Evaluation Report Title:
EVALUATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION AND EVIDENCE PROGRAMM
(HIEP): SUMMATIVE PHASE 1 REPORT

Response to Evaluation Report (overarching narrative)

Introduction to the HIEP

The Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP), worth over £50m, began in 2012. Covering a wide-ranging portfolio, the HIEP focuses on generating evidence and stimulating innovations for improving humanitarian responses. HIEP is part of the UK's strategy to contribute to a more robust evidence base for humanitarian interventions, and will encourage innovations that work and can be scaled up. The HIEP is managed via an innovative Virtual Team structure, comprised of project managers and advisers across DFID and a small central Secretariat. As both the management approach and the research objectives were novel, the HIEP Secretariat commissioned ITAD to evaluate the programme over its original lifetime (up to end of 2018/19) and to make suggestions on the research projects through case studies, on the programme-level activities and priorities, and on the management model, as well as on the HIEP's outcomes and impacts.

Formative Report

In 2013, the ITAD evaluation team produced a formative report, which provided preliminary findings. The report found that the establishment of individual projects and partnerships created a solid foundation for HIEP's future success, and highlighted the importance of developing an influencing strategy and further developing the team structure to maximise the potential impact of the HIEP as it gained momentum.

The recommendations from the formative report are included here as an annex. Some of the recommendations were taken forward in the first phase, while others were not completed due to resource constraints and very high staff turnover. However, the evaluation team have integrated into their summative phase report those recommendations that they still consider to be relevant going forwards.

Summative Phase 1 Report

The report was considered by the evaluation Steering Committee in March 2016. The evaluation team joined the meeting and held constructive discussions. The report was well received by the Committee. In addition, a quality assurance review was conducted by DFID's Specialist Evaluation and Quality Assurance Service (SEQAS). This reviewer rated the report as 'green', and commented on the competence of the report.

Recommendations Action Plan

The summative report assessed the HIEP against several main thematic areas, including its relevance, effectiveness, value for money and impact, as well gender and social inclusion (GASI), and looked at the management model. In addition, the evaluation team considered eight individual case studies, drawn from projects across the portfolio. The findings indicate that the HIEP is performing well overall: "HIEP is making a significant contribution to the sector and is on track to produce robust and relevant evidence accessible to humanitarian organisations".

More specifically the review found that the HIEP continues to respond to priorities in the humanitarian community; it is on track to produce high quality evidence and innovation products; it is economical and largely efficient; and is already achieving some impact on the sectors' interest in and understanding of how to support innovation, as well as in some organisations' policy and practice towards research management and use. Some HIEP projects and partners' innovative approaches and methodologies are good ways to reach women and excluded parts of communities in research, but HIEP could be more consistent in its consideration of GASI, and could benefit from adopting a systematic approach across the portfolio.

The evaluation found that the HIEP cross-departmental model is proving an effective way to bring together skills and expertise across DFID. However it suggested that more investment in measures to harness the potential of HIEP's Virtual Team could increase the potential to achieve HIEP's ambitious overall goals.

Overall, DFID agrees with the main findings and recommendations made in the report. Several of the top recommendations from the report have been echoed elsewhere, for example, in the HIEP's internal annual review in 2015. This gives the HIEP Secretariat a strong basis for adopting these recommendations. For example, the evaluation makes several recommendations for increasing activity on research uptake and learning to ensure research affects programming positively. The HIEP should also strengthen engagement with partners and build lasting institutional links, as a way to improve uptake and communications, and better target and coordinate research. Finally, the HIEP should strengthen capacity to deliver the programme outcomes. This could take the form of new partnerships, as well as changes to the current management model. These considerations have already been factored into the development of future humanitarian research programmes to be funded by DFID's Research and Evidence Division, but more will be done to improve the current HIEP portfolio and management in line with the recommendations. Over 2016 DFID has begun to strengthen staffing of the HIEP secretariat in order to better position it to deliver on the HIEP's potential, and will keep staffing levels under review.

In some cases, DFID does not accept the evaluation team's recommendations. Firstly, in all cases the recommendations were not achievable in the timeframes suggested due to the need to prioritise staff capacity (also noted elsewhere by the evaluation as a constraint) as well as an emphasis on increasing communication uptake work around the World Humanitarian Summit (which the evaluation also commends). However, implementation has already started in some cases and we have made suggestions for when those recommendations we accept can be practically be actioned in the table below. Our assessment is that we need to be realistic and prioritise the work of the HIEP virtual team on a focussed and achievable set of aims and outcomes, to be developed under the influencing strategy.

