 2016</b> .....	<b>82</b>
<b>C)</b>	<b>Acronyms</b> .....	<b>84</b>

# 1 Summary

The Annual ID Report 2016 reports on the activities, impact and perspectives of the HEKS/EPER International Division's projects and programmes of its three sections: development cooperation (DevCo), humanitarian aid (HA) and church cooperation (CC). HEKS/EPER hopes this report will inspire its readers – HEKS/EPER staff as well as external readers – to challenge their perspectives on international cooperation. The report aims to support internal learning and steering decisions in order to improve the effectiveness and relevance of HEKS/EPER's endeavours in favour of people and communities in need.

During 2015 and 2016, HEKS/EPER elaborated the next phase of its International Programme, the 'HIP 2017-2020'. This boosted internal analysis and evaluation of the progress of projects and priority programmes. The new HIP, with its analysis of the results of the previous phase and **the international context** ([Chapter 2](#)), has already made a mark on HEKS/EPER's activities last year, providing clarity as to adaptations and continuations.

In 2016, HEKS/EPER intervened with 161 international and 37 HHQ staff in cooperation with more than 100 partner organisations in 32 countries through 248 projects – 185 development projects, 28 HA projects and 35 church cooperation projects (reports per country and map see [Appendix A](#)). HEKS/EPER has local coordination offices in 16 DevCo priority programmes. Totally, HEKS/EPER reached with DevCo activities 935'000 individuals, with HA interventions more than 150'000 and with CC projects approximately 25'000 persons. The reduction to 16 DevCo priority programmes during 2016 enabled HEKS/EPER to almost achieve the objective of a cost volume of at least one million CHF per country, with 14 country programmes surpassing this limit. The overall volume of international programme spending (DevCo, CC and HA) increased from CHF 34.5 million in 2015 to CHF 36.25 million in 2016 (detailed finance table see [Chapter 8.5](#)). At the same time, the number of fragile countries in HEKS/EPER portfolio increased. In South Sudan, Haiti, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Ukraine, smooth programme implementation wasn't possible. 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.

## Progress in development cooperation

Assessing its progress, HEKS/EPER identified that in DevCo ([Chapter 4](#)), it achieved 9 out of 10 objectives. *Resilience building, access to resources* (e.g. water), *access to basic services, sustainable production* and *access to land* were the objectives where most progress was made. Objective 8, 'reduced emergence/escalation of violent conflict', was on a global level not reached with our programmes, mainly because of a political context decreasingly favourable like in Palestine/Israel and Zimbabwe or with the civil war in South Sudan emerging also in HEKS/EPER project areas.

**Access to land** ([Chapter 4.1](#)) for rural communities means food security, a basis for additional income, but also cultural identity. In 2016, HEKS/EPER facilitated improved access to land for nearly 80'000 individuals securing 15'791 ha of land. Worldwide in 12 countries, 40 HEKS/EPER projects were dealing to various degrees and different approaches with access to land. Analysis through a self-assessment by HHQ staff showed that in 8 out of 12 countries the set objectives were reached 'well' or 'very well'. Hardly reached or not reached at all were the access to land aims in countries with conflicts or shrinking space for civil society: in South Sudan, Palestine/Israel, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia. Overall, this means an increase of activities, studies, partnerships and progress compared to 2015 with 66'000 beneficiaries in 31 projects in 11 countries. Since 2009, land projects led to improved access to land for half a million individuals. Valorisation of land is key to ensure long-term access, but also to make land 'profitable' for farmers or communities. Therefore, access to land means also to foster agro-ecological production, inclusive market systems (see also [objectives 2.1 to 2.3](#)) and transformation of land conflicts or their prevention.

During 2016, activities related to link-up globally with key processes relevant for HEKS/EPER activities promoting access to land have been:

- Global network for the Right to Food and Nutrition.
- International Colloquium on Traditional Peoples and Communities in Brazil.
- Contribution to the preparation process of a new UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people living in rural areas
- Global Convergence on Land and Water Struggles: support for caravan in West Africa
- Contribution and participation at SDC Learning Journey on Land Governance

Progress in achieving results to **access water** ([Chapter 4.1](#)) were obvious reaching 66'475 individuals, mainly in Cambodia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Niger even though some projects had been consolidated or ending, and with difficulties in implementation in civil war affected South Sudan

The number of people receiving **access to public/basic services** ([Chapter 4.1](#)) through HEKS/EPER projects is almost four times higher than 2013, reaching 140'000 individuals in 2016. A key intervention area was Eastern Europe promoting equal access for Roma to rights and services like education, housing, health and social schemes. Access to home care in Romania, Serbia, Ukraine and Moldova is a growing field with HEKS/EPER and its partners becoming actors recognized for competence and quality.

More than 50 HEKS/EPER projects around the world had a specific focus on **sustainable and climate change resilient production** ([Chapter 4.2](#)). Interventions led broader acceptance of and conversion to agro-ecological production practices. Highlights 2016 were the launch of an organic certification project in Senegal and the results of the project in Brazil fostering ecologic production in the Cerrado.

HEKS/EPER has been putting significant efforts into strengthening partner organisations in implementing projects with a strong focus on **improving market access** and the **development of inclusive market systems** ([Chapter 4.2](#)). Since 2013, the number of projects dealing with these issues increased from 37 projects (21% of the total portfolio) to 53 projects (23%) in 2016. The market systems development approach in Moldova, for example, enabled farmers to export nearly 4'200 tons of table grapes in 2016, accessing also the EU high-quality market with 126 tons. And in Bangladesh the income of 84% of the Dalit and Adivasi minorities participating in a holistic market access project increased.

For 175'000 individuals participating in HEKS/EPER projects quality of life in a conflict situation has been improved in 2016 with **improved social cohesion** ([Chapter 4.3](#)) between different groups in the South Caucasus region, but also in Columbia, Brazil or Palestine/Israel. New projects to mitigate land conflicts or to protect civilians from human rights violations were launched in Cambodia and DR Congo.

**Shrinking space for civil society action** targeting democracy and human rights and therefore weakening the influence and ownership of civil society has increasingly become one of the key obstacles to implementing development or humanitarian aid projects ([Chapter 2](#)). 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 (more on the challenge shrinking space in [Chapter 10.2.2](#)). Therefore, HEKS/EPER put a lot of effort to promote an enabling environment, linking up with other Swiss NGOs (AG Enabling Environment) and the ACT Alliance Community of Practice Rights and Development. ([Chapter 4.4](#)). The process of establishing broader alliances in order to better represent and defend the diversity of civil society has proven difficult but valuable. HEKS/EPER, in cooperation with the NGO platform, has been engaged in a joint learning process with SDC on enabling environment. And HEKS/EPER, being part of the official Swiss delegation, co-facilitated a workshop at the CSO Forum at the Global Partnership for Development Effectiveness HLM2 in Nairobi.

### Progress in humanitarian aid

In 2016, HEKS/EPER interventions in humanitarian aid ([Chapter 5](#)) were implemented in 12 different countries. More interventions were carried out in countries that have a development focus like Cambodia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Serbia and Zimbabwe. The main constraints which HEKS/EPER faced in the provision of humanitarian assistance were volatile security situations and political instability (Ukraine, Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon), accessibility to affected populations (Haiti) and legal restrictions in host countries with respect to refugees (Turkey and Lebanon). Including **preparedness and prevention** ([Chapter 5.4](#)) through holistic programming is key, for example in Zimbabwe, a country affected by El Niño, where new agricultural technologies and drought-resistant seeds were promoted. A total of 140'000 people – mainly in Pakistan and the Philippines – received training and tools which decreased the impacts of disasters and strengthened their response capacity to disasters. The second focus of HEKS/EPER humanitarian aid interventions has been in the Middle East in **response to the Syrian crisis** and the huge population displacements in the region. Thanks to a **rapid response** after Hurricane Matthew in June 2016, families in Haiti could repair their housing with cash-for-work income and three schools are being repaired (schools are now resilient enough to resist hurricanes) and earthquakes and springs protected. Together with a road repair programme, these actions supported 20'000 individuals.

### Progress in church cooperation

In 2016, HEKS/EPER's church cooperation ([Chapter 6](#)) was able to constantly develop its programme, e.g. 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 6.2](#)) 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. Activities in Transcarpathia, **Ukraine**, have been increased in the area of home care and assistance for the handicapped.

### Human rights as the reference for all HEKS/EPER activities

The basis of activities in all three sections of ID is the **human rights-based approach** (HRBA, [Chapter 7.1](#)). In many countries HEKS/EPER invested in HRBA capacity building – e.g. Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe. Within the Roma programme, partners moved increasingly from being service providers to being advocacy actors, making the state responsible for the access to inclusive education and housing. The access to international human rights mechanisms was successful in Brazil, where HEKS/EPER together with FIAN International supported the indigenous Guarani Kaiowà people in filing a lawsuit with the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights.

Workshops for HEKS/EPER office staff and partner organisations on the integration of **resilience building** ([Chapter 7.4](#)) into programmes and projects were held for Zimbabwe, Niger and Senegal. Amongst others, the practical measures taken in the frame of projects were: the use of seeds and varieties adapted to changing climatic conditions, sustainable land/water management, conservation agriculture, community organisation, risk transfer through grain/seed/livestock banks and advocacy for the avoidance of new risks. In the Swiss NGO DRR Platform collective, HEKS/EPER invested a considerable amount of work resources into the development of a DRR/CCA e-learning course.

### Managing the HEKS/EPER international programme

[Chapter 8](#) outlines the **institutional evolution** of HEKS/EPER and how it **manages its programmes and projects**. In 2016, the roll-out of the PCM ([Chapter 8.4](#)) via onsite training for all CO staff and representatives of the POs were completed, except for Niger and Haiti. 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. Two decisive components in this regard include the development of a digital data collection and aggregation system for the key indicators and the commissioning, accompanying and implementing several rigorous impact evaluations.

Also, HEKS/EPER fully revised its **Field Financial and Administrative Guidelines** during 2016. These are sure to establish and maintain an administrative management system which facilitates an effective and economic utilisation of resources available to HEKS/EPER. Additionally, it fosters an optimal internal control system, enabling the safeguarding of resources from misuse and ensuring an efficient and timely financial information system of good quality. In order to remain relevant and competitive in the international development and humanitarian landscape, HEKS/EPER will pursue a **growth strategy** to diversify its funding portfolio in the new HIP strategy period. The focus will be on the acquisition of grants and tenders from bilateral and multilateral donors, using HEKS/EPER own means and the SDC block grant as leverage to achieve a multiplier effect ([Chapter 8.3](#) acquisition and fundraising).

### Challenges, opportunities and perspectives of international cooperation

In 2016, the HHQ team identified more than 15 key patterns ([Chapter 10.2](#)) emerging from and around HEKS/EPER's international cooperation activities, including issues like capacity development for HEKS/EPER staff, partners and project participants or access to land or enabling environment for civil society actors. HHQ analysed the five most relevant emerging patterns which may hamper or foster the implementation and the sustainability of projects and programmes:

- Conflict sensitivity in humanitarian aid.
- Decreasing security and shrinking space.
- Inclusive markets – opportunities and limitations.
- Effective networks and alliances– internal and external.
- Selecting and supporting competent staff and partners.

The HIP annual report 2016 closes with the **perspectives** for 2017 onwards which are in line with the starting perspectives in the HIP 2017-2020 ([Chapter 11](#)).

## 2 Context of international cooperation related to HEKS/EPER's activities

In 2016, HEKS/EPER elaborated its new international programme 2017-2020. However threats to the key topics HEKS/EPER is addressing – such as human security, equal rights and prosperity – cross borders 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 and adapts its strategy and implementation. The global trends HEKS/EPER refers to are summarised in this chapter.

UNDP estimates, that 'around 800 million people suffer from hunger, and malnutrition affects almost one in three people on the planet.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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**<sup>3</sup>. 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.<sup>4</sup> 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. With natural resources diminishing and a third of the soil worldwide degraded and affected strongly by flood and drought<sup>5</sup>, 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 providers, which are important for a functioning society)<sup>6</sup>. 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> An Oxfam report on inequalities shows that 'where income inequality is high and/or increasing, the evidence

<sup>1</sup> UNDP (2017). Human Development Report 2016.

<sup>2</sup> FAO (April, 2017). FAO and the SDGs: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6919e.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> WFP (March, 2016). Website: <https://www.wfp.org/hunger/who-are>

<sup>4</sup> UNDP (2017). Human Development Report 2016.

<sup>5</sup> FAO (April, 2017). FAO and the SDGs: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6919e.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2011). Rural Poverty Report 2011. New realities, new challenges: new opportunities for tomorrow's generation.

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (2016). UNDP support to the implementation of sustainable development goal 10 – reducing inequality within and among countries.

[http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Sustainable%20Development/10\\_Reducing\\_Inequality\\_Jan15\\_digital.pdf?download](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Sustainable%20Development/10_Reducing_Inequality_Jan15_digital.pdf?download)

<sup>8</sup> UNDO (2017). Human Development Report 2016.

is clear that economic growth has significantly less impact on poverty.’<sup>9</sup> 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<sup>10</sup> 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 7.1](#)).

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 DevCo 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](#)).

A 2015 World Bank report<sup>11</sup> shows that **climate change** is an acute **threat to poorer people** across the world, with the potential to push more than 100 million people back into poverty over the next fifteen years. The poorest regions of the world – sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia – have been hit already in 2016 with one of the strongest El Niño effects ever recorded. According to various UN sources, some 40 million people are prone to suffer from famine in 2017. HEKS/EPER fears that priority countries such as Niger, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia are amongst those that will be affected.

The World Bank states that climate impacts will affect agriculture the most, a key sector in the poorest countries and a major source of income, food security, nutrition, jobs, livelihoods and export earnings. By 2030, crop yield losses could mean that food prices rise an average of 12% in sub-Saharan Africa. The resulting malnutrition could lead to a 2% increase in severe stunting in Africa. Therefore, the HEKS/EPER international programme promotes enhancing sustainable smallholder agriculture and inclusive markets as promising measures to increase yields, income and food security. Access to land, water, resources and other assets are just as crucial as making institutions and authorities work for rural communities and to foster resilience ([Chapter 4.1](#)).

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’.

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 4.4](#)). 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 ‘combatting terrorism’ and the rise of right-wing populism and autocratic regimes. Amnesty International stated in its annual report for 2016 that counterterrorism laws and regulations ‘fighting foreign terrorism’ have been passed in at least 47 countries since 2013. These brought expanded police/intelligence powers and restricted the civil rights of foreigners as well as citizens (e.g. preventive detention, travel bans, special courts, restricted access to media or reduced freedom to speak or assemble).

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

---

<sup>9</sup> Oxfam (2012). Left behind by the G20? How inequality and environmental degradation threaten to exclude poor people from the benefits of economic growth. 157 Oxfam Briefing Paper. [https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/bp157-left-behind-by-the-g20-190112-en\\_4.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp157-left-behind-by-the-g20-190112-en_4.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> See SDG no. 10.

<sup>11</sup> World Bank Group (2015). Shock Waves. Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty.

more restrictive laws, including NGO regulations<sup>12</sup>, which shrink the manoeuvring room for local communities and community-based organisations. Even in Switzerland, SDCs shall be restricted in financing NGOs abroad that are presumed to be critical of their Governments<sup>13</sup>. This is in spite of the fact that the international community has recognised CSOs as development actors in their own right<sup>14</sup>. 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<sup>15</sup>. To counter these trends, a broad reaffirmation of human rights is urgently needed. Governments committed to respecting human rights serve their people better by being more likely to avoid the corruption, self-aggrandising, and arbitrariness that so often accompany autocratic rule. 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 ([Chapter 8.2](#)). 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<sup>16</sup> 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.

More than 4.8 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 the UN, 13.5 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria. The UN's 2016 humanitarian appeal for Syrian refugees was just 56% funded by the end of November 2016. Therefore, HEKS/EPER increases its endeavours in the Middle East with actions in humanitarian aid, but also church cooperation. The civil war in South Sudan displaced 3.4 million people within the country, with 1 million fleeing to Uganda. HEKS/EPER had to partly suspend its DevCo activities and shift towards more humanitarian activities.

### **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 Marrakesh climate conference in November 2016, the international community confirmed the Paris agreement; however financial commitment to support developing countries remains low. The elaboration of a firm plan on implementation, including regulations, will also still be a long process.

On May 2016 the first ever **World Humanitarian Summit** (WHS) took place in Istanbul, Turkey, bringing together stakeholders in humanitarian aid, development cooperation, peace building and the private sector. The WHS took place in light of the major refugee crisis, where every 113th person on the globe is displaced by conflict and persecution (UNHCR 2016). The summit clearly identified key opportunities that exist for more effective collaboration among the diverse set of stakeholders that operate in the humanitarian sphere and saw some small successes, particularly related to better inclusion of and increasing funding to local and national responders.

---

<sup>12</sup> ACT Alliance. Shrinking Political Space for Civil Society Action (2011); Democracy in Action: Protecting Civil Society Space (2012), Space for Civil Society. How to Protect and Expand an Enabling Environment (2014).

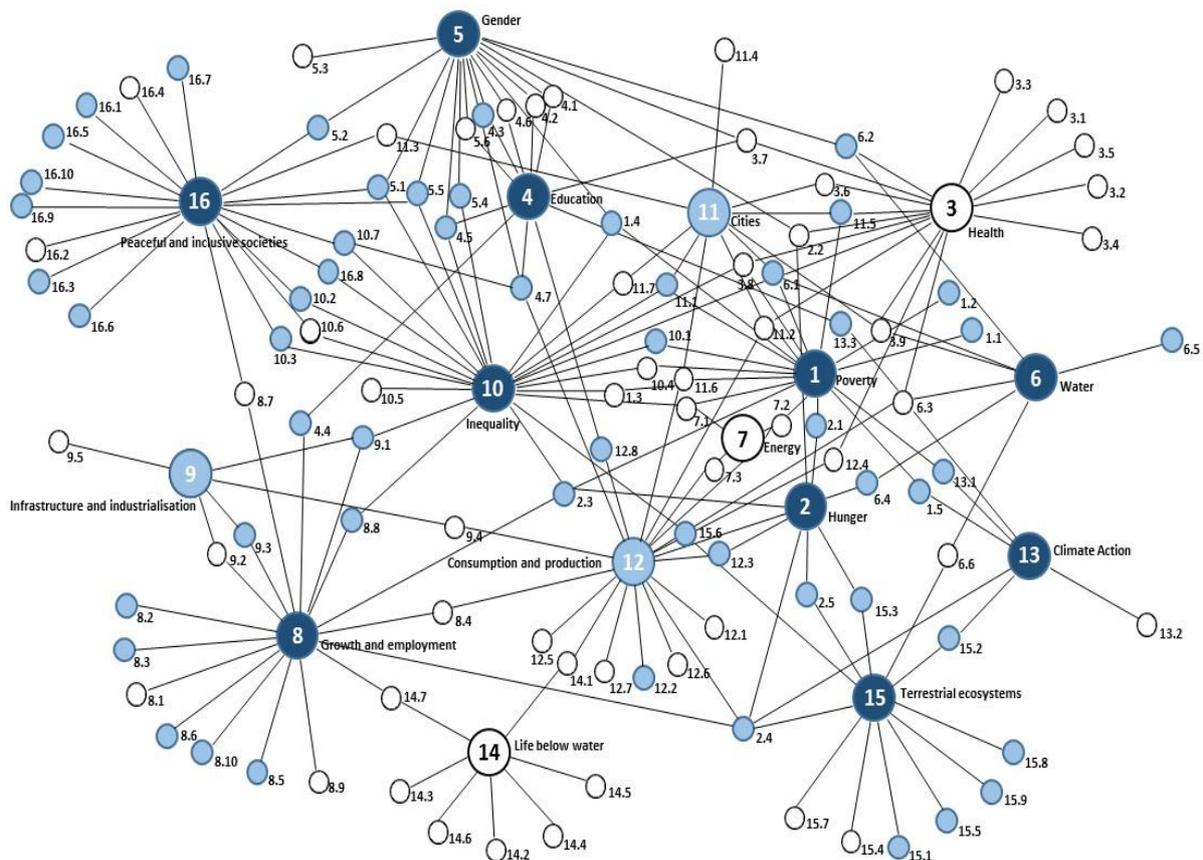
<sup>13</sup> The Federal Assembly. Website (April 2017): <https://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefft?AffairId=20163289>

<sup>14</sup> Busan Partnership for Effective Development (2011). Accra Agenda for Action 2008.

<sup>15</sup> SDGs (2015). §39, 41, 60.

<sup>16</sup> UNDP (2017). Human Development Report 2016.

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. At the very end of 2016, the Second Committee (Economic and Financial) of the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the 2017-20 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) addressing the need for effective, efficient and coherent operational activities to achieve the SDGs including greater cooperation and complementarity between development, disaster risk reduction (DRR), humanitarian action and sustaining peace. 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 – DevCo, HA and CC – and 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 3 shows the interconnectedness of the SDGs and the corresponding targets, and which SDGs and targets HEKS/EPER contributes towards. Most convergences exist for the goals *1 poverty, 10 inequality, 16 peaceful and inclusive societies, 5 gender and 8 growth and employment*.



**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.

**Figure 1: HEKS/EPER contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and the corresponding targets<sup>17</sup>.**

<sup>17</sup> Adapted from: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015). Towards integration at last? The sustainable development goals as a network of targets. DESA Working Paper No. 141.

### 3 The HEKS/EPER International Programme

#### 3.1 Theories of change and objectives

The year 2016 marks the final year of the HEKS/EPER International Programme 2013-2016. A new ‘HIP 2017-2020’ was elaborated during 2016, learning from promising practices, progress and successes, but also from failures and challenges and assessing the fast changing context. This chapter however outlines the theory of changes of the 2013-2016 phase, on which this document reports. The main focus of HEKS/EPER’s operations was on three sections, **development cooperation (DevCo), humanitarian aid (HA)** and **church cooperation (CC)**.

#### Theories of change and objectives

In 2016, HEKS/EPER intervened in 32 countries. Of these, 18 were part of the 16 DevCo priority programmes with country offices (CO) and country programmes (CP). The CPs were further broken down into projects implemented through partner organisations and/or by HEKS/EPER directly, incorporating the country and institutional objectives and designed to add to the theory of change (ToC) of the CP with their specific project objectives. CC was active in 9 countries with 3 of them having their own CPs. HA also operated in 9 countries through projects, accompanied either by COs (e.g. in the DevCo priority countries Haiti and Zimbabwe), by partner organisations and a desk officer at HHQ (e.g. Serbia, Ukraine and Turkey) or by expat delegates (e.g. Lebanon, Iraq, the Philippines and Pakistan).

Each of the three working sections is defined by an impact hypothesis or ToC, which is reflected by a results framework that includes objectives to which country programmes (and projects) contribute. For each section, the respective objectives are clustered in four or five domains. The cross-cutting issues of HRBA, gender, conflict sensitivity and resilience (DRR) are valid for all working sections. PCM, financial and administrative standards are applicable for all programmes and projects to ensure quality, transparency and of course the ability to learn and steer the interventions for the benefit of the people and communities HEKS/EPER works with and for.

Overview HEKS-ID Results Frameworks 2013-2017

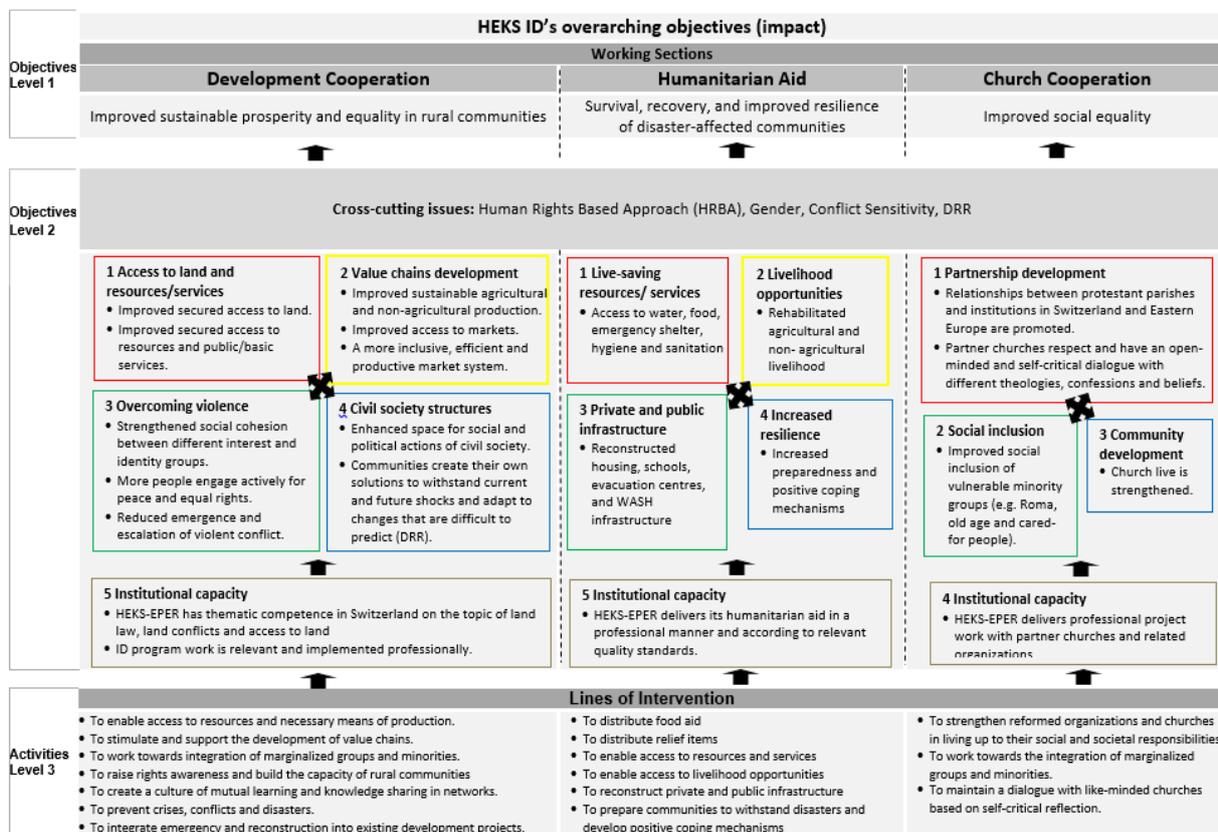


Figure 2: HEKS/EPER's overarching objectives of the HIP 2013–2017 for the activities in development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation.

## Development cooperation

### THEORY OF CHANGE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

By strengthening the structures of civil society, HEKS/EPER enables the pursuit of access to land and resources, the building of sustainable value chains (production, processing, marketing and knowledge transfer) as well as peaceful coexistence. HEKS/EPER is thus making a contribution to greater equality and prosperity for rural communities.



Contributing to equality and prosperity for rural communities is the overarching aim of HEKS/EPER's activities. While projects and programmes employ HEKS/EPER's holistic approach, their corresponding objectives are oriented towards the expected results of the DevCo global results framework. The results framework consists of five objective areas, with four being programmatic and one being institutional.

**Zimbabwe: Fetching water on the plot of the Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre.**

## Humanitarian aid

### TOC OF HUMANITARIAN AID

HEKS/EPER HA saves lives, alleviates suffering, restores livelihoods and rehabilitates infrastructure through providing and improving access to life-saving resources and services (such as food, water, shelter and hygiene products), livelihood opportunities, private and public infrastructure (housing, schools, WASH infrastructure) as well as increasing the resilience of target populations.

The humanitarian aid concept guides HHQ, country offices and HA staff in the countries on how to conduct humanitarian projects. It describes the key areas of interventions and on what premises we operate in which contexts. Of key importance is the linkage of HA with DevCo or CC and the inclusion of resilience building.



**Philippines: Distribution of humanitarian goods.**

## Church cooperation

### TOC OF CHURCH COOPERATION

Acting in Christian solidarity, HEKS/EPER supports reformed churches and their Diaconia organisations in Eastern Europe in fulfilling their community and social duties towards their members and the public to achieve more social justice.

CC is an integral part of the HIP. The four objectives focus on strengthening church partners that play a relevant role in their countries, therefore HEKS/EPER supports an active church life and the capacities of the church organisations to commit towards improved social equality in their respective societies. Linking parishes from Switzerland and abroad facilitates funding and also an open dialogue to foster an open-minded and tolerant church family.



Romania: Home care for elderly people.

### 3.2 Holistic approach in development cooperation

In the development cooperation section, HEKS/EPER focuses on the two priorities of development of rural communities (red circle) and conflict transformation (green circle) embedded within human rights (blue circle) as a reference framework for HEKS/EPER's rights-based approach. HEKS/EPER's core competence lies in pursuing a holistic approach to development cooperation, linking both priorities. The impact circles, with their 14 fields of interventions, are closely linked and mutually reinforcing to add substantial value by creating synergies and by making use of interfaces.

To achieve an objective like 'Improved and Secured Access to Land for Rural Communities', HEKS/EPER works in various areas, such as 'Access to Resources' (red), 'Marketing' (red) and 'Creating Linkages & Dialogue' (green). Depending on the context and in order to focus on target-group-specific measures to reduce poverty and/or discrimination, it may be more effective to temporarily place greater emphasis on one circle and work more intensely within specific areas of intervention. Evaluation of the holistic approach provides evidence that this approach works effectively. For example, analysing and addressing existing or potential conflicts is key for the successful implementation of all projects aiming at fostering access to land, markets or water.

