

## Applying the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus to food and nutrition security

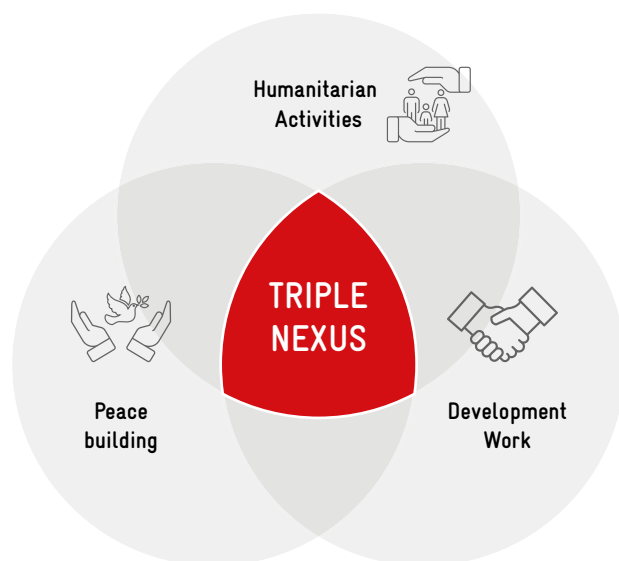
*Sustainable irrigation supports farming and reduces tensions over scarce resources*

### Insights into Mali's integrated approach to tackling food and nutrition crises

GIZ's Global Programme on Food and Nutrition Security, Enhanced Resilience aims to sustainably improve the food and nutrition security and resilience of people, with a focus on women of reproductive age and infants. Through a multi-sectoral approach, the programme strengthens resilience across diverse contexts, targeting challenges specific to each country. In settings affected by armed conflict and climate change, building resilience becomes crucial as these factors heighten the risks of hunger and malnutrition. The following example from the country package Mali demonstrates how the programme applies the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus to enhance resilience and stability in crisis-affected regions.

#### Understanding the triple nexus

The current situation in Mali, characterized by population displacement, armed conflicts, and growing food insecurity, exemplifies the kind of scenario the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus, also known as the triple nexus, is designed to address.