We also do not accept the recommendation to set up a new project focussing on capacity building. Capacity building of researchers and research organisations in the Global South is not exclusively a humanitarian problem, but a wider research systems development problem, and support should extend beyond individual researcher capacity development. DFID's Research and Evidence Division is currently developing an updated approach to country knowledge systems, working with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the UK Research Councils, to understand the key stakeholder groups; barriers and enablers in their interactions, and to help identify approaches to support system development.

This will be tested initially in two to three countries in collaboration with national research councils. As DFID's focus is increasingly in fragile and conflict affected states this approach would also need to be tested in these settings. Having said that, HIEP programmes will continue to seek to boost capacity building within existing research projects where feasible, recognising this will have only limited impact on the wider system.

Overall, DFID staff involved with the evaluation process have pointed to the useful scrutiny and conclusions drawn by ITAD, and the thoroughness of their methodology and reporting. It is also important to recognise however the very high level of resource needed from within DFID to provide the evaluation team with the necessary information to produce such a thorough result, and in future to ensure that teams managing a real time evaluation of this kind are sufficiently staffed to do so in addition to delivering the programme.

The HIEP Secretariat looks forward to the fourth and final phase of the evaluation.

The recommendations as agreed below have been included in the HIEP delivery plan.

Evaluation Report Title: EVALUATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION AND EVIDENCE PROGRAMME (HIEP) - SUMMATIVE PHASE 1 REPORT

N o.	Recommendations	Responsibili ty	Date (recomme nded)	Date (agreed)	Accepted or Rejected	If "Accepted", Action plan for Implementation or if "Rejected", Reason for Rejection
	Recommendations					
1	**Resourcing HIEP projects' research uptake processes** Revisit partner communication and research uptake plans and budgets. Consider increases and extending contracts for longer-term communication particularly if products are produced only in last 3–6 months of the project to support longer-term research uptake activities. Ensure resourcing is sufficient for the production, translation and promotion of a range of products and processes.	HIEP Secretariat with project teams	April 2016	Dec 2016 and ongoing	Partially accepted	**The HIEP Secretariat accepts the recommendation, and has started to implement it as appropriate.** We expect to have reviewed all projects and made changes as appropriate by end December 2016, although we may need to look again later at those that are not due to complete until much later in the programme.
2	**Strategies to achieve HIEP outcomes** Develop and resource specific strategies to guide Virtual Team actions to support each of HIEP's three outcomes. Identify priorities in terms of countries, organisations, and sectors/themes HIEP seeks to see change by 2018. Consider as part of these more detailed strategies:	HIEP Secretariat with Virtual Team	April 2016	May 2016 and ongoing	Partially accepted	**The HIEP Secretariat accepts the need for a revised influencing strategy, but does not accept the recommended timing and proposes to adapt some of the specific recommendations as follows:** **a)** Accepted. This will be considered as part of the influencing strategy. **b)** Partially accepted, will be

| | | a) Develop a wider donor engagement strategy beyond the current focus on innovation and the WHS. A number of donor governments are already funding evidence and innovation so DFID could engage proactively with them to advocate for increased investment.

b) Leaders clearly play an important role in promoting greater investment in evidence and innovation, so the influencing strategy should identify and target key individuals to work with.

c) Actively support the growing HIEP network of academic and operational organisations and individuals with a common interest to build momentum and learning on how to change organisational culture in relation to evidence and innovation.

d) Review the range of operational organisations that are involved in HIEP and seek ways to widen its scope to achieve change through the partnership model.