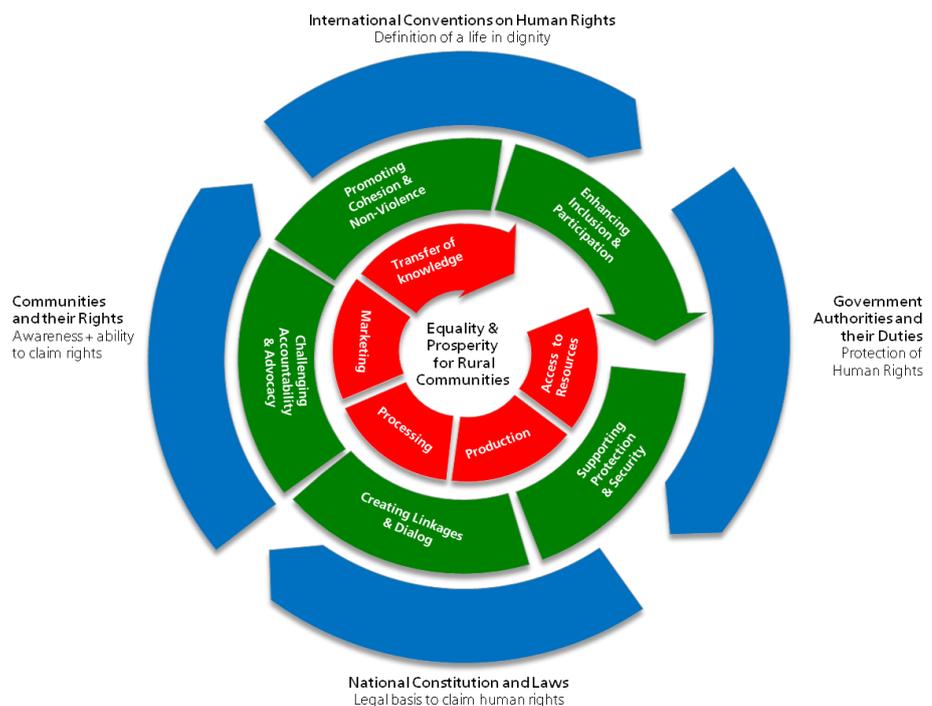


Figure 3: HEKS/EPER's 'impact circles' development of rural communities (red), conflict transformation (green) and rights-based approach (blue).

## 4 Progress in development cooperation

This chapter details – according to the four operational areas and ten objectives in development cooperation – the progress and changes observed and how HEKS/EPER contributed, primarily based on country and project reports and evaluations as well as learnings from meetings on various topics with partners, to external stakeholders and knowledge sharing sessions.

### 4.1 Access to land and resources/services

**OBJECTIVE 1.1 AND OBJECTIVE 5.1**  
**Improved secured access to land AND thematic competence on access to land**

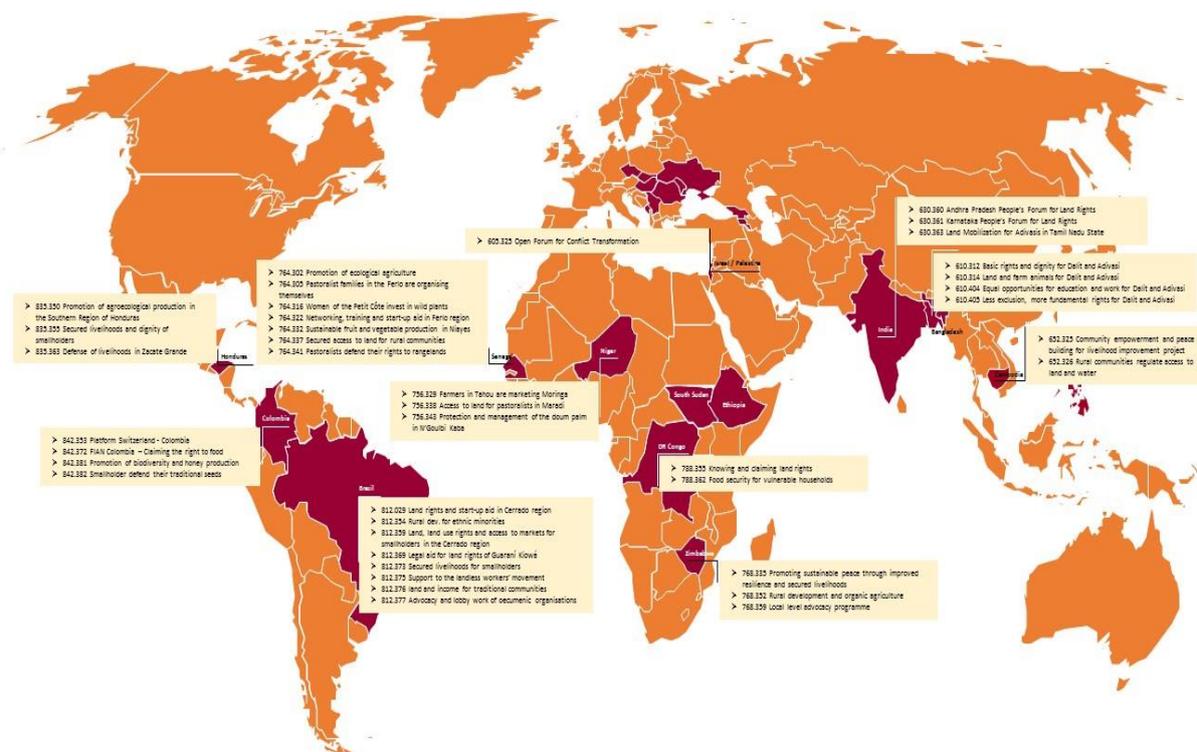


Figure 4: HEKS/EPER projects related to access to land by the end of 2016.

Widespread, continued disputes over who owns the world's land is a major constraint to progress on a wide range of development goals espoused by local peoples, national governments and the international community. The largest land acquisitions (e.g. by agro-business) are concentrated in countries with weak governance structures or poor governance. In these countries, the proportion of hunger and malnutrition in the population is also very high, for example in HEKS/EPER priority countries such as DR Congo or Ethiopia<sup>18</sup>. This is an observation confirmed by HEKS/EPER's analytical framework to systematically assess and enhance land tenure security. It has been revealed that the greatest success is possible with more stable governments (e.g. Brazil, Senegal or India) in which a rights-based approach with reference to national law has proven an adequate strategy.

**Access to land for rural communities** means **food security**, a basis for **additional income**, but also **cultural identity**. In Switzerland, but also amongst experts in various global networks, HEKS/EPER is more and more regarded as a competent and active actor in the development community when it comes to supporting people and communities in securing their traditional and legal rights to access land and important

<sup>18</sup> Rights and resource initiative (2015): Who owns the world's land?

resources such as water, seeds, forests, pasture or farmland. In **12 countries** worldwide, **40 projects** are dealing to various degrees and with different approaches with the topic of access to land with the aim of:

- 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](#)).

#### 4.1.1 Programmatic achievements in access to land

Countries with HEKS/EPER DevCo activities (2016)	Access to land facilitated	
	No. of individuals	No. of hectares
DR Congo	416	286
Ethiopia	0	0
Niger	41'386	1'401
Senegal	636	597
South Sudan	0	0
Zimbabwe	111	208
Bangladesh	533	6
Cambodia	0	0
India	6'037	4'574
Palestine/Israel	25'000	0
Brazil	3'959	8'719
Columbia	0	0
Haiti	n/a	n/a
Honduras	1'500	0
Moldova	n/a	n/a
South Caucasus	n/a	n/a
Kosovo	n/a	n/a
Romania	n/a	n/a
Serbia	n/a	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>79'578</b>	<b>15'791</b>

Figure 5: Key data for 2016, access to land.

In 2016, HEKS/EPER facilitated improved access to land for nearly 80'000 individuals securing 15'791 ha of land. Access to land has been secured in various manners – individual land titles (e.g. India, DR Congo), agreed rights on shared land use by communities (e.g. Brazil, DR Congo) and regulations on land use (e.g. cattle corridors in Niger). Elaborating, documenting and submitting land claims does not result in individuals accessing land or hectares of secured land, but was an important part of HEKS/EPER activities in countries like Senegal (see below), India or in the framework of new access to land activities in Cambodia.

Analysis through a self-assessment by HHQ staff showed that in eight out of twelve countries, the achievement of the set objectives was 'good' or 'very good'. Objectives that were barely achieved or not achieved at all were the access to land objectives in countries with conflicts or shrinking space for civil society: in South Sudan, Palestine/Israel, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia.

In Columbia, HEKS/EPER is screening the opportunities and risks of the peace agreement with land under the control of the FARC that is now accessible, but vulnerable to land acquisitions without respecting the needs of the local communities. In the coming months and year, HEKS/EPER will focus on this post-conflict process.

In Cambodia, HEKS/EPER added the land conflicts and access to land components to its intervention lines in agro-production, seeds and access to market, working intensely on the topic, building up competences and linking with partners and networks in Cambodia.

#### Adding value to land

Valorisation of land is key to ensuring long-term access, but also to making land 'profitable' for farmers or communities. Therefore, access to land also means also fostering agro-ecological production, inclusive market systems (see also [Objectives 2.1 to 2.3](#)) and transformation of land conflicts or their prevention. In addition, HEKS/EPER wants to have a closer look to the unintended outcomes of access to land activities. Land titles often lead to increased value for the legally secured plots. Individual landowners or fragmented communities may tend to sell land for short-term gains, especially if they are in precarious economic situations and do not have prospects for adding value to their land from which they benefit immediately and in the long-term. Screening its projects, HEKS/EPER has more and more interventions in the field of shared access to and use of land. This is a promising approach to secure land and to foster food security and prosperity in a sustainable manner.

## Achievements in selected countries

**Senegal:** Within the framework of the national land reform, HEKS/EPER partner organisations are committed to its design and elaboration for the benefit of small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises as well as small farms and transhumant cattle breeders. In 2016, specific concrete inputs were made to the national Land Reform Commission, with the aim of providing these people secured access to and use of land and resources. After a process supported by HEKS/EPER for many years, 70% of the proposals were accepted. In addition, HEKS/EPER partners were able to submit 590 documented claims on land to the authorities.

**Niger:** During 2016, 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 2016, cattle corridors of 126 km in length were able to be negotiated, secured and marked by contracts, which benefitted around 41'000 people. In addition, 630 hectares of cattle grazing grounds were secured and 770 hectares of unproductive land could again be cultivated. With all these measures, the living conditions of sedentary farmers and pastoralist communities as well as their peaceful coexistence could be further improved.



**With the cooperation of HEKS/EPER partner FIAN, in November 2016 the Guarani Kaiowá submitted their complaint regarding access to their land to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.**

**Brazil:** In 2016, access to 8'719 hectares of land for 6'000 people was secured. With the change of government, the achievements of the HEKS/EPER partner organisations are threatened. After a great deal of effort in recent years, the authorities have finally realised their responsibilities in the field of land rights. It was therefore all the more important to expand the HEKS/EPER portfolio with new organisations, including PAD (Processo de Articulação e Diálogo), which supports the coordination of civil society to maintain its rights and democracy. For the promotion of biological diversity and food security, HEKS/EPER set up a new cooperation with the organisation Terra de Direitos in 2016. From 2017, the organisation will foster advocacy work on access to economic, social and environmental rights, for traditional communities as well as the Guarani Kaiowá at

the national level. Since the legal remedies to secure access to land for the Guarani Kaiowá have been largely exhausted at the national level, HEKS/EPER, together with its partner organisation FIAN International, supported the submission of a complaint to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights at the end of 2016. A positive judgement could have a signalling effect on access to collectively used land.

### 4.1.2 Institutional achievements in access to land

To strengthen the core competences, network capacities and public visibility of HEKS/EPER in the field of access to land and land conflicts, in April 2016 HEKS/EPER launched a new institutional project related to the topic of access to land, which focuses on two aspects:

- Activities related to a better qualification of HEKS/EPER work with regards to access to land: case studies, cooperation with institutions and experts, colloquiums, publications, flagship projects and capacity building will accompany this process.
- Activities related to the accompaniment of relevant global processes with regards to access to land and participation in relevant networks. Processes like the Global Convergence on Land and Water Struggles, the elaboration of the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people in rural areas or the implementation/monitoring of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests.

Furthermore, the project aims:

- To link HEKS/EPER's country programs to these global processes.
- To further develop a common institutional understanding and vision on the topic of access to land and resources.

During 2016, initial activities related to this global project have been conducted. The main outcomes and findings in **five key processes** HEKS/EPER have been:

### **1) Global network for the Right to Food and Nutrition**

The network is an initiative of public interest CSOs and social movements to act jointly for the right to adequate food and nutrition by creating spaces for dialogue, supporting CSOs in accessing their rights, defending human rights activists, and promoting human rights. Being an active member, HEKS/EPER participated in the annual meeting in Dakar in March 2016. There the increasing threats land rights activists face was a key topic with countries like Honduras identified as one of the most dangerous to for those active in human rights. In addition, HEKS/EPER contributed to the 2016 edition of the Right to Food and Nutrition Watch on seeds and biodiversity, with practical examples from Honduras, Colombia and Brazil.<sup>19</sup>

### **2) International Colloquium on Traditional Peoples and Communities in Brazil**

At the end of August 2016, HEKS/EPER co-organised the fourth International Colloquium on Traditional Peoples and Communities in Montes Claros, Brazil with about 350 participants from academia, the NGO sector, members of social movements and public authorities from five countries. Besides the organisation of two side-events – one related to the UN Declaration on Peasant's Rights and a second related to the Voluntary Guidelines on Secured Land Tenure – the event led to:

- The strengthening of political dialogue between different social movements in Latin America.
- To a broadening of working contacts with networks, alliances, research institutions and civil society organisations at the international and national level (e.g. with the Geneva Academy for International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights or the Institute of Development Studies, national research institutes in Brazil, the University of Kassel or pastoralist and Adivasi community representatives).
- The deepening of good practices related to land governance and secured access to land.

### **3) 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 supporting the elaboration process of a new UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people living in rural areas. After the development of a draft version and three consecutive rounds of negotiations, there will be a further round of negotiations in May 2017. As such, HEKS/EPER was involved in the preparation of a large international conference on this topic which will be held in March 2017 in Schwäbisch Hall, Germany.

In addition, HEKS/EPER organised a capacity building and networking event linked to the Peasant Rights Declaration in April 2016 during the International Civil Society Week in Bogota, Colombia.

### **4) Global Convergence on Land and Water Struggles: support for caravan in West Africa**

In March 2016, a so-called 'land caravan', launched and organised by a social movement of grassroots organisations and hundreds of direct stakeholders working for their right to food and land, traversed seven West African countries advocating for access to land and water. HEKS/EPER partners were actively involved when the demands of the movement were handed over to Macky Sall, the President of Senegal and current President of the West African Economic Community ECOWAS in Dakar, Senegal.

### **5) Contribution and participation at SDC Learning Journey on Land Governance**

The SDC network for Agriculture and Food Security together with the network for Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance have organised a learning journey on land governance, directly including around 100 professionals.

As a first step, case studies were conducted in three countries (Brazil, Mozambique and Cambodia) to give in-depth insight into the situation and recent developments regarding land rights, whereas the Brazilian case study was based on the extensive experience HEKS/EPER and its partners gathered during recent years

---

<sup>19</sup> Right to food and nutrition watch (2016): Keeping seeds in people's hands.

on land governance. Subsequent to the studies, validation workshops were conducted in each of the countries with professionals from the public, private and civil sectors.

In September 2016, a face-to-face meeting with the participation of various HEKS/EPER staff members was held in Switzerland. The three-day meeting included excursions to different regions of Switzerland, allowing the participants to learn how conflicting interests in land use are balanced here.

The case study conducted in Brazil by the Institute of Development Studies stated the following: 'The Norte de Minas shows what can be achieved by strategies such as those used by HEKS/EPER and its partners in helping isolated groups to come together and form larger movements with national and international visibility, especially when these movements are linked up with academic networks that can help to produce an evidence base to support their demands for more inclusive land governance. Other regions of Brazil, and other countries around the world, can undoubtedly learn from this model, even where some of the enabling conditions are lacking.'

## OBJECTIVE 1.2

### Improved secured access to resources and public/basic services

#### Access to public/basic services

The people receiving access to services through HEKS/EPER projects is almost four times higher than 2013, reaching 140'000 individuals in 2016.

In **Serbia, Kosovo, Romania and Hungary** equal access for Roma to basic rights and services like education, housing, health and social services have been improved in 2016. Roma were better integrated into mainstream basic and vocational education systems and their settlement infrastructure and housing conditions were improved. Moreover, successful models for educational support and house upgrading were included in the new phase of the respective national Roma integration strategies. Including a systemic perspective, HEKS/EPER strives to strengthen all efforts aiming to make local and national authorities accountable for social inclusion with social services or employment schemes fully paid by the state.



To foster the social and economic inclusion of marginalised groups such as the Roma in Kosovo HEKS/EPER facilitates dialogue between the community, mainstream society and the authorities.

In **Haiti**, infrastructure investments in rural roads and local marketplaces allows peasant farmers to market their produce better and have increased access to healthcare and other basic services. Most of the school buildings that were built previously in Haiti with HEKS/EPER support were able to weather Hurricane Matthew without any substantial damages.

In 2016, HEKS/EPER **Moldova** continued to successfully support the development of a home care model which provides high-quality social and medical services in rural areas of Northern Moldova. The service was expanded from 21 to 28 communities and received additional funding from the national health insurance company and co-funding from local authorities, making it possible to increase the number of patients served. As a member of the national network of home care service providers, the partner organisation CASMED continued to actively lobby for updating and improving the legal regulations and standards for social and medical service provision in Moldova.

### Access to water

Access to clean water is part of various HEKS/EPER country programmes and during 2016, progress in achieving results are obvious, with them reaching 66'475 individuals. The number is lower than in 2015, with some projects in Ethiopia and Niger being consolidated or ending, and with difficulties in implementation in South Sudan with the civil war hampering the projects.

In **Cambodia**, the targets have been met or even exceeded. Access to land and water has been confirmed as the main resource for human consumption and agricultural production. The canal renovation, community pond and water well were renovated and provided a huge and valuable benefit to our PooC. A very positive change has come about from the renovated canal in the project areas of the three partners AK, SOFDEC and SACRED as farmers can increase their rice cultivation from once to twice or even thrice per year. In addition, AK, SACRED and SOFDEC work on access to water by constructing / rehabilitating water wells and community ponds. As a result, 4,609 PooC have improved access to water for human consumption and agricultural production.

In **Niger**, access to water and improving sanitation have high priority. During 2016, seven wells were rehabilitated, one borehole was successfully drilled and two solar water pumps were installed. The use is for both drinking water and livestock. Additionally, efforts have been made to construct latrines for an additional 60 families, totalling some 540 people. In total, through the efforts of HEKS/EPER to improve sanitation, 16'968 people have access to latrines. HEKS/EPER and its partner organisations are promoting the aspects of protection of natural resources within the framework of the official policies and are promoting coordination among all relevant stakeholders.

In **South Soudan**, beside the stressful conditions, some progress was made in at least the first quarter of 2016 in WASH aspects. HEKS/EPER partners constructed 13 boreholes, rehabilitated 13 shallow wells and boreholes and 4 institutional pit latrines, accompanied by the provision of 150 latrine construction slabs for community households. This led to improvement in access to safe and clean water and improvement in hygiene and sanitation practices in the participating communities. As an exit strategy, the communities have been guided to be responsible for the operation and maintenance of their facilities through setting up water user committees (WUC) and community pump mechanics (CPM) at each constructed and rehabilitated water point. These committees were coached on their roles and responsibilities. The composition of these committees was deliberately done in a way that promotes the involvement and participation of women.



Water point in Ethiopia.

In **Ethiopia**, HEKS/EPER evaluated the three-year water-shed project in Borana. The project contributed to positive effects in the natural resource management of the participating communities. Implementation of three WASH projects contributed to providing access to clean water for around 16'500 households. For several years, HEKS/EPER and one of its partners have been actively engaged in purifying fluoride-polluted water in the Rift valley. The fluoride removal technology centre in Modjo, which is supported by HEKS/EPER, has good potential to play a key role in this challenging issue. The cooperation between HEKS/EPER, its partner organisation and EAWAG as a backstopper is a promising modality.

**Globally/networks:** HEKS/EPER continued to be actively involved in the Swiss Water & Sanitation NGO Consortium and participated in the sharing of experiences and learnings. HEKS/EPER considers this coordination as an important and innovative modality to enhance coordination and to create potential for synergies.

In 2016, HEKS/EPER decided to join the international network Blue Community. Being a member of Blue Community, HEKS/EPER will make additional efforts to promote the human right to water and sanitation in the framework of the cooperation with its partners. This innovative initiative has a great potential to contribute to greater awareness within our partner network as well as in our constituency about the right to access to safe water and water as a public good. HEKS/EPER also continues to be actively involved in additional WASH-related networks, namely the Swiss Water Partnership, solidarit’eau Suisse and AGUSAN.

### Access to seeds

Despite feeding the world and providing resilience to natural disasters, peasant seed systems face severe threats due to the appropriation of nature by corporations and the accelerated destruction of agricultural biodiversity. Increasingly, seed and agrochemical businesses seek to privatise, monopolise and control seeds by patenting and commodifying these very sources of life. Meanwhile, peasant and indigenous communities, who have been the developers and guardians of seeds for millennia, are finding their rights to save, use, exchange and sell seeds overshadowed by a corporate agenda that prioritises profit over human rights and the sustainable maintenance of nature.<sup>20</sup>

In **Honduras** the HEKS/EPER partner Proyecto de Reconstrucción Rural (PRR), in cooperation with the CIALs, worked with Communal Seed Research Committees organised by the farmers in the communities, which continued their research work on new corn and bean varieties based on traditional campesino seeds and knowledge. These new varieties have proven that they perform better in a context of hotter soil temperatures and less rainfall due to the consequences of climate change. In cooperation with another HEKS/EPER programme partner, the network ANAF AE (National Network for the Promotion of Agroecology), 30 new farmers have been trained as ‘seed keepers’. These seed keepers, together with the CIALs, are part of a new and innovative strategy developed by PRR and ANAF AE which aims to protect traditional seeds by declaring them ‘local heritage varieties’, an approach which has been supported by the municipalities. In 2016, PRR also successfully established initial experiments in selling traditional seeds to the institutional markets in their region of intervention. PRR signed seed purchase contracts with the local authorities of two municipalities which are now buying seeds, corn and beans produced by the CIAL committees. These seeds are passed on by the municipalities to farmers and local communities who lost their seed stocks due to the severe droughts which occurred in the region. Thus, this strategy by PRR and ANAF AE has on the one hand contributed to increasing the food security and resilience capacities of local communities and, on the other hand, to enhancing and diversifying the incomes of the CIAL farmers.



**Biodiversity and access to adapted local seeds is key to maintaining or increasing food security.**

**At regional level in Latin America** the networking between BfA and HEKS/EPER, which started in 2014 with a regional workshop on seeds and climate change in Guatemala, was able to significantly broaden its range of partners. In 2016, a joint project was started which integrates partner organisations and networks of eight different countries in Latin America. At the heart of the project is the exchange of experiences and lessons learnt on innovative initiatives of civil society actors to influence legal frameworks on seeds and biodiversity at national level in order to protect the traditional knowledge of local rural communi-

<sup>20</sup> Right to food and nutrition watch (2016): Keeping seeds in people’s hands.

ties with regard to their genetic materials, to guarantee free access to seeds and to qualify the advocacy competences of the partners and their networks. By the end of 2016, supported by BfA and HEKS/EPER, a video project in the eight countries was started, which aims to systematise good practices developed by the different partners. The video is planned to be launched at the annual meeting of the Latin America and Caribbean Alliance for Biodiversity in May 2017 in Mexico.

In **Cambodia** HEKS/EPER's programme partner LAREC focused its work on the research of flood tolerant and glutinous rice varieties. In order to increase seed production of three floating rice varieties, LAREC contracted 46 farmers to produce these rice seeds in four villages. The results are encouraging both technically and economically. As such, the farmers were able to enhance their production techniques regarding the different stages of seed production: the seedling, flowering and ripening stages. At the same time, in the reporting period, LAREC was able to sell around eight tons of rice seeds to different stakeholders such as NGOs, farmer communities, local authorities and the private sector.

## 4.2 Value chain development

### OBJECTIVE 2.1

#### Improved sustainable agricultural and non-agricultural production

In rural areas, livelihoods largely depend on agricultural production. Even though access to resources – such as land, water and other 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, 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.

The following two examples show specific results that were achieved in 2016.

#### Senegal – participatory guarantee system for organic certification

In 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.

#### Brazil – alternatives to industrial agricultural production in the Cerrado region

HEKS/EPER partner organisations CEDAC (Centre of Agroecology of the Cerrado Region) and COOPCERRADO support communities in the Cerrado in the development of value chains. This includes sustainable use of the Cerrado ecosystem by the collection and processing of non-timber forest products, and the production of organic vegetables, fruits and cereals. COOPCERRADO is a commercialisation network composed of more than 3'000 peasant families, which successfully links production activities with access to markets strategies at regional and national level. An evaluation of the most recent project phase conducted during 2016, states the following: 'even though this experience is small in economic terms, the project is a counterpoint to the hegemony of agribusiness. In this sense, the results of the work by CEDAC and COOPCERRADO are more on a strategic level, since they make it possible to demonstrate that there are economic alternatives for the families living in the region, especially from the valorisation of their peasant production systems.'



**From production to market – contract between the cooperation and supermarket chain**

A good example to illustrate the importance and prospects of these experiences, which confirm the economic value of natural products coming from the biodiversity of the Cerrado savannahs, is the recently established commercial contract between COOPCERRADO and KORIN. KORIN, a national supermarket chain which sells organic products, purchases Cerrado Barú nuts from COOPCERRADO and sells the nuts and their sub-products in KORIN's shops and restaurants.

(see also: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEOPNFHlm9A#t=119>)

Besides these two examples, more than 50 ongoing HEKS/EPER projects around the world have a specific focus on sustainable agricultural and non-agricultural production. Interventions will generally lead to

broader acceptance and application of agro-ecological production practices (e.g. Zimbabwe, Senegal, Niger, Ethiopia, Columbia, Honduras, Brazil, India, Cambodia, Armenia and Moldova), the conversion to organic production (e.g. Georgia, Brazil and Senegal) or are more generally linked to coping with changing environmental and climate conditions in order to be better adapted to such changes (especially projects in drought- or flood-prone regions such as Senegal, Niger, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Brazil, India and Cambodia).

## **OBJECTIVE 2.2 AND 2.3**

### **Improved access to markets / a more inclusive, efficient and productive market system**

HEKS/EPER projects and programmes promote an integrated market systems 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 market systems development approach ultimately aims at increasing the income of people and at market systems delivering products or services more efficiently. As such, HEKS/EPER strives for changes to the structures and dynamics of market systems.

As in previous years, HEKS/EPER has been putting significant efforts into strengthening partner organisations in implementing projects with a strong focus on improving market access and the development of inclusive market systems. Since 2013, the number of projects dealing with such issues increased from 37 projects (21% of the total portfolio) to 53 projects (23%) in 2016. Among others, the following results have been achieved during 2016.

#### **Moldova – development of the table grape market system**

The market systems development approach in a table grape market development project in Moldova shows promising results and continues to show potential in facilitating access to the national and international market. For example, during 2016, it was able to establish relations with polish market actors and contracts were signed for one truck of grapes (18 tons) per week to be delivered to a market in Poland. At the end of the year, seven trucks with a total of 126 tons of grapes were exported. Overall, more than 4'000 tons of grapes were exported to other international markets during 2016: Romania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Baltic states. In addition, interviews with beneficiary farmers showed that reinvestments into equipment or infrastructure have been possible: e.g. tractors, cold storage rooms, small irrigation schemes and anti-hail systems.

#### **Senegal – access to microfinance leads to increased livelihood opportunities**

Part of a project with HEKS/EPER partner organisation ACCESS, HEKS/EPER established a guarantee fund of 6'000 Swiss francs at a local microfinance institute in order to enhance access to credit for women's groups. Between 2011 and 2016, nine different women's groups benefitted from credits for a total of CHF 70'000 for income generating activities like small businesses, selling local products and the transformation of products. Interviews with selected groups and women show that this led to additional income for the women, increased economic literacy and increased asset bases (housing equipment, etc.).



**Women's group in Senegal received credits enabling them to invest in their businesses, such as selling their agricultural products.**

## **Brazil and Honduras – access to institutional markets**

Access to institutional markets continues to be an important modality for the development of inclusive market strategies in HEKS/EPER CPs in Latin America. In two of the country programmes, Brazil and Honduras, initiatives to strengthen rural communities' access to these markets have been developed. These experiences displayed significant results in 2016 with some important lessons learnt.

### **Brazil: Cooperativa Grande Sertão**

The Food Purchase Programme (PAA), established during the PT governments of former president Lula, has been nearly withdrawn by the new government after the political coup in May 2016.

Despite of the negative economic impacts for a lot of farmer organisations and their cooperatives due to this situation, some of the HEKS/EPER programme partners, such as the Cooperativa Grande Sertão (CGS), were able to strengthen their performance by increasing access to other existing IM modalities, i.e. the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE). The data gained during the evaluation of CGS's project, as well as the annual report of the CP, confirm that CGS was able to significantly increase the sale of its products to PNAE by more than 300%, to almost CHF 70'000, in the first six months of 2016 compared with the same period in 2015.

### **Honduras: ADEPES/APRAL pilot experiments**

HEKS/EPER partner organizations ADEPES and the peasant cooperative APRAL have been supported by the two Brazilian partners CAA and CGS, through thematic exchanges and technical consultancy, in their efforts to set up first experiments in fruit value chain development in combination with IM initiatives. The results of the project evaluation as well as the figures of APRAL's commercial performance for 2016 showed interesting results, both economically and politically. Inspired by the results of the pilot experiments in the municipality of Pespire, ADEPES and APRAL successfully negotiated with three other local governments in the south of Honduras to join the IM initiative and enhance the quality of school meals by introducing food produced by local farmers.