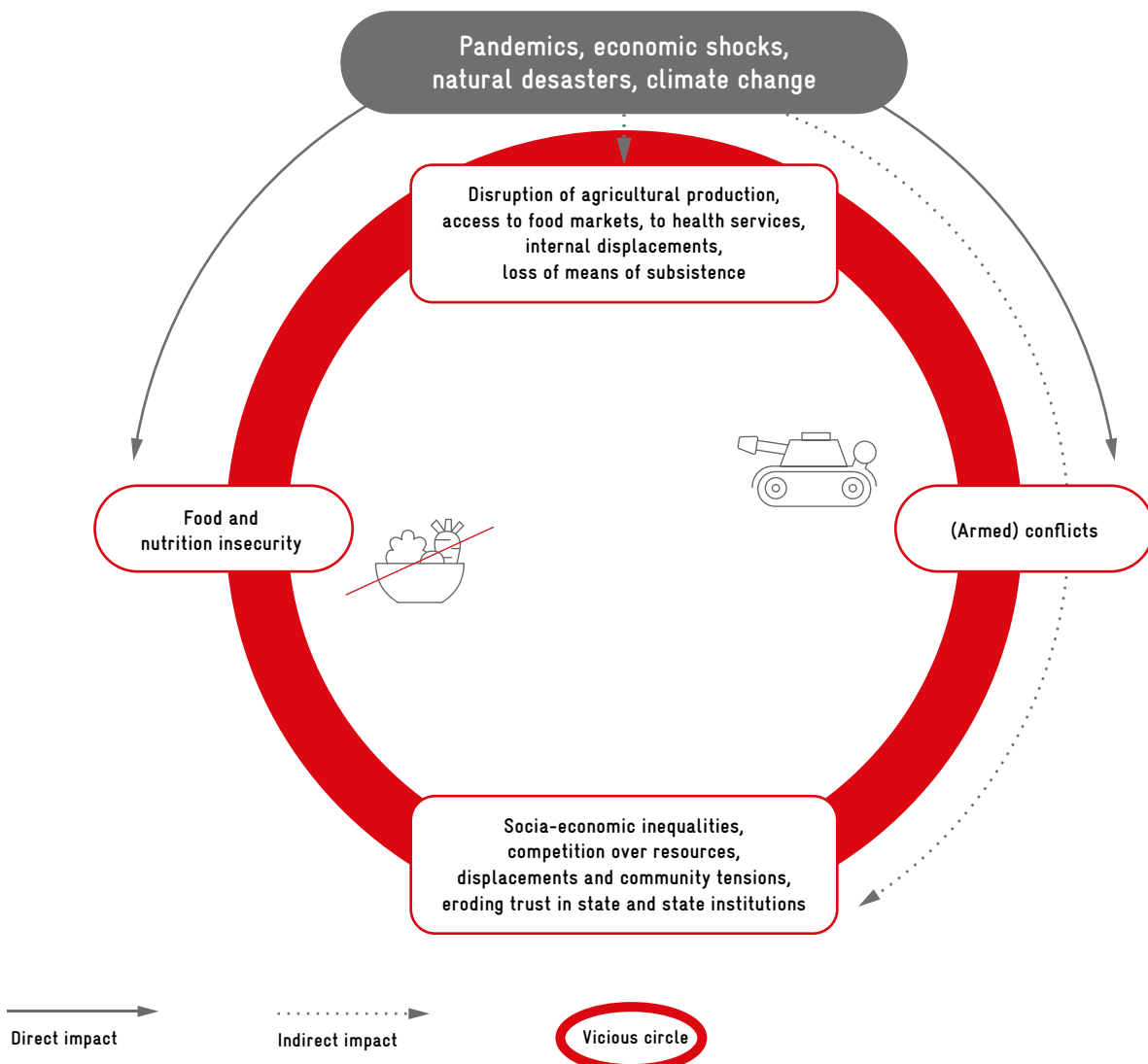
The HDP nexus is a policy framework that strengthens coordination between humanitarian, development, and peace/security actors to enable more collaborative, coherent, and effective action (OECD, 2019). Traditionally, these sectors were approached independently, each with distinct objectives and methods. However, the HDP framework acknowledges their interdependence, emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts to meet the needs of crisis-affected people, build

resilience, and foster peace and sustainable development. The inclusion of peace and stability expands the original humanitarian-development nexus, highlighting that without these foundations, neither humanitarian nor development interventions can achieve lasting success. This approach is not merely a framework but a necessary mindset for addressing the complexities of interconnected crises.

## Contextual challenges: Fragility and food and nutrition insecurity in Mali

The interaction between humanitarian, development, and peace efforts is critically important in the food and nutrition security sector in Mali. Armed conflict disrupts agricultural production, food markets, and access to health services, depriving communities of their livelihoods. These disruptions exacerbate conflict risks, which are further intensified by external factors such as climate change, economic shocks, and pandemics.

In Mali, food insecurity and instability reinforce one another, creating a vicious cycle. Resource competition, such as disputes over land and water access, fuels tensions between communities, while livestock theft by armed groups further destabilizes households, robbing them of essential income. When food insecurity raises the opportunity cost of peace, individuals may perceive violent conflict as a viable way to secure resources or income, perpetuating the cycle of violence.