e) Increase outreach to other donors and foundations to invest in | | | | | considered during influencing strategy redraft, subject to HIEP team capacity.
c) Accepted, this will be considered during influencing strategy redraft.
d) Partially accepted – there are now no plans to launch new research or innovation projects under HIEP, but we will seek to work through wider partnerships.
e) Partially accepted – prioritisation of outreach will be considered during influencing strategy redraft in the context of available resources.
f) Partially accepted – there are no plans to carry out new research under HIEP, but lessons from ongoing projects will be captured.
g) Ongoing (WHS was in May 2016). Actions from specific events and initiatives launched at the WHS are being followed up where appropriate, including through Education Cannot Wait, the Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation and the Grand Bargain.
h) Accepted for discussion with the Committee.
i) Partly accepted. We agree the Theory of Change should be refined, and will do so in conjunction with the research uptake and influencing strategy, However, we do not feel that |

		innovation, at international but also regional and national levels.					expecting the entire Virtual Team to act as one is realistic, and propose focussing on smaller thematic groups with more clearly defined aims within the wider Virtual Team.
		f) Generate research and practical knowledge of how to build links and alliances between national (bottom-up) and international (top-down) innovation processes.					
		g) Develop approaches for influencing the later stages of the WHS and ensuring that commitments will be followed up.					
		h) Engage HIEP Management Committee in promotion of HIEP agenda within and outside of DFID. Develop a specific plan and areas of responsibility.					
		i) Review and refine the HIEP theory of change in line with experience to date to make explicit the intention to act collectively as HIEP Virtual Team, to make explicit the relevance of national actors, to distinguish between the HIEP programmatic aims and uptake of individual project's uptake, and refine anticipated outcomes (detailed in section 9).					

3	**Monitoring by partners** Extend partner contracts for at least one year beyond their current end point to ensure they track and maintain monitoring data on research uptake - essential to be able to see the longer-term results of HIEP.	HIEP Secretariat and teams	April 2016	Ongoing	Partially accepted	**The HIEP Secretariat broadly accepts the recommendation, but does not accept the recommended timing and as for recommendation one it will be necessary to review projects on a case by case basis.** Agreements to extend six HIEP projects have already been made.
4	**Value for Money Management** Set up systems for better monitoring of VfM within HIEP. Include: a) Specific VfM review across the programme at the Management Committee meeting every six months b) The development of VfM guidance to include in the HIEP handbook. c) Establish specific VfM indicators which are set out during project inception phase, and monitored throughout implementation. These should include consideration of: • Staff management costs as a % of total costs • Fixed overhead costs or Indirect Cost Recovery ("ICR") % rate • Delays per year as measured by	HIEP Secretariat and Management Committee	June 2016	Dec 2016	Accepted	**The HIEP Secretariat partially accepts the recommendation, but does not accept the recommended timing.** We plan to complete work on a VfM framework for HIEP by December 2016, to ensure we draw upon and are in line with ongoing cross-RED work on VfM indicators that were rolled out in the second half of 2016, and will feed into the next Annual Review (also due by end 2016). On the specific recommendations: a) Accepted, starting from January 2017. b) The RED VFM guidance will be added to the HIEP handbook in due course. c) Partially accepted. We will monitor VFM indicators across the project portfolio including the suggested indicators where appropriate. d) Accepted, although given some

	months • Budget deviations per year as measured by % budget • Proportion of budget allocated to research uptake d) Monitor key cost drivers e) Monitor efficiency by tracking key milestones and indicators at both the project and programme levels such as time from contract to inception. f) Link logframe outputs and outcomes to resources to be able better to assess VfM (i.e. to know the cost of achieving results).					projects use fixed price (output based) contracts this will not be relevant for them. e) Partially accepted. Given the heterogeneous nature of HIEP projects no single metric will be suitable for this, however we will review projects against the plans agreed at the outset. f) This is not accepted as we do not think it is feasible at the outcome level given the complex nature of both the logframe and Virtual Team structure.
5	**Long-term support to uptake and application of HIEP evidence in priority regions and countries** Develop and contract out a HIEP communication project, or set of projects, to promote uptake and application of HIEP findings particularly at the <u>national and regional levels</u>. Elements of the project should include: a) creating links and relationships for HIEP in priority countries with	HIEP Secretariat	June 2016	January 2017 and ongoing	Partly-accepted	**DFID partly-accepts this recommendation, and will complete the influencing strategy before commissioning a new project in order to ensure its scope is relevant and appropriate.** As outlined above, we will also increase efforts to ensure communication of research findings through existing projects and by working with DFID offices and regional teams, and strengthen existing regional and international partnerships. Specifically:

