

European Humanitarian Forum

Forum humanitaire européen



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European Humanitarian Forum

Failure is not an option: the imperative of nexus to fight famine

21st March 2022, 11:30 – 13:15

Panelists:

Jutta Urpilainen, European Commissioner for International Partnerships; *Meryame Kitir*, Minister of Development Cooperation and Major Cities Policy, Belgium; *Qu Dongyu*, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); *Catherine Russell*, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); *Axel van Trotsenburg*, World Bank Managing Director of Operations; *Sofia Sprechmann Sineiro*, Secretary General of CARE International

Interventions from the floor:

Scott Weber, Director Interpeace; *Eva Svoboda*, ICRC Deputy Director for Policy and Law; *Jean Francois Riffaud*, CEO, Action Contre la Faim; *Vincent Stehli*, VOICE, Director Action Contre la Faim; *Kathrin Lorenz*, GIZ Director Governance and Conflict; *Andy Catley*, Tufts University, SEADS project

Executive Summary

“Whatever short-term action you take must have long-term solutions embedded”

The European Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpailanen, recalled that before the Covid-19 pandemic, the international community already had to fight to eradicate hunger.

Panelists provided examples of how bringing together humanitarian, development, and peace aspects in programming allowed for a comprehensive response and longer lasting impacts. Examples discussed were e.g. Sahel where a Belgian climate programme with a gender priority did not only deliver food assistance, but taught people to fertilise and work the soil and regain income or Niger where new partnerships brought defence and development actors together to ensure common lines and approaches.

Against their different backgrounds and experiences, panelists engaged in jointly defining the scope and potential of a nexus approach:

Nexus helps **overcoming the lack of coordination** to prevent and reduce silos, as well as overcoming a colonial Western thinking of “Us and Them”. **Nexus** means overcoming separation of crises in **pre-, during- and after** phases and acknowledging complexity of non-linear realities. Operators should master the three components of nexus (“trilingual” operators). **Nexus** ensures **complementarity** when different actors are at the same time at the same place, respect their differences in mandates, share knowledge and find creative ways of working together.

Nexus puts **people at the centre** with focus on the needs, knowledge and experience of local actors, allowing for bottom up decision processes. **Nexus** strives for **sustainability**, builds on what is existing including local service providers and actors, aims at reducing impacts on the environment and supports innovation, capacity building, technical assistance, information sharing and digitalisation. **Nexus** respects existing **humanitarian standards** and integrates upcoming ones, such as the SEADS standard on livelihoods assistance to be published 2022.

Nexus acknowledges the **humanitarian role** is not only to save lives but also to make sure humanitarians do not need to come back and are aware of the long-term footprint the short-term action leaves.