

Each year, Sida conducts a humanitarian allocation exercise in which a large part of its humanitarian budget is allocated to emergencies worldwide. The allocation and subsequent disbursement of funds takes place in the beginning of the year to ensure predictability for humanitarian organizations and to allow for the best possible operational planning. Sida's humanitarian assistance is based on the four humanitarian principles, in particular **impartiality**, with its compelling urge to ensure that humanitarian action is carried out based on “**needs alone**”, giving priority to the “**most urgent cases of distress**”. Therefore, Sida's allocation methodology is grounded in several objective indicators such as; the *scale* of humanitarian needs (number of people in need), the *severity* of humanitarian needs (including food insecurity/IPC levels), the number of people targeted for the humanitarian response, the *financial coverage* of the respective humanitarian appeal, *national capacities* to respond and underlying risks, as well as distinct indicators related to *forgotten crises*. Sida also strongly supports the humanitarian coordination structures.

For 2021, Mali is allocated an initial 63 MSEK. Close monitoring and analysis of the situation in Mali will continue throughout the year and inform possible decisions on additional funding.

1 Crisis overview

1.1 Humanitarian overview

The conflict in Mali continued during 2020 and deteriorated in central Mali and expanded towards the south and south east of Mopti. Armed groups, including jihadist groups and the self-defence groups mobilised against them, target civilians in acts of killing, theft and property destruction. The attacks were sporadic at first but have now become more frequent and widespread. They have also become increasingly communal in nature and communal armed groups have taken root bringing an ethnic dimension to the area's conflicts and opposing ethnic groups against each other. As violence takes on a communal character, civilians, men and women of all ages, are more frequently targeted based on their ethnicity. The presence of the state is seriously weakening, with armed groups present in more and more territory.

On 18 August, a group of army officers overthrew the former president, after several months of demonstrations against his rule led by a coalition of opposition parties and civil society movements. In September 2020, a transitional government led by a civilian president, a military vice-president, a civil prime minister and 25 ministers (out of which four are women) took office. The transitional Government will remain in office for 18 months, tasked to prepare for a new constitution, perform elections and to make reforms. On Saturday 5 December, the

National Transitional Council (CNT) was finally installed after months of intensive negotiations. The transition Government is already facing challenges, as in the autumn of 2020, civil servants have been on strike which may impact the delivery of basic social services in collaboration with local authorities.

Environmental and socio-economic changes, many of which relate to the land and its exploitation, are placing great strain on local societies and rekindling old communal antagonisms. Recurring droughts and population growth put ever-increasing pressure on natural resources, especially land, water and pasture. It has become difficult to combine different forms of production, such as farming and livestock breeding, in the same area. Since the end of the 20th century, these tensions have revived latent conflicts that have degenerated into open violence in recent years.

Violence has resulted in a massive humanitarian crisis. In addition to violations of human rights, international humanitarian law and other norms, food insecurity is growing at a worrying pace in the conflict areas. In addition, the COVID-19 restrictions, a deterioration in the security situation and climate related challenges (including floods) contributed to an increase in humanitarian needs during the year.

According to the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) 2021, 7.1 million people are now in need of urgent humanitarian assistance and protection which is equivalent to one third of the Malian population. This is a dramatic increase from 4.3 million at the beginning of 2020. The GHO indicates that 5.8 million people will be targeted with humanitarian assistance in 2021.

Violence is escalating in the Sahel region, including in Mali. Abductions, killings, mutilations, sexual violence, recruitment of children and destructions of civilian property are some of the protection concerns reported. The use of mines and the increasing use of improvised explosive devices and the threat of remnants of war constitute an important protection risk and cause of civilian death and injuries. This also has a negative impact on the access to economic activities and livelihood for the population in the affected areas. It further complicates humanitarian access.

According to the Cadre Harmonisée in October 2020, the projection for 2021 is that around 4.7 million people would be food insecure and among those close to one million people in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) phase 3 (Crisis) to phase 4 (Emergency). The agricultural yields were good on average in 2020, although there were significant drops in production due to floods, inter-community conflicts and other forms of insecurity. There has been a remarkably drop in cotton cultivation and related income. In addition, the access to some pastures have remained limited in conflict zones in the center and northern parts of the country which negatively affects livestock feed and animal production.