Successful and innovative programmes such as Public Food Purchase Programmes (PAA) can easily be withdrawn when governments change if they are not anchored by law or other public policies, such as the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) in Brazil. Thus, strengthening organisational development, and enhancing the networking capacities and technical skills of farmer cooperatives are crucial elements to better prepare them to carry out effective advocacy work and develop more diversified market strategies.

## **Bangladesh – access to markets for Dalit and Adivasi**

HEKS/EPER Bangladesh programme, with four different partners, adopts a systemic market development approach in the selected sub-sectors of bull fattening and native chicken breeding, especially linked to the marginalised Dalit and Adivasi groups. The interventions include the establishment of producer groups; the improvement of production through access to knowledge, inputs and services; establishing linkages to market players through rural sales and service centres; and facilitating access to finance in the form of microcredits, including livestock insurance. Since 2015, the people who could sell products to mainstream society substantially increased, the people have better access to credit and insurance facilities and most people now say that they are participating in a reliable and profitable market. At the end of 2016, about 77% of the covered beneficiaries report a moderate increase of income and about 7% a massive increase of income.

## **Georgia – fair trade and organic hazelnut value chain development**

The fair trade and organic hazelnut project in Georgia with the goal to increase income and improve the living conditions of the smallholder farmer families made substantial progress in 2016. For the first time in Georgia, organic (43 tons) and UTZ-certified (268 tons) hazelnuts were able to be exported through ANKA Fairtrade.

In addition, an impact assessment survey conducted in summer 2016 showed a number of additional positive trends:

Topics	Project participants	Non-participants
Average hazelnut harvest per hectare (kg/ha)	1'109	1'037
Percentage of good quality hazelnut yield compared to overall yield	16.52%	0.11%
Improvement in hazelnut harvest is the reason for changes in my livelihoods	32%	8%
Percentage of respondents whose income from selling hazelnuts increased	41.23%	22.03%
Farmers reporting improved availability of inputs as a main reason for changes in cultivation area, harvest and yield during the previous year	23%	8%
Farmers reporting improved availability of machinery as a main reason for changes in their cultivation area, harvest and yield during past year	20%	4%
Farmers reporting improved application of relevant agricultural practices as a main reason for changes of their cultivation area, harvest and yield during the past year	34%	14%
Farmers converting to organic production	42%	-
Farmers intending to convert to organic production	54%	n/a

**Figure 6: An impact assessment in 2016 compared the hazelnut production and the economic situation of project participants with farmers not involved in the HEKS/EPER project. Quality, harvest, income are significantly higher among project participants.**



**Organic hazelnut production in Georgia.**

## 4.3 Overcoming violence

### OBJECTIVE 3.1

#### Strengthened social cohesion between different interest and identity groups

HEKS/EPER experiences in 2016 confirmed the need to counter power-holders trying to deliberately fragment societies. They create and/or highlight differences between communities and group to create the image of them being enemies. In this way, they instrumentalise certain groups towards its own vested interests.

The four-day war in Nagorno-Karabakh in April 2016 is a frightening example on how social media accelerates the potential of stereotyping and mutual hatred. Similarly, in South Sudan, ethnic instrumentalisation has caused the proliferation of war into those parts of the country which had been relatively calm until recently. As such, HEKS/EPER is investing in long-term endeavours which enhance the capacity to practise tolerance by reflecting on one's own identity, the other and existing stereotypes.

#### Vision of peace in the South Caucasus

As the country programme evaluation conducted 2016 showed, endeavours started in 2013 defining a vision of peace in the South Caucasus and a corresponding 'theory of change' on how to get there are showing results. Cooperation between different partners and like-minded organisations increased based on a common understanding and a joint vision. Synergies are better exploited and tasks are shared, for example an organisation using the resources another organisation developed for capacity building or in strengthening outreach and impact in joint advocacy for peace.

One of the major challenges was to involve 'real' Abkhaz partners in HEKS/EPER peace projects instead of Mingrelian minorities from Abkhaz only. Here, the readiness to jointly work in a project striving for democratic values of our existing HEKS/EPER partners and new Abkhaz partners is a great achievement in itself. However, this does not mean that partners already share these same visions for peace and a joint future. Whereas partners from the Abkhaz side still dream of wider recognition of their independence and a young nation, the Georgian side still emphasises belonging together.

The Youth for Peace project which addresses Azeri, Armenian, Georgian and Abkhaz young people aims at countering dominant militaristic messages and hate speech in favour of tolerance between the different ethnic groups in the Southern Caucasus and non-violent conflict transformation. The project, which was founded a decade ago, has grown from a holiday camp for vulnerable groups to a



Youth for peace – Azeri, Armenians, Abkhaz and Georgians learn from each other.

qualified peace initiative. It has been successful in breaking stereotypes and changing attitudes at the individual level and countering the current trend of increased separation between the South Caucasian societies. The project took efforts to include more critical segments of society instead of preaching only to the converted. For example, a young man who had just completed his military service and lost his best friend during the war was included last April, although he was hesitant initially. Very insecure about how he would manage direct contact with Azeri youths – the hated enemy – he became convinced that 'Azeri's also do not want to kill others and that it is possible to maintain good relationships among the different groups'. Young people have started to own the peace agenda and become creative in it. Numerous follow-up activities have been organised by the young people themselves, such as exhibitions, mini camps, flash mobs and discussion groups. Teachers and parents of camp participants observed the positive changes the attendees have gone through after participating in the peace camp, such as increased self-

confidence, motivation to study, knowledge about and tolerance towards other ethnic groups, as well as engagement against hate speech.

Successful efforts to enhance the outreach in order to achieve results beyond the individual level have been highly visible. Teachers, for example, started to support their pupil's efforts in spreading messages on mutual tolerance and non-violence by protecting them from being silenced by the mainstream discourse, which often sees war as the only solution to the conflict. Project staff and target groups (such as schoolteachers and camp participants) became active in order to mitigate the upcoming hatred against Azeri after the four-day war in April.

Since 2013, the project has become very active on social media. Each week, there are an average of 20 posts on the Youth for Peace Facebook page, 1'951 likes and between 1'000 and 2'127 visits a week. Interaction with posts is a sign for continued exchange between camp leaders, participants and friends.

The Armenian round table which launched a conflict transformation course at Yerevan University enhanced young people's abilities to be more self-reflective and tolerant towards outside groups. The young people stated that they had learned to better cope with their own emotions and prejudices when encountering outside groups.

Round table discussions which included experts and opinion leaders have led to increased cooperation among peace activists. For example, the Regional Network for Peace and Reintegration organised discussion forums and provided a platform to introduce the Berghof Foundation's Dealing with the Past project initiatives and thus created a starting point to integrate important new approaches towards peace building. In addition, other peace organisations have used materials developed by Youth for Peace partners. In Georgia, the Youth for Peace project has been able to win over popular opinion leaders such as musicians to convey peace messages created by camp participants.

However, a number of challenges remain: a key obstacle is that since 2014, direct exchanges with Azeri from Azerbaijan in the framework of the peace project have ceased. Furthermore, although the collaboration between the different partners has been motivating, attitude and behavioural change towards outside groups and effectiveness in increasing outreach have been excellent, the core of the peace message remains a great challenge. It has been difficult to convey non-biased information on the conflict beyond individual experiences and impossible to discuss facts about the conflict. Furthermore, with Armenia in control of the disputed region and surrounding occupied territory, it is in a convenient position to be interested in maintaining the status quo and thus can easily claim to be non-aggressive, open to peace and non-violence. If peace messages neglect the readiness to adhere to human rights principles, such as the right of return, but stress historical territorial claims instead, there is a major risk that the movement will be exploited by a nationalist agenda which does not bring the countries any closer to peace.<sup>21</sup>

### **Conclusions for the way forward**

Although the projects have been satisfying in increasing their outreach, the content of the peace message and vision is still vague. In order to enhance critical self-reflection and avoid being caught up in one's own biases, a conflict transformation strategy which provides space to explore and acknowledge different positions, needs and interests, seeking solutions based on human rights principles, would be crucial. Otherwise the project could even run the risk of being distorted by the current jingoist forces. Literature research as well as the interviews carried out show how deeply engrained societal narratives, linked to violence and the suffering of its own people in the past, are governing the mainstream discourse and thus make conflicting goals incompatible. An approach which enhances healing and reconciliation by dealing with the past is key in order to promote mutual recognition and forgiveness at collective level and a precondition for a meaningful vision for peace.

Furthermore, staff and partners should develop better preparedness against conflict escalation. Scenario planning should be the basis for developing plans to enhance meaningful reactions at times of escalation of violence and war. This should include security plans for partners and civil society members / human-rights defenders at risk (e.g. urgent appeals, legal aid, readily available funds for food and shelter), as well as measures to counter systematic disinformation, paralysis and escalation of rumours.

---

<sup>21</sup> South Caucasus 2016 country programme evaluation.

## OBJECTIVE 3.2

### More people engage actively for peace and equal rights

HEKS/EPER acts on the assumption that attitudes and core values of non-violence and social justice – not only of selected rights-holders and duty-bearers, but of the populace – are a fundamental basis for more people to actively engage for equal rights and peace. Therefore, HEKS/EPER fostered peace education measures that increased people's knowledge of how to cope with conflict constructively, preventing social conflicts from becoming violent and to reflect different values. For example the Youth for Peace in the **South Caucasus** project resulted in 2016 in a decline of aggression among the young people participating, less thinking according to stereotypes as well as an increase in activities to promote equal rights and tolerance. Another promising approach applied in the South Caucasus programme, to reach more people and to enhance engagement, especially among young people, is the use of social media and innovative communication methods such as flash-mobs and TV spots with testimonials (see also [Objective 3.1](#)).

In **Cambodia**, selected people in local communities trained by a HEKS/EPER partner organisation in peace-building skills have subsequently conducted awareness workshops on peace building with other community members in their own village. These locally led initiatives were reported to reduce domestic violence and to promote a constructive conflict culture to enhance mutual respect, non-discrimination and non-violence. In addition, media volunteers at Cambodian Community Development Learning Centres (CDLC) were assisted in producing radio programmes on peace building and community dialogue sessions, and in this way reached a wider audience.

In October 2016, when the Colombian people rejected the peace deal that the Colombian government had reached with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the importance of involving the wider public in peace-building endeavours was underlined once more. As such in **Colombia**, HEKS/EPER supports not only peace-building processes on track 1 and 2 involving official, high-level conflict parties as well as influential leaders and civil society actors, but also activities at grassroots level with people in communities. The final revised and approved peace agreement comes with momentous opportunities but also challenges for the HEKS/EPER peace interventions in Colombia.

Using these windows of opportunity in ongoing peace processes like in Colombia, HEKS/EPER is also aware that the promotion of a culture of respect and non-violence, changing mindsets and behaviours are long-term processes. For example, experiences in the Roma programme in 2016 showed once again that the **empowerment and mobilisation of the Roma communities** is more time-consuming than expected. Questions around values, identity and positive self-images were in the past only partly addressed in some projects. These processes require additional efforts and engagement by HEKS/EPER and its partner organisation within the Roma programme in the coming years.

## OBJECTIVE 3.3

### Reduced emergence and escalation of violent conflict

HEKS/EPER's approach is based on the conviction that increased economic and social inclusion reduces the emergence and escalation of violence. This has been visible among other experiences in HEKS/EPER projects addressing Dalit and Adivasi communities in Bangladesh during the first project phases. However, since the context has changed ever since and political violence in general has increased, those results are no longer traceable. Currently HEKS/EPER is putting new energies into linking partners to jointly monitor and combat violence against vulnerable population groups. In Bangladesh, the network of partners has been strengthened with a new setup in the north-west. All partners focus on Dalit and Adivasi and thus can set strategic priorities adapted to the particular needs in this area (e.g. access to land). This allows the demands from the community to be brought from the local level to the regional, and eventually the national level.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, a new conflict transformation project started in 2016. In the framework of this project, HEKS/EPER supports local and ethnically mixed peace networks that maintain rapid alert systems to monitor and react



Civilians in Congo DR are exposed to violence by different armed groups.

in case of human rights violations. In the districts of Rutshuru and Lubero, in North Kivu, where violence between ethnic groups like the Nande and Hutu again increased in 2016, these efforts are a necessity to protect the civilian population in the villages and to reduce the escalation of violent conflict. Despite major security incidents that entailed evacuations of some peace network members in certain villages, the HEKS/EPER partner network CRONGD (Conseil Régional des Organisations Non Gouvernementales de Développement) contributed to reducing the raising ethnic violence in Northern Kivu. To this end, CRONGD cooperated closely with the provincial government and local leaders of the Nande and Hutu to engage in dialogue and to reduce tensions.

#### 4.4 Strengthen civil society

##### OBJECTIVE 4.1

##### Enhanced space for social and political actions of civil society (enabling environment)



**Palestinian woman in Wadi Fuqim.**

As in the previous year, the topic of enhancing space for civic action in general and for our partners in particular has been at the centre of HEKS/EPER peace-building endeavours. Also, shrinking space has been identified as a challenge during the analysis of 2016 (see [Chapter 10.2.2](#)). Studies at country level carried out within broader consortia have been initiated by HEKS/EPER in Honduras as well as Israel/Palestine. The process of establishing broader consortia in order to better grasp and represent the diversity of civil society has proven difficult but valuable. Although HEKS/EPER and its cooperation partners took great efforts to include the differing views within civil society (in particular in regards to agreements or disagreements on national politics) into its analysis on 'existing spaces and ways forward', cooperation between those factions remained limited. The reasons are manifold, however it should be noted that first of all those critical of the government showed relatively little interest and readiness to collaborate and those civil society organisations which are instead seen as 'pro-government', as well as some moderate ones, ignored our invitations for joint assessments. The positive effect of the difficult process is that the analysis has helped to create readiness for future cooperation. The learning process brought deeply engrained mistrust between CSOs and the government to the fore and showed the need to reengage and carefully accept and test opportunities, such as a newly installed Human Rights Commission. Furthermore, it became clear that it is key to protect human rights processes as a whole instead of human rights defenders as

individuals only. The results have been shared with the SDC office and a joint follow-up on recommendations has been planned.

The ‘Space for Gender-Inclusive Rights-Based Development in Zimbabwe’ project’ sought to enhance opportunities for partners and like-minded organisations with respect to rights-based development. The ACT Alliance tool kit on gender-inclusive rights-based programming has been tested and adopted to the Zimbabwean context through intense and long-term capacity building among partners and like-minded organisations. The approach, which explains human rights based on rights within the nuclear family and gender, has contributed to another understanding of human rights beyond political divisions and western domination. Duty-bearers understood that a rights-based approach does not necessarily mean being an opposition party. In 2016, the project increasingly targeted duty-bearers who are the key policymakers and potentially hinder or support the enjoyment of human rights. As a result duty-bearers from Mangwe, Gwanda and Bulilima have already invited civil society to participate in budget-making processes, while the Harare city council invited civil society to contribute to their publication on the ‘Right to Water’. In total, 397 duty-bearers were trained under the HRBA project. Duty-bearers have shown willingness to address issues of transparency and accountability, with the Matobo RDC identifying corruption as a threat to development in the district. They committed to putting in place mechanisms to address these challenges.

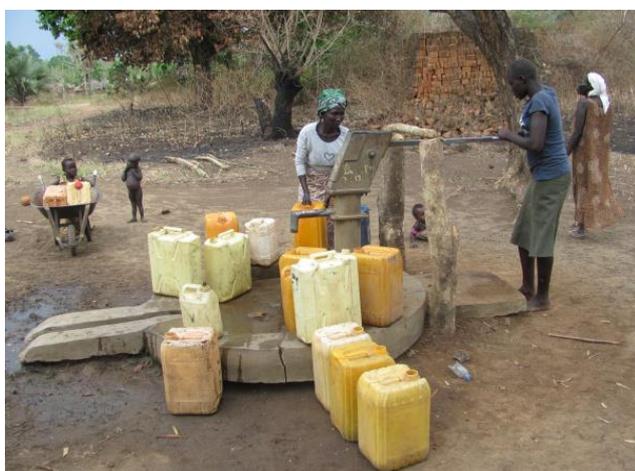
Furthermore, HEKS/EPER, in cooperating with the NGO platform, has been engaged in a joint learning process with SDC (see also [Chapter 8.6](#) and [Chapter 10.2.2](#)). HEKS/EPER is leading the Honduras civil society study and was one of the key organisers of a successful learning event with UN Special Rapporteur Maina Kiai. In the course of a joint learning process, SDC and the Swiss NGO platform explored ways for INGOs and donor agencies to do better to protect, promote and expand the space for civil society in developing countries (see documentation). HEKS/EPER facilitated and organised, in collaboration with Bread for the World, a workshop at the CSO Forum at the Global Partnership for Development Effectiveness HLM2 in Nairobi and provided feedback to the negotiation team regarding its outcome document. In collaboration with ACT Alliance, HEKS/EPER established a process to study space for CSOs in Israel and Palestine and capitalised on coping mechanisms and means to protect space as well as advocacy strategies – which are however somewhat stuck due to the difficult context.

A very practical example at country level for enhancing space is the ‘Space for Rights-Based Development’ project in Zimbabwe. The experiences show successfully taken opportunities in extremely restrictive contexts (see also above).

The joint learning process and the joint engagement in the HLM2 in Nairobi has been the starting point for a continued joint learning process, in which the quality in terms of the involvement of CSOs in multi-stakeholder dialogue will be jointly explored and measured. The results are planned to be part of the next monitoring round on GPDEC Indicator 2.

#### **OBJECTIVE 4.2**

**Communities create their own solutions to withstand current and future shocks and adapt to changes that are difficult to predict (DRR)**



**Well in Yei, South Sudan.**

The achievements in resilience building are reported in [Chapter 7.4](#).

## 4.5 Key data and progress assessment of development cooperation

Countries with a CP	Key data 2016 – development cooperation								
	0) No. of individual direct beneficiaries	1) No. of individuals who perceive their income to have increased (production, jobs, market prices, etc.)	2) No. of individuals how perceive their yields to have increased (production, improved infrastructure, access to land, etc.)	3) No. of individuals whose access to public services was facilitated (employment/self-employment, health services, education, infrastructure, etc.)	4) No. of individuals whose quality of life in a conflict situation has improved (higher security, stronger resilience or deeper understanding of root causes)	5) No. of individuals who perceive their livelihoods to have improved	6) No. of individuals whose access to water was facilitated through the project	7) No. of individuals whose access to land was facilitated (land titles, use of land, territorial securing of land access, etc.)	
								No. of individuals	No. of hectares
DR Congo	8'263	497	573	843	7'178	1'081	90	416	286
Ethiopia	48'404	2'080	1'092	3'216	0	3'639	17'508	0	0
Niger	372'530	2'375	1'004	19'395	0	718	8'354	41'386	1'401
Senegal	39'159	3'782	1'965	222	0	250	0	636	597
South Sudan	44'137	564	3'390	29'827	4'270	7'490	15'982	0	0
Zimbabwe	35'223	509	70	1'510	950	705	5'080	111	208
Bangladesh	29'876	3'782	2'656	4'378	5'930	18'854	4'341	533	6
Cambodia	36'819	2'418	5'895	0	118	0	4'609	0	0
India	72'490	8'681	6'750	31'250	11'168	11'530	1'730	6'037	4'574
Palestine/Israel	65'000	100	25	0	65'000	100	0	25'000	0
Brazil	54'961	2'759	4'884	3'420	18'898	3'993	4'080	3'959	8'719
Columbia	2'664	944	1'248	60	33'313	2'178	844	0	0
Haiti	30'000	0	0	24'200	0	0	0	0	0
Honduras	20'514	613	988	956	5'206	1'092	1'611	1'500	0
Moldova	13'128	4'081	3'633	8'991	0	0	0	0	0
South Caucasus	40'743	28'069	28'057	942	15'000	0	0	0	0
Kosovo	6'490	63	0	5'574	237	526	90	0	0
Romania	8'806	40	0	3'516	5'000	250	0	0	0
Serbia	5'854	178	0	1'107	2'414	0	2'156	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>935'061</b>	<b>61'535</b>	<b>62'230</b>	<b>139'407</b>	<b>174'682</b>	<b>52'406</b>	<b>66'475</b>	<b>79'578</b>	<b>15'791</b>

Figure 7: Key data 2016 of development cooperation activities of HEKS/EPER in 19 programmes

### Internal progress assessment

In an exercise during the annual reporting process, programme staff at HHQ qualitatively assessed (internal questionnaire) the 2016 trends in achieving its objectives according to the results framework of all three sections. In DevCo, progress in reaching the objectives was identified in eight out of nine objectives, with most success in access to land, access to resources (water) and services, sustainable production, social cohesion and enabling environment. Compared to the previous year, the two objectives of conflict transformation (cohesion and EE) were added to those successfully achieved.

Since 2009, land projects have led to **improved access to land** for 500'000 individuals, with almost 80'000 in 2016 (see figure 7). In nine countries, clear progress was identified. In four (South Sudan, Palestine/Israel, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia) it was difficult to achieve the objectives due to the difficult context with either shrinking space or civil war.

**Resilience** was rated as successful because, also in 2016, HEKS/EPER invested in capacity-building to mainstream the topic in country programmes and projects.

Only the objective of **reduced emergence of violence** was rated as not progressing, with a score even lower than in 2015. This was mainly because of deteriorating security and armed conflicts in the same countries, in which working towards the objective access to land became more difficult. However, progress in enhancing an **enabling environment** was higher than in the previous year.

The access to land and access to markets objective was assessed throughout all programmes and appears to be well integrated into HEKS/EPER's work. A large majority rated the objective as being broadly achieved and there was a small amount of progress. Many of our projects in this area started out as production increase projects and now also incorporate marketing components. While this movement in itself is laudable, we will in the future strive to not only provide access to markets but also facilitate an inclusive and efficient market system.

**Inclusive, efficient market system:** 15, up from 8 countries, did work in this field in 2016. This is remarkable progress by country offices and partners, with their projects being explicitly inclusive and efficient market systems. As it is still a relatively new area for HEKS/EPER, projects in this domain are now tangible. Capacity-building and strategic decisions helped to design more pertinent interventions.



With a diapraxis approach, HEKS/EPER partners were able to foster social and economic inclusion of Adivasi in Bangladesh. Social acceptance and income increased.

## 5 Progress in humanitarian aid

In 2016, HEKS/EPER interventions in humanitarian aid were implemented in 12 different countries: the Philippines, Pakistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Serbia, Zimbabwe, Ukraine, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and even in Italy. Although the types of interventions are still in the four defined key areas of HEKS/EPER humanitarian strategy – saving lives, rehabilitation and livelihoods, rehabilitation of private and public infrastructure and increasing resilience – there is a large increase in the number of interventions in countries. More humanitarian aid interventions are carried out in countries that primarily have a development focus like Cambodia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Serbia and Zimbabwe. In these countries, where the risks of natural disasters are high, development programmes have to include disaster risk reduction components to increase community resilience. This is for example the case in Zimbabwe, affected by El Niño, where new agricultural technologies and drought-resistant seeds were promoted.

The second focus of HEKS/EPER humanitarian aid interventions has been in the Middle East in response to the Syrian crisis and the huge population displacements in the region. Following the Mosul crisis, HEKS/EPER started WASH projects in the Dohuk region, in IDP camps. In Lebanon and Turkey, cash-based programs continue to provide life-saving income for refugees from Syria. Inclusion of the different host communities reflects HEKS/EPER's continued commitment to promoting social inclusion and cohesion through its projects. More has to be done in this area and this will be one of the main topics in 2017, coupled with conflict transformation interventions and keeping in mind conflict sensitivity as a cross-cutting issue (see also pattern 1 in [Chapter 10.2.1](#)).

### 5.1 Life-saving

#### OBJECTIVE 1: LIFE-SAVING RESOURCES/SERVICES

##### Access to water, food, emergency shelter, hygiene and sanitation

Also in 2016, HEKS/EPER, thanks to strong and professional partners, was able to successfully provide life-saving services to people affected by natural disasters and conflict. Provision of humanitarian aid through direct **cash assistance** has played an increasing role in HEKS/EPER's response mechanism. HEKS/EPER has applied the cash assistance approach in Lebanon, Turkey, Haiti and partially in Iraq. Cash assistance is considered a more dignified and effective approach, giving beneficiaries the freedom to utilise the cash assistance according to their personal priority needs (e.g. rent, food, medicine, non-food items). This was possible through strong partners in these countries and strong financial control mechanisms which HEKS/EPER has developed and put in place recent years.

In Iraq and Ukraine, HEKS/EPER complemented this approach through the provision of **WASH services, winterisation, shelter and food kits** because not all the needs could be covered through a cash approach due to security constraints and accessibility to markets and resources. Unfortunately, due to the volatile situation in Ukraine, these objectives could not be met since security constraints inhibited access to the affected population.



Cleaning for cash in the Shatila camp, Lebanon.

Since the Syrian and Iraqi crises have become protracted crises with no end in sight, a gradual shift from unconditional cash to cash-for-work has taken place in projects in Lebanon and Iraq where beneficiaries are compensated for work done which benefits both the host and refugee/IDP communities. This was especially relevant since it aimed at contributing towards more **conflict sensitivity** in these contexts. This shift towards cash-for-work as well as a stronger focus on conflict sensitivity was also the result of findings of a cash evaluation which

HEKS/EPER commissioned in 2016, which emphasised that more needed to be done to bring host and refugee/IDP communities together. **Cash-for-work** is becoming a preferred modality by beneficiaries in protracted crises since they do not want to be recipients of charity, therefore employment is becoming a priority need of beneficiaries in these contexts. A promising practice has been the cash-for-work in the Shatila and Borj el Borajne camps in Beirut, Lebanon, where Syrian refugees have contributed towards improving the environmental health conditions in the camps through daily cleaning activities.

The drought in Zimbabwe in contrast needed a completely different approach since the drought had affected the availability of food items on the market and the distribution of cash was legally not accepted, hence **food kits** were distributed.

The main constraints which HEKS/EPER faced in the provision of humanitarian assistance were **volatile security situations and political instability** (Ukraine, Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon), accessibility to affected populations (Haiti) and legal restrictions in host countries with respect to refugees (Turkey and Lebanon). Not having a permanent presence in the country, as well as volatile security situation like in Ukraine and Turkey, are the biggest limiting factors for HEKS/EPER's ability to steer the quality of its projects.

In 2016, HEKS/EPER was also able to respond to the refugee migration crisis where over a million refugees migrated from war-torn countries such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan to seek refuge in Europe. With their strong local Serbian partner EHO, over 42'000 refugees who were transiting through Serbia were assisted with food, drinking water, hygiene items and the rehabilitation of two reception centres.

An innovative approach undermining the efforts of human traffickers was the **humanitarian corridor** where HEKS/EPER supported a project which helps Syrian refugees in Lebanon legally attain humanitarian visas to travel and apply asylum in Italy. Here, HEKS/EPER's partners in Italy provide for travel to Italy and accommodation for selected refugees until their asylum process has been completed.



**Humanitarian corridor – legal migration of refugees to Italy, supported by HEKS/EPER's partner, Waldensian Church.**

Based on the experiences from 2016, HEKS/EPER will put **stronger emphasis on social cohesion** in all its interventions and for protracted crises will look into longer-term and more sustainable solutions for the populations being assisted. In many contexts HEKS/EPER has been able to observe reoccurring patterns over the years (e.g. Cambodia, Ethiopia) between droughts and floods. Preparedness should play a more vital role in these contexts and stronger linkages between humanitarian aid and development cooperation established in the coming years.

## 5.2 Livelihood

### OBJECTIVE 2: LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

#### Rehabilitated agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods

Livelihoods of population affected by natural disasters or conflicts are massively changed or transformed entirely. Formerly viable livelihoods become no longer reliable or feasible. In the immediate aftermath, during the relief phase, livelihood 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, 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 migration for work.

To enable household to avoid the vicious cycle of transformed/damaged livelihoods and negative coping mechanisms, throughout 2016 HEKS/EPER continued to support disaster-affected populations as soon as possible in restoring/adapting their livelihoods. In countries where HEKS/EPER operates country offices, the linkage between humanitarian and development livelihood interventions has been strengthened. HEKS/EPER reached over 36'000 individuals in 2016 with humanitarian aid livelihood interventions focusing on:

- Rehabilitation, strengthening and diversification of livelihoods (Philippines, Zimbabwe and Haiti).
- Cash-for-work programmes (Iraq, Haiti, Lebanon and Haiti).
- Cash-based support for refugees (Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon).

### 5.3 Infrastructure

#### OBJECTIVE 3: PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

##### Reconstructed housing, schools, evacuation centres and WASH infrastructure

Restoring 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. The HEKS/EPER rehabilitation of water systems and hygiene facilities in **Pakistan** has been an achievement in this regard. About 500 pumps in combination with new deep wells provide safe water for about 280 villages in the Indus river valley in Sindh province. In total, 105'000 individuals have benefitted from this measure. HEKS/EPER has contributed significantly to improving the quality of life of the partner communities and capacity building in hygiene and water usage will strengthen the resilience.

Linking relief and development can rely on the creation of new infrastructure in the wake of a crisis as a tool to overcome it. In **Iraq**, HEKS/EPER supported the construction of three water dams for irrigation in the Suleymania area (Kurdistan region in Iraq). The dams are part of a rural livelihood programme for IDPs and host communities, aiming at improving agricultural production in vegetable production and horticulture.

The aspect of relief linked with development can also be observed in the **Philippines**, where three schools are under construction, which also act as emergency shelters in case of typhoons and floods.