	relevant regional and national networks and evidence brokers or intermediaries b) production of a set of evidence products and processes (events, ongoing communication, other) to promote evidence drawn from across HIEP on specific prioritised themes c) production of a set of products drawing on the learning from HIEP research partners on methodological challenges and solutions to evidence production in humanitarian contexts d) promotional activities to increase awareness of HIEP-produced knowledge, and access to it, among humanitarian actors e) research on how to address challenges to overcoming the political economy of research uptake - translating robust evidence into change in organisational practice f) practical support to organisations that request help in the application of HIEP research (this may well need input from partners).					a) This will be addressed in the influencing strategy. b) We will increase focus on communication around particular themes both within specific HIEP projects and by working with DFID policy teams where a number of projects address a common area. c) The HIEP synthesis components have developed a state of the art assessment of the broad evidence across a range of priority humanitarian issues. We will seek to document lessons from individual projects, and use existing partnerships and initiatives to synthesise them where possible. d) We will use existing projects, partnerships and initiatives to promote awareness of HIEP outputs, including the new gap mapping and prioritisation of humanitarian research and innovation. e) This problem is not exclusive to humanitarian evidence uptake. RED is considering its strategy on wider knowledge systems; we will feed into and learn from that work, as well as learning from experience across HIEP and other similar programmes. f) This is not a research function. We will however work with policy teams to produce guidance based on HIEP

					research where appropriate and feasible, support DFID operational teams as feasible (subject to capacity) and seek opportunities to ensure uptake through future technical assistance programmes in particular thematic areas.
6	**Gender and Social Inclusion** Develop a plan to strengthen HIEP's approach to implementing its commitments to gender and social inclusion. This should include measures to add value to and influence the GASI approaches of programmes within the current portfolio, and consolidate systems and mechanisms for embedding GASI within HIEP in preparation for the next phase. Specifically, this should include the following: a) For any new programme funded by HIEP, provide programme managers with clear requirements, based on RED requirements on what HIEP's expectations are in relation to GASI throughout the research process, including reporting and communicating results b) Re-embed the RED indicators in	HIEP Secretariat	June 2016	April 2017	Partially accepted	**The HIEP Secretariat accepts the recommendation, but will not be able to complete this work until April 2017 given that the majority of research projects are well underway and annual reporting will be due in late 2016.** Specifically: a) Not relevant as there are no plans to plans to launch further research projects under the HIEP. We will however ensure that GASI is addressed in any future humanitarian research that RED commissions. b) Accepted. The HIEP Secretariat will update the logframe with gender indicators by Autumn 2016. c) Accepted, subject to availability. d) Not relevant as there are no plans to launch further research projects under the HIEP. e) We will ask projects to report on this as part of regular reporting and seek to

	the HIEP logframe **c)** Include a gender/social inclusion specialist within the annual review team **d)** Include a section within proposals in which applicants outline how they will resource (timings, costings, etc.) their approach to GASI, where it is relevant to the research, including recruitment, training and retaining of local women researchers **e)** Share lessons learnt across the portfolio through internal and external briefing and workshops, etc. around, for example, the following issues: ✓ Methodological challenges to integrating gender and social inclusion issues into humanitarian research ✓ Lessons learnt on engaging women and other hard-to-reach groups in humanitarian research processes ✓ Challenges in recruiting, building capacities and retaining Southern women researchers in humanitarian contexts.					synthesise lessons. Many have already independently raised these issues.
7	**Strengthening the HIEP model** Strengthen systems for ring-fencing,	HIEP	June 2016	Ongoing	Partially accepted	**The HIEP Secretariat broadly agrees with the recommendation, but early**

	managing and rewarding adviser and programme manager time spent on HIEP. This could include ensuring that reviews of HIEP staff PMF objectives have appropriate Quality Assurers, and linking HIEP work into professional cadre development.	Secretariat				**consultations suggest that a formal QA process for PMF objectives will not be viable and we will need to find a different way to achieve the aims of this recommendation.**
8	**Capacity building** Consider a specific project to build capacity in priority humanitarian countries to increase the supply of experienced and skilled female and male researchers in the Global South, as well as building the capacity of organisations interested in undertaking research but currently not meeting quality standards of HIEP.	HIEP Secretariat	August 2016	n/a	Not accepted	**This recommendation is not accepted. We will work within existing programmes to boost capacity building support to Southern research organisations where feasible, but this problem is not exclusive to humanitarian and it is beyond the scope of this programme to build general research capacity.**
9	**Case study recommendations** Respond to case study recommendations through lead adviser and project team meetings. HIEP Secretariat should log and track responses.	HIEP Secretariat and project teams	February 2016	Dec 2016 and ongoing	Accepted	**The HIEP Secretariat accepts the recommendation, but will not be able to implement this in full December 2016, with ongoing follow up with project teams required.**

