

An independent think tank that specialises in analysing practices and developing policies for the humanitarian sector



## OUR WORK AS A LEARNING PARTNER



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## GROUPE URD, A LEARNING PARTNER FOR AID SECTOR ACTORS

### WHAT IS A LEARNING PARTNER?

A **learning partner** provides support in terms of **strategic management and continuous improvement** to those responsible for implementing a project or programme. This can include analysing practices and contexts, the production of knowledge, and helping to integrate lessons learned. The central objective of this support is to **guarantee the quality and relevance** of actions in the field.



Above all, a learning partner is **committed to and shares accountability for the success of projects and the achievement of objectives**. They specialise in evaluation, operational research and capacity reinforcement and bring complementary added value to a consortium or between different consortiums.

Ideally, the learning partner is **present at the key stages of a project** to highlight priority issues and to **make the work of project partners easier**.

# GROUPE URD, A LEARNING PARTNER FOR INTERNATIONAL AID ORGANISATIONS

By occupying this central role, Groupe URD can provide support on several levels to facilitate the implementation of operations, lighten the workload of actors and allow them to concentrate on operational issues:

- ✓ **Quality management:** helping to develop and implement a quality management mechanism based on a robust MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning) system that is adapted to the project;
- ✓ **Agile management:** helping to establish structured and iterative processes that allow decisions to be made in the face of uncertainty;
- ✓ **Relevance:** reinforcing the capacity of the project and actors to take a step back, question their decisions and practices to ensure that they are technically and methodologically relevant;
- ✓ **Integrating cross-cutting issues:** helping actors to adapt the project and reinforce their capacities in relation to issues such as localisation, climate, environment and gender.

By remaining outside the operational team, Groupe URD can take a step back and propose operational adjustments to be implemented 'while the project is taking place'. The tools that are used encourage listening, dialogue, consultation and the participation of the different project stakeholders, such as affected people and communities, project partners, local authorities and donors.

## THE DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES THAT WE CAN PROVIDE

The support that Groupe URD can provide as a learning partner can take many different forms depending on the implementation context, the expectations and needs of stakeholders and the nature of the project:



## OUR EXPERIENCE

Groupe URD has many years of experience as a learning partner in different contexts, such as the Lake Chad Basin, Mali, Haiti, Lebanon and Burkina Faso. **Below are a few examples:**

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### *The RESILAC project, Inclusive Economic and Social Recovery Around Lake Chad (Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad) / Donors: EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and the French Development Agency*

Alongside Action Contre la Faim and Care, as well as their numerous operational partners in the four countries of the Lake Chad Basin, Groupe URD took part in the RESILAC project from June 2018 to May 2023. RESILAC was designed as an **agile project**, based on the humanitarian-development nexus, **adapted to the needs of people and territories**, while also taking into account security and climate-related challenges. It involved **continuous learning via the 'Knowledge production and management' pillar** steered by Groupe URD. We established an innovative accountability approach (Feedback Day) and conducted **lesson sharing exercises** on the implementation of psychosocial support, mental health, social cohesion and economic recovery activities. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms made it possible to adjust activities and support decision-making. **Six regional studies** were carried out, including: the impact of the security crisis on land ownership; endogenous conflict prevention, mediation and resolution mechanisms; caring for people with psychological disorders; and the integrated territorial approach. These helped to **improve understanding** of the environment in which the project was taking place so that activities could be adapted to it.

⇒ <https://www.urd.org/en/project/resilac-economic-and-socially-inclusive-recovery-in-lake-chad/>



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### *The Vil Nou Pi Bèl project (Haiti) / Donor: the French Development Agency*

Groupe URD was involved as a learning partner in the Vil Nou Pi Bèl project from May 2019 to December 2022 in partnership with Care France and Care Haiti. This project aimed to **reinforce the resilience of the inhabitants of Jérémie** in Haiti. We provided regular support in monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the project was of good quality, and in operational decision-making to help steer the project. One of the priority activities was **reinforcing local organisations** on issues such as project and financial management, conflict management, environmental issues and disaster risk management. This involved assessing local CSOs, and running training sessions and participatory workshops to exchange practices. A **study and a training course on the renovation of historical buildings** led to the drawing up of a technical dossier on this subject. Via evaluations (EIMS), operational research, training courses, events, awareness-raising campaigns and multi-actor coordination meetings, Groupe URD ensured that the project was adaptable to the evolving context and emerging needs.

⇒ <https://www.urd.org/en/project/vil-nou-pi-bel-reinforcing-the-resilience-of-the-inhabitants-in-the-city-of-jeremie-in-haiti/>



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### *The PASFASS project (Chad) / Donor: French Development Agency*

From March 2019 to October 2023, CARE, the *Bureau d'Appui Santé et Environnement* (BASE) and Groupe URD ran the PASFASS project to increase the social empowerment of Chadian women. As part of this consortium, Groupe URD provided **targeted support (studies, evaluations and monitoring)** which aimed to give project stakeholders, and primarily field staff, practitioners and the health authorities a better understanding of the socio-economic factors



that have an impact on access to Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Healthcare. A **training course** helped the consortium members to improve the effectiveness of their **monitoring and evaluation procedures**, and a session on **cartography and geographic information systems** helped the project teams to draw up their own health maps. Groupe URD also carried out a **studies on access to reproductive healthcare, on security management, on access to reproductive healthcare among adolescents in Chad, and on the social norms and practices related to female genital mutilation (FGM) in the Mandoul region**. A medium-length documentary on the continued practice of FGM was produced towards the end of the project, and a final lesson sharing exercise was conducted via the production of case studies and technical files.

⇒ <https://www.urd.org/en/project/the-pasfoss-project-to-increase-the-social-empowerment-of-chadian-women/>



### The Nex'Eau project (Burkina Faso) / Donor: the French Development Agency and USAID

Groupe URD was involved in the Nex'Eau project as part of a consortium with Solidarités International and the Gret, as well as their numerous operational partners in Burkina Faso, from May 2021 to October 2023. The project aimed to reinforce the resilience of drinking water services in crisis contexts. In addition to the technical aspects related to **consolidating drinking water management and supply**, the project also involved **monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and the sharing of methodological practices and lessons learned**. **Two studies were carried out**, one on taking displaced people into account when planning water services in Burkina Faso and the other on the financial sustainability of public drinking water services during crises. **Three iterative evaluations with mini-seminars allowed staff and donors to monitor** how the project was evolving, and make adjustments based on needs and the context. The project showed the importance of ensuring that activities and funding are agile in insecure and politically unstable contexts. <https://www.urd.org/en/project/reinforcing-the-resilience-of-water-services-in-crisis-contexts/>



**If you are interested, and would like to know more about setting up a project of this kind, please contact us:**

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