In **Cambodia**, HEKS/EPER and its partners have provided rainwater-harvesting materials (water tanks and gutters) to 1'070 most affected households in Kampong Chhnang province. The households were able to use the water tanks for water storage during water distribution by government and also for rainwater harvesting in the rainy season.

#### Promising practice – building WASH infrastructure and making it sustainable through strengthening the communities

The **Sindh/Pakistan WASH project** was able to combine the creation of infrastructure, backstopped and quality controlled by an international WASH expert, with a high degree of ownership by local communities and administrative support from local authorities. The latter appreciate the creation of new and good quality WASH infrastructure after the Indus floods. Training of WASH committees and WASH monitors safeguards the sustainability of the project.

**Project support by HEKS/EPER:** An international WASH expert has been deployed as a close escort, regularly backstopping infrastructure works, checking on quality and suggesting operational modifications (e.g. drilling deep boreholes for clean water supply).

**Effective partnership:** Norwegian Church Aid, the local partner RDF and HEKS/EPER were able to establish a dynamic, fruitful partnership and efficient cooperation procedures in the field.

**Ownership:** Community WASH committees and individual families have safeguarded and supported the successful implementation of works and training and the commitment of community WASH committees contribute to the sustainable operational management of the new WASH systems. Communities have created collective saving funds to provide financial resources in case of repair and maintenance needs in the future.

In **Haiti**, after Hurricane Matthew in June 2016, families could to some extent repair their housing with cash-for-work income and three schools are being repaired. Together with a road repair programme, these actions affected 20,000 individuals.

In south-west **Ukraine**, a heavy hailstorm destroyed 7,000 houses in 37 villages. HEKS/EPER contributed to rebuilding 210 roofs for disadvantaged families.

In **Serbia**, refugees have appropriate temporary shelter at reception centres for refugees. The

three consecutive refugee projects supported state efforts in increasing the number of shelter places for refugees in Serbia. Interventions included contributions to infrastructure (small renovations, upgrading of sanitary facilities, as well as contribution to the maintenance of the centres until the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration was able to take over (laundry services, repairs). Roma and other vulnerable families affected by flooding have rehabilitated and improved their housing conditions, including individual sanitation facilities.



**Rebuilding agricultural production, roads and houses after Hurricane Matthew heavily struck the HEKS/EPER project region in Haiti.**

### Learning for steering

- To make an infrastructure project a success story, it is key to persuade authorities to not only accept a project, but that they will be part of the long-term usage and maintenance of a piece of infrastructure.
- Infrastructure done well means including local communities, strengthening their ownership of not only the ‘infrastructure and its long-term maintenance’, but enabling them to articulate their needs, to negotiate with the respective authorities to make them accountable and to create a more enabling environment so they can actively participate in their society and country.
- Close support from an external expert (e.g. WASH expert in Pakistan) has proven very effective. The expert’s deployment was for 60% of the implementation period with frequent longer-term field visits. The expert not only supported the drilling of boreholes and construction but also quality control and construction improvements to increase durability and usage value of bath units, latrines, water points, etc. Moreover, the expert looked after on-time delivery of goods and works carried out, helped with his technical problem-solving skills, and established good and stable ties with community decision makers, villagers and families who benefitted from the intervention.

## 5.4 Preparedness and prevention

### OBJECTIVE 4: INCREASED RESILIENCE

#### Increased preparedness and positive coping mechanisms

Working in highly disaster-prone countries like Haiti, Pakistan or the Philippines, HEKS/EPER continues to include preparedness and prevention activities in most of its interventions.

Preparedness and prevention activities are always carried out hand-in-hand with the communities and the local and national authorities. This is the case for example in Haiti where after Hurricane Matthew, thanks

to *cash-for-work activities*, 12 km of roads have been rehabilitated, springs protected and schools repaired. Schools are now resilient enough to resist hurricanes and earthquakes.

In Pakistan, in the Sindh region which is affected by recurring floods, a vast water and sanitation programme includes resilience and preparedness thanks to raised platforms for LBHU, pumps and water tanks. Local disaster preparedness committees have been trained in disaster risk mapping.

In the Philippines, in the post-Haiyan reconstruction projects, HEKS/EPER successfully included a full range of preparedness and prevention activities: 29'600 community members are now informed about early warning systems and communal evacuation procedures. A total of 17 disaster risk reduction committees have been trained and have received equipment to be able to carry out rescue and relief activities. In addition, 2'370 beneficiaries have been mobilised for re-forestation.

Country offices and HEKS/EPER partners that are implementing development projects in disaster-prone countries are being trained in the specifics of humanitarian aid programming. The training focuses on the humanitarian aid standards, new instruments for emergency projects such as cash-based interventions, the functioning of the UN cluster system, logistic and administrative procedures, etc. A contingency plan is developed for at-risk countries and is then updated according to the changing situation.

### **Promising practice –population preparedness in the Philippines**

The resilience of 17 communities was increased at the following levels:

- **Structure:** HEKS/EPER has assessed the existing DRR structures in the communities and has supported clarification of roles and tasks before, during and after a disaster. Additionally the process to develop DRR community plans was supported.
- **Knowledge:** All members of the DRR committees were trained in their tasks. Furthermore, awareness and knowledge of the community was increased through radio broadcasts and campaigns.
- **Practice on the ground:** To test theoretical resilience knowledge, simulation exercises were carried out. DRR committee members, together with fire brigade, police and other community members, participated in simulation exercises to check whether the theoretical knowledge could be put into practice and how different agencies work together. During the feedback round at the end of the simulation, gaps were identified and recommendations for improvements given.
- **Mitigation:** Mangrove reforestation on communal ground and fruit tree planting on communal and private land was carried out together with community members. To ensure sufficient quality and quantity of mangrove seedlings, a mangrove nursery and planters association was founded.

In some of the targeted communities, influences of the mitigation activities on livelihood options were noted: the newly established mangrove nursery and planters association created additional income for association members through this new livelihood option. Additionally, community members in one of the rehabilitated mangrove areas noted that after rehabilitation, the abundance of crabs, shrimps and fish increased in the area, augmenting the daily catch and therefore the income of the community members.

In general, a high percentage of community members and especially the DRR focal points improved their understanding of local hazards, existing early warning systems, evacuation routes and safe evacuation spaces and therefore were better prepared for typhoons and tropical depressions.

## **5.5 Key data and progress summary for humanitarian aid**

The table below depicts the key data for humanitarian interventions in 2016. Most people were reached via distributions, even though the amount and the duration of each activity in this domain varies greatly. The support in Lebanon with 9'510 individuals receiving cash supply and other distributions throughout the year has a longer and bigger impact than the distribution of some food, water and health items for 42'000 people in Serbian transitions centres with support for individuals lasting only some days or weeks.

A total of 140'000 people – mainly in Pakistan and the Philippines – received training and tools which decreased the impacts of disasters and strengthened their response capacity to disasters. A more

systematic linkage between DevCo and HA could even increase resilience in coming years – especially if properly included in DevCo projects.

Countries	Key data 2016 – HEKS/EPER humanitarian aid			
	Life saving Distributions of food, water and non-food items, cash/vouchers, CfW, etc.  No. of individuals	Livelihood Agronomical support, micro business, irrigation, business development, economic development, credit schemes, etc. No. of individuals	Reconstruction WASH (infrastructure and hygiene), shelter, housing, schools, roads, etc.  No. of individuals	Prevention & preparedness Strengthening resilience, disaster preparedness  No. of individuals
<b>Cambodia</b>	5'350	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Iraq</b>	63'300	1'395	75	75
<b>Lebanon</b>	9'510	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Pakistan</b>	n/a	n/a	105'000	105'000
<b>Philippines</b>	n/a	17'665	602	33'316
<b>Turkey</b>	2'125	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Haiti</b>	12'500	16'000	20'000	n/a
<b>Italy</b>	50	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Serbia</b>	42'000	n/a	9'748	1'500
<b>Ukraine</b>	1'406	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Ethiopia</b>	14'160	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	5'537	1'000	n/a	n/a
<b>total</b>	<b>155'938</b>	<b>36'060</b>	<b>135'425</b>	<b>139'891</b>

Figure 8: Key data for humanitarian aid activities of HEKS/EPER in 12 countries.



HEKS/EPER supports IDPs in northern Iraq with various livelihood activities, as well as enabling access to water.

## 6 Progress in church cooperation

In 2016 HEKS/EPER's church cooperation (CC) was able to constantly develop its programme. The most important step was made with the start of projects with new church partners in **Syria and Lebanon**. Programmes in the Middle East in the framework of CC are a result of the exploratory visit in 2015 with the conclusion that in a pilot phase experiences would be collected until end of 2017, and whether and with which partners CC will expand to the Middle East. Since March 2016, HEKS/EPER has been supporting afternoon classes in Beirut, mostly for refugee children and activities for children and young people in 12 local church communities in different areas in Syria. The first experiences of cooperation with the new partners are very good initial project results are encouraging (see [Chapter 6.3](#)).

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 minorities through projects providing home care, fostering inclusion of Roma or refugees, supporting the handicapped or projects protecting and counselling victims of domestic violence. Activities in Transcarpathia, **Ukraine**, have been increased in the area of home care and assistance for the handicapped. For the first time in 2016 a PCM workshop was organised for CC partners in Cluj. This is an important step to strengthen the organisational capacities of partner churches and their organisation as well as to make greater use of the instruments of development cooperation in CC too, enabling planning and monitoring with the capacity of adapting projects to a volatile context.

### 6.1 Partnerships and dialogue

#### **OBJECTIVE 1: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PROTESTANT PARISHES AND INSTITUTIONS IN SWITZERLAND AND ABROAD ARE PROMOTED**

In 2016, CC has been accompanying 25 partnerships between parishes and institutions in Switzerland and Eastern Europe. One new partnership (Romania) was started in 2016.

In 2016, several exchange initiatives were supported by CC, as were a trip with a small group of young people to Transcarpathia, joint training of Swiss and Hungarian-Romanian pastors in Transylvania and different trips of partner congregations, which were mostly organised independently.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2: PARTNER CHURCHES RESPECT AND HAVE OPEN-MINDED SELF-CRITICAL DIALOGUE WITH DIFFERENT CONFESSIONS AND BELIEFS**

Mainly through our training programmes, CC can influence the attitude of partner churches. In Romania, the training programme for pastors developed very well. The mainly practically orientated training was attended by 250 participants. As in previous years, HEKS/EPER supported a seminar for female pastors with participants from Hungary, Slovakia, Transcarpathia/Ukraine and Transylvania/Romania, as well as a retreat for pastor's wives in Transylvania.

A second instrument to facilitate critical dialogue is projects to include vulnerable people or minorities such as Roma, refugees or victims of domestic violence. The reformed church of Hungary (RCH) confirmed that once again the commitment of HEKS/EPER towards Roma was an important leverage to strengthen RCH members' approach towards Roma. In Romania, projects for victims of domestic violence focus their awareness activities deliberately on church groups as well.

### 6.2 Social inclusion

#### **OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVED SOCIAL INCLUSION OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE (ELDERLY, HANDICAPPED) AND MINORITY GROUPS (ROMA AND REFUGEES)**

Refugees and migrants remained one of the main topics in church cooperation (CC) countries in 2016. Although in numbers there are only very few refugees compared to Western European countries, the governments and the majority of the population are very critical, accompanied by a strong rhetoric against

Islam and the danger of welcoming terrorists. Whilst the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (ECCB) emphasises the humanitarian imperative of Christians towards refugees and criticises their government, the leadership of the Reformed Church in Hungary (RCH) and the surrounding countries with Hungarian minorities are cautious not to attack the position of the Hungarian government.

In the **Czech Republic** a project of the ECCB Diaconia focuses on migrant workers, mostly coming from Bulgaria and Romania, who are in danger of being exploited or trafficked. In 2016, the project moved to a new shelter which provides more places for emergency cases. Further steps were made to extend activities to the eastern part of the Czech Republic. A new team will be based there in 2017, possibly in Brno.

In **Hungary** a new phase of the country programme was developed which will continue to focus on Roma inclusion. As a new area of intervention, a project to promote the integration of refugees and migrants in Hungary was developed in coordination with the Reformed Church in Hungary's Ministry for Refugees. The project will support congregations in Budapest to build up after-school support for young refugees and will raise awareness among the church community and wider public concerning the situation of refugees by enabling face-to-face contact and by including the issue in various training courses and events. Also, two new congregations started projects for Roma-children and young people, alongside the projects already existing in 13 congregations. Elsewhere, HEKS/EPER also supported in Hungary the inclusion of people with disabilities in 15 congregations and in the Berekfüdő church centre, where subsidised holidays for 815 people with disabilities were offered.



After-school classes for Roma in Hungary.

In **Slovakia**, two new congregations joined the Roma inclusion project, which now supports projects in a total of five congregations.

In Transcarpathia, **Ukraine**, the activities were expanded. It was important to make connections with new church-related organisations. With the support of Diaconia Romania, home care services were started in the Beregszasz region and the two recently established day-care centres for children and young people with disabilities under the roof of a single project. They are constantly developing and professionalising their service. HEKS/EPER continues to support the work of the Diaconal Centre in Beregszasz, where 280 disadvantaged people and four schools receive daily lunches, and 20 women with their 34 children can stay temporary in the crisis centre (women suffering from domestic violence, pregnant women with no family support).

In **Romania**, Diaconia continues to expand home care service in more than 170 localities in Transylvania. Home care services newly expanded into the Harghita region and established a new branch in Odorheiu. In four towns, job projects for people with disabilities are operating. In Oradea, the counselling office for victims of domestic violence developed its service and is expanding the network, whilst the women's shelter in Brasov continues its high-level work in welcoming victims of domestic violence and providing them medical, psychological and legal support.

The home care project in **Serbia** was officially certified by the government as one of the first NGOs, which allowed further expansion into two additional municipalities. EHO – Diaconia Home Care is now present in six municipalities in about 35 locations.

In **Italy**, the Centro Diaconale in Palermo, with the support of HEKS/EPER, started an integration centre for former prisoners. The five beneficiaries live in an apartment, do some volunteer work in the centre and are supported in establishing relationships with their families and finding a job. In addition to this project, the Centro Diaconale is involved in the inclusion of children with disabilities and migrants in school classes, refugees who are minors and women in crisis situations.

### 6.3 Community development

#### OBJECTIVE 4: CHURCH LIFE IS STRENGTHENED

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 Beirut (Lebanon), HEKS/EPER mostly supports refugee children in their school attainment through afternoon classes for elementary (40 students) and intermediate level (30 students). Furthermore, a rest home for the elderly was expanded to accommodate a further residents. This strengthens the economic base of this institution, by better use of the basic services and gives six new jobs to refugees.

In Syria, 12 congregations in different areas have project activities for children and young people, which are attended weekly by 1'400 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.



HEKS/EPER supports youth activities to maintain an active church life beyond conflict and war (left: after-school classes in Lebanon – right: youth project in Syria).

### Church life in Eastern Europe

Programmes for children and young people are also an important contribution to strengthening the church life in the **Czech Republic** and in **Transcarpathia (Ukraine)**. The youth and education department of the ECCB organised camps in 2016 for 950 people, also including children with disabilities. In Transcarpathia, HEKS/EPER contributed to youth camps for 1'950 members of the Reformed Church (RCT).

In the **Czech Republic** and **Romania**, HEKS/EPER supports the congregations of the partner churches to refurbish buildings – but only premises which strengthen church life and link the churches with the community – e.g. also using a church hall for open social or cultural events. In the Czech Republic, three ECCB-congregations were supported in improving their infrastructure, as were five congregations in Romania. The training programme for pastors in Romania, started in 2014, is still a success and gives important inputs for their work in the congregations.

The 13 projects in **Hungary** for Roma and other disadvantaged children and young people are also an important contribution to developing and strengthening church life – it has mobilised the church communities with many volunteers participating with various activities. In three congregations, new alternative/multicultural forms of religious services, attended by both Roma and non-Roma, were introduced.

### 6.4 Key figures and progress summary for church cooperation

In the seven Eastern European countries where HEKS/EPER carried out church cooperation projects in 2016 – Romania, Italy, Serbia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Ukraine – nearly 15'000 people were provided with support through social services, such as home care, protection of migrant workers, day-care facilities for the disabled, women's shelters (domestic violence) or work for young people. Exchanges between the reformed church parishes in Switzerland and partner churches in Eastern Europe currently facilitates 25 parish partnerships, with one added in 2016. With the new intervention area in the Middle East, HEKS/EPER reached another 1500 members of reformed churches enabling a vivid church life – another 9'500 church members were reached in Eastern Europe through projects in the area of youth work.

Countries	Key data 2016 – HEKS/EPER church cooperation			
	Relationships No. of individuals being involved in exchanges	Dialogue No. of individual who benefited from dialogue initiatives	Social inclusion No. of individuals who benefited from activities to improve inclusion, health, etc.	Church life No. of individuals who benefited from activities strengthening church life (such as infrastructure, youth camps)
<b>Lebanon</b>	n/a	n/a	110	300
<b>Syria</b>	n/a	n/a	0	1'400
<b>Italy</b>	n/a	n/a	58	n/a
<b>Czech Republic</b>	400	n/a	158	2'787
<b>Hungary</b>		500	680	850
<b>Romania</b>		500	12'892	3'246
<b>Slovakia</b>		n/a	250	400
<b>Serbia</b>		n/a	403	
<b>Ukraine</b>		n/a	361	1'950
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>14'912</b>	<b>10'738</b>

Figure 9: Key data of 2016 church cooperation activities of HEKS/EPER in nine countries.

## 7 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: human rights-based approach, 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.

### 7.1 Human rights-based approach

The human rights-based approach (HRBA) **in 2016 remains the guiding working approach** in all projects and programmes of the HEKS/EPER International Programme. HEKS/EPER is convinced that international cooperation should promote participation and empowerment, accountability and advocacy, equality and non-discrimination, as well as access to justice and human rights mechanisms. Therefore, **capacity building processes** for staff and partner organisations with regard to the HRBA and advocacy were expedited in many HEKS/EPER partner countries, including Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe.

Previous efforts of HEKS/EPER to **make duty-bearers more accountable through advocacy and capacity building** for their human rights obligations yielded fruit in 2016. For example, within the Roma programme, partners moved increasingly from being service providers to being advocacy actors, making the state responsible for the access to inclusive education and housing. These advocacy efforts led to increased commitment and financial contributions from local authorities. However, additional resources and capacities will be needed for more systematic advocacy and to deal with resistance and backlashes in future. Other advocacy efforts by HEKS/EPER and its partner organisation in Italy contributed to the establishment of safe humanitarian corridors for refugees mainly from Africa and Middle East ([Chapter 5.1](#)).

HEKS/EPER afforded special attention to rolling out the **HRBA in fragile contexts**. While the absence of human rights and development is often an underlying cause of conflict and fragility, at the same time, fragility makes it very difficult to address these challenges. In fragile countries, like the DR Congo, Honduras, Lebanon or Haiti, cooperation with and capacity building of authorities remains a huge challenge.

For example in Haiti, the weak state structure, lack of justice and missing linkages to the state authorities at national level challenged the implementation of HEKS/EPER projects. Nevertheless, the cooperation with (formal and informal) authorities at the very local level as well as a strong focus on community participation and empowerments permits (to a certain extent) a rights-based working approach even in such difficult, fragile contexts. For example in October 2016, communities in which HEKS/EPER assisted rights-holders in claiming their rights and establishing self-organised participation mechanisms (e.g. parent groups), were more resilient and able to absorb and actively participate in humanitarian assistance after Hurricane Matthew.

Other promising practices were reported from the Democratic Republic of Congo, where HRBA training increased the joint understanding of rights-based programming among HEKS/EPER staff and partner organisations and enhanced the planning and implementation of projects. Furthermore duty-bearer training in Zimbabwe shows opportunities for engagement since the impact on behavioural change with respect to accountability has been amazing (see [Chapter 4.4](#)).

When working with a rights-based approach, the **links of HEKS/EPER programmes and projects to human rights mechanisms** are crucial. This includes promoting access to justice in our partner countries and in some cases (if the local and national justice system is not functional, if national remedies are exhausted and/or not in line with human right standards) also the access to international human rights mechanisms. For example in 2016, HEKS/EPER together with our partner organisation FIAN International supported the indigenous Guarani Kaiowà people in Brazil in filing a lawsuit with the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights to claim the right to access their territories in Mato Grosso do Sul (see [Chapter 4.1](#)).

## 7.2 Conflict sensitivity

Acknowledging the crucial role which development and humanitarian cooperation can play in both improving and exacerbating the root causes of conflict and inequality, HEKS/EPER continued to **mainstream conflict sensitivity** in 2016 as a cross-cutting issue in all HEKS/EPER projects and programmes.

Especially within the HEKS/EPER humanitarian division, awareness of conflict sensitivity has grown and highlighted the need to not only minimise the negative consequences of humanitarian assistance but also to explore how humanitarian cooperation can contribute to conflict prevention. Compared to development cooperation, a conflict-sensitive working approach in humanitarian aid comes with additional challenges e.g. the tight schedules that may hamper a sound conflict sensitivity assessment in the planning stage of urgent interventions and the limited existence of long-term cooperations and networks in volatile and fast-changing humanitarian contexts. Therefore HEKS/EPER resumed strategic discussions (for example in the 'HEKS/EPER Regional Plan Middle East') on how to integrate conflict sensitivity in humanitarian aid. Moreover, in **Lebanon** a conflict-sensitivity assessment and training in the field of conflict sensitivity under the lead of an external consultant started at the end of the year. The assessment and training should form the basis for future conflict-sensitive humanitarian interventions in Lebanon.

In **Moldova**, implementation of the recommendations of the conflict-sensitivity assessment in 2014 is still ongoing. Based on the results of the conflict-sensitivity assessment, the Moldovan country programme was revised in 2015 and now includes a new component that focuses on strengthening local civil society in rural Moldova. Moreover, potential cooperation with Transnistrian partners is being reconsidered and sensitive language issues are handled with more care.

In the framework of the **Roma** programme in Serbia, conflict-sensitive mitigation strategies that included dialogue with Roma, municipalities and neighbours have been worth the efforts for adapted relocation solutions in Obrenovac and Lazarevac.

Besides these efforts to increase conflict sensitivity in project and programmes, HEKS/EPER has in 2016 further invested in capacity building at HQ and field office level. Completion of the Swiss Online Course on conflict sensitivity (developed by HEKS/EPER, Swisspeace, Caritas, Helvetas and SDC) is compulsory for the personnel and thus builds a sound basis for conflict-sensitive programming competences among HEKS/EPER staff.

Moreover, HEKS/EPER remains an active member of the global Conflict Sensitivity Community Hub and has as such actively participated in international discussions, joint learning, evidence-building and networking in the field of conflict sensitivity.

## 7.3 Gender

Striving for **gender equality** remains key for HEKS/EPER, aiming at equal rights and prosperity for women and men in rural communities by **addressing gender power imbalances and discrimination**.

In **Senegal**, women were as such trained in leadership and management, and thus reported significant changes in their participation in **decision-making** within local councils and community-based organisations. They have a say in mixed organisations and hold positions of responsibility in local organisations, and thus can shape communal development. Additionally, production techniques and commercialisation of dairy products were improved and successfully raised women's income. During the caravan of the Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles in West Africa, HEKS/EPER supported its partners in mobilising 750 people (80% women), who participated in activities for land rights and access to water and seeds.

In **Honduras**, more women assumed leadership positions in community-based organisations and as defenders of land rights. There were also slight advances for women in household decision-making around the use of income. A more equal distribution of domestic chores and care work between men and women remains a big challenge, which continues as a long-term objective.

In **Zimbabwe**, training with the gender-inclusive rights-based ACT manual are bearing fruit, as the country office adapted the manual for Zimbabwe and put up its own website. At a women's desk forum, they began planning advocacy actions against discrimination against women in traditional courts and child marriages.

Additionally, some women were trained in access to justice and are working as paralegals. They gained respect from other community members including traditional leaders, who call on them for advice on matters regarding the law.

In the new country programme, HEKS/EPER in **Colombia** places emphasis on gendered power relations and gender-based violence, and therefore, proactively addresses the involvement of men and masculinities.

In **Ethiopia**, women's self-help groups received training and coaching in saving and credit schemes in order to make small business plans and to gain access to local finance institutions, and thus are able to invest in cattle and sheep fattening or other business activities to improve their living conditions.

Besides gender mainstreaming in programmes and projects, HEKS/EPER places emphasis on gender equality within country offices and partner organisations. In **Brazil** for instance, the country office and partners developed ownership and discussed the **institutionalisation of gender equality**. They agreed on a common understanding, including plans for capacity building and other actions. The partner organisation CESE has a considerable amount of expertise in the field of gender, and organises capacity building on gender competence for the other HEKS/EPER partners. They began supporting a number of small indigenous women's projects in 2016 in order to enable women's and gender-equality organisations to enhance their political participation and to overcome structural inequalities. CESE is providing technical support and training as well as fostering exchanges and integration in national platforms and networks.

In order to analyse the local preconditions, HEKS/EPER's country office in the **South Caucasus** conducted a gender equality survey among its partner organisations. Although management mostly supports gender justice in their organisations, the results showed that mainstreaming gender equality at an organisational level can be sensitive and requires an organisational development process that needs counselling and supervision. Gender-sensitive context analyses (baselines) at the project level were stated to be a challenge for the partner organisations, as can be seen in other contexts.

In general, **measuring the effectiveness** of gender mainstreaming remains a big challenge. HEKS/EPER has incorporated gendered key questions (e.g. so as to conduct a gender baseline or to identify the specific needs and interests of men and women) into the programme and project templates. Additionally, gender equality has been integrated explicitly into the reporting and M+E plan.

HEKS/EPER worked with MSC interviews, which have proved to be a suitable method to observe gender change as most significant change is most apparent in personal life, gendered roles and status within



Railway Dalit community in Parbotipur in the north-west of Bangladesh.

family and society. Women participating in projects on food security in **Colombia** reported economic independence through personal income generation and felt more valued in their family and community. They perceived this change as fundamental, leading to self-esteem and empowerment. In addition, the implementation partner Organización Femenina Popular (OFP) was able to strengthen its identity and networking based on empowered and motivated rights-holders. However, within the entire context of the programme it was difficult to systematically capture change and to make general conclusions, as it was not possible to achieve an enduring public policy for women's right to food. Therefore, these MSC stories can be regarded as women's success stories rather than as contributions to an overall pattern of gender change.

## 7.4 Resilience building

In 2016 HEKS/EPER continued outreach on mainstreaming resilience building throughout its development cooperation and humanitarian aid programmes and projects.

Two workshops for HEKS/EPER office staff and partner organisations on the integration of resilience building into programmes and projects were held in Zimbabwe (May 2016) and in Niger (September 2016) for participants from Niger and Senegal. The workshops aimed to convey basic understanding of different risks and their reduction, assessment of risk at community level and resilience building. All workshops were led alongside with local experts for DRR/CCA, who will potentially assume a backstopping role to support resilience aspects in the respective country portfolios. In the workshops, the participants identified predominant hazards in their project area and formulated action plans on how to integrate risk-reduction/resilience-building measures in their respective projects. In the Niger/Senegal workshop, special focus was placed on the integration of natural resource management measures, as both programmes combat the proceeding land degradation and desertification. In Zimbabwe, an important issue discussed was how to lobby for more DRR/CCA policy with the current government to prevent a drought situation as in 2016. Two more workshops were planned in South Sudan and Haiti, however these had to be cancelled due to the worsening security situation in South Sudan over the course of 2016 and the humanitarian crisis after Hurricane Matthew in Haiti in early October 2016.

In development cooperation as well as in humanitarian aid, HEKS/EPER consolidated the resilience-building measures initiated over recent years and further worked in the field of risk prevention/mitigation, preparedness and risk transfer, supporting both structural and non-structural measures. Amongst others, the measures taken are: the use of seeds and varieties adapted to changing climatic conditions (e.g. Cambodia, Brazil, Colombia, Honduras and Niger); sustainable land/water management and eco-DRR (e.g. Niger, Senegal, Ethiopia, Honduras, Haiti and Cambodia); promotion of conservation agriculture (e.g. Zimbabwe); community organisation for better preparedness for natural or man-made hazards such as disaster management/preparedness committees, community early warning systems, DRM plans, emergency drills (e.g. Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and the Philippines); risk transfer through grain/seed/livestock banks (e.g. Cambodia, India, Honduras) and advocacy for the avoidance of new risks (risk governance) (e.g. Colombia, Brazil, Honduras and Zimbabwe).

In the Swiss NGO DRR Platform collective, HEKS/EPER invested a considerable amount of work resources into the development of a DRR/CCA e-learning course. HEKS/EPER took the lead in the so-called 'Curriculum Mandate' working together with representatives of other Swiss NGOs in bringing together the 'Swiss'-approach to DRR and CCA and the vast knowledge of Swiss DRR actors into five course modules. The course will be launched over the website of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform (<http://www.drrplatform.org/>) in April 2017. The e-learning course will also shape the future capacity building of HEKS/EPER staff and partners at in the field.

On a conceptual level HEKS/EPER currently works on the improvement of the ability to measure resilience building in its programmes and projects as well as on the better integration of resilience building with conflict transformation and conflict sensitivity. In the Israel/Palestine programme HEKS/EPER together with other NGOs attempts to contextualise resilience, particularly transformative resilience, for conflict-affected contexts.

## 8 Management for quality, learning, progress and results

### 8.1 Institutional evolution

This chapter describes how HEKS/EPER fosters the relevance and efficiency of its activities as postulated in its institutional objective.

