



Civil Society Dialogue Network Funding Instruments Meeting

Instrument for Stability

Informal consultation on 2014 programming

Wednesday 25 September 2013 (09.00-18.00)

Martin's Central Park Hotel, Boulevard de Charlemagne 80, 1000 Brussels

MINUTES

(NB/ The [final agenda](#) of the meeting is available to download from the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) page of the EPLO website.)

1. Welcome

EPLO welcomed the participants and reminded them that this year they had an opportunity to provide inputs at an earlier stage than in previous years.

The European Commission (EC) explained that the informal consultation was taking place in a different context from those in previous years as negotiations on the new EU multiannual financial framework (MFF), including the new Instrument for Stability (IfS) Regulation, were still ongoing. It also stressed that, although no commitments could be made about the 2014-2020 IfS programming, it did not want to wait for the adoption of the MFF and the IfS Regulation before consulting its partners, and that the main aim of the meeting would be to listen to their comments and suggestions.

Finally, the EC announced that a second meeting might be organised in early 2014 in order to present more concrete information about the 2014 IfS programming.

2. Session 1: Update on expected context for 2014-2020 programming

The EC presented the [state-of-play regarding the draft IfS Regulation 2014-2020](#).

Participants raised the following issues:

1. What will happen if the new IfS Regulation is not adopted by the end of the year?

2. What are the negotiating positions of the European Parliament (EP) and the Council of the EU?
3. How has the EC sought to increase the involvement of and consultation with civil society?

In response the EC said:

1. It is unlikely that the negotiations will not be completed before the deadline. However, there has been contingency planning so there will not be a funding gap if an agreement is not reached before the end of the year.
2. The EC cannot discuss any details of the negotiations, including the different institutions' positions.
3. Article 8 of the EC proposal for the new IfS Regulation provides for civil society involvement in the preparation of strategy papers. The EC would like to see the EU delegations' engagement with civil society more systematised. Civil society will be consulted once the programming process has started.

The EEAS presented its [initial thinking on the strategic programming of the IfS 2014-2020](#).

Participants raised the following issues:

1. Please provide more details about the possibility to 'engage with relevant stakeholders on cyber-space' under the proposed Article 4.
2. How will the principle of 'comprehensive EU approaches' be implemented?
3. Regarding the possibility of 'promoting early warning' under the proposed Article 4, what has been the experience of having two funding streams (African Peace Facility (APF) and IfS)?
4. How have the New Deal commitments been taken into account in the initial thinking on the future IfS programming?
5. Could the possible 'focus on peace-building/state-building initiatives' under the proposed Article 4 include support for democratic governance?
6. How will it be possible to sustain statebuilding initiatives if crisis response actions have a maximum duration of 18 months?
7. Please provide more details about the internal coordination mechanism.
8. What is the multilateral dimension of possible actions aimed at addressing the 'destabilising effects of climate change' under the proposed Article 5? How could they fit in with initiatives aimed at addressing the crises in regions such as the Horn of Africa and Sahel?
9. How could civil society be involved in actions supported under the proposed Article 5?
10. Please provide more details about conflict prevention and capacity building clusters.
11. How do you see the capacity of EU delegations to fulfil their evolving role? On the IfS side, do you have people in EU delegations to ensure that the notion of an EU comprehensive approach is taken up?
12. The inclusion of "emerging crimes" in the proposed Article 5 programming is a welcome development.

The EC and the EEAS gave the following responses:

1. The EEAS does not only see cyberspace as a security concern. It also entails social, economic, business and human rights considerations. The rationale behind the possibility of including it under the proposed Article 4 is to create a forum which brings together a wide range of representatives from business and civil society in order to help the EU to define and develop policy in this area.
2. The EU has a broad range of policies and instruments at its disposal. The establishment of the EEAS and the prominent role given to EU delegations facilitates the implementation

of an EU comprehensive approach. A good example of the application of the EU comprehensive approach is in the Horn of Africa where there is a mix of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) tools in coordination with the IfS and development instruments. The EC and the EEAS are currently developing a communication on this issue.