The internally displaced population (IDP) has increased over the year, mainly in the central and northern regions (Mopti, Gao, Segou, Timbuktu and Menaka) and by the end of the year approximately 311 000 people were internally displaced. Some of the population that earlier had fled to neighboring countries are returning back to Mali as the security situation in neighboring countries, including Burkina Faso, is deteriorating.

The northern regions remain very fragile due to the presence of armed groups and high level of criminality. Furthermore, the situation has deteriorated rapidly in the centre, both due to the presence of armed groups but also due to communal violence. Increased insecurity affects the Liptako Gourma area in particular but is also affecting areas that used to be less affected such as Segou. Areas that are particularly hard to reach include Ansongo, Douentza, Koro, Bankass, Bandiagara, Youvarou, Ténenkou and Niono. Another protection concern is the attacks on civilians and their livelihood, including the “blockage” of the population in villages. One such example is the civil population in Farabougou (approximately 3000 people) who are currently “blocked” in their village after having been attacked and without access to their fields or humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian actors are advocating for a humanitarian corridor to the affected population and have provided some humanitarian assistance to the displaced. Access by humanitarian actors was worsened by the destruction of three bridges, military operations and open conflict.

Humanitarian access in general remains a critical challenge. The multiple armed groups present in Mali, increased criminality and military operations in the same geographical areas where humanitarian interventions are delivered are all factors that complicate humanitarian access and “blur” the lines between actors with different mandates such as humanitarians and military.

The coming year, Mali will have a transitional government and there is limited analysis of the potential impact on the humanitarian situation available. There is no indication of the humanitarian situation improving during 2021, rather a probable scenario is a deterioration in areas south of the center while the humanitarian situation remains serious in the northern and central parts of the country. The challenges linked to violations of international human rights law, international humanitarian law (IHL) and other norms by the various parts of the conflict persist. This will most probably continue to intensify displacement of the population in the years to come.

According to the national Food Security and Nutritional study (ENSAN) 20xx, 60 percent of the population has been affected negatively in regards to livelihoods and income generating activities e.g. access to markets and food. This trend will most likely continue during 2021.

In addition, cyclical droughts and floods are expected throughout the year where the regions of Segou, Koulikoro and Kayes are at high risk. The heaviest rains are expected in July and August although severe flooding may occur in September and October linked to the flows in the Niger river which strongly depend on the amount of rains in other parts of the region. The climatic variability affects the livelihood of farming, fishing and the pastoralist communities. The most challenging period for farmers and pastoralists is usually between June and August but can start as early as March depending on the previous rainy season.

1.2 Affected population

The poorest and most vulnerable groups (in terms of resources, power and voice, opportunities and choice, security and safety) include women, young people, internally displaced people and rural populations. Men and boys are vulnerable to physical violence as well as forced and underage recruitment. Property and land are destroyed and the population are attacked or caught up in fights between military and armed groups or in intercommunity violence. People fleeing

violence are subject to multiple attacks, explosive devices, and family separation. Women and girls are especially vulnerable to sexual and gender based violence (SGBV). People living with disabilities are also very vulnerable in this context. Recent trends have shown that specific attention to the vulnerability and risks related to ethnical belonging is required.

Violations of international humanitarian and human rights law are a major concern in Mali. The protection cluster reported over 4 000 protection incidents during 2020, including killings, mutilation, arbitrary arrestation, gender-based violence and forced recruitment. Also grave violations against children increased to 775 reported cases in 2020 which is an increase from 744 in 2019 and 544 in 2018. Most commonly reported is recruitment of children followed by denial of humanitarian access and killing/maiming.

The population in Mali is youthful and the low coverage of social services has contributed to children's vulnerability in general and particularly in conflict affected areas. The nutrition status is poor among children, due to poor dietary practices food deficiency and high prevalence of diseases which is also linked to insufficient access to clean and safe water and sanitation., Civil insecurity contributes to lack of access to basic social services.

Schools and health centres are closing due to insecurity. In the last two years, teachers in Mali have been threatened and killed; education facilities demolished, and learning material burnt, leading to the closure and non-functioning of around 1 300 schools. Children out of school are more vulnerable and at higher risk of human trafficking, recruitment by armed groups, sexual violence and child marriages. Approximately one out of four health centres in areas affected by conflict are not functioning and certain communities are unable to access the health centres that are open due to the fear of being attacked on the road. The protection and health clusters in Mali have registered an increase in attacks against health infrastructure in 2020, this includes attacks on hospitals/health centres, theft and/or destruction of equipment and drugs, threat against or abduction of health staff.