#### **OBJECTIVE 5.2 DEVCO / HA / CC**

**The HEKS/EPER International Programme's work is relevant and implemented professionally**

With the HIP 2013-2017, the issue of the 'resilience' and 'preparedness' of rural communities came onto the agenda. HEKS/EPER has been investing more in training and support in disaster risk analysis in the priority countries (e.g. Niger, Senegal and Zimbabwe). In 2016, the HA team started the roll-out of its implementation concept. Improved response and preparedness capacity of our country offices and partner organisations is the objective. Apart from the staff training, a specific disaster response plan was developed and will serve as a guiding document.

In 2016, the roll-out of the PCM (see [Chapter 8.4](#)) via 5 days of onsite training for all CO staff and representatives of the POs were completed, except for Niger and Haiti. Another important guideline for effective and efficient implementation is HEKS/EPER's FFAG. The comprehensive updating process was a priority for the controlling team and ID management in 2016. Up-to-date guidelines and templates in all the work-relevant topics of finance, HR, contract management and IT and data sharing were developed by the end of 2016 (see [Chapter 8.5](#)).

These useful instruments and a careful roll-out and backstopping by specialised HHQ staff are key for professional programme implementation. Key management objectives have and will continue to be relevant for our presence on four continents and to continue increasing the financial volume per country, as well as through mandates. There was no change in the number of focus countries with country offices. Maintain around 16 is important from the perspective of the ID programme portfolio. In all countries with HEKS/EPER programme work, humanitarian and development projects are implemented by country office staff and POs based on needs.

#### **Programmatic approach, geographic coverage and thematic focus**

Under ID's overarching programme objective, HEKS/EPER aims to implement coherent country programmes where the various partners and projects create synergies and contribute to HEKS/EPER's theory of change. In 2016, the focus process in DevCo countries came to an end with the closing of the Philippine office in June 2016. HEKS/EPER remains present on four continents with a substantial programme volume. A remaining challenge is to increase programme volume per country where context, political and climate stability and partner portfolios allows this. At the same time, the number of fragile countries in HEKS/EPER portfolio increased. In South Sudan, Haiti, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Ukraine, smooth programme implementation wasn't possible and a partial shift of DevCo projects to HA or new HA interventions was the only way to stay engaged.

In 2016, HEKS/EPER intervened with 161 international and 37 HHQ staff in cooperation with more than 100 partner organisations in 32 countries through more than 248 projects – 185 development projects, 28 HA projects and 35 church cooperation projects. HEKS/EPER has local coordination offices in 16 DevCo priority programmes (**for reports by country and map see [Appendix A](#)**).

The ongoing reduction to 16 DevCo priority programmes (by the middle of 2016) enables HEKS/EPER to achieve the objective of a cost volume of at least one million Swiss francs per country. In 14 countries, the yearly expenses in 2016 were above one million Swiss francs. The overall volume of international programme spending (DevCo, CC and HA) increased from CHF 34.5 million in 2015 to CHF 36.25 million in 2016 (detailed finance table see [Chapter 8.5](#)). In 2016, one country programme came to an end. The phasing out process of the DevCo projects in the Philippines was mainly carried out in 2015 and finalised in the first quarter in 2016. The HA reconstruction projects on Panay Island are also in their final months and will be finished in the second quarter of 2017. The Philippines remains as a standby country; meaning in the event of any future humanitarian catastrophe, HEKS/EPER and former POs would be prepared to respond together.

Since 2013, the ratio of large vs small projects in country programmes has improved gradually, from less than 30% large projects in 2012/2013 to more than 50% in 2015, meaning that interventions have become more efficient and gained relevance. In 2016, 69% of the DevCo overall volume was implemented through projects with a yearly project amount above CHF 100'000.

An additional 50% of internal staff resources for acquisition were allocated to the international division team during the course of 2016. With these additional resources, a separate 80% FTE acquisition position was created and brings the needed boost for systematic ACQ support to the country offices and at HHQ. This will lead to proactive networking with new potential donors and professional in-house preparation of attractive offers. A substantial increase of the HEKS/EPER mandate portfolio is a key element of the growth in the DevCo programme (see [Chapter 8.4.1](#)).

## 8.2 Programme management

HEKS/EPER formulates its objectives in institutional capacity and coherent programme management in all three working section (DC, HA and CC) 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 2016. In various countries, new programme and admin staff were recruited in the HEKS/EPER offices and new partner organisations selected (Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, DR Congo, Haiti, the Philippines, Colombia, etc.).

### Implementation methods and partners

According to the context and sector, HEKS/EPER uses different implementation methods in **DevCo**, but continues with its approach of acting according to local realities in mainly rural areas. The main partners are the people and communities we work with, rural families organised in locally rooted civil society organisations such as CBOs, associations and producer groups.

At a next level, the challenge in 2016 remained finding partners with the ability to implement projects of a certain financial scale (CHF 100'000 to 250'000 per year). Therefore, HEKS/EPER will commit itself with close PO support throughout the entire project cycle. This means being more involved in project definition, management and coordination. Larger projects are implemented by more than one specialised partner organisation or service providers (government, private sector, partner NGOs, research institutes, etc.).

HEKS/EPER can also act as a self-implementer through a project implementation unit (PIU), as is already the case in some priority programmes such as Niger, Moldova, Georgia and Haiti.

In **HA**, HEKS/EPER works to build competent prepared staff in the country offices and a **partner portfolio** of potential partners in 'standby countries' (risk assessments, resilience training, conflict-sensitivity assessments and training in humanitarian needs assessment). This leads to faster response to emergencies and tested up-to-date methodologies and tools to better analyse and design suitable and solid activities.

### Security

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. In summer 2015, HEKS/EPER introduced a new security policy. In the course of 2016, various activities were carried out:

- HEKS/EPER participated in the working group on safety and security of the Swiss NGO network that aims at inter-agency cooperation and coordination of security policies and training.
- Employees of the ID who regularly travel abroad completed an online Security Induction Course. This online training was produced by the ACT Alliance Safety & Security Community of Practice and covers various topics with relevance for traveling and working in potentially dangerous environments.
- Four ID employees completed a five-day Security Field Course provided by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs 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 unit composed of members of HEKS/EPER management, including the director and division managers. The task force is in charge of handling security incidents such as kidnappings or severe traffic accidents abroad. In 2016, the task force met several times to train and prepare for such emergencies.

### 8.3 Acquisition and fundraising

In 2016, HEKS/EPER implemented seven **development cooperation** grants in seven countries (see figure 10). Two new grants were successfully acquired during the year. In November, the HEKS/EPER South Caucasus country office in Georgia signed a four-year contract with the European Commission to implement the 'PROCEED – Promoting Citizen Engagement for Economic Development' project. In Bangladesh, the country office won a tender from the UNDP to support their work on 'Linking Climate Resilience Grants for Climate Resilient Planning and Budgeting at Local Government Level'. This projects starts in 2017 (still included in the grant table below). In addition, a contract was signed for phase 2 of the SDC mandate in Kosovo to continue the work on social inclusion and improvement of living conditions for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. Overall in 2016, HEKS/EPER invested CHF 1'096'969 from its own means in the implementation of the DevCo grants.

HEKS/EPER grants 2016 – development cooperation							
	Projects	Country	Overall budget *	HEKS/EPER co-financing	Partners	Grant donors	Duration from – to
1	Citizen engagement for economic development	Georgia	3'438'237	1'144'500	HEKS/EPER Romania, ELKANA	European Commission	01.12.2016-30.11.2018
2	Market opportunities for livelihood improvement	Georgia	2'499'978	0	direct	SDC Georgia	01.12.2015-30.11.2018
3	Social inclusion and improvement of living conditions for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians	Kosovo	818'487	390'519	TdH, VoRAE	FDJP Switzerland (SEM)	01.01.2016-31.12.2016
4	Social inclusion and improvement of living conditions for Roma and other vulnerable groups	Romania	6'459'106	1'000'000	FAER, Diakonia Romania	SDC East Cooperation	01.02.2015-31.12.2018
5	Improvement of living conditions of Roma and other vulnerable groups Prevention of irregular migration and support to reintegration of returnees	Serbia	1'937'374	650'000	EHO	SDC East Cooperation (350'000) & SEM migration partnership (300'000)	01.03.2016/17 – 21.12.2018
6	Hydraulique Rurale Appui au Secteur Eau et Assainissement PHRASEA**	Niger	13'550'000	0	Helvetas PHRASEA	SDC / Helvetas	01.01.2012-31.12.2016
7	Acces a l'eau pastorale, hygiene et assainissement	Niger	1'109'088	388'150	Caritas, Fastenopfer, HSI, Solidar, SRC, Swissaid, TdH	SDC (Swiss Water Consortium)	01.01.2015-31.12.2017
	WASH	Ethiopia	790'275	197'569	Caritas, Fastenopfer, HSI, Solidar, SRC, Swissaid, TdH	SDC (Swiss Water Consortium)	01.01.2015-31.12.2018
	Access to clean & safe water and better hygiene and sanitation	South Sudan	848'800	158'465	Caritas, Fastenopfer, HSI, Solidar, SRC, Swissaid, TdH	SDC (Swiss Water Consortium)	01.01.2015-31.12.2019
8	Climate resilience grants for climate resilient planning and budgeting at local government level	Bangladesh	156'316	0	direct	UNDP Bangladesh	01.01.2017-30.06.2017
<b>Total grants CHF (phase budgets*)</b>			<b>18'057'661</b>	<b>3'929'203</b>			

\* = Overall budgets of the projects for the full phases as indicated in the last column.

\*\* = HEKS/EPER is a subcontractor of Helvetas' PHRASEA project receiving a yearly contribution of about CHF 80'000.

**Figure 10: 2016 HEKS/EPER implemented seven grants with a financial volume for the full phases of CHF 18 million with an overall HEKS/EPER contribution of CHF 3.9 million. To implement a broad grant portfolio, substantial self-financing by HEKS/EPER is required to access external grant financing and to achieve an effective leverage.**

In **humanitarian aid** HEKS/EPER got grants for seven projects in six countries with Swiss Solidarity as the main donor.

HEKS/EPER grants 2016 – humanitarian aid							
	Project	Country	Overall budget*	HEKS/EPER Co-financing	Grand donor	Partner	Duration from – to
1	Support/shelter for refugees (phases 1,2,3)	Serbia	900'000	300'000	Swiss Solidarity	EHO	01.09.2015-31.10.2016
2	Humanitarian assistance of Palestine Refugees from Syria	Lebanon	1'458'399	632'638	Swiss Solidarity & Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe	Najdeh	01.01.2017-31.12.2017
3	Livelihood, resilience and access to land for victims of Typhoon Haiyan on Panay Island	Philippines	1'705'952	984'431	Swiss Solidarity & NCA	TFM	01.09.2014-31.12.2015
4	Rehabilitation of evacuation infrastructures & prevention trainings	Philippines	1'477'579	539'634	Swiss Solidarity	direct	01.04.2015-31.03.2017
5	Sustainable WASH assistance to flood affected Communities	Pakistan	2'933'917	586'784	Swiss Solidarity	NCA	15.04.2014-14.04.2017
6	Emergency support for IDPs and host families	Iraq	1'052'404	532'404	Stadt Zürich, Bachmann, KiGem, Amriswil	DKH / REACH	01.08.2016-31.07.2018
7	Emergency support for victims of hurricane Matthew	Haiti	577'984	196'166	Swiss Solidarity	direct	07.10.2016-31.03.2017
<b>Total grants CHF (phase budgets*)</b>			<b>10'106'235</b>	<b>3'772'057</b>			

\* = overall budgets of the projects for the full phases as indicated in the last column.

**Figure 11: 2016 HEKS/EPER implemented seven grants with an overall financial volume of CHF 10.1 million with an overall HEKS/EPER contribution of nearly CHF 3.8 million – not yearly.**

In order to remain relevant and competitive in the ever-evolving international development and humanitarian landscape, HEKS/EPER will pursue a growth strategy to diversify its funding portfolio in the new HIP 2017–2020 strategy period. The focus will be on the acquisition of grants and tenders from bilateral and multilateral donors, using HEKS/EPER own means and the SDC block grant as leverage to achieve a multiplier effect. To advance HEKS/EPER's progress in this direction, a new Acquisition Officer position (0.8 FTE) was created and successfully filled as of October 2016. The position has a direct reporting line to the head of ID in order to be involved in and contribute to relevant strategic decisions at headquarter level while maintaining close working relationships with HEKS/EPER field operations and technical teams to ensure high quality project proposals that are aligned with HEKS/EPER global strategy as well as individual country programmes.

After an initial assessment of HEKS' organisational strengths, weaknesses, previous experience and internal processes, an acquisition strategy is currently being developed in close collaboration with the fundraising and communication team. Its completion, approval by ID senior management and subsequent roll-out of activities are priority milestones for 2017. The production and dissemination of support materials and tools to enhance the acquisition capacity of HEKS/EPER country offices complement this effort.

### 8.3.1 Learning from grants and applications

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 programs through an increase in mandates, it will pursue opportunities in a systematic and strategic way to ensure all acquired grants contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives set out in the HIP 2017-2020. As such, mandates are a means to the end of achieving greater programme impact and reach, and greater organisational capacity and effectiveness.

Some key overall learnings are:

- **Multiplier effect:** HEKS/EPER's can and should leverage its own means to attract institutional funding in order to amplify programme impact and reach. This applies to any form of 'contribution' such as

SDC block grant, EU grants as well as funds from fundraising and marketing – all within Switzerland, but also abroad in HEKS/EPER priority programme countries.

- **Strengthening thematic expertise:** Implementing mandates at high levels of excellence requires strong thematic expertise in HEKS/EPER's core areas of expertise, such as market systems development, access to land and resources, fostering enabling environment and conflict transformation. Building up such capacity across the organisation has a positive impact on projects beyond the mandate.
- **Fostering innovation:** In order to be competitive, HEKS/ EPER has to develop, pilot, prove and improve new approaches to achieve development impact. Tenders and mandates provide an incentive to stay at the forefront of global development practices in HEKS/EPER's core areas of expertise.
- **Internal structures and processes:** In order to satisfy rigorous donor reporting requirements, adequate structures and processes have been put in place, notably in areas such as monitoring and evaluation, systematic data collection and financial reporting.
- **Strategic partnerships:** Donors increasingly prefer to fund consortia of organisations who jointly implement larger-scale projects or programs. HEKS/EPER will therefore continue to increase its efforts to build partnerships with organisations of strategic value, for example with other members of the ACT Alliance, as well as research institutions and the private sector.
- **Impact assessments:** Our participation in the 2015 Impact Award (initiated by SDC and Nadel) caused HEKS/EPER to engage in various discussions regarding impact with our country offices, our partner organisations and various research institutes. From this experience we learnt that the definition and measurement of 'impact' is broader than initially assumed. Accordingly, we further differentiated our impact evaluation policy, which now is based much more on the notion of 'causality' and the related 'how' and 'why' questions we would like to address, rather than just establishing a counterfactual and quantifying attribution.

Overall, it is HEKS/EPER's experience that tenders, grants and mandates contribute considerably to institutional learning which, in turn, increases HEKS/EPER's capacity to implement high-quality projects and programmes all over the world.



HEKS/EPER works in five countries on social and economic inclusion of Roma – picture: Kosovo

## 8.4 Monitoring and evaluation, learning for steering

ID's investment in M&E is based on a comprehensive five-year **strategy** (2014–2018). It consists of two phases. The development phase (2014–2016) has been focusing on setting up the main structure for a global M&E approach (PCM handbook, digitalised key indicators, rigorous impact evaluations, etc.) and providing the necessary capacity building to the staff involved. The consolidation phase (2017–2018) is about to gradually shift our institutional focus to – among other things – investing in quality insurance. The main focus in 2016 was accordingly put on the following areas:

**PCM:** We revised our PCM handbook a second time. Its 2.0 release will take place soon (May 2017). For example, the handbook has been made leaner, the most important M&E working templates have been updated and alternatives to the log frame approach have been integrated.

**Global M&E plan:** Our global approach to M&E is meant to facilitate ID's global performance assessment. To be able to assess yearly progress, ID will soon develop a global M&E plan for its HIP, based on a compilation of the M&E plans (baseline and target values) from projects and country programmes in our operational countries. The global M&E plan is expected to be finalised at the latest by the end of 2017 and will form the basis of the HIP report 2017.

**Global body of evidence:** 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. Two decisive components in this regard include:

- The development of our digital data collection and aggregation system for our key indicators (DevCo). Our initial target for this to be ready by 2016 had to be extended by one year. Accordingly, we will report against our global objectives from 2017 onwards through digitalised key indicators (<https://hekskeyindicators.org>).
- Commissioning, accompanying and implementing several rigorous impact evaluations.

Country / working section / design	Thematic focus	Status
Lebanon / HA / quasi-experimental	Cash transfer	Completed in 2016
Bangladesh / DevCo / quasi-experimental combined with contribution analysis	Value chains and social inclusion	Report soon to be delivered in 2017
Georgia / DevCo / quasi-experimental	Value chains	Report in July 2018
Senegal / DevCo / theory-based with contribution analysis and process tracing	Access to land	Intermediate report delivered; final report in 2019
Palestine/Israel / DevCo / ytd (announced)	Right to return	Design stage; final report in 2021

Figure 12: HEKS/EPER impact evaluations carried out and planned.

**Quality insurance:** In terms of gradually increasing our investments in quality insurance, we have started to develop instruments that will allow the ID to systematically monitor, appraise and communicate the quality of project and programme reports, evaluations, and the mainstreaming of our cross-cutting issues, including the HRBA<sup>22</sup>.

**Capacity building on PCM/M&E:** To ensure that all staff of HEKS/EPER of our implementing partner organisations keep improving in terms of applying the basic elements of PCM (logic models, M&E plans, follow-up matrices, evaluation ToR and inception reports, etc.) as well as keeping up with more recent innovations (digitalised key indicators, rigorous impact evaluations, etc.), ID has been continuing to build capacity in its operational countries. Six M&E workshops had been planned for 2016. For various reasons, four were held in Zimbabwe, Senegal and Israel/Palestine (DevCo, and Cluj (CC)). The workshops in Niger and Haiti could not be held due to natural disasters (Haiti) and internal managerial issues (Niger). These two countries are expected to receive the training in 2017.

<sup>22</sup> Through our systematic internal approval procedure, quality insurance is already well-established for the design phase of projects and programmes.

**Capacity building on various topics:** HEKS/EPER invests substantial resources in training partners every year (see list below). In 2016, CHF 87'403 was spent on training DevCo partners in 13 programmes. There have been additional assignments in various countries included in the 'regular' costs of the country offices.

- Workshops on resilience mainstreaming were held for the programmes in Niger, Senegal and Zimbabwe.
- HA launched capacity building for COs and partners with a first workshop focusing on a country disaster response plan in Zimbabwe. In Cambodia emergency assessment training has been carried out.
- Conflict transformation and conflict sensitivity: Cambodia, Colombia, Congo DR and Georgia/Armenia.
- Access to land: Cambodia, Colombia.
- Security: DR Congo.
- Management, finances and administration: Cambodia and DR Congo.
- Facilitation: Armenia (PO with more skills in approaching/instructing/capacity building of beneficiaries).
- Value chain/inclusive market: Moldova.

#### 8.4.1 Programme and project evaluations

During 2016, HEKS/EPER commissioned the following four evaluations of country programmes (CP). The corresponding lessons learnt were fed into the next phases of the respective countries and they were also partially used to adapt HEKS/EPER's international programme in 2017.

List of CP evaluations:

- Bangladesh 2013-2016 (DevCo).
- South Caucasus 2013-2016 (DevCo).
- Haiti 2013-2016 (DevCo and HA).
- Hungary 2014-2016 (CC).

Note that in 2016, HEKS/EPER also commissioned 35 external project evaluations (including two impact studies and one experience capitalisation) whose findings were, where relevant, used when carrying out the above CP evaluations. The **overview of all evaluations** is listed in [Appendix B](#) of this document.

#### Findings and recommendations for DevCo country programmes

During the reporting period, three external DevCo CP evaluations (one CP also includes HA) were carried out by national and international consultants. There are a few findings that to some extent can be generalised for the evaluations, including the following:

- According to HEKS/EPER's evaluation policy, all CP evaluations have to address the question of whether the respective theories of change are still valid and relevant. In this regard, the evaluations indicate that theories of change are highly valid and relevant, due to various reasons, as outlined below:
  - i) CP, including their respective projects, conducts systematic context monitoring and corresponding adjustments are made to the theories of change. This flexibility in adjusting theories of change, and in that sense approved projects/programmes, is partly linked to HEKS/EPER's drive to improve in terms of adaptive management (AM). To mention but three areas of improvement: concerted investment has been made in equipping partner organisations, country offices and headquarters with innovative and results-driven M&E and management personnel; programme/project designing and implementation modalities have become much more open (for instance, alternatives to the log frame approach are no longer treated as exceptions); and HEKS/EPER's internal programme/project approval procedure has been made leaner.
  - ii) During the reporting period, Bangladesh and the South Caucasus have been faced with considerable social and political challenges and other countries like Haiti have suffered from natural disasters. Accordingly, the Bangladesh CP evaluation reports that due to unprecedented political instability, programme implementation has largely been delayed. In the South Caucasus, programme implementation was massively affected due to shrinking space through raising nationalism and the escalating context and – partly linked with this – HEKS/EPER's registration in Azerbaijan note being extended in early 2015. However, the evaluations also reveal that long-term and holistic programming has the advantage of providing more scope to cope, especially with political instability, partly because the programmatic 'fabric' provides a strong and robust framework in which it is easier to deal with contextual stress and make the necessary adjustments, while keeping effective operations ongoing.

- Both CPs in Bangladesh and the South Caucasus contain **innovative components**. In the South Caucasus, there has been a promising transformation in the rural development sector through innovative approaches such as market systems development (MSD) and fair trade certification. It is therefore recommended to capitalise on existing experience with the hybrid MSD and public-private-dialogue approaches for scaling up and strengthening advocacy in this pioneering area. In Bangladesh, the very programme design itself is innovative in that it focuses on systematically integrating discriminated-against minority groups (such as 'untouchables') into value chains in order to promote their social inclusion in the long run. In fact, this combination of value chain promotion and social inclusion is a largely untested hypothesis. Accordingly, HEKS/EPER has commissioned an impact evaluation (quasi-experimental combined with contribution analysis) on top of the CP evaluation meant to test the hypothesis. Initial results show that the incomes of the minority groups have increased due to the intervention!

The following is an outline of the most important findings for each specific CP evaluation:

- The overall effectiveness of the **South Caucasus** CP has been satisfying as most projects are on track to achieve their objectives. Yet in rural development, the challenges with organic production are substantial and stated objectives can barely be achieved. The conflict transformation projects have been very effective concerning reaching out to more people and started addressing socio-political aspects. Gender should be more systematically integrated in all project log frames and monitoring plans. Projects have very diverse sustainability issues/potentials, mainly depending on partner organisations' capacities. The MSD projects should have clearer exit strategies by demanding higher co-financing when phasing out.
- **In Bangladesh**, the CP has come a long way in terms of empowering Dalits and Adivasi, two of the most discriminated-against and disenfranchised minorities in the country. However, if the CP envisions a leading role in terms of Dalit and Adivasi empowerment, certain measures should be reinforced. The established human rights network of Dalits and Adivasi has to take a more proactive role in terms of advocacy, and therefore more capacity building and resources will have to be allocated to it. In addition, the CP, through its partner projects, has to put more effort into uniting the still highly fragmented civil society in order to gain broader national support to empower Dalits and Adivasi. Furthermore, there is an as-yet underutilised potential of young people to act as agents of change in the Dalit and Adivasi communities. This will be taken up much more seriously in the years to come. Moreover, the CP is still in the process of identifying more viable solutions to more effectively promote access to finance for the discriminated-against target groups, a key success factor for their empowerment.
- **In Haiti**, the evaluation shows a lack of coherence in the CP between the envisioned programme approach (as outlined in the corresponding CP document) and the de facto implemented project approach on the ground. In order to be able to deliver more effective development work in future, it is advised to adjust the current approach by supporting local initiatives of implementing partners who represent the communities more systematically. The project approach seems to not be suitable for a sustainable development process for local communities, with there instead being a risk it will foster a kind of development process that is dependent on external support.

#### **Findings and recommendations for CC country programme (Hungary)**

- In general, the CP is perceived as very relevant, however many local partners supplement it by activities they consider necessary to achieve the planned outcomes (e.g. entrepreneurship, evangelisation). This indicates there is scope for further improvement in terms of relevant programming.
- Similar to the evaluations conducted in the DevCo CP, this evaluation reveals that implementing projects needs significant time to achieve results at outcome level in terms of the social inclusion of the Roma communities. Again, this underlines the above-mentioned trend in HEKS/EPER interventions of designing long-term theories of change consisting of several subsequent phases.
- Furthermore, the evaluation shows that after-school projects are the most successful, with life-skill development and community building requiring more time and effort as attitudes and behaviours are slow to change.
- The institutional set-up of the CP has been successfully established and is very efficient.
- However, financial sustainability and the responsiveness of the Swiss partner congregations were unanimously evaluated as very low.

### 8.4.2 Lessons learnt from MSC assessments

This year's MSC assessments were conducted in 12 DevCo programmes<sup>23</sup> and 1 HA project<sup>24</sup>, involving 13 different projects. Many MSC assessments mainly confirm one strategically important finding which had already been identified the previous year:

**Finding – people and communities have other aims than PO and HEKS/EPER:** When correctly conducted, MSC assessments have the power to reveal the unforeseen, i.e. unintended and often negative changes. We have many innovative projects (Bangladesh, India, Palestine/Israel, Cambodia, etc.) who try to 'break with taboos' and 'bring up new topics' in public. In this context, our implementing partners are often challenged by the fact that people and communities in and/or around projects have a different perception about the changes they would and would not like to see. These views are not in line with our pre-defined strategic priorities and objectives, i.e. they are not what one would expect. Examples include discriminated-against minority groups in Bangladesh such as Dalits expressing that they do not wish to strive for social integration into mainstream society – it should be noted however that this concern was raised at the initial stage of the concerned projects, when the project participants had not yet been made fully aware of their rights. Or, as indicated by various examples in Cambodia, Bangladesh and India, the recurring abuse of drugs, alcohol and the related issue of domestic violence are continuously 'doing harm' and thereby undermining projects' effectiveness. Similar examples include beneficiaries revealing that their 'perceived needs' relate to buying motorcycles, cars, mobile phones, houses or migrating, and after having received a land title, selling their agricultural land to gain money and move to the city. Partners and HEKS/EPER are challenged by such issues because they often imply a divergence with our understanding or stereotype of how 'development in the South' should take place.

**Lessons learnt:** As we move on with innovative projects striving to break with taboos and raising new topics, and as we keep on using MSC assessments to reveal the unexpected and indirect dynamics in the context, implementing partners and HEKS/EPER alike are increasingly challenged to self-critically review and adjust our strategic priorities and objectives, as and when needed. An increasingly useful/effective concept to tackle this hurdle is adaptive management, which partly implies the implementation of short iteration cycles or of a portfolio approach with only the most promising and relevant interventions being promoted and replicated.



DR Congo: field visit to exchange on significant changes affecting the people.

<sup>23</sup> Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Palestine/Israel, Honduras, Brazil, Moldova, Colombia, Senegal, DRC, South Caucasus and Zimbabwe.

<sup>24</sup> Pakistan.

## 8.5 Finances

HEKS/EPER's overall expenditure in 2016 amounted to CHF 76 million (CHF 70 million in 2015). For activities in the international division including humanitarian aid, HEKS/EPER spent CHF 36.25 million (CHF 34.5 million in 2015). Total 'DevCo South' project costs amounted to CHF 16.4 million, while 'DevCo East' project costs totalled CHF 4.9 million. In 2016, SDC contributed 29% of the costs of DevCo South and East (31% in the previous year). The purely resilience (DRR) portion totalled CHF 0.4 million, not taking into account that HEKS/EPER is increasingly mainstreaming resilience activities in their 'regular' DevCo projects as a cross-cutting issue.

In addition to the CHF 7.6 million contribution, the SDC financed the setting up of the thematic advisory team with CHF 0.4 million. SDC's contribution to the overall costs of the international cooperation activities was 22%. For financial sustainability, it is vital to not depend on just one key source, which is why HEKS/EPER takes care to have a diversified 'income portfolio'. Therefore HEKS/EPER ID strengthened its acquisition ability with more expertise and staff resources (see also [Chapter 8.2](#)).

### Controlling at HEKS/EPER's headquarters

ID Controlling carried out internal audits and facilitated many capacity-building sessions in various countries. An anti-corruption concept including a reporting system for whistleblowing was introduced at HHQ.

It also fully revised its Field Financial and Administrative Guidelines during 2016. These are sure to establish and maintain an administrative management system which facilitates an effective and economic utilisation of resources available to HEKS/EPER. Additionally, it fosters an optimal internal control system, enabling the safeguarding of resources from misuse and ensuring an efficient and timely financial information system of good quality. It applies to all programme/projects types – development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation; including grants. Every CO employee will fully understand that everyone, regardless of their job, is accountable that the processes and standards are followed correctly. In addition, the manual serves as a recommendation for partner organisations. The roll-out of the new FFAG for all priority countries and at HHQ will be carried out by May 2017.

Figure 13: Budget and closing of the HEKS/EPER International Programme 2016.