3. The APF can only be used to pay for the African components of peacekeeping missions (e.g. African troops). The IfS has been used to complement the APF, including by providing funding for EU advisors. The APF was not yet in place when the IfS started to be used to fund early warning capacity building initiatives for the African Union (AU). The APF remains the main point of entry but the IfS can be used to ensure that there are no funding gaps.
4. The strategic programming only sets out the framework. The broad reference to a 'focus on peace-building/state-building initiatives' would give the EC the possibility to cover the issues included in the New Deal.
5. Democratic governance is primarily covered by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).
6. There is an internal coordination mechanism to try to ensure that the development assistance instruments, including the EIDHR, can integrate actions which have been started under the IfS. The 18-month limit does not apply to actions under the proposed Article 4 or the proposed Article 5.
7. There is an internal coordination mechanism in the EEAS and a parallel mechanism within DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DEVCO). There is a formal process for coordinating with EU delegations on the programming process, including programming guidelines. Joint programming with EU Member States is also taking place in a number of countries.
8. Climate change can be addressed under a variety of EU external funding instruments. It is important that IfS actions are focused on those aspects where it has the greatest added value such as global work, policy work and awareness raising. This could be through support to global or trans-regional actions, or actions aimed at developing and disseminating policy in areas such as those implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) or the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC).
9. Civil society is already involved in some actions (e.g. counter terrorism and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation). There is scope for more civil society involvement in actions on drug trafficking and cybercrime.
10. According to the EEAS' initial thinking, the three main clusters could be (1) conflict sensitivity (conflict prevention, post-crisis and post-disaster, resilience etc.); (2) human security (gender, children and youth in conflict, empowerment of local communities etc.); and (3) security (security sector reform (SSR), disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR); integrated border management, transitional justice etc.)
11. DEVCO is moving the fragility agenda forward. However, they do not have the funds to support the policy so they are requesting IfS funding.

The EU delegations are extremely stretched. The EC is trying to help by:

- providing IfS staff to reinforce EU delegations which are managing crisis response funding
- providing guidance so that all programmes can take into account conflict sensitivity
- trying to bridge the gap between the operational and political sections
- launching some of the in-country IfS calls for proposals at a regional level.

The EU delegations need the support of civil society organisations (CSOs).

12. The choice of which threats to address is based on two criteria: (1) the size of the threat; and (2) its socio-economic and human security impacts.

3. Session 2: Operational opportunities and challenges for the Instrument for Stability 2014-2020

The EC presented a summary of the new [EU Financial Regulation](#).

Participants raised the following issues:

1. Regarding 'indirect management', is it possible to fund local partners and networks?
2. Please provide more information about the liability chain with regard to sub-granting.
3. Please provide examples of sub-granting.
4. When will the new rules set out in the new Financial Regulation take effect?
5. Please provide more information about the provisions for returning funds which have been allocated to partners in difficult countries but which have not been spent.
6. Will a normal interim financial report suffice in the years in which an expenditure verification report is not required?
7. What are the new requirements regarding the transfer of funds between budget headings?
8. Have any discussions taken place about increasing the 7% ceiling for indirect costs?
9. Please provide more details about the following exception clause in the Financial Regulation: 'The 7% ceiling may be exceeded on the basis of a reasoned decision of the Commission'.
10. Please provide more details about the international standards for sub-granting.
11. Regarding interest on pre-financing, can the beneficiary take the interest and use it to reduce the co-financing ratio?

The EC gave the following responses:

1. There are two possibilities to work with local partners: (1) through indirect management if they have passed the pillar assessment; or (2) through sub-granting under a grant contract or an indirect management delegation agreement. The beneficiary can use its own procedures for sub-granting, but this needs to be evaluated by the EC in order to determine whether they comply with international standards.
2. The liability chain has not changed. The beneficiary is responsible for the financial management of the entire grant, including any sub-granting. Beneficiaries are advised to meet or accompany the local organisations (i.e. sub-grantees) in order to ensure they follow the correct accountability procedures.
3. There are no entities to which beneficiaries cannot sub-grant. It is even possible to sub-grant to individual persons in dire need. There needs to be a description of the sub-grant actions, sub-grantee organisations and selection criteria in the description of the action in the grant contract.
4. The new Financial Regulation has been applicable to all calls for proposals launched since 1 January 2013. In cases where calls for proposals were launched in 2012 but contracts were signed in 2013, the new elements relating to pre-financing guarantees and payment deadlines were included as per the new Financial Regulation. For indirect management, it will be applicable as of 1 January 2014.
5. The beneficiary is still responsible for the financial management of the grant. If the EC needs to recover any funds, it will issue a recovery order addressed to the beneficiary.
6. The EC will require a detailed breakdown of the beneficiary's accounting expenditure such as a printout of its accounting records.
7. Beneficiaries still need to inform the EC in a timely manner about any changes. They are advised to meet their project manager to discuss any major changes.
8. The EC is not aware of any discussion on increasing the ceiling for indirect costs.
9. The EC is not aware of any cases where the ceiling has been increased. However, if the beneficiary is able to demonstrate in their accounting that a cost is directly linked to the implementation of an action, it can be specified as a direct cost.