The use of mines and the increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and the threat of remnants of war constitute are a serious protection risk. Over 200 incidents were registered in 2020, many in Mopti region.

Overall, resilience has decreased due to the protracted nature of the crisis, specifically for the IDPs and host-families. Traditional coping mechanisms such as seasonal migration is challenging due to the increased insecurity and coastal countries closing their borders (due to COVID-19). Overall, there are high risks of negative coping strategies such as child marriage and recruitment by armed groups.

2 The humanitarian response

2.1 National and local response

The Government's capacity to respond to humanitarian needs is relatively low. Currently, the transitional Government is faced with strikes in several sectors. In some conflict-affected and

hard to reach areas, the state structures are barely present, such as the central and northern regions. In general, basic social services have low coverage and are in decline or under attack. A challenge is the lack of social services staff willing to go to insecure areas and in order to perform the work with sufficient quality.

Prior to the conflict, civil society had an important role in development work. Many national and local NGOs have in general made the shift and are able to cooperate with international humanitarian actors. A commonly used strategy among humanitarian actors to increase access to the most vulnerable populations is to work with and through communities. This may lead to stronger accountability to the affected population and increase the influence of civil society.

2.2 International response

The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) in Mali is a multi-year plan 2020–2022. According to the updated Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) 2021, 7.1 million people are now in need (PIN) of humanitarian assistance in Mali to meet basic needs, a number that went up from 4,3 million at the beginning of the year 2020. According to the GHO the target is 5.8 million people during 2021.

COVID-19 restricted measures put a serious strain on the resilience of the population as restrictions resulted in access to markets and a shortage of imported food commodities. The availability of local products in markets decreased compared to last year and the food security cluster projects over 3 million people to be in need of food assistance.

For 2021, preliminary numbers show that there are high needs in all sectors however the highest are in protection and WASH, PIN is 3,4 million for protection and 2,7 million in WASH respectively. The response will focus on providing life-saving responses in the six worst-affected regions: Gao, Kidal, Menaka, Mopti, Segou and Timbuktu. The majority of needs are in the Mopti region while the north remains fragile and the south, in particular Segou, is seeing an increase in needs and humanitarian presence. Areas that are particularly hard to reach include Ansongo, Douentza, Koro, Bankass, Bandiagara as well as Youvarou, Ténénkou and Niono.

Leadership and Coordination: The humanitarian response is coordinated by OCHA under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator who also has the roles of Resident Coordinator and Deputy Special Representative of MINUSMA. Since May 2019, a Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator is in place. A Humanitarian country team (HCT) is in place for the overall coordination and leadership including the clusters who are also working on sub-regional level.

UN Agencies: The concept of the “one UN” is extensively developed in Mali. Most UN agencies are represented in the HCT and often lead or co-lead of the various clusters. In addition, the agencies are often also the lead of the development coordination forum which is beneficial for implementing a nexus approach. In general, the agencies have a capacity to absorb funds and manage a rapid response. In 2020, a new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2024 and a UN Country Team (UNCT) nexus note were adopted in Mali. UNSDCF is linked to the national development plan and complements the multi-year Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2020-2023.

Humanitarian NGOs: Due to the protracted humanitarian situation in Mali, the humanitarian community is rather big with networks of national and local NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies in place. Operational capacity is sometimes limited due to either challenges of access or funding, but humanitarian actors can still deliver in hard to reach areas, often through a partnership between national organizations and INGOs or UN. According to OCHA, 200 humanitarian partners are active in the country, among them 74 INGOs and 85 national NGOs. Most of the humanitarian actors are active in the north and the center of the country in three main sectors: Food security, protection and health. Many NGOs are strong humanitarian actors and advocates for a principled (and rapid) humanitarian response.

Donors: The 2020 HRP is as of end of November 2020 financed up to 45 per cent which shows a significant funding gap. The major humanitarian donors are US, EU, Germany, Japan, UK, Sweden and Norway. Donor coordination is since 2020 more formalised in Mali, humanitarian donors meet regularly and participate as observers in the HCT.

Other actors: Many of the humanitarian actors in Mali are also implementing development activities, and in some cases peace-building activities. The same applies for donors that often support both types of activities. Stabilisation actors are present in Mali in addition to international and regional military forces which requires continued clear communication around mandates, roles and responsibilities to protect humanitarian space and access. All major UN agencies have regional programmes both in development and humanitarian response. Many INGOs are also present in the region and are increasingly discussing or implementing a regional approach to central Sahel (Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso).