Country/programme	Budget expenses	Closing expenses	Closing SDC contribution DRR	Closing SDC contribution others	% of SDC contribution
<b>Development cooperation south</b>					
<b>ASIA</b>					
Asia general	130'000	45'436	0	0	0%
Bangladesh	1'100'000	1'110'795	0	327'202	29%
Cambodia	1'246'000	1'255'384	70'555	430'378	40%
India	797'000	788'490	0	237'977	30%
Palestine/Israel	1'545'000	1'466'022	0	445'218	30%
Philippines	88'000	137'385	0	80'000	58%
Vietnam	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total Asia</b>	<b>4'906'000</b>	<b>4'803'511</b>	<b>70'555</b>	<b>1'520'774</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>AFRICA</b>					
Africa general	0	0	0	0	0%
Ethiopia	1'498'000	1243'640	71'037	165'961	19%
Eritrea	0	0	0	0	0%
Niger	1'756'000	1'584'469	68'991	431'003	32%
Senegal	1'210'000	1'369'503	0	642'512	47%
Zimbabwe	1'320'000	1'214'193	23'518	413'647	36%
South Sudan	1'680'000	1'007'041	47'037	293'232	34%
DRC	930'000	1'003'298	78'222	277'037	35%
<b>Total Africa</b>	<b>8'394'000</b>	<b>7'422'143</b>	<b>288'805</b>	<b>2'223'391</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>THE AMERICAS</b>					
Americas general	110'000	112'544	0	61'847	55%
Brazil	1'298'000	1'048'427	0	549'998	52%
Columbia	863'000	788'030	0	210'000	27%
Guatemala	0	0	0	0	0%
Haiti	1'310'000	1'399'502	40'320	397'860	31%
Honduras	1'174'000	793'207	0	152'037	19%
<b>Total Americas</b>	<b>4'755'000</b>	<b>4'141'710</b>	<b>40'320</b>	<b>1'371'741</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Total DevCo south</b>	<b>18'055'000</b>	<b>16'367'364</b>	<b>399'680</b>	<b>5'115'907</b>	<b>34%</b>

<b>Development cooperation east</b>					
<b>EUROPE</b>					
Europe general	505'000	409'278	0	146'605	36%
Albania	0	0	0	0	0%
Armenia	330'000	246'338	0	50'000	20%
Azerbaijan	0	42'540	0	0	0%
Georgia	1'430'000	1'216'314	0	128'392	11%
Kosovo	300'000	473'819	0	0	0%
Moldova	1'110'000	1'235'911	0	234'556	19%
Romania	1'320'000	1'284'875	0	0	0%
<b>Total DevCo east</b>	<b>4'995'000</b>	<b>4'909'076</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>559'552</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Total DevCo south&amp;east</b>	<b>23'050'000</b>	<b>21'276'440</b>	<b>399'680</b>	<b>5'675'460</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Humanitarian aid</b>					
<b>HA south</b>					
Asia reserve	0	61'476	0	0	0%
Zimbabwe	0	334'889	0	0	0%
Ethiopia	0	68'225	0	0	0%
Iraq	687'000	948'107	0	0	0%
Lebanon	2'092'000	1'466'917	0	0	0%
Pakistan	983'000	1'030'672	0	0	0%
Philippines	1'720'000	1'379'590	0	0	0%
Italy	0	108'597	0	0	0%
Niger 1)	100'000	-197	0	0	0%
Turkey	0	324'124	0	0	0%
Haiti	500'000	465'371	0	0	0%
Honduras 1)	0	-629	0	0	0%
HH revenue 2)	0	-59'762	0	0	0%
<b>Total HA south</b>	<b>6'082'000</b>	<b>6'127'380</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>HA east</b>					
Ukraine	0	279'151	0	0	0%
Serbia	870'000	825'480	0	0	0%
<b>Total HA east</b>	<b>870'000</b>	<b>1'104'631</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total HA south&amp;east</b>	<b>6'952'000</b>	<b>7'232'011</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Church cooperation</b>					
CC Europe regional	229'000	111'196	0	0	0%
Lebanon and Syria	150'000	220'860	0	0	0%
Czech Republic	256'000	228'850	0	0	0%
Hungary	210'000	209'820	0	0	0%
Italy	51'000	52'303	0	0	0%
Romania	414'000	415'720	0	0	0%
Serbia	460'000	458'122	0	0	0%
Slovakia	500'000	27'438	0	0	0%
Ukraine	189'000	246'455	0	0	0%
<b>Total CC</b>	<b>2'009'000</b>	<b>1'970'765</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other global projects</b>	<b>275'000</b>	<b>955'187</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Management costs</b>					
Programme management	2'550'000	2'543'048	45'084	638'436	27%
Thematic advise	700'000	704'530	0	400'000	57%
Management ID HHQ	1'678'000	1'567'280	30'056	428'550	29%
<b>Total management 3)</b>	<b>4'928'000</b>	<b>4'814'858</b>	<b>75'140</b>	<b>1'466'986</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Contributions to other HEKS/EPER departments</b>					
<b>Total contributions 4)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25'180</b>	<b>357'554</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>HIP total</b>					
<b>Int. cooperation total</b>	<b>37'214'000</b>	<b>36'249'262</b>	<b>500'000</b>	<b>7'500'000</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Country / programme</b>	<b>Budget expenses</b>	<b>Closing expenses</b>	<b>Closing SDC contrib. DRR</b>	<b>Closing SDC contrib. others</b>	<b>% of SDC contribution</b>

1) Foreign exchange gain. 2) Revenue from a COM fundraising event – not yet allocated nor implemented.

3) Total management = programme management costs at HHQ including country desks, thematic advisors and ID management.

4) Total contributions = including SDC contributions to HHQ human resources, IT, managing board (no contribution to communication & fundraising).

## 8.6 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 (see also [Chapter 10.2.4](#)). 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 14: Major networks/specialist groups HHQ participates in. At country level, COs engage in additional networks.**

Networks	Topics	Benefits / contributions
<b>ACT Alliance</b> (global network of 144 FBOs and churches active in more than 100 countries in development cooperation, humanitarian aid and advocacy)	Development policy, cooperation, CoP, working groups: Rights and Development, Acquisition, Humanitarian Response, and others. Cooperation at the country level (joint projects, knowledge exchange, advocacy, etc.).	Knowledge sharing, networking, joint activities on DC. Joint advocacy, local and international level with intergovernmental institutions. Joint capacity building in HRBA and joint studies/analysis and work on enabling environment. Online training in safety and security.
<b>Alliance Sud</b> (policy platform of 6 big Swiss iNGOs advocating for just global structures)	Programme group and various working groups on development policy, lobbying.	Joint public relations, knowledge sharing on policy and DC principles.
<b>Swiss NGO Platform</b> (incl. subgroups)	Policy development, networking, knowledge sharing, lobbying and cooperation.	Knowledge sharing, networking, joint activities on DC, development of an online course and setting up a capacity-building and advocacy hub.
<b>Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition</b>	Right to food, access to land and resources, advocacy.	Knowledge sharing, joint activities, documenting good practices, coordination of actions/exchange (also for CBOs).
<b>Swiss NGO DRR Platform</b>	Specialist group on DRR/CCA.	Knowledge sharing, setting standards in the field of DC and HA, collaboration and partnerships, advocacy work. HEKS/EPER is a member of the platform core group and carries out mandates in the name of the platform.
<b>SDC networks</b>	Professional groups: Agriculture and Food Security, Conflicts & Human Rights, Climate Change and Environment, Decentralisation & Governance, Employment & Income, Water, Gender, Disaster Risk Reduction (Resilience).	Knowledge sharing, reflecting on our own work. Joint capacity building.
<b>Conflict Sensitivity Community Hub</b>	Conflict sensitivity, conflict sensitive programming, do no harm.	HEKS/EPER has a status as a steering group member of the CSC Hub. 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.
<b>Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services</b>	Agriculture and Rural Advisory Services.	Knowledge sharing on good practices.

<b>Aguasan</b>	Specialist group on water.	Knowledge sharing on water.
<b>Swiss Water Partnership</b>	Thematic network on water.	Knowledge sharing on water.
<b>KOFF / Swisspeace</b>	Specialist group on peacebuilding.	Knowledge sharing on peacebuilding.
<b>Bread for All</b>	Development policy and cooperation.	Knowledge sharing and cooperation on climate change, gender, religion and right to food.
<b>EFECW</b>	Ecumenical Women's Network.	Knowledge sharing.
<b>WIDE</b>	Specialist group on gender.	Knowledge sharing on gender and DC.
<b>FAO NGO Working Group</b>	FAO processes, agriculture and food systems in general.	Knowledge sharing, development policy development and networking.
<b>Max Havelaar Foundation</b>	Foundation for fair trade.	Strengthening fair trade in Switzerland. HEKS/EPER is a founding member.
<b>SEVAL</b> (Swiss Evaluation Society)	Evaluations.	Experience sharing on evaluations and networking.

**Alliance Sud:** As a member of Alliance Sud, HEKS/EPER contributed to the development process of the next phase of AS strategy. HEKS/EPER staff are participating in various AS working groups.

**ACT Alliance:** In 2016, HEKS/EPER was active in various national forums of 'Actions by Churches Together'. For example, in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Palestine/Israel, the Philippines and Zimbabwe, this allows us to make use of synergies in knowledge sharing, advocacy and capacity building. Coordinating humanitarian responses after a catastrophe is also an important joint action. The main ACT partners of HEKS/EPER are Dan Church Aid, Norwegian Church Aid, the Church of Sweden, the ICCO, DKH and Bread for the World. In the 'rights and development working group', HEKS/EPER was active in coordinating and pushing forward the implementation of the strategy to cope with shrinking space for civil society.

**Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNtRtF):** In 2015, HEKS/EPER became member of the GNtRtF. The network is an initiative of public interest civil society organisations and social movements that share an understanding of the meaning of the human right to adequate food and nutrition. The topic of access to land and other natural resources is one of the core fields of intervention of the network. This includes: demands by social movements to access food production resources, territories and the commons; the struggle against land grabbing and the implementation of the tenure guidelines, etc.

In 2016, relevant interactions between HEKS/EPER and the network were:

- Support of the land caravan in West Africa in cooperation with the Global Convergence on Land and Water Struggles.
- Exploring possibilities for cooperation regarding the implementation of alert systems for the protection of HR defenders engaged in cases of violations of the right to food and other related HR.
- Exploring possibilities for cooperation regarding the organisation of fact finding missions in selected focus countries.
- Exploring possibilities with regard to the monitoring of the implementation of FAO's voluntary guidelines on the tenure of land, forests and fisheries and selected focus countries.
- Exploring possibilities to more closely align HEKS/EPER's partner organisations and their networks to the GNtRtF and its working agendas.

**KOFF:** HEKS/EPER is a member organisation of the Centre for Peacebuilding platform. An exchange forum meets frequently to discuss developments, debates, challenges and concepts, to improve conflict transformation work and conflict sensitivity. Apart from mutual learning on best practices and the development of tools, HEKS/EPER has been actively participating in following up on projects via the conflict sensitivity retreat and the development of an online learning course.

**Swiss NGO DRR platform:** HEKS/EPER is an active member of the platform and is part of the platform's core group. In 2016 HEKS/EPER organised a one-day learning event on 'DRR/CCA Basics for Mainstreaming' in June 2016. In addition, HEKS/EPER is leading the development of a learning course on

DRR, CCA and Resilience. Besides teaching the fundamentals of DRR, CCA and Resilience, the course shows the specific 'Swiss' approach to the subject and gives a variety of examples of good practice by Swiss actors in the field. The course has five modules and will be released on the Platform's website in April 2017: <http://www.drrplatform.org/>. Furthermore, HEKS/EPER collected data for examples of good practice in Niger and Cambodia, which will be published in the Swiss NGO DRR Platform 'Good Practice Collection on DRR and CCA' (WOCAT publication) in 2017.

**SDC networks:** Individual members of HEKS/EPER's staff belong to various SDC networks, such as the networks on agriculture and food security, employment and income, gender, climate, energy and environment, disaster risk reduction, and conflicts and human rights.

**Enabling environment working group:** HEKS/EPER is a proactive member of the Enabling Environment working group of the Swiss NGO forum and is the leader for one of the two focus countries. While HELVETAS is coordinating exchange activities on Laos, HEKS/EPER is facilitating exchange platforms to develop projects which aim at further enhancing an enabling environment. The work involves intense exchange with other Swiss and international NGOs, the SDC and the EDA. In 2016, HEKS/EPER co-organised the joint learning event between SDC and the Swiss NGO platform on enabling environment for civil society focusing on the role of Swiss actors to promote and expand the space for civil society in developing countries ([see also Chapter 4.4](#)).

**Informal climate change working group:** HEKS/EPER is a member of an informal working group, composed of representatives from five Swiss and German faith-based organisations (HEKS/EPER; Bread for All, Fastenopfer, Bread for the World and the Diakonie Emergency Aid). The 2016 meetings led to a rich exchange of practical knowledge concerning climate change and DRR issues, which also stimulated working contacts between the partner organisations of the various agencies and dialogue with research institutions in the countries.

**FAO NGO working group:** HEKS/EPER is a member of an informal working group of Swiss NGOs (Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Swissaid, Biovision, Alliance Sud, Bread for All, Declaration of Berne, Fastenopfer, Uniterre and HEKS/EPER) dealing with different FAO processes and other issues related to the agricultural development sector.

**Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services (SFRAS):** SFRAS is an informal group of experts from Swiss development, research, education and private sector organisations, who are involved in rural advisory services (RAS) in developing countries. HEKS/EPER regularly participates in meetings of this forum.

**BFA cooperation community:** HEKS/EPER is active in the groups on the right to food, religion and development.

**AGUASAN:** Established in 1984, it is an interdisciplinary Swiss community that brings together a wide range of specialists to promote wider and deeper understanding of key issues in water supply, sanitation and hygiene in developing countries. It is helpful for increasing HEKS/EPER's competence in water-related matters.

**Swiss Water Partnership:** HEKS/EPER benefits from SWP, which brings together relevant stakeholders to promote a sustainable and equitable use and management of water resources and universal access to water and sanitation, as well as being a strong voice on water policies and a dynamic learning platform.

**WIDE Switzerland:** WIDE examines Swiss development politics, as well as economic policy and foreign affairs, with a focus on gender relations, to engage in the public debate and to convey knowledge in these subject areas. HEKS/EPER uses this knowledge to improve the mainstreaming of gender issues in its programmes.

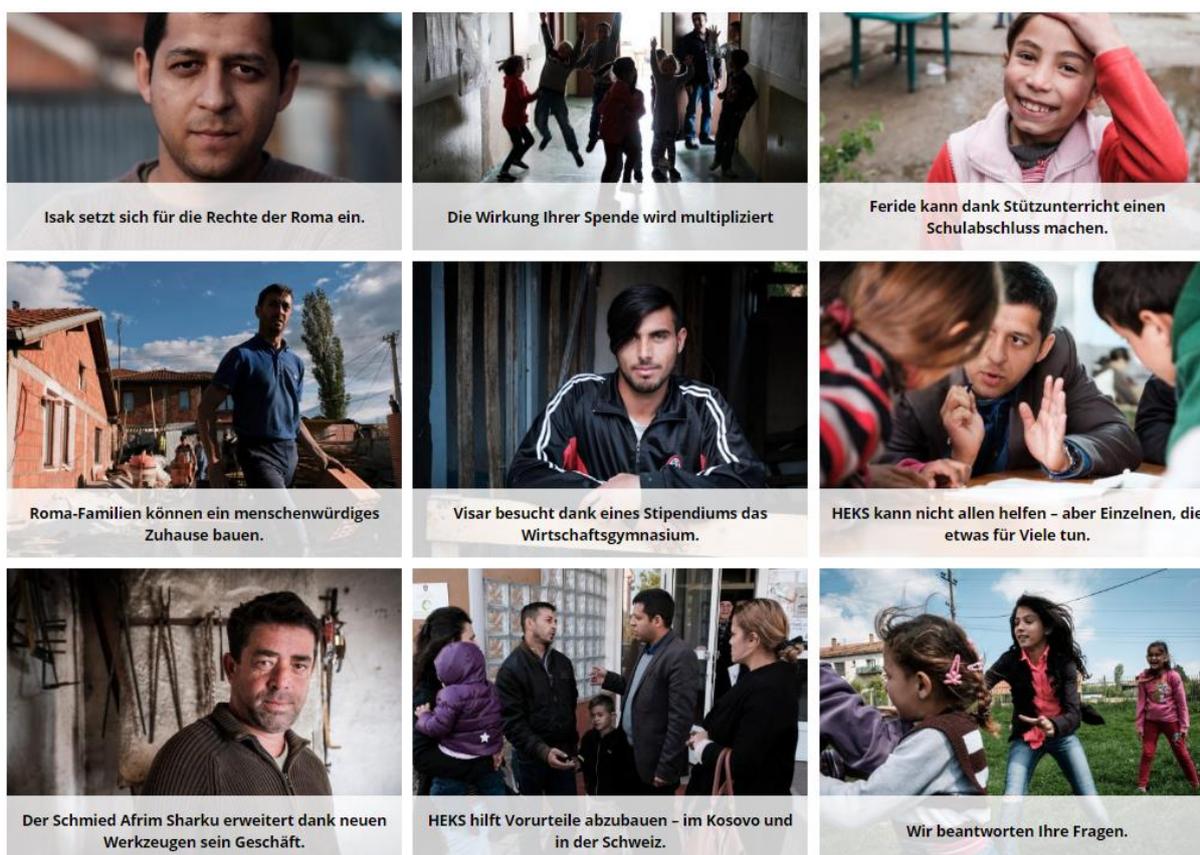
**United Nations humanitarian clusters:** HEKS/EPER is a member of the relevant humanitarian response clusters. These clusters can change depending on the sectors/countries HEKS/EPER is responding in. For example, in the Philippines, HEKS/EPER/TFM is involved in the food, shelter and early recovery/livelihoods clusters (Roxas City/Panay Island).

**The Swiss Evaluation Society:** The Swiss Evaluation Society 'Seval' helps HEKS/EPER share experience and improve the quality of its field evaluations, involving politics, academia, administration, NGOs and the private sector.

## 9 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 work: In 2016, HEKS/EPER provided the public with information about its emergency aid for war refugees in northern Iraq, Syria, Italy, Turkey and Ukraine through press releases and its monthly newsletter, reported on its emergency aid for the victims of Hurricane Matthew in Haiti and the drought in Zimbabwe as well as on the peace agreement in Colombia and the 'land caravan' against the violent expulsion of smallholders in Africa. HEKS/EPER provided information about other particular aspects of its project work in the four editions of the magazine *handeln*.
- Campaign on the integration of Roma in Kosovo: 'If you're wondering whether donations are worthwhile – ask him!' was HEKS/EPER's message to the Swiss people in its 2016 campaign. It then provided an answer on the campaign website [www.fragen-sie-ihn.ch](http://www.fragen-sie-ihn.ch) based on its efforts on behalf of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians minorities discriminated against in Kosovo. HEKS/EPER and its local partner organisation 'Voice of RAE' are helping Roma in Kosovo to improve their living conditions with a broad-based programme. The Roma families can build houses with electricity and running water and improve their job prospects. The children can attend school and young people can undertake vocational training or degrees. An advertisement, a documentary and extensive material for collection initiatives by the church parishes complete the campaign.



**HEKS/EPER's annual campaign – 2016 on Roma inclusion in Kosovo. Picture: presence on the website.**

- Corporate responsibility initiative: The initiative supported by HEKS/EPER and 79 other organisations was submitted to the Federal Chancellery in October 2016 with around 120'000 valid signatures. The initiative is based on the UN guiding principles for business and human rights and calls for binding regulations for Swiss companies operating internationally. They should also be legally obliged to adhere to human rights and environmental standards abroad. The victims of human rights violations should be able to take legal action against companies in Switzerland and claim compensation.

- Climate alliance for a fair climate policy: HEKS/EPER is a member of the Klima-Allianz, a coalition of 70 organisations from the fields of environmental, development and social policy as well as politicians and churches who are campaigning for a fair and sustainable climate policy in Switzerland. It is calling for Switzerland to completely convert its energy supply to renewable sources by 2050 and to support developing countries financially with climate protection and adaptation measures. In 2016, the Klima-Allianz monitored the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement in Switzerland and regularly adopted a position on the planned measures through which Switzerland aims to achieve the agreed climate goals. It also advocated structured withdrawal from nuclear energy before the referendum and launched the 'Renten ohne Risiko' (Pensions without Risk) campaign, which calls on the pension funds to sell off shares in fossil-fuel companies.
- 'Weckruf gegen Hunger und Armut' (Wake Up to Hunger and Poverty) – in view of the looming cuts to the federal budget for international cooperation for the period 2017–2020, HEKS/EPER and 74 other organisations from Swiss civil society launched the 'Weckruf gegen Hunger und Armut' campaign and – together with over 36'000 people – called upon the National Council and Council of States to use 0.7% of gross domestic product (GDP) for this purpose. Only in this way can the objectives of the UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable development be achieved. It is also part of Switzerland's humanitarian tradition to support the establishment of fair societies and the rule of law and to back the global fight for life in safety, freedom and dignity. Parliament refrained from making overly drastic cuts but nevertheless reduced planned expenditure to 0.48% of GDP.
- Events at church parishes: HEKS/EPER employees regularly provide information about the aid organisation and its project work abroad at public events in church parishes, at panel discussions or confirmation classes. HEKS/EPER held 131 such events in 2016.
- 'Eastern Europe Day': People from Eastern Europe and the Balkans have been migrating west for years in search of better economic prospects. Almost only elderly people remain behind in the villages. The 28<sup>th</sup> 'Eastern Europe Day' provided around 150 participants with the opportunity to gain an in-depth insight into the causes and consequences of migration in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. While Bernhard Odehnal, Eastern Europe correspondent for *Tages-Anzeiger* newspaper, provided an overview of the situation in Eastern Europe and in the Balkans, Antoinette Killias, HEKS/EPER's head of the Swiss division, explained the impact of migration from Eastern Europe on Switzerland and how HEKS/EPER helps immigrants to integrate. At the workshops, participants gained an in-depth understanding of specific issues with guests from the HEKS/EPER project countries.
- Benefit concert for fleeing families: The benefit concert for HEKS/EPER took place in the almost sold-out Tonhalle in Zurich on 23 April. The Janáček Philharmonie Ostrava symphony orchestra provided the 1'400 guests with a memorable musical experience with wonderful music and a delightful wind instrument section and raised just under CHF 60'000 for the HEKS/EPER projects for refugees in Iraq, Lebanon, Serbia and Switzerland. HEKS/EPER's major donors also attended the *Fleeing Families – Helping Then and Now* exhibition as part of an exclusive event and a reading by the Swiss-Romanian author Dana Gricorcea.
- *Onlookers'* exhibition: HEKS/EPER also presented the *Onlookers'* exhibition at various venues in Switzerland in 2016. In the exhibition, former participants in the oecumenical support programme EAPPI, which supports HEKS/EPER with public relations work and raising awareness, report on their work as human rights observers in the West Bank using texts, images and videos.

## 10 Emerging patterns of HEKS/EPER's international cooperation

At HEKS/EPER's headquarters, the 2016 annual country reports from DevCo country offices, humanitarian aid projects and church cooperation as well as the results of various M&E tools were shared, analysed and rated. As in previous years, emerging patterns of HEKS/EPER's various interventions – either opportunities or challenges – most relevant to HEKS/EPER have been identified and are described in this chapter. HEKS/EPER will work on these identified issues during 2017 onwards to make significant contributions to improving equality and prosperity among people and communities in need.

- 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, M&E tools, initiatives, etc. may emerge.
- HIP patterns and steering decisions are incorporated into discussions/workshops in areas such as HHQ management meetings, regional meetings, partner meetings in the countries, DO with CO exchange and the biannual IDFs.

### 10.1 Patterns from 2011 to 2016

Identified patterns from previous years proved to be landmarks for new developments within HEKS/EPER, refining its profile and actions. **Figure 10** 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 2015 ([Chapter 8.1](#)). Below is a compilation of how HEKS/EPER dealt with the clearest patterns:

**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 4.1](#) and [Chapter 9.1](#)).

**Systemic perspective:** Achieving systemic change has become increasingly important in the implementation of HEKS/EPER's programmes and projects. HEKS/EPER seeks to foster transformations in the structure or dynamics of a system that lead to impacts for a large numbers of people, either in their attitudes and values, material conditions, behaviour or access to information, services and products. At the ID forum, a workshop was held on the systemic perspective, which was the basis for incorporating this principle in the new HIP phase 2017–2020.

**From 'food security' to '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 to a **market-oriented approach** that emphasises income generation and market demand. In parallel, the access to land strategy has been adapted. With the HIP 2017–20, HEKS/EPER moved from the value chain approach towards adopting a systemic approach to an inclusive market system development. 'Classic' value chain development has limited success delivering sustainable impacts because of weak linkages between the beneficiaries and other value chain actors. The 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. Pursuing systemic changes in market development involves developing a vision for a more efficient, inclusive and equitable market system and working from a number of angles with critical market players to achieve this goal in a self-sustaining way. 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 after the end of a project's involvement in facilitating the market system change. A value chain is NOT confined to complex, internationally traded products/services. For example, a rural producer is involved in a value chain / market

system, even if (s)he is trading rice seeds, without the using money, between producers or selling vegetable on local markets or to neighbours.

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Taking into account the many dimensions of 'access to land'	Taking into account the many dimensions of 'access to land'	Taking into account the many dimensions of 'access to land'	Taking into account the many dimensions of 'access to land'	Taking into account the many dimensions of 'access to land'	Taking into account the many dimensions of 'access to land'
Networks / partnerships to be effective	Networks / partnerships to be effective	Networks / partnerships to be effective	Networks / partnerships to be effective	Networks / partnerships to be effective	Networks / partnerships effective, security, up-scaling, systemic
	Link short-term and long-term support for 'meaningful' projects	Link short-term and long-term support for 'meaningful' projects	Link short-term and long-term support for 'meaningful' projects	Link short-term and long-term support for 'meaningful' projects	
	Focus on young people / migration / urban vs rural ...	Focus on young people / migration / urban vs rural ...	Focus on young people / migration / urban vs rural ...	Focus on young people / migration / urban vs rural ...	
	Striving for systemic change for sustainable change		Striving for systemic change for sustainable change	Striving for systemic change for sustainable change	Inclusive Market: Striving for systemic sustainable change
	Space for reflection, knowledge sharing and learning	Space for reflection, knowledge sharing, and learning	Space for reflection, knowledge sharing, and learning		
		DRR / Resilience building for sustainable change	DRR / Resilience building for sustainable change	DRR / Resilience building for sustainable change	
		EE and how to cope with increasing insecurity and fragility	EE and how to cope with increasing insecurity and fragility	EE and how to cope with increasing insecurity and fragility	EE and how to cope with increasing insecurity and fragility
		Complexity challenges our reading and assessment of impact and RBM	Complexity challenges our reading and assessment of impact and RBM	Complexity challenges our reading and assessment of impact, and RBM	
		Holistic approach and HRBA to spot diapraxis, handling conflict sensitivity	Holistic approach and HRBA to spot diapraxis, handling conflict sensitivity	Holistic approach and HRBA to spot diapraxis, handling conflict sensitivity	HA, social cohesion and conflict sensitivity
		Enabling management: strengthening PCM, human resources, expertise...	Enabling management: strengthening PCM, human resources, expertise...	Enabling management: strengthening PCM, human resources, expertise...	Enabling management: human resources, expertise
Abuse of drugs, alcohol, and increased domestic violence				Abuse of drugs, alcohol, and increased domestic violence	

Figure 15: At knowledge-sharing workshops during the reporting process, HEKS/EPER identified recurring patterns affecting its work.

**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 in certain countries such as Iraq, Honduras and Zimbabwe.

**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 the next HIP phase.

**Insecurity and fragility:** There is little evidence that the number of fragile 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 in developing countries. Government development agencies, including the SDC, are shifting the focus of their programmes towards countries or areas with a fragile context. The rationale behind this is that countries in these conditions can barely provide the basic needs of its people, namely the poor. With HEKS/EPER having already been operating in such contexts for many years now, it is of interest to understand whether its projects have a particular impact, due to the approach, or whether the critics are right who claim that support based on the development model is not feasible in such situations.

**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](#)).

## 10.2 Patterns related to HEKS/EPER's work in 2016

In 2016, the HHQ team identified 15 key patterns emerging from and around HEKS/EPER's international cooperation activities, including issues like capacity development for HEKS/EPER staff, partners and project participants, access to land or enabling environment for civil society actors. 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 or opportunities.

### 10.2.1 Conflict sensitivity in humanitarian aid

#### Systematisation and capacity building

HEKS/EPER refers to neutrality and impartiality in its HA programmes. Nevertheless, interventions in a certain context always become part of the (conflict) context. Do no harm is therefore an important part of HEKS/EPER HA concept. With the new HIP 2017–20, conflict sensitivity (CS) has been strengthened in all the three divisions of ID: DevCo, HA and CC as a cross-cutting issue ([Chapter 7.2](#)). The complexity of the context in which emergencies occur and the urgent need for aid pose, particularly in the context of HA, challenges to operating according to a conflict-sensitive approach. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated that HA activities are only effective and sustainable, if implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner. Therefore, CS will be strengthened in HEKS/EPER's HA projects and programmes. The systematisation of CS as a cross-cutting issue in all HA projects and programs during the 2017–2020 implementation phase includes:

- CS assessment before project implementation as standard.
- CS assessments are always linked to interventions.
- Systematic planning of CS assessments (funding, time frame, participatory approach, etc.).
- CS capacity building field offices and partners.

Focusing more on CS also in the field of HA has revealed that there is a need for capacity building in the field offices as well as among partner organisations. For example, the difference between conflict transformation and conflict sensitivity is not always clear. HA interventions may not contribute to conflict transformation but will certainly be sensitive to the conflict as well as careful to avoid causing or increasing conflicts.