Annex 1

Evaluation Report Title: EVALUATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION AND EVIDENCE PROGRAMME (HIEP): FORMATIVE PHASE REPORT (2013)

Recommendations	Accepted or Rejected	If "Accepted", Action plan for Implementation or if "Rejected", Reason for Rejection
Recommendations		
Recommendation 1- Clarify level of ambition of HIEP to support transformative change in the sector It is urgent in 2014 for the HIEP Secretariat and Management Committee to clarify the level of HIEP's ambition in relation to transformation and change in the sector (i.e. at the outcome level) so plans, strategies and resourcing can be developed accordingly.	Accepted	Towards the end of 2014 the HIEP published a refreshed strategic plan setting out progress of the programme so far and plans going forward. This reiterated that in the coming years, the HIEP would further expand the range of partners it works with and forge links with the World Humanitarian Summit. Since then, the Management Committee has reviewed the vision of the HIEP and reiterated the commitment to the programmes ambitious theory of change. In the short term, staff turnover means capacity is limited, and so expectations on progress in 2014 and the first half of 2015 must be realistic and proportionate to resources available.
Recommendation 2 – Resourcing HIEP Before the end of 2014, the Management Committee should review the overall balance of how resources are being allocated to and within HIEP, and make adjustments taking into account decisions made in relation to Recommendation 1 and the level of ambition of HIEP.	Accepted	The Management Committee reviewed resourcing to the HIEP in the final quarter of 2014, allocating more resources to leadership of the programme, and maintaining commitment to a secretariat presence in the East Africa Research Hub. Recruitment processes mean that this resourcing level should be realised by the end of Q2 2015.
Recommendation 3 – Galvanising the collective power of HIEP virtual team	Accepted	Several processes have been planned and implemented to support the development of the strategic role of the virtual team, including regular

By December 2014, the HIEP Secretariat should develop a plan and identify the resources needed to support the development of the strategic role of the HIEP virtual team.		meetings, updates and stronger links with the humanitarian cadre. The role of the virtual team will continue to develop over the course of 2015.
Recommendation 4 – Monitoring HIEP By December 2014, the Secretariat and Management Committee should put in place systems to monitor HIEP more effectively, including a populated logframe, establishing systems to track efficiency and economy across HIEP.	Partially Accepted	The programme logframe has been populated and made publicly available, with work undertaken to align the log frames at the individual project level to the programme wide logframe. A results monitoring matrix has been included in the delivery plan, and a communications monitoring grid is maintained by the secretariat. The importance of tracking efficiency and economy is recognised, and work is underway to consider how an effective system can be developed across Research and Evidence Division; however the timing of the recommendation was not met.
Recommendation 5 – Achieving change in humanitarian contexts By Quarter 1 2015, the HIEP Secretariat should develop a strategy for HIEP engagement with regional and country stakeholders.	Partially Accepted	The HIEP Management Committee acknowledges the importance of engaging with regional and country stakeholders; however a standalone plan may not be appropriate. Capacity to engage with regional stakeholders has been boosted by the position in the East Africa Research Hub, as well as redoubled efforts through RED wide activities.
Recommendation 6 – HIEP's approach to gender and social inclusion By Quarter 1 2015, the Secretariat should develop a plan to strengthen HIEP's approach to implementing its commitments to gender and social inclusion.	Accepted	Gender and social inclusion are integral to many HIEP projects, and the secretariat acknowledges that further work to strengthen the HIEPs approach, for example by articulating alignment with the International Development Gender Equality Act (2014). This will be considered by the secretariat in 2015.
Recommendation 7 – Learning from HIEP By the end of Quarter 1 2015, the HIEP Secretariat should develop a strategy to ensure learning from projects is captured and shared across the HIEP virtual	Accepted	This recommendation was mirrored in the 2014 annual review of the programme, which was to support the development of synthesis products on key issues. The secretariat will lead this work over the course of 2015.

team, partners and externally in key subjects (e.g. methodological challenges in integration of gender and social inclusion issues in humanitarian research; ethics in humanitarian research).		