2.3 Challenges and risks for the humanitarian response

During 2020, humanitarian access has been further complicated due to insecurity linked to military operations and criminality, COVID-19 and flooding at several places. Humanitarian organisations have had to temporarily suspend or scale down activities because of security incidents. In the regions on the border to Burkina Faso, for example in Bankass and Bandiagara, insecurity is decreasing due to the permanent presence of armed groups and fighting between them. Insecurity was increasing in Gao and between May and August 2020, 25 incidents targeting humanitarians were registered. The situation in Ansongo circle was one of the most difficult. During 2020, activities in and around Menaka were interrupted due to very high insecurity/criminality and lack of adequate security arrangements.

Humanitarian access in Timbuktu has improved due to a robust analysis of the situation and systematic contact with communities. However, military operations have had a negative influence in Gourma-Rharous circle. ACAPS indicates that nearly a third of all (worldwide) recorded abduction events targeting aid workers have occurred in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger (Jan 2019 - June 2020). Half of these occurred in the Mopti region in Mali.

Access is also a challenge due to the lack of infrastructure in some areas. The humanitarian air services, such as UNHAS, are paramount to reach beneficiaries with services and resources.

Communication at local level and strengthened civil-military coordination combined with community trust-building and acceptance are key strategies to improve access. In addition to

the work of OCHA, INSO has an important presence in Mali supporting NGOs with security related information and analysis. Criticism has been directed towards MINUSMA as the presence of the international troops has not curbed the security risks in some areas and in some cases blurred the lines between military operations and humanitarian work.

Another challenge for 2021 is to find a way to respond to longer term humanitarian needs (after first interventions of 3-6 months) and also to ensure that the solutions that are offered to IDPs in terms of return or resettlement are according to standards.

There is a risk that with continued insecurity, more military troops are deployed to the country and that the more "soft" parts of peace interventions and development interventions are not scaled up at the same pace to address root causes of the current situation.

3 Sida's humanitarian allocation

3.1 The Role of Sida's Humanitarian Support

Sida has been focusing on a humanitarian portfolio that has been directed to partners intervening in the centre and the north of the country. Response has been focusing on meeting urgent needs of the population most in need, with a clear emphasis on protection as an overarching issue. Sweden is active in donor forums and the HCT and advocates for a strong principled humanitarian response.

According to experience from field follow-up, there has been an expression of satisfaction among partners with Sida's funding approach being both flexible and reliable. Participation in the HCT by the Swedish embassy focal point has been important to ensure an in-depth analysis and follow-up of partners and to take part in strategic dialogue issues including around the nexus. The humanitarian donor coordination has improved during 2019 and 2020 and Sweden appreciates this opportunity to coordinate common key messages and share information with other donors.

The data collection and analysis of protection needs have in general been unsatisfactory in Mali but there has been strong efforts to improve and during 2020 the protection cluster have published several important papers and strengthened the protection monitoring system. The HCT also adopted a protection strategy to support and promote the centrality of protection including through an enhanced humanitarian leadership in protection advocacy and high level strategic discussions.

Sida has since several years had a particular focus on strengthening the protection sector and one example is that the support to NRC resulted in the set-up of a strengthened rapid assessment and response system in Mopti region linking to the Rapid Response Mechanism (co-funded with other donors). Furthermore, Sida's support to IRC allowed for the implementation of protection activities in hard-to reach areas.

There are concerns related to Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) by security/military actors in areas and through projects that are primarily perceived as humanitarian. This practice has a negative impact on humanitarian access that is depending on humanitarian actors being perceived as neutral and independent in order to gain community trust. Blurred lines between mandates can be detrimental to the delivery of humanitarian aid but also to the security of the population and humanitarian workers. The challenge and entailed risk have been discussed over several years in Mali and was also discussed extensively in the Sahel Conference arranged in 2020 by Germany, EU, Denmark and UN. Civil/military coordination in general is under pressure and needs to be reinforced in Mali.