One of the measures in regard to fostering capacity building in CS has been the development of an online course in collaboration with Caritas Switzerland, Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, swisspeace/KOFF and SDC. The course will be completed by all HEKS/EPER ID staff involved in operational activities by the end of 2017. The course will be completed with an individual action plan on CS under the supervision of the CS thematic advisors.

### **Link between conflict sensitivity and social cohesion**

Experience has demonstrated the importance of interlinking conflict-sensitive interventions according to the new HIP DevCo objective 8: 'improved intra- & inter-group relations' and the existing objective 'strengthened social cohesion' ([Chapter 4.3](#)). For example, the experience with the humanitarian intervention closely linked to the DevCo Roma inclusion programme shows that successful integration of Roma into the mainstream society can only be reached by also addressing the majority population throughout the entire inclusion process. Therefore, all projects primarily adopted needs-based as opposed to ethnicity-based approaches to select beneficiaries. In Serbia, the project on flood rehabilitation, relocation solutions were found in both Obrenovac and Lazarevac. In Obrenovac, good relationships with the municipalities which were built as part of the conflict mitigation strategy were maintained and so far the relationship with neighbours is good. Implementation of soft components has started and will be continued in 2017.

In the Lebanon HA programme ([Chapter 5.1](#) and [Appendix A2](#)), one of the main challenges faced by the Palestinian host community is the massive deterioration of the environmental health conditions in the camps with the influx of up to 100'000 refugees from Syria. The camps were already crowded and infrastructure on the verge of collapse before the Syrian crisis and the influx of refugees. As a result, rubbish started piling up in the streets, contaminating water and attracting rats and insects. Tensions between host and refugee communities increased over time since they both struggle to survive with resources becoming scarcer. To address both these issues, HEKS/EPER launched a cash-for-work project where refugees were able to earn an additional USD 50/ month for cleaning the camps on a daily basis. With only two hours of work every day, the CfW workers at the camps have made a considerable change and are appreciated by both communities.

Lessons learnt and findings from practical experiences:

- Emergencies may promote social cohesion and improve group relations when done in a conflict-sensitive manner.
- Improving relations between host communities and refugees should be an aim in HA interventions.
- Long-term HA interventions in particular should foster social cohesion.
- Social cohesion is key to resilience, with resilience not being having an economic perspective.

### **10.2.2 Decreasing security and shrinking space**

Shrinking space and security problems were already key patterns during the last three years and emerged in 2016 again as a challenge for people and communities as well as for CSOs and NGOs in the countries, but also for HEKS/EPER as an implementer and donor. HEKS/EPER has analysed the topic over the past years in various processes and meetings within its own organisation as well as with external stakeholders (Swiss NGO platform working group on enabling environment; ACT Alliance EE working group; SDC). Examples of continuous learning were the ACT Alliance study on shrinking space for civil society and the follow-up conference in Malawi (November 2013) as well as the permanent exchange with the ACT EE working group and a joint ACT project on EE in Zimbabwe. With the Swiss EE working group, HEKS/EPER co-organised the joint learning event in September 2016 with the SDC and facilitated and organised a workshop in collaboration with Bread for the World at the CSO Forum at the Global Partnership for Development Effectiveness HLM2 in Nairobi in November 2016 (see also [Chapter 4.4](#)).

Shrinking space for civil society caused by a restrictive political/economic/social environment and violence are also significant threats to effective development in HEKS/EPER priority programmes. Without an active civil society no sustainable development is possible, because without ownership and participation the

people and communities, in a longer term, do not benefit from development interventions. Corruption, poor governance and inequalities hamper enabling environments.

Security is the basis for any work in development and provides space for local civil society actors to work towards equal rights and prosperity despite a non-enabling environment. But HEKS/EPER is faced with criminal acts against civil society activists enjoying impunity, including killings in Honduras and Brazil. In Iraq, South Sudan, Palestine/Israel, Ukraine and in DR Congo, the HEKS/EPER country office and partners partly lose access to project areas due to war or unrest – especially in the South Sudan where the country programme is severely hampered by the civil war.

The absence of government as in Haiti or DR Congo and economic deprivation or natural disasters as in Haiti with deteriorating natural resources are catalysts for shrinking space and less security. With ongoing social and political unrest and/or upcoming elections, countries like Cambodia, Ethiopia, Armenia, Moldova, Turkey, Zimbabwe and Israel shrink the space for local communities and free CSO and NGO actions through various restrictions and stigmatisation of CSO leaders by the government. The denial of freedom of speech and peaceful assembly leads to less ownership, fragmentation and conflicts.

Under the real or fake threat of terrorism, many governments restrict fund and adopt laws to rein in civil society. These rules have the advantage of seeming ordinary, routine and apolitical – for example, those requiring honest and transparent budgeting or simple administrative registration. Yet autocrats seeking to stifle civil society have used legal constraints to accomplish far more: to undermine the very independence of civic groups. In ‘western countries’, e.g. Switzerland, increased surveillance and calls for restricting laws affect not only the countries itself, but undermine activities of Swiss NGOs in international cooperation (planned restrictions of freedom of speech for foreigners, planned restrictions on NGO financing abroad and the initiative to leave the European convention on human rights).

HEKS/EPER wants to counter these negative trends. In 2016, 22 HEKS/EPER projects included a clear EE objective. Many other projects included EE components as a working approach. With the new HIP 2017–2020, HEKS/EPER put more emphasis on enabling environment. Key recommendations according to HEKS/EPER analysis to foster EE are:

- Do profound analysis on context, risks, stakeholders and design, then programmatic intervention lines including HRBA and security management. HEKS/EPER has to cope with fragile contexts and its dynamics and therefore has to be ready to adapt its interventions and security plans.
- Using PCM tools like the M&E plan, the follow-up matrix to document and analyse progress, taking steering decisions and promoting adapted objectives help to adjust projects. Does HEKS/EPER withdraw or use a different approach? Could new partners address problems better or do we cope better thanks to capacity building? HEKS/EPER has to be ready to take decisions – quickly enough and appropriately.
- Good standards, organisational framework, identity of NGO/CSO and operating independently foster credibility.
- COs and POs must be able to detect windows of opportunities to act in a non-enabling environment.
- Work towards a pluralistic participative society (democracy).
- Rights, laws, constitution, conventions, violations of rights, etc.: **disseminating knowledge and skills and advocacy**. Foster capacity to gather and analyse information from communities and other sources. Pool knowledge to contribute effectively to national planning and policymaking processes.
- Mobilisation of people and access to/dialogue with duty-bearers are key – emphasis on dialogue with young people to foster cohesion and inclusion.
- Reaching out also to informal civil society without always trying to formalise them. Involve formal CSO as intermediaries and design capacity development towards defining their own agenda and strategies and leaderships.
- **Networking** is key – local, national and international. **Build alliances** between CBOs/CSOs/NGOs/iNGOs/enabling duty-bearers and other stakeholders **to protect civil society space and to strengthen protection mechanisms**. Bridge the gap between those working on development and those working on human rights/justice. Identify EE measures jointly.
- HEKS/EPER facilitates the dialogue between CSOs and duty-bearers. INGOs and government aid agencies should create spaces and building capacities for effective public dialogue, analysis and research.
- HEKS/EPER is a reliable partner that remains in fragile contexts, being a responsible and conflict-sensitive partner/donor.

- HEKS/EPER holistic approach as well as HRBA as the foundation of all HEKS/EPER activities are helpful. Do not allow a gap between 'service delivery' and 'human rights work'.

### 10.2.3 Inclusive markets – opportunities and limitations

As one of the core objectives of HEKS/EPER's work, there was a continuous discussion on this topic in recent years. In 2015, HEKS/EPER published new guidelines on market systems development (MSD), which led to various capacity-building events in several countries. Depending on the country context, the following questions and issues remain open and need further in-depth discussions and exchange in the next years:

- Challenge of including and reaching the poorest families with MSD interventions.
- Defining where and under what other conditions an M4P / MSD approach makes sense and where other approaches may lead to more tangible outcomes.
- Further reflections on how to best include the private sector in interventions.
- How to best use MSD approaches for diapraxis as well (e.g. example of Bangladesh).
- Assessment of the necessary capacities of HEKS/EPER and partner organisations staff in implementing a MSD approach and corresponding capacity building.
- Specific challenge in implementing MSD interventions for organic markets (e.g. Georgia, Senegal).
- How to best use the opportunities arising in middle-income countries with more purchasing power, increasing awareness among the population with regards to health and environmental protection.

In order to tackle these issues and answer these questions, HEKS/EPER will look for further synergies with external actors and networks, adapt its profile depending on the context and its competences, invest in sound market systems analysis, and look for new and innovative approaches addressing market systems constraints in order to support front runners but at the same time leave no one behind. More on the institutional evolution of access to market, see also [Chapter 10.1](#) 'From food security to inclusive markets' and for progress 2016 on inclusive markets see [Chapter 4.2](#).



An inclusive and efficient market system means that also small-scale farmers have the possibility to sell their products to generate income to improve their livelihood. Including remote and poor families in 'market projects' is a challenge. Picture – family farm in the Cerrado region in Brazil.

#### 10.2.4 Effective networks and alliances

The need for more strategic, effective and efficient networking has been a recurring topic during previous strategy and planning workshops, and has as such been recognised as an essential component of the new HIP 2017–2020. It is important to consider various aspects of networking (such as external vs. internal, national vs international), and it is always a means to an end (e.g. increased knowledge, visibility, impact etc.), never the end in of itself.

##### Internal exchange and networking

As an organisation that implements projects through three working sections (DC, HA and CC) on four different continents, HEKS/EPER sees great potential in creating an enabling environment for effective cooperation and exchanges across these sections and countries. This will be done by encouraging collaborative behaviour that breaks through blinkered thinking, and supported by technology solutions that facilitate remote collaboration. Recommendations are:

- Facilitate the creation of internal thematic networks and working groups that encourage exchanges and mutual learning on challenges and best practices.
- Facilitate exchanges between DC and CC partner organisations (where appropriate) to inspire learning, e.g. on how to motivate and work with volunteers.
- Identify and intentionally use complementary mandates and strengths of HA and DC partner organisations in reaching different segments of society and bridge the humanitarian-development divide.

##### External engagement, networking, alliances and partnering

There are many reasons why HEKS/EPER is already actively involved in external engagement and networking (see [Chapter 8.6](#)), and intends to further increase its efforts in this area. Through networking, HEKS/ EPER pursues different objectives:

- Improved technical capacity through learning and knowledge sharing e.g. through thematic working groups with other NGOs on disaster risk reduction and other relevant topics.
- Access to additional capacities such as human resources, increased knowledge and information, effective tools, etc.
- Increased visibility and profile of HEKS/ EPER as an expert organisation on core topics (e.g. through active participation and contribution at conferences, publications).
- Amplified voice for advocacy and lobbying e.g. through Alliance Sud in Switzerland or as a member of the Right to Food and Nutrition Network to foster the topic of access to land at global level.
- Seeking to increase protection of CBOs, local POs as well as people and communities we work with – strategic cooperation and advocacy can lower risks for actors of civil society, especially human-rights-defenders.
- Increased effectiveness of and possibilities to scale-up country programmes through strategic partnerships, alliances and active participation in consortia.
- Increased internal efficiencies and less duplications (e.g. through shared security management or joint needs assessments).

While it is clear that networking is an essential aspect of our work, it is critical to strike the right balance and determine how and where to invest precious staff time or finances for networking in light of capacity limitations. Recommendations are:

- Conduct comprehensive external landscape mappings (development and humanitarian donors, partners, networks) as part of country strategy development processes.
- Create and regularly review and update external engagement plans based on strategic priorities in order to determine best return on investment on behalf of networks and alliances.
- Encourage and better equip country offices and partner organisations with the necessary skills and resources to effectively network at national level.
- Define and clearly communicate HEKS/EPER's added value for partnerships, and take our core values into account.

### 10.2.5 Selecting and supporting competent staff and partners

Having a new strategy, coherent guidelines, a new FFAG (see [Chapter 8.5](#)) and a revised PCM (see [Chapter 8.4](#)) in place, successful implementation comes down to good management as well as competent and motivated staff. How to create and maintain an ‘enabling management’, ‘staff capacities’ and an adapted ‘partner and project portfolio’ have been a topic in various annual report workshops and part of the enabling management topic at IDF 2015 as well as of the hub strategy discussion (competences of COs) in the framework of the HIP 2017–2020 with thematic competence in offices strengthened through thematic field officers and reinforced capacity building on PCM, resilience, DRP, conflict, market, etc. (see also [Chapter 8.1](#) and [Chapter 8.2](#)). The HEKS/EPER capacity survey 2016 on needs and strengths in implementing the HIP key topics for capacity building were acquisition, inclusive market, advocacy strategies, access to water, diapraxis, enabling environment, systemic perspective, HRBA, HA and linking HA with DevCo. While planning a CP or HA activity, it is always important to set realistic objectives based not only on needs, but also on existing expertise and/or possibilities to build up needed capacities or to adapt the partner portfolio.

A permanent task is staff turnover or not finding adequately skilled staff (wages, field work not attractive, difficult context, etc.). Therefore HEKS/EPER needs an attractive job package for CO staff, not only defined by a high remuneration, but with incentives like positive work atmosphere and prospect of individual job and skill development – components such as capacity training, mutual exchange with other countries.

The relationship between POs and COs has to be clear in each country with transparent communication defining the line between professional distance and mutual trust. POs will be independent from HEKS/EPER with their own agenda, with HEKS/EPER not intervening in internal structures, nevertheless PO capacity building remains key enabling them to cope with standards, but also to gain thematic competence. Strategies to also include grassroots organisations in project activities have to be clarified at country level.

COs must have adequate finances and resources for ‘soft factors’ like facilitating, advocacy, capacity building, networking and alliance building. Including networks in existing projects or having small projects for advocacy and networking measures on CP level are ways forward.

### 10.3 Further patterns in 2016

Other opportunities identified, but which are rated as less important by HEKS/EPER staff, for increasing the relevance of HEKS/EPER’s activities were:

- Systemic perspective: The case of Brazil with the change in government in 2016 showed that a perceived systemic change to guarantee income with a value chain focusing on selling agricultural products on the institutional market (food schemes for schools and state-run social institutions) was not working anymore. With the new government, a new policy cutting funding for social/educational schemes left farmers and cooperatives losing their ‘market access’ and having difficulties in selling the products to other clients (see [Chapter 4.2](#)).  
POs and also some COs are not yet able to think or act towards systemic change, therefore capacity building or knowledge sharing in networks is needed.  
On the other hand the Roma programme in Kosovo and partly in Romania and Serbia show the success of systemic approaches with integration measures supported, paid and included in government policy.
- Linking DevCo, HA and CC: CC partners can inspire DC partners, e.g. via activities to foster face-to-face intergroup relations and working with volunteers. DevCo-HA linkages to be strengthened according the new HIP dealing better with recurrent ‘humanitarian’ patterns like countries with alternating droughts/floods (Cambodia) and programmes meandering between HA and DevCo like Niger, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Haiti and South Sudan. Important: Not evoking any charity approach that make people develop a ‘receiver mentality’.
- Church organisations are stable sustainable organisations and have a high profile in grassroots work. However they have structural limitations – geographical, political positioning or internal hierarchy. Nevertheless, diaconal organisations tend towards professionalism and impartiality in their efforts. E.g. church partners gained relevance with its programmes on social inclusion.
- Working with service providers in a M4P approach shows positive results for small-scale farmers.
- Importance of agro-ecological production for sustainable agriculture, yields and income.

## 11 Perspectives on the implementation of the HEKS/EPER international programme

The perspectives written in this annual report are in line with the starting perspectives in HIP 2017–2020. Already by end of 2015, HEKS/EPER clearly stated that overall continuity will be a hallmark of the next phase, building on the strengths of the international programme 2013–2017. Objectives, approaches and principles are refined and embrace the perspectives for 2017 with the following adaptations or continuations. Perspectives starting the phase of HIP 2017-2020 implementation:

- **Continuing with the three sections of DevCo, HA and CC** with their specific theories of change and objectives. They have been rephrased to point out how programmes and projects will generate impact; however, by large the intervention rationale represents an evolutionary continuation of the previous HIP. Synergies among the three sections of HEKS/EPER (DevCo, HA and CC) will be used systematically for more effective and relevant HIP implementation.
- **HRBA remains the reference framework** of HEKS/EPER's work fostering human rights, enabling environment and conflict transformation, but also enabling access to land, resources, services or an inclusive market system. It is also applicable for CC and HA.
- **The holistic perspective** – understood as the interdependence of 'single' objectives – remains key. It will continue to enhance in-depth context analysis with 'broad holistic lenses' and link the various fields of actions of programmes/projects to make progress towards the ToCs of each section. The holistic perspective in the ToC of DevCo is well-established.
- **A systemic perspective** was already being aimed at through conflict transformation and the application of a HRBA during the HIP 2013–2017. A continuous pattern identified in the progress analysis was the need to 'strive for systemic change'. Emphasising the importance of the systemic perspective, the HIP 2017–2020 considers the topic as an inherent 'principle' of the entire HIP for enhancing systemic changes to overcome inequalities at their roots up to governance level, meaningful for disadvantaged individuals, households and communities.
- The HIP 2017–2020 strives for **inclusive and efficient market systems**, expanding the previous focus on value chain development and access to markets. Regional meetings in 2017 will involve capacity building and knowledge exchange on this topic.
- **Mainstreaming gender, conflict sensitivity and resilience:** HEKS/EPER has been promoting gender **aspects** in its programming and implementation for many years. Nevertheless, in the next phase, more emphasis will be placed on gender, including a process of mainstreaming the topic, including more resources. **Resilience** in HIP 2017–2020 is an inherent part of the DevCo theory of change and HEKS/EPER continues to mainstream the topic. More in-depth analysis is needed on how to deal with psychosocial components and values in order to overcome fragility, transform conflicts and enhance social cohesion. This will lead to more resilience and less conflict potential. Dealing with root causes of violent conflicts and enabling space for civil society actions continues to be a core topic of HEKS/EPER; especially because HEKS/EPER is working mainly in fragile contexts. A number of programmes are focused on keeping up dialogue between duty-bearers and a vibrant inclusive civil society. HIP strategies aim at providing alternatives to unjust structures and authoritarian rule, advocating for long-term political change.
- **Humanitarian aid:** The roll-out of the HA implementation concept with its clear priorities will also enhance the response capacity in all priority countries, for example, by developing disaster response plans.
- Creating more **prospects for refugees** (HA) and for young people in rural communities (DevCo) – with topics such as education, employment, income, social cohesion and security – to avoid brain drain, recruitment into violence, apathy, etc. HEKS/EPER ID will also link-up with HEKS/EPER Switzerland for a coherent overall strategy.
- **Church cooperation** will evaluate its pilot activities in the Middle East in order to strengthen the values of a multi-religious and pluralistic society through its cooperation with reformed minority churches. The next church cooperation concept paper 2018–2022 will be the new guiding document and ready by end of 2017.
- HEKS/EPER fosters '**enabling management**' towards an effective, relevant and impact-oriented programme implementation with comprehensive management guidelines and administrative tools such as the FFAG. Relevant management figures and indicators will be transferred into the ERP system

and key information for steering and learning. However, a well-balanced partner portfolio, effective alliances and networks, multi-stakeholder approaches and approaching duty-bearers remain key to fostering effectiveness, knowledge sharing, protection and advocacy when striving for systemic changes and to achieve the objectives.

- The adjusted and improved **PCM** including a sound M&E system will help significantly in planning, implementing, monitoring, learning from and steering the HIP 2017–20. With its reflective approach, HEKS/EPER remains a learning organisation reflecting on its activities, the progress and documenting lessons learnt as well as steering decisions in its reporting.
- **Promoting ownership and mutual accountability:** MSC interviews ([Chapter 8.4.2](#)) identified a need for a self-critical review of its activities and adjustment of the strategic priorities and objectives to enable people and communities to express their needs, to define and pursue their aims. An increasingly effective concept to tackle this hurdle is adaptive management, which partly implies the implementation of short-iteration cycles or of a portfolio approach with only the most promising and relevant interventions being promoted and replicated.
- **Contribution towards SDGs:** As laid down in the new HIP and also in the context chapter of this document (see [Chapter 2](#)), HEKS/EPER views itself being an organisation fostering the SDGs in Switzerland and abroad within the framework of its mandate, strategies as well as strengths and capacities. Therefore, HEKS/EPER participates in the national process contributing to the 17 goals of sustainable development together with other Swiss civil society organisations.



Protection of mangroves in Senegal by local women's group

The HIP annual report 2016 has been jointly elaborated by HEKS/EPER's ID staff and was published in April 2017.

**HEKS/EPER – Swiss Church Aid**

Headquarters	Phone	+41 44 360 88 00
Seminarstrasse 28	Fax	+41 44 360 88 01
Postfach	Email	info@heks.ch
8042 Zürich	Web	www.heks.ch



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

## Appendices

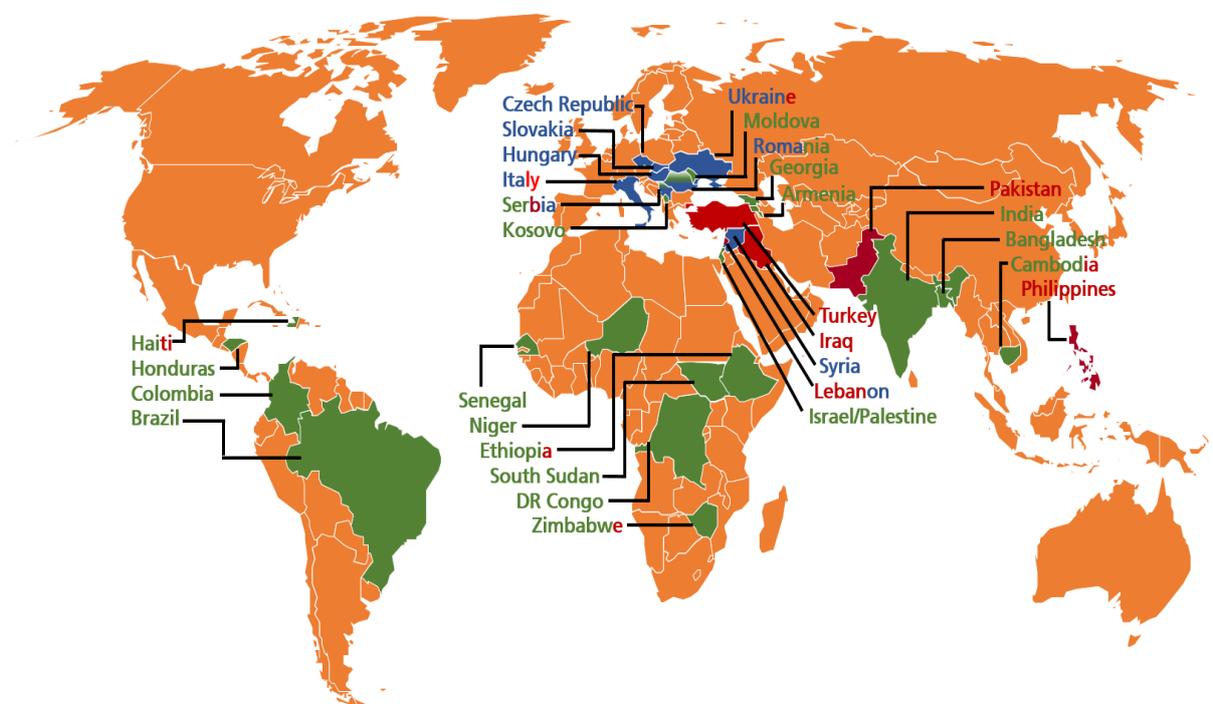
### A) Activities by country (DevCo, HA and CC)

This chapter highlights the main activities and achievements according to the 32 countries HEKS/EPER/EPER was active in in 2016. The respective programme costs are published in [Chapter 8.5](#). Key insights on programme progress are summarised in Chapters [4](#) (DevCo), [5](#) (HA) and [6](#) (CC) according to the overarching objectives. In addition, you will find in-depth analysis in [Chapter 8.4](#) for countries where evaluations have been carried out.

Interested readers can check the yearly country reports for 2016 for each DevCo priority programme and HA intervention, available on request ([stefan.gisler@heks.ch](mailto:stefan.gisler@heks.ch)).

HEKS/EPER around the world 2016

Green = DevCo Red = HA Blue = CC



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

#### A. 1 Africa

##### Ethiopia

The conflict between the authoritarian government and sections of the population escalated in 2016. Hundreds of people were killed during protests. The limited room for manoeuvre for NGOs – particularly in the HEKS/EPER project areas of Kofale and Gudur – has complicated the practical implementation of projects. HEKS/EPER is therefore also seeking to work in new areas and focus more intensively on the protection of natural resources (land, forests, water and seeds) as well as on pastoralism. In 2016, HEKS/EPER completed a multi-year water project in Shashamene and handed it over to the authorities and people. A total of 16'500 people also obtained secure access to clean drinking water in Kofale thanks to two HEKS/EPER projects.

In the southern Borana region, HEKS/EPER helped 4'200 people to deal with challenging environmental conditions (drought, soil low in nutrients, flooding, scrub encroachment, etc.) through improved water management and modified farming methods. Over 2'000 smallholding families improved their incomes thanks to diversified agriculture with vegetable growing, honey production, small-scale livestock farming and aloe processing. However, many farmers still do not have adequate regular and profitable access to markets. Greater effort must be made to support people in peacefully asserting their rights vis-à-vis the authorities (HRBA).

### **DR Congo**

Despite continual recurrence of violence, an unstable political situation and poor economic circumstances, HEKS/EPER – together with its seven partners – was able to help around 8'300 people in the rural eastern Congolese regions of Rutshuru, Masisi and southern Lubero. A key element of this was the psychosocial support and reintegration of almost 1'000 people who had experienced violence in the armed conflicts or women who had suffered sexual abuse. HEKS/EPER also mediated in 250 cases of land disputes at various meetings. Seven cooperatives with over 400 farmers almost doubled their income from cassava. HEKS/EPER launched peacebuilding activities with two new partners in 2016. This is a key requirement for economic development and greater security, especially in this part of the Congo.

### **Niger**

Food shortages and chronic malnutrition are a constant threat to people in Niger. HEKS/EPER therefore attaches great importance to securing fair access to the scarce land, water and other natural resources for the various groups of settled farmers and nomadic herdsman. In 2016, 126-km-long livestock corridors were negotiated, contractually secured and marked out from which around 41,000 people benefited. In addition, 630 hectares of pastureland was also secured and 770 hectares of uncultivated land was made arable again for crop production. Over 8'000 people regained access to drinking water thanks to five renovated wells. New latrines and washing facilities for 17'000 people in 22 villages also represented a significant achievement. All of the measures improved the living conditions and peaceful coexistence.

### **Senegal**

As part of the national land reform, the HEKS/EPER partner organisations are campaigning for a fair structure to also benefit small farms, smallholders and livestock-farming families. Specific submissions were made to the national land reform commission in 2016 in the hope of securing access to land and its usage for these people. In all, 70% of the proposals were adopted after a multi-year process supported by HEKS/EPER. The CO and its partners also improved agricultural production – especially vegetable growing – as well as market access for these groups through targeted projects. A total of 3'800 people improved their income through the projects. The measures to preserve the natural resources, such as water, soil and forests – which included action to combat salinization, to protect mangroves and reforestation – also made an important contribution.

An international 'land caravan' through West African countries with a high-profile closing event in Dakar made the governments and the population aware of the importance to food security of providing access to land for smallholder farmers. The HEKS/EPER partners mobilized 750 people from the projects, 80% of whom were women, to take part in the march. A total of 590 land files with specific claims to land were submitted to the authorities.

### **South Sudan**

South Sudan has still not recovered from the decade-long war with the north and a new civil war began in 2013 between the militia of Salve Kiir and Riek Machar, which escalated in July 2016 with thousands of people being killed and displaced. The UN even fears genocide in Yei province. HEKS/EPER had to close its office in Yei, managed its activities from Uganda and opened a new coordination office in the South Sudanese capital of Yuba in early 2017. The five HEKS/EPER partners nevertheless implemented projects in the fields of water and sanitary facilities, agriculture, fishing, literacy and basic and advanced training in manual skills and farming in 2016. A total of 16'000 people obtained access to drinking water and 3'400 smallholders increased their income.

Climate change and its effects on agriculture and food security, the war and the poor economic situation also presented major challenges in 2017 which HEKS/EPER and its partners sought to tackle – the activities have to be continually reviewed and adapted to ensure they are effective and safe.



**Civil war in South Sudan led to displacements and the breakdown of economy**

### **Zimbabwe**

The political situation in Zimbabwe remained tense but stable in 2016. However, the economic situation deteriorated. There was an acute lack of liquidity which saw a reduction in salary payments, purchasing power and trade. There was a severe drought in the south of the country, three-quarters of the harvest failed in Matabeleland and 40% of the population was dependent on emergency aid. HEKS/EPER provided 5'000 people in its project areas with food and 1'000 with seeds. Communal infrastructure like dams, fences and bridges was renovated through food-for-work activities.

Despite this challenging environment, HEKS/EPER succeeded in raising the employment rate amongst around 250 young project participants and enabling 700 farms to increase their productivity through its new country strategy.

Defending land rights and preventing expulsion for the benefit of large agricultural companies is very difficult in Zimbabwe – HEKS/EPER nevertheless succeeded in securing 200 hectares of land for 100 people. In the Moriti Oa Sechaba region, over 11'300 people obtained access to clean drinking water and sanitary facilities in 2016.

Four partner organisations are adopting a coordinated approach to providing people with information about their civil rights and empowering communities to present their concerns to the competent authorities. Authorities were also made aware of their duties, particularly with regard to providing basic state services. All in all, 10'000 people were reached through training and targeted campaigns.