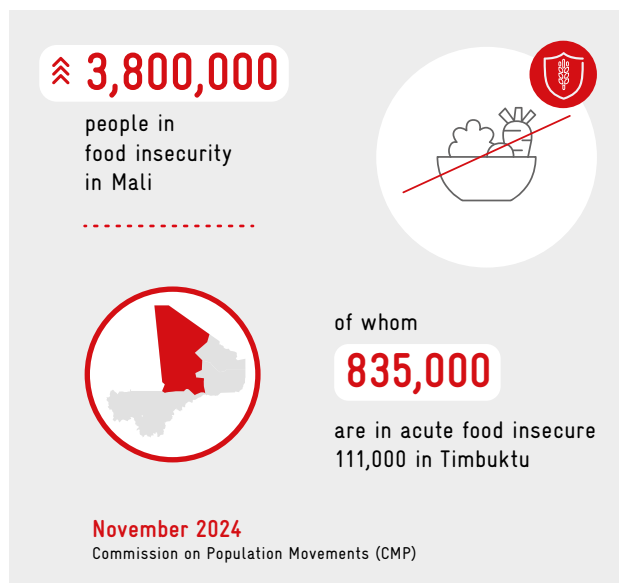
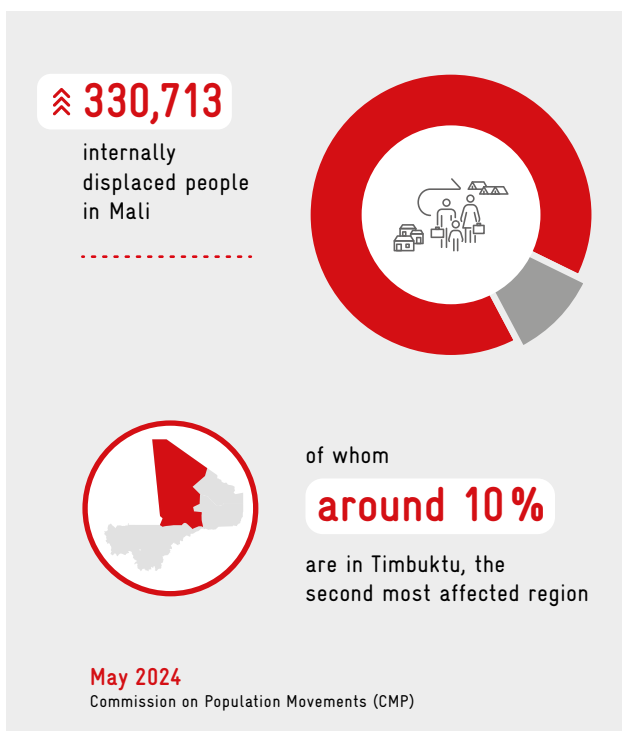
Pastoralist and farmer livelihoods coexist despite the pressures of conflict and climate challenges

Women and girls are particularly affected, as conflict and fragility deepen existing gender inequalities. Addressing food security as part of conflict mitigation is therefore essential to breaking this cycle and fostering resilience in fragile regions such as Mali.

Since 2012, Mali has faced a prolonged political and security crisis. While the northern regions have seen some stability, other conflicts persist, with Mali's Sahel location making it particularly vulnerable to recurring climate crises. In just seven years, Mali experienced three major food crises (2005, 2010, and 2012–2013) alongside pastoral crises affecting all communities. Central Mali, especially the Inner Niger Delta, has fertile farmland crucial for the country's food security but also longstanding land and resource distribution disputes. Resource scarcity and the volatile security context

drive ongoing displacement, with the number of internally displaced persons rising steadily.

According to Mali's Commission on Population Movements (CMP, May 2024), the internally displaced population stands at 330,713 individuals, with Timbuktu hosting around 10%. Simultaneously 350,541 formally displaced people have returned to Timbuktu – highlighting the significant population movements in the region.



Discussion on the links between food insecurity and conflicts must consider people's resilience to recurrent crises, especially those driven by conflict and climate. Structural vulnerabilities, including rural marginalization, deteriorating rural livelihoods, and weak social protection, are compounded by global commodity price spikes, socio-economic crises, and climate events. A combination of conflict-sensitive support and climate resilience, especially in high-risk areas like the Inner Niger Delta, is thus essential to improving food security and stability prospects.

## Applying the Triple Nexus

### Integrated multisectoral approach for vulnerable communities

The programme in Timbuktu strengthens the resilience of 6,800 vulnerable households, primarily women of childbearing age, refugees, and internally displaced persons, against food and nutrition crises. These households face structural challenges like loss of livelihoods, compounded by crisis-specific vulnerabilities such as displacement and climate shocks. To address these needs, the programme integrates interventions across agriculture, pastoralism, nutrition, hygiene, and governance. Climate-smart practices – including water-efficient rice cultivation, soil rehabilitation, and climate-resilient crops – ensure sustainable resource use, improve food security, and reduce competition over scarce resources that could escalate into conflicts.