3.2 Allocation Priorities 2021

Sida's humanitarian focus in Mali will continue to allow flexibility of partners to ensure a rapid response to the most vulnerable population in hard-to reach areas. Some targeted protection interventions will be supported and Sida will support partners implementing a multi-sectorial approach placing protection at the center and partners working on community-based approaches to protection while at the same time contributing to collective learning and coordination. Sida will continue to support promotion and training on international humanitarian law. In dialogue, Sida will follow up on the implementation of the HCT protection strategy, access and civil/military coordination and engage in discussions around more long-term solutions (after 3-6 months of displacement) to identify potential areas of cooperation with the bilateral strategy (nexus).

Sweden needs to continue to advocate for a principled humanitarian response in Mali. When applying an integrated response, the humanitarian community needs to carefully consider the negative impact such an approach may have on access of humanitarian actors. The possibility of humanitarian actors being perceived as less neutral and independent if working too closely with development and/or peace actors must be avoided. To support access to the population in hard to reach areas, there is also a need to advocate for a stronger Civil/Military coordination and increased number of trainings on IHL and humanitarian principles.

Sida's humanitarian unit plans to travel to Mali twice in 2021 including field trips to follow up on projects, field visits are planned as joint field monitoring between Sida HUM and the Embassy in Mali.

3.3 Partners

Sida monitors each partner's adherence to gender marker codes, conflict sensitivity, resilience, and accountability as well as their capacity to contribute to reaching protection outcomes irrespective of their sector-specific expertise. In the coming years Sida will consider a consolidation of partners in Mali and may reduce the number to allow closer dialogue and strengthened follow up and monitoring.

International Rescue Committee (IRC) has a longstanding presence in the Gao and Menaka regions in north eastern Mali, assuming an important protection role. IRC will provide protection and WASH support in Ansongo District. IRC is already present in Ansongo district,

which is a hard to reach area and knowledge of the context and trust/acceptance of the community is important.

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) works to protect the rights of vulnerable people affected by displacement. NRC aims to increase the emergency response and multi-sectorial assistance e.g. to reach more people in hard to reach areas. NRC also contributes to the nexus approach to bridge the gap between emergency and durable solutions. NRC will implement activities in the central and northern part of Mali with a focus on most hard to reach areas. Sweden has been supporting NRC as they allow a flexible approach adapted to needs. During the last two years, NRC has used Sida financing to strengthen the protection monitoring and response in connection with the Rapid Response mechanism in Mopti region. This pilot will be extended to the north in 2021. International Committee of the Red Cross

International Committee of the Red Cross' (ICRC) main priorities, in 2021, will be to strengthen protection for people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence, by maintaining dialogue with all relevant parties on their obligations under IHL, international human rights law and other norms. ICRC will facilitate access to good-quality health services, including mental-health care and physical rehabilitation, and advocate protection for patients, medical personnel and medical facilities. The work will also focus on addressing the needs of newly displaced and other violence-affected people, especially in hard-to reach areas, and to increase livelihood and other resilience-building projects. ICRC will also visit detainees, help detaining authorities meet detainees' needs and bring their treatment and living conditions in line with internationally recognized standards. ICRC is an important partner in Mali due to its presence in some of the hardest-to reach areas since the beginning of the conflict and ICRC's important protection mandate including promotion of IHL.

World Food Programme (WFP) responds to crisis-affected population in Mali with food or cash emergency assistance to save lives and protect livelihoods. UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), managed by WFP, also plays a key role in facilitating access to vulnerable population by the humanitarian community.

United Nation's Childrens Fund (UNICEF) will address the urgent needs of the most vulnerable populations in crisis-affected regions in Mali, while strengthening the linkages between humanitarian action and development programming and prioritizing community-based approaches. As lead of the nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and education clusters and the child protection sub-cluster, UNICEF will support the Government and other partners to strengthen their capacities for coordination, preparedness and risk-informed response.

United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) will focus on protection coordination, monitoring and implementation of the HCT protection strategy that Sida will follow up closely during the year in collaboration with other donors.

Save the Children (SC) will implement an integrated project in the sectors of child protection, education, food security with the objective of strengthening the resilience of the most vulnerable children and their families affected by armed conflict in the circles of Koro and Bankass.

Action Against Hunger (AAH) will contribute to addressing the humanitarian nutritional crisis in the regions of Timbuktu and Taoudenit through a multisectoral adaptative approach strengthening the resilience of communities and including the public systems. For 2021, the project will focus on the sustainability of the two previous years (Sida Hum multi-year resilience funding) and to consolidate results for the most acute nutrition interventions.