To provide people with effective and competent support, HEKS/EPER invested heavily in further training for the HEKS/EPER office and partner organisations in 2016.

## A. 2 Asia and the Middle East

### Bangladesh

In 2015, the World Bank declared Bangladesh a middle-income country and the densely populated country's economy also grew in 2016. However, not everyone is benefiting. The minority groups of the Dalit (casteless) and the Adivasi (indigenous people) are marginalised. They do not enjoy the same rights and opportunities as the majority of the population. The 2013–16 country programme set itself the goal of improving this situation and has achieved a great deal over recent years. In an impact study, HEKS/EPER determined that around 77% of the just under 30'000 project participants obtained a moderate and 7% a significant increase in income. Almost all of them who farm cattle or poultry are today connected with the relevant market players and are also able to sell their products profitably. A key factor is not just the economic but also social integration and the respect for rights. Almost 60% of people in the HEKS/EPER projects are organised in village groups or human rights networks. Many took part in public events which called for peaceful coexistence and equal rights and opportunities for everyone. A third of them presented their concerns to the state through official submissions. Almost 10'000 project participants now receive the state social welfare to which they are entitled and significantly more people are using state healthcare services. In Bangladesh, storms and flooding severely affect the poorest who sometimes live and work in very exposed places. Joint risk analyses were carried out in 79 municipalities and a set of measures was drawn up to protect against environmental change and catastrophes. The basis for life is therefore being made more sustainable.

### Cambodia

In 2016, HEKS/EPER further expanded its programme in Cambodia with more partners, projects and a larger annual budget of USD 1.4 million. HEKS/EPER supplemented its activities in the field of agricultural production and market access based on an analysis with conflict transformation components. This primarily aims to enable access to land or mediate land conflicts and enable rights to be claimed from the authorities. This legal-based work, which primarily benefits the rural population, is extremely important in view of the increasingly restricted room for manoeuvre of the civil population. The partners are also being given special training. The already difficult political and economic situation of smallholders was made worse in 2016 by a drought with large losses to harvests and livestock. HEKS/EPER improved access to drinking water for 5,000 people through local project partners where cooperation with the authorities was successful and the worst-affected families received support.

### India

The sustainably secured access to arable land and the ability of smallholding families to farm profitably is of major importance to strengthening the southern Indian Dalit and Adivasi minorities. Extreme weather with drought followed by flooding and political and social tensions saw a decline in economic development in the south of the country. However, having operated in India for 59 years, HEKS/EPER can draw upon extensive experience in order to continually bring its activities in line with changing requirements. The support of the land forums in the three southern Indian sub-states – where responsibility for their management and successful campaigning for access to land has now been transferred to the landless and smallholding Dalit and Adivasi families – is extremely important.

Profitable value-creation chains, such as cashew nut production supported by HEKS/EPER, significantly increased the income of project participants in 2016 and thus also social recognition. Above all, 72'000 smallholders and landless people benefited from the projects run by HEKS/EPER partners – over 6'000 people obtained access to land (around 4'600 hectares), around 8'700 were able to increase their family income and over 31'000 people gained access to state social benefits and healthcare services.

### Pakistan

In the sixth year after the major flooding catastrophe, HEKS/EPER's humanitarian activities in Pakistan made good progress in 2016. Drinking water supply was completed for 105'000 people – deep wells and an effective pump and piping system is providing clean water in 190 villages in the Naushehro Ferzoe region. The government's construction of six water purification plants was a positive step. HEKS/EPER

ensured that the wells only collect high-quality ground water as the surface layers of soil are contaminated in the project area through decades of intensive farming using pesticides and fertilisers.

Flood-proof water distribution points, good sanitary facilities and hygiene training for the population improved the conditions for better health. HEKS/EPER is ensuring that the water supply and hygiene campaigns are continued over the long-term by the population and the authorities.

### The Philippines

In 2016, HEKS/EPER remained active in Mindanao and Panay as part of its humanitarian projects. This is still as a consequence of the destructive typhoon in 2013 (Haiyan) and its aftermath. This destroyed the economic foundations and after a period of emergency aid, HEKS/EPER focused last year on helping around 18'000 people to earn a living again independently on a long-term basis. Over 1'000 fishermen and farmers were given tools, materials, seeds and of course training in order to return to work and generate an income. Attention was paid to ensuring diversification of income opportunities – one highly promising alternative was the sustainable cultivation of rubber trees.

As the Philippines is hit by 20 typhoons a year, HEKS/EPER attaches great importance to disaster prevention. With the help of HEKS/EPER, three storm-proof evacuation centres were built which will be used as schools at normal times. Around 2'400 project participants worked on a mangrove reforestation project. These forests are important as they protect against storm flooding, prevent excess salinization and are spawning grounds for fish. A total of 17 disaster committees were trained and equipped. Around 30'000 people received training on early-warning systems and evacuation measures. Communications systems and radio programmes will make raising the alarm and evacuation easier in future.

This extensive emergency aid, the rebuilding of the economy and infrastructure and sustainable precautionary measures were only successfully carried out thanks to cooperation with local partners and the authorities – all participants, including HEKS/EPER, were constantly pushed to the limits in terms of resources and expertise. HEKS/EPER could nevertheless reflect on positive achievements shortly before the completion of all activities in the first half of 2017.

### Iraq

So far, around 1.25 million people have fled from ISIS and the terror in the Iraqi heartland in northern Iraq. In 2016, the flow of refugees was increased by the fighting in Mosul. HEKS/EPER stepped up its activities and is helping – together with the local partner REACH and Norwegian Church Aid – around 65'000 refugees in six regions of Kurdish northern Iraq. People are being provided with food parcels and drinking water in the refugee camps and hygiene measures are being undertaken. HEKS/EPER is also supporting host families and the refugees they have taken in based on their requirements – for example, blankets and stoves for the winter or cooking utensils, mattresses and hygiene items. Direct payments and paid charity work is also being funded. A key factor is peaceful coexistence between hosts and refugees. HEKS/EPER is therefore financing projects on the cultivation of crops and vegetables where both groups work on the fields and bring in the harvest together. Five local schools are also being renovated.

### Lebanon

There are a total of 1.2 million Syrian war refugees in Lebanon. They make up a quarter of the population which presents a huge challenge for this small country. HEKS/EPER supported around 9'500 refugees in the camps of Shatila and Borj Borajne in 2016, spending CHF 1.5 million on **humanitarian aid**. In addition to direct payments to the poorest families which they use to buy food, blankets, dishes or hygiene items individually or to pay for rent or medical treatment in line with their requirements – HEKS/EPER launched a cash-for-work programme. Camp residents who are poor and without an income are paid to clean the streets and camps. Women were trained as hygiene ambassadors and deployed on information courses. A many as 90% of the camp residents indicated that cleanliness and hygiene in the camps had improved.

As part of **church cooperation**, HEKS/EPER supported the Evangelical Armenian church in Beirut with its social work in a home for the elderly and in afternoon classes. Around 70 children, mainly refugees, of primary and senior-school ages were given extra tuition to improve their chances of gaining good qualifications upon leaving school.

## **Palestine/Israel**

The year 2016 was marked by increasing restrictions for the civil population and opposition – government pressure on the freedom of movement and opinion increased. This represents a challenge for the implementation of the HEKS/EPER programme for more access to land and dialogue over resettlement. HEKS/EPER is working with several partner organisations campaigning for the rights of internally displaced persons and dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians. Partners are seeking to raise public awareness in Israel over the issue of human rights violations, refugees, opportunities to return and peaceful coexistence. Another important factor is access to land for farming and for cultural identity. Various new projects were planned in 2016 which will make a contribution in 2017 to improving the social and economic situation of the displaced Palestinians.

## **Syria**

Since 2011, around half of the 1.8 million Christians have fled from Syria. However, the presence of the Christian minority is of major importance to the coexistence of various Syrian communities far beyond the churches. They stand for a pluralistic and peaceful society – the Protestant churches are allies of open Muslim groups against the strengthening of radical Islamist groups. HEKS/EPER aims to make a contribution here. Since 2016, HEKS/EPER has been supporting the youth work of two Protestant minority churches as part of church cooperation. Thanks to HEKS/EPER, small Sunday schools were extended in 12 parishes in various regions to half-day support programmes for 1'400 children and young people. Thanks to games, craft workshops, eating and spending peaceful time together, the children experience a degree of normality amidst the civil war. This programme also gives hope to parents. The support programmes are also being used by children from other churches, including some Muslims.

## **Turkey**

All in all, 2.7 million people have fled from the war in Syria to Turkey. A fifth of the population are refugees in some regions. They live under difficult conditions, such as in the province of Sanliurfa. Here, in 2016, HEKS/EPER enabled its Turkish partner STL to support 500 families in great need with food coupons to buy items in local shops. This project is part of a more comprehensive HEKS/EPER strategy to support Syrian and Iraqi refugees at various locations in the region.

## **A. 3 Latin America and the Caribbean**

### **Brazil**

With the removal from office of President Dilma Rousseff in 2016 – which also brought the PT Workers' Party's period in government to an end – political upheaval ensued in Brazil which jeopardises the achievements of the HEKS/EPER partner organisations over recent years. There has also been a severe recession. At great effort, the authorities have been persuaded to finally assume their responsibility over land rights and social services in recent years. However, the policy of the new government is focusing on austerity measures and reducing the population's rights of consultation.

This made the expansion of the HEKS/EPER portfolio to include new organisations all the more important. These include Processo de Articulação e Diálogo (PAD), which supports the coordination of the civil population to maintain democracy. In order to promote biological diversity and food security, HEKS/EPER established a new partnership in 2016 with the organisation Terra de Direitos, which, from 2017, will assist national organisations with advocacy work with the government on the issue of biodiversity and facilitate access to economic, social and ecological rights for traditional communities as well as the Guarani Kaiowá. As the legal resources have largely been used up on the Guarani Kaiowá at national level, HEKS/EPER, and the partner organisation FIAN International, helped it to submit a grievance to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights at the end of 2016. A positive verdict could send out a signal for access to communally used land for the rural population. In 2016, HEKS/EPER itself obtained access to 8'719 hectares of land for 6'000 people.

In 2016, the HEKS/EPER office was relocated to Brasilia where there is easier access to national authorities and organisations.

## Colombia

After four years of negotiations, an initial 'no' vote and follow-up negotiations, a peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC rebels was finally concluded at the end of 2016. An agreement alone does not guarantee lasting peace or an improvement to the human rights situation. There is even the threat of more violence and uncertainty during the transition phase. HEKS/EPER will therefore focus more intensively from 2017 on peace and post-conflict reconciliation with appropriate projects and partners.

With the new 2016–2019 country programme, HEKS/EPER is now working in the Santanderes region with two new partner organisations. The projects are focusing on protecting the basis for existence of farming families thanks to organic and diversified farming. The provision and cultivation of traditional indigenous seeds is also being promoted. The partner organisations were supported with their lobbying work calling on the government to abolish the legal ban on indigenous seeds.

The partners OFP and FIAN are monitoring the food situation and calling for the right to food security for the local population – the actual food and income situation of over 1'000 people was improved in 2016. The partner organisation OFP also promoted women as leadership figures to give them a greater voice in the communities.

A new priority in 2016 was securing land rights over the long-term, especially in the Reserva Campesina Cimiterra area. This involved addressing the sustainable use of this land and better usage of sales markets.

## Haiti

Haiti is the poorest country on the American continent. A total of 75% of the population live below the poverty line. The HEKS/EPER programme focuses on Grand'Anse in the south-west of the island. It aims to support rural communities through the development of promising agricultural sectors and the construction of infrastructure in an approach aimed at job creation.

In 2016, HEKS/EPER supported the development of the pig, goat and cocoa segments. Several rural tracks and a local market were renovated, opening up communities. The construction of five community schools resistant to earthquakes and cyclones has begun. As part of this, social organisation was enhanced, in particular the parent associations to manage the schools and groups to maintain the tracks. An external evaluation in April highlighted the relevance of this work and the importance of better cooperation with local state and non-governmental structures.

On 4 October, Hurricane Matthew devastated Grand'Anse, leaving thousands of families homeless, destroying schools and access routes and obliterating crops and trees. Taking account of the lessons learned from the 2010 earthquake, HEKS/EPER immediately focused on a limited number of villages and activities. After the distribution of water purification tablets and financial aid for clearance work undertaken by the villagers, seeds were handed out and money given to the most vulnerable. The relationship of trust with the villagers and the capacity of the team based in Jérémie have enabled rapid, concrete results to be achieved with the financial contribution of Swiss Solidarity.

## Honduras

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

Politically, Honduras saw greater militarisation and a further increase in violence in 2016. People campaigning for social justice are being persecuted and killed. People advocating for land rights and environmental issues are at great risk. The perpetrators often carry out these crimes on behalf of large landowners or the government. They have little to fear in the way of consequences. The special usages zones planned by the government with special rights for investors in the south of Honduras are exacerbating the problem as the rights of the local population are being eroded. In 2016, HEKS/EPER – together with other local and international partners – produced a study on the room for manoeuvre and remaining courses of action open to civil society with the following summary: the current situation is extremely difficult. Civil society is highly fragmented and extremely restricted in its actions. However, there are courses of action available and civil society remains very active. HEKS/EPER is responding to this by stepping up its efforts in the fields of human rights and conflict transformation.

Another key factor is food security through the promotion of indigenous seeds and organic production. The development of value-creation chains, including the marketing of products, will be focused on in future. Climate change is increasing extreme climate events with long periods of drought. HEKS/EPER is responding and focusing more heavily on drinking water and agricultural water usage. A total of 1'600 people benefited from this in 2016.

## **A. 4 Europe**

### **Italy**

At the Centro Diaconale in Palermo, the Waldensian partner church focuses on the social integration of disadvantaged people, including single women, unaccompanied young refugees and children with disabilities or from difficult family backgrounds. In 2016, the centre launched a reintegration programme for released prisoners thanks to the support of HEKS/EPER. It provides them with accommodation, they undertake voluntary work and the centre supports their integration into family life and the working world.

The Waldensians also provide accommodation and support the integration of refugees from Africa and the Arab region who have arrived in Italy via the 'humanitarian corridor'. The Italian state ensures structured, safe arrival for certain refugees. With the help of HEKS/EPER, the Waldensian church has been assisting 50 such refugees since October 2016.

### **Kosovo**

The living conditions of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are marked by poverty and social exclusion. The local HEKS/EPER partner VoRAE aims to ensure the social and economic integration of these minorities and around 6'500 people benefitted from their work in 2016. In 2016, over 1'000 pupils benefitted from remedial teaching which is incorporated into the after-school classes of the state schools. HEKS/EPER hopes this integration and teaching model will soon be taken over by the state. VoRAE also succeeded in persuading the Kosovan government to finance a scholarship fund for 500 Roma, Ashkali and Balkan Egyptians a year.

The project to improve the living conditions of the minority groups was extended to three new municipalities. The costs will be borne by HEKS/EPER, the authorities (at least a third) and the residents themselves. The latter are carrying out most of the work themselves.

Both models for success – the remedial teaching and the building renovation – were incorporated into the Kosovan government's Roma strategy. Over the coming years, HEKS/EPER and VoRAE aim to support the drawing-up and specific implementation of this strategy at municipal level.

### **Moldova**

Moldova was also affected by the political and economic crisis in 2016. Rural municipalities and state social institutions in particular had insufficient financial resources. This made it all the more important that HEKS/EPER launched its new 2016–2020 programme phase with the main objective of improving the living conditions of the rural population. HEKS/EPER sought to increase the income of smallholders. In 2016, around 6'000 people in the grape, berries and dairy sectors took part in project activities as a result of which 68% increased their income. HEKS/EPER is also improving access to home care services for the elderly. The partner organisation CASMED provided home care services for 2'260 people in need of care. Strengthening the rural communities is another key goal. Study trips and conferences were organised to encourage authorities, local businesses and civil society organisations to undertake local development themselves.

### **Romania**

The 1 to 2 million Roma in Romania are poorly educated, badly affected by poverty and unemployment and have limited access to medical and social facilities. HEKS/EPER is therefore focusing on the economic and social integration of the Roma in Romania. In the field of education, HEKS/EPER partners organised 'summer nurseries' for 600 Roma children. The year-round after-school classes were very successful. A total of 1'700 young people received remedial teaching – 1'000 more than in the previous year. The

municipal authorities involved contributed over 50% to the costs and various additional activities enhanced exchanges between Roma and non-Roma people. The partners arranged access to state social and healthcare services for around 1'600 Roma in Cluj and Bihor. A total of 700 families improved their living conditions and the threatened removal of their children was avoided. Vocational training and business consulting was also carried out. The activities were strengthened with the opening of a HEKS/EPER office in Cluj in 2016.

As part of ecclesiastical cooperation, HEKS/EPER is supporting Diaconia Romania with its social work for around 13'000 people. With projects to combat domestic violence in Brasov and a women's refuge, Diaconia is helping women affected directly in Oradea, but is also organising information events and public campaigns to raise awareness amongst the population. Projects were launched in four regions to help the integration of people with disabilities into working life. The home care service for poor and elderly people in rural areas was further expanded – 170 centres are supporting people in seven Romanian provinces.

### **Serbia**

HEKS/EPER is active in Serbia with all of its foreign divisions – development cooperation, humanitarian aid and church cooperation. As part of the Roma programme, the partner organisation EHO – together with the municipal authorities – improved the living conditions of over 150 Roma families in 2016 by providing new homes as well as access to water, sanitation and electricity. HEKS/EPER succeeded in strengthening the education sector with grants, teacher training and the integration of Roma teachers into the school system. Successful approaches to Roma integration were incorporated into the national Roma strategy by the Serbian state.

As part of church cooperation, home care services for sick and elderly people were extended to eight municipalities and around 400 people.

HEKS/EPER continued its aid for refugees on the Balkan route in 2016. Emergency aid packages were distributed to tens of thousands of people in early 2016 and the reception capacity of emergency and transit accommodation was then increased. In 2016, the rebuilding of the homes of 42 Roma families destroyed by flooding in 2014 was completed. The dialogue with the authorities and neighbours was a protracted but worthwhile process. Sustainable solutions were found.

### **Slovakia**

HEKS/EPER secured two more parishes for the Roma programme in southern Slovakia. Five parishes are now working with more and more volunteers providing recreational camps for children and young people as well as life coaching to ensure better integration of Roma.

In Slovakia, 10% of the population are Roma. Most Roma live in isolation and under difficult conditions. Their houses are often in poor condition, they are short of food and live in unsatisfactory hygiene conditions. Over 90% of them are unemployed and they have inadequate access to education, a balanced diet and medical services. More than almost any other organisation in Slovakia, the reformed church, which is aware of the situation of minorities with its 85'000 Hungarian-speaking members, has the potential to build bridges with the Roma population and the Slovakian-speaking population. Since 2015, HEKS/EPER has therefore been supporting the reformed church parishes in setting up projects aimed at ensuring the social integration of the Roma. In 2016, HEKS/EPER secured two more parishes for the Roma programme. In total, five parishes organised recreational camps for children and young people and improved their chances of a good education with 'life skill' courses.

### **South Caucasus (Georgia and Armenia)**

In 2016, economic development in Armenia and Georgia improved slightly with an increase in GDP of between 2% and 3%. However, this growth hardly reached the rural population. The South Caucasus were also blighted by several simmering conflicts. The most serious incident took place in April when the smouldering Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region escalated into four days of war.

HEKS/EPER aims to improve the income opportunities of the rural population in the South Caucasus and to promote peaceful coexistence. Around 28'000 people in the HEKS/EPER projects increased their

agricultural output and income in 2016 with fruit production in Armenia and livestock farming in eastern Georgia. In the Kakheti region, a new training course was launched at the agricultural colleges. In western Georgia, hazelnut producers not only increased their income and sales but also successfully obtained UTZ and organic certification. HEKS/EPER was able to compensate for the forced exit from Azerbaijan in 2015 with four new projects in Armenia and Georgia.

Young people from civil society of different nationalities were involved in projects as part of peacebuilding efforts. The first contact and meetings in Abkhazia were promising. Here HEKS/EPER is promoting dialogue between various groups such as Georgians, Mingrelians and Abkhazians. A total of 15'000 people were involved in various conflict management projects.

### **Czech Republic**

HEKS/EPER has maintained close ties with the Evangelical Church of Bohemian Brothers for decades. A break with tradition and an ageing population present the reformed minority church with challenges. It nevertheless still has a strong presence in society with its active parishes and social work. HEKS/EPER supports it in these efforts. In 2016, Diaconia also provided countless working migrants from Bulgaria and Romania with information about their rights to protect them from exploitation, provided legal advice, raised awareness amongst the authorities and expanded its emergency accommodation provision in Prague, western Bohemia. A branch office is set to be opened in Brno (in the east). Only a strong church can be socially active which is why HEKS/EPER also supported camps and various training courses for 950 children and young people. The renovation of buildings of importance to church life and the public was jointly funded in three parishes.

### **Hungary**

The reformed church in Hungary is an important social institution. HEKS/EPER supported its activities aimed at the integration of Roma and people with disabilities. Remedial teaching, courses on manual skills and budget management and meeting points were provided for around 700 Roma children and young people in 13 parishes. The social and professional integration of Roma is extremely important in Hungary but they are nevertheless badly affected by poverty and unemployment. An evaluation carried out in 2016 showed that better relations and more joint activities between Roma and non-Roma existed in these 13 locations. The social work also boosted church life.

Work on the social integration of the disabled was carried out in 15 parishes. Affordable holidays for 815 people with disabilities were provided at the Berekfürdő church centre.

The new Hungary 2017–2020 country programme was developed in the second half of the year. The focus was also placed on Roma integration. HEKS/EPER will now also support the reformed church in its efforts to better integrate refugees and immigrants in Hungary. Awareness was raised amongst parishes and opportunities created for meetings between local people and immigrants.

### **Ukraine**

War and economic crisis are mainly hitting the poor and elderly in the Ukraine – an observation also made by the partner church of the Hungarian reformed minority in western Ukraine. This is why the expansion of the reformed partner church's social projects in Transcarpathia was so important. The experienced Romanian Diaconia is also receiving support with home care services for the elderly and ill from a new church foundation. The day centres' care services for children and young people with disabilities are now also more professional and extensive. HEKS/EPER is also continuing to support the Diaconia centre in Beregszasz where 280 people in need and four schools are given lunch – 20 women with 34 children have also found refuge here from domestic violence and extreme poverty. HEKS/EPER is also supporting the highly popular youth camps for around 2'000 young people.

As part of its emergency humanitarian aid, HEKS/EPER is also supporting Hungarian church aid in its efforts in eastern Ukraine to support internally displaced persons by providing accommodation, food and other services. A total of 1.7 million people are fleeing and access to them is not easy.

## B) Evaluations of HEKS/EPER programmes/projects in 2016

In addition, in 2016 HEKS/EPER commissioned 33 external project evaluations; including two impact evaluations and one experience capitalisation<sup>25</sup>:

### Development cooperation

HIP DevCo objectives	Project evaluations
<b>Access to land, resources and services</b>	
Secured access to land and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 706.368 Borana Watershed Initiative ETH</li> <li>• 756.343 Taimakon Doum NIG</li> <li>• 756.338 Zamtapo NIG</li> <li>• 835.363 Adepsa HON</li> <li>• 764.302 Enda Pronat SEN</li> <li>• 764.337 Plaid-Foncier SEN</li> <li>• Country programme Haiti</li> <li>• Country programme Bangladesh</li> </ul>
Secured access to basic services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 610.405 RIGHTS BAN</li> <li>• 610.404 DREAM BAN</li> <li>• 610.312 ALO BAN</li> <li>• 610.314 PREMDIP BAN</li> <li>• 942.383 Roma Inclusion Romania</li> <li>• 788.338 - 788.339 Avreo-CACDI RDC MTR</li> <li>• 830.344 AGR Haiti</li> <li>• 830.362 RICREP Haiti</li> <li>• 830.364 AGR Aspacrep Haiti</li> <li>• 830.365 PAIR Haiti</li> <li>• Country programme Haiti</li> </ul>
<b>Production and market systems</b>	
Sustainable agricultural production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 652.102 SOFDEC CAM</li> <li>• 764.302 Enda Pronat SEN</li> <li>• 788.362 Vifede RDC MTR</li> <li>• Country programme Haiti</li> <li>• Country programme South Caucasus</li> <li>• 918.043 Farmers' School Georgia</li> <li>• 835.355 Vecinos HON</li> <li>• 835.361 ADEPES HON</li> <li>• 934.315 Cattle Farming MD</li> </ul>
Inclusive and efficient market systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 934.315 Cattle Farming MD</li> <li>• Country programme South Caucasus</li> <li>• 610.405 RIGHTS Bangladesh</li> <li>• 610.404 DREAM BAN</li> <li>• 610.312 ALO BAN</li> <li>• 610.314 PREMDIP BAN</li> <li>• 830.364 AGR Aspacrep Haiti</li> <li>• 835.361 ADEPES HON</li> </ul>

<sup>25</sup> **2016: 39 evaluations** (32 final evaluations; 3 MTR in BAN and RDC-2; 4 other assessment types in PHIL-2, ETH and IND) were conducted (some covering two projects at the same time); **HH//CC//DevCo: 6//2//31**; **CP level: 6**, i.e. 1 Capex – PHIL, 1 accountability assessment – IND, 4 evaluations (HT, SC, BAN, HU). **Project level: 33**, i.e. 30 evaluations, 1 IE (HH, LEB), and '0.5' IE SEN, and one capex in ETH.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 764.302 Enda Pronat SEN</li> <li>• 812.359 CEDAC BRA</li> <li>• 942.383 Roma Inclusion Romania</li> </ul>
<b>Civil society and governance</b>	
Enhanced security & space for civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 610.405 RIGHTS Bangladesh</li> <li>• 610.404 DREAM BAN</li> <li>• 610.312 ALO BAN</li> <li>• 610.314 PREMDIP BAN</li> <li>• Country programme South Caucasus</li> </ul>
Empowered rights-holders and accountable duty-bearers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country programme South Caucasus</li> <li>• 610.405 RIGHTS Bangladesh</li> <li>• 610.404 DREAM BAN</li> <li>• 610.312 ALO BAN</li> <li>• 610.314 PREMDIP BAN</li> <li>• 835.363 Adepsa HON</li> <li>• 835.361 ADEPES HON</li> <li>• 835.355 Vecinos HON</li> <li>• 756.338 Zamtapo NIG</li> <li>• 812.029 CESE BRA</li> </ul>
Inclusion and participatory governance structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 610.405 RIGHTS Bangladesh</li> <li>• 610.404 DREAM BAN</li> <li>• 610.312 ALO BAN</li> <li>• 610.314 PREMDIP BAN</li> <li>• 764.337 Plaid-Foncier SEN</li> <li>• 756.338 Zamtapo NIG</li> <li>• 812.029 CESE BRA</li> <li>• 942.383 Roma Inclusion Romania</li> <li>• Country programme South Caucasus</li> </ul>
<b>Living together in peace</b>	
Improved intra- and inter-group relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country programme South Caucasus</li> <li>• Country programme Bangladesh</li> <li>• 610.405 RIGHTS Bangladesh</li> <li>• 610.404 DREAM BAN</li> <li>• 610.312 ALO BAN</li> <li>• 610.314 PREMDIP BAN</li> <li>• 904.350 ART Peace SC Armenia</li> </ul>
Commitment and public attitude towards peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 904.350 ART Peace SC Armenia</li> <li>• Country programme South Caucasus</li> </ul>

#### Humanitarian aid

HIP HA objectives	Project evaluations
<b>Life saving through access to water, food, shelter and sanitation</b>	
Rehabilitated livelihood opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 668.353 Rehabilitation PHIL</li> <li>• 660.324 Cash Assistance LEB impact evaluation</li> </ul>
Reconstructed public and private infrastructure	None
Increased prevention and preparedness	None

### Church cooperation results framework

HIP CC objectives	Project evaluations
Strengthening and inclusion of disadvantaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Country programme Hungary</li> </ul>
Strengthening church life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Country programme Hungary</li> </ul>
Churches in dialogue with differing confessions	None
Sense of belonging to the same church family	None

### HIP management

HIP objectives (institutional)	Project evaluations
Professional implementation / capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All evaluations included this component (but the evaluation of the country programme Haiti focused on coherence and relevance)</li> </ul>

## C) Acronyms

ACT	ACT Alliance (coalition of faith-based organisation working in international cooperation)
CC	Church cooperation
CBO	Community-based organisation (grass root organisation)
CD	Country Director HEKS/EPER
CMS	Change monitoring system
CO	Country office (of HEKS/EPER in priority programme countries)
CP	Country programme (DevCo or HA)
CS	Conflict sensitivity
CSO	Civil society organisation
CT	Conflict transformation
DevCo	Development cooperation
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EAPPI	Ecumenical accompaniment programme in Palestine/Israel
FBO	Faith-based organisation
FFAG	Field financial and administrative guidelines
FIAN	Food First Information and Action Network (international organisation for the right to food)
FO	Fastenopfer
HA	Humanitarian aid
HHQ	HEKS/EPER headquarters (in Switzerland)
HIP	HEKS/EPER international programme
HKI	HEKS/EPER key indicator
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
ID	International division (of HEKS/EPER)
iNGO	International non-governmental organisation
KI	Key indicator
KOFF	Kompetenzzentrum Friedensförderung / Center for Peacebuilding
KS	Knowledge sharing
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
M4P	Making markets work for the poor
MSC	Most significant change
MSD	Market system development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PCM	Project or programme cycle management
PIU	Project implementation unit
SDC	Swiss agency for development and cooperation
WCC	World council of churches
ZEWO	Swiss certification foundation for non-profit organisations collecting donations.