10. Sub-granting has to be in line with EC procedures. A delegated body's sub-granting procedures will be assessed by an external auditor. The assessment will use international standards where they exist (e.g. accounting). Otherwise, it will use the new EU Financial Regulation standards.
11. The EC recovers the profit which the beneficiary makes in the project on a *pro rata* basis (i.e. *pro rata* of the EC's contribution). The beneficiary could re-inject this interest, but the EC would recover it on a *pro rata* basis.

The EC invited participants to provide suggestions regarding the following operational aspects of IfS programming: multistakeholder approaches, geographical scope and gender mainstreaming.

(NB/ The [list of questions](#) which was shared with participants in advance of the meeting is available to download from the CSDN page of the EPLO website.)

Multistakeholder approaches

The EC invited participants to share their views regarding the application of a multistakeholder approach to IfS-funded actions.

Participants raised the following issues:

- Where and for what purpose should multistakeholder approaches be used?
- Under which conditions could the multistakeholder approach be encouraged as the best delivery model?
- Which criteria could be considered beyond operational and administrative advantages?
- What role could multistakeholder approaches play in the next programming cycle?
- The EC should not underestimate the difficulties and complexity involved in implementing a multistakeholder approach.
- Multistakeholder approaches can sometimes result in constraints which can jeopardise the successful implementation of projects. There is a need for flexibility.
- Multistakeholder approaches work in certain contexts (e.g. information sharing, outreach, creating synergies etc.) They are less effective in terms of developing concepts for activities.
- The governance structures of partnerships need to be well thought through in advance.
- Multistakeholder approaches can unintentionally facilitate double funding of actors. One means of mitigating this risk could be the creation of a list of stakeholders and their respective sources of funding.
- The depth of stakeholder involvement is very important, particularly in terms of activities. However, the complexities arising from multistakeholder involvement in project management may be inhibiting.
- There is great scope for the application of multistakeholder approaches under the proposed Article 5. In the past, CSOs have been asked to engage with EU Member States' consortia but this has not always resulted in effective multistakeholder approaches.
- There is scope for civil society involvement in activities aimed at addressing the 'destabilising effects of climate change' under the proposed Article 5. One way could be through the network of public environmental information centres.

Geographical scope

The EC invited participants to share their views regarding the geographic scope of IfS-funded actions.

Participants raised the following issues:

- Please provide examples of transregional actions.
- Multicountry and/or transregional approaches are welcome. However, they cannot have a sustainable impact if they are implemented over a short timeframe.
- Multicountry calls may be discontinued under the new Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities thematic programme.
- The flexibility of multicountry approaches is welcome. However, they do involve additional complications.
- The possibility of multicountry approaches eliminates the need to develop individual projects in neighbouring countries.
- If the EC is to pursue multicountry approaches, it also needs to lower its expectations of what results can be achieved.

The EC gave the following responses:

- Regarding the timeframe for activities, the programmable components of the IfS (current Article 4) may take place over a period of up to 36 months.
- Regarding trans-regional approaches, the EC is looking at the areas of support under the proposed Article 5 (e.g. drugs, maritime piracy, migration etc.). Multi-country actions allow for activities to take place outside the country in which the principal activity takes place.

Gender mainstreaming

The EC invited participants to share their views regarding gender mainstreaming in IfS-funded actions.

- Gender mainstreaming needs to be more explicit in evaluations.
- There is a need for stricter and more concrete criteria covering issues such as whether women participate in meetings, whether women are implementing partners, whether women are signatories to co-operation agreements etc.
- It is important to take into account the specific factors which can facilitate or hinder the participation of women in projects.
- The design, monitoring and evaluation components of projects need to be reinforced (e.g. by using a baseline study and a results framework at the end with a limited number of questions and indicators).
- Gender requirements should feature more prominently in calls for proposals and the gender gap should be identified more specifically.
- It is important to raise the issues which need to be addressed and their significance for the EU. It would be useful to include questions of masculinity and femininity.
- There is already explicit language in both the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security, and the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development. It could provide a useful entry point.
- It is also important to raise the question of gender equality in EU consultations in partner countries.
- Is the European Parliament fully aware of what the IfS is already doing on gender?
- It is important to focus on the beneficiaries in order to avoid an overly external perspective of gender mainstreaming.
- It is necessary to broaden the discussion about gender to beyond it being solely a women's issue; it is about the vulnerability of a variety of groups.

- Tougher policies are required as the ones that have been implemented so far have not been successful.
- There needs to be greater transparency regarding how budgets are distributed in favour of women. This requires better data.
- The EU should concentrate more on the organisational needs of women's organisations and less on building the capacity of individual women. It should support women's organisations and the establishment of networks.
- The EU should ensure that it adopts an inclusive gender approach which includes the most vulnerable women in partner countries.
- Mainstreaming carries the inherent risk of "away-streaming" (i.e. making the issue superficial). While it is important to address the issue of gender in a crosscutting manner, it is also necessary to include a specific focus on supporting women's organisations and networks.

The EC invited participants and their colleagues to send written responses to the questions.

4. Session 3: Instrument for Stability 2014 programming – Conflict prevention, crisis preparedness and peace-building component (Article 4)

The EC presented an overview of the [implementation of the pre- and post-crisis capacity building \(Article 4.3\) component of the IfS 2007-2013](#).

Participants raised the following issues:

1. Which EU delegations will manage in-country calls for proposals under the 2013 Annual Action Programme (AAP)?
2. Why was there a significant increase in the funding allocated to Article 4.3 in 2010?
3. Is IfS funding connected to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 national action plans?
4. Will climate change be a priority in the 2014-2020 programming?
5. Are there plans to: (1) bridge the gap between the number of people trained for civilian stabilisation missions and the number of people actually deployed? and (2) increase the number of women deployed in those missions?
6. How is the EC looking to build on its past and ongoing support for the Kimberly Process? Where does the issue of land management in regards to national resources fit into it?
7. Will the possible focus on 'assistance to curb use of natural resources to finance conflicts' also cover scarcities of natural resources?
8. - More could be done with regards to transitional justice, including the prosecution of the perpetrators of sexual violence against women, capacity building for courts, supporting the work of truth commissions and commissions of enquiry, and providing reparations for victims of sexual violence.
- Local constituencies for international justice should also be supported.
- Although support for justice is mentioned in the IfS Regulation, it has been neglected to some extent in recent years.
9. Will youth and children be prioritised in 2014 and beyond?
10. How does the EC decide which countries to prioritise in its in-country calls for proposals?
11. Does an analysis of EU Member States' past and ongoing support for the various thematic priorities exist?
12. Will the evaluation of Article 4.3 actions 2007-2013 also cover EU Member States' actions?
13. EU Member States have to provide data to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The EC could refer to the OECD data.

14. Will media, particularly capacity building of local media, and access to information be included in the 2014 programming?
15. Will the action on 'promoting job creation and private sector involvement in fragile or conflict-affected states' be continued in 2014?
16. Is the 2014-2020 programming linked to the ongoing discussions about an EU comprehensive approach, including the planned communication?
17. Will the in-country calls for proposals be maintained in the 2014-2020 programming?
18. Is there any indication of the amount of IfS funding which will be allocated in support of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) and the New Deal framework in the 2014-2020 programming?
19. How does the EU evaluate the impact of its activities?
20. How does the EC decide which funding instrument (EIDHR or IfS) to use to support transitional justice?

The EC and the EEAS gave the following responses:

1. Under the 2013 AAP, € 9 million has been allocated to supporting local and regional actions aimed at strengthening the capacity building of civil society in conflict prevention, crisis preparedness and peacebuilding. These actions will be managed by the EU delegations in the following countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, Nepal, Peru, Senegal (regional action), Somalia, Tajikistan and Zimbabwe.
2. The increase in funding corresponds to the start of the second phase of the IfS (2010-2013). It followed the recommendations of the 2009 scoping study on the Peacebuilding Partnership.
3. Women, peace and security is one of the areas for support under the in-country calls for proposals. There is no conditional linkage between the EC's decision to enable an EU delegation in a particular country to launch an in-country call for proposals and the existence of a UNSCR 1325 national action plan in that country.
4. Climate change would more likely to be addressed under the proposed Article 5.
5. Approximately 4000 civilian personnel have been trained in the first two years of the Europe's New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management (ENTRI) project, which was funded under the 2010 AAP. There was a credible link between their need for training and possibility of actual deployment. However, decisions regarding their deployment are not taken by the EC but by the competent authorities (i.e. EU Member States, third countries, and regional and international organisations. Experience has shown that it is difficult to deploy female police officers as their numbers are already low in EU Member States' police forces.
6. Discussions on the future priorities of the Kimberly Process will take place in November. On the basis of those discussions, the EC