Sida’s humanitarian allocation to the Mali crisis in 2021		
Recommended partner for Sida support	Sector/focus of work and response modalities	Proposed amount
IRC	protection and WASH , IDPs and host communities in Ansongo Cercle	10 000 000
UNICEF	Support to HAC	9 000 000
NRC PBA	Multi-sector	11 000 000
WFP	Food security / UNHAS	5 000 000
ICRC	Protection, IHL, health services, displaced, increasing livelihood.	10 000 000
UNHCR	Multi-sector (protection coordination)	7 000 000
Save the Children	CP, Education, Food Security in the circles of Koro and Bankass.	7 000 000
AAH	Nutrition in Timbuktu and Taoudenit through a multisectoral approach.	4 000 000
		Total: 63 000 000

3.4 Strategic humanitarian funding and longer-term assistance

As informed in previous sections, Mali is very vulnerable to shocks, including multifaceted conflicts, recurring droughts and floods (due to degradation of natural resources and climate change). People living in poverty and vulnerability earn their main income through natural resources that has the potential to provide the poorest and most vulnerable, such as women and internally displaced persons, with opportunities for a more sustainable livelihood, strengthened resilience and reduced need of humanitarian support.

A new Mali country strategy is expected for the Swedish Development Cooperation for 2021-2025. The Embassy has coordinated input from colleagues working on the implementation of humanitarian, nexus and peace interventions in Mali, which provides an excellent opportunity to further increase synergies and common analysis. It is expected that the strategy will continue to support the sectors of democracy and human rights, peaceful societies and sustainable management of natural resources, environment and climate.

In 2021, the focus will be put on reducing people’s needs, risks and vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and address underlying causes of conflicts and hunger, which opens up for common analysis and synergies between development and humanitarian actors. For example the Embassy plans to continue building on the triple nexus approach (humanitarian-development-peace) by developing a country level nexus strategy which is in alignment with the DAC Recommendations and their 11 principles.

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There will be a continuous dialogue between Sida's Humanitarian unit, the Africa Department and the Embassy to provide joint, predictable and multi-year support to some organizations to improve results and focus on the same geographical area and vulnerable communities. Potential partners are some of the partners that are present in "hard to reach" areas e.g. in the central and northern regions to provide humanitarian assistance, but that in addition have more long term interventions to support human rights, social cohesion and peacebuilding components as well as livelihoods interventions (income generating activities) to strengthen resilience for these vulnerable people.

The Embassy is supporting the Food and Agriculture Organization to strengthen resilience for pastoralists, which was initiated as a complementarity to the humanitarian support during the food-security crisis in 2018. The intervention is currently being evaluated and will provide useful information about opportunities in Mali and the region.

The Embassy also seeks to increase the linkages between social protection system and to strengthen the Government's economic responsibility to respond to the most vulnerable people and at the same time strengthen resilience of communities, which is closely linked to humanitarian cash-based programming. Such an example is the UNICEF, WFP, and FAO joint multi-sectorial programme in Mali which focuses on an integrated package of support in the most vulnerable regions and livelihoods. Sweden will also follow up on opportunities to link the strengthened focus on protection within the humanitarian interventions with the bilateral support for human rights and rule of law. Dialogue will continue to find synergies between Sida's humanitarian interventions and interventions supported by the global peace strategy in Mali.

In 2020, a new UNSDCF 2020-2024 and a UNCT nexus note were adopted in Mali. UNSDCF is linked to the national development plan (CREDD) and complements the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2020-2023. This opens up possibilities to strengthen a coordinated approach to nexus with the aim to help reduce overall vulnerability and unmet needs of the most vulnerable, strengthen risk management, build resilience capacities and attack the root causes of crises. This is also in line with discussions on the nexus at the high level event/ Sahel conference arranged by EU, Germany, Denmark and the UN in 2020, where the various roles and responsibilities were discussed but also the need of a holistic response beyond military intervention.

Sweden supports the DAC Recommendations on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus; a non-binding legal instrument by the OECD. While a coordinated approach is essential to responding to complex emergencies such as in Mali, there is also a significant risk that the needs-based nature of humanitarian work is politicised, and that humanitarian space is reduced due to blurred lines with security and political actors. Dialogue around the risks is needed and encouraged and it is essential to contextualise interventions in close cooperation with local partners and communities to better understand opportunities and risks.

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