To meet both immediate and long-term needs, the programme employs emergency mechanisms like temporary cash-for-work programmes and food transfers. These measures safeguard basic needs during crises, protect household assets, and maintain nutritional intake. At the same time, the programme builds long-term resilience by equipping communities to anticipate, respond to, and adapt to future crises.

### Conflict-sensitivity in action

Conflict sensitivity is fundamental to ensuring sustainable outcomes. The programme actively considers the diverse interests of farmers, pastoralists, displaced persons, and local communities to foster reconciliation and strengthen social cohesion. Key to this approach is the inclusive selection of target groups using participatory methods based on vulnerability and poverty criteria. Advocacy efforts with local authorities enhance land tenure security, particularly for women, reducing resource-based tensions and preventing conflicts.

The programme also supports community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, promoting a shared understanding of how displacement, food insecurity, and vulnerability interconnect. Through early warning systems and dialogue facilitation, communities are empowered to manage conflicts proactively. Awareness campaigns on Mali's Pastoral Charter encourage inclusive resource management, while revitalized water management committees strengthen governance and ensure sustainable resource use.



*Women farmers in Timbuktu display their harvest, building resilience against crises*

The approach prioritises Do No Harm assessments to mitigate unintended consequences which is a high risk in contexts where resources are limited.

### Strengthening governance for coordinated impact

Effective coordination is critical to maximizing the impact of interventions by donors and government agencies. The programme supports the establishment of a unified National Council for Food and Nutrition Security and Social Protection and the development of a multisectoral monitoring and evaluation system, providing evidence-based insights to guide coordinated action.

Regionally, the programme fosters collaboration among implementing partners, ensuring harmonized targeting of beneficiaries. By improving early warning systems for price trends and pastoral surveillance, the programme enhances data availability, enabling better resource planning and more effective crisis responses.



Validation workshop for thematic maps of vulnerable areas, aligned with national resilience priorities

## Conclusion: Why the HDP Nexus is essential

The application of the HDP nexus in food and nutrition security does more than address individual challenges – it has the potential to transform complex crises. The reflections from Mali offer valuable insights for designing future programmes.

Flexible emergency mechanisms, conflict-sensitive approaches, and strengthened governance structures link immediate relief with long-term development. Food security serves as

a strategic tool to foster peace and stability, breaking the vicious cycle between food insecurity and conflict.

At the same time, the Mali example highlights that a food and nutrition programme must incorporate peacebuilding and conflict-sensitive measures. Similarly, stabilization initiatives must integrate food security and resilience as core components. Only by aligning these approaches can we address the root causes of fragility and achieve sustainable development.

### Further information

GIZ 2019, [Multi-Country Resilience Study](#) • [giz2019-en-multi-country-resilience-study.pdf](#)

GIZ 2022, [Proof of Impact – Global Programme Food and Nutrition Security, Enhanced Resilience](#) • [giz2022-en-proof-of-impact.pdf](#)

OECD 2019, [The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: A Framework for Action](#) • [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus-interim-progress-review\\_2f620ca5-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus-interim-progress-review_2f620ca5-en.html)

As a federally owned enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

Published by:  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices:  
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32+36 53113 Bonn Germany T +49 228 44 60-0 F +49 228 44 60-17 66	Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5 65760 Eschborn Germany T +49 61 96 79-0 F +49 61 96 79-11 15
--	---

E [info@giz.de](mailto:info@giz.de)  
I [www.giz.de](http://www.giz.de)

Programmes:  
Global Programme Food and Nutrition Security,  
Enhanced Resilience

Authors:  
Carlotta Tinapp, Raymond Mehou  
E [carlotta.tinapp@giz.de](mailto:carlotta.tinapp@giz.de), [rayond.mehou@giz.de](mailto:rayond.mehou@giz.de)

Responsible:  
Julia Kirya  
E [julia.kirya@giz.de](mailto:julia.kirya@giz.de)

Photo credits:  
GIZ Georges-Arnaud Akieminou (p.1-4)  
GIZ Mali (p. 5)

Layout:  
kipconcept gmbh, Bonn

URL links:  
Responsibility for the content of external websites linked in this publication always lies with their respective publishers. GIZ expressly dissociates itself from such content.

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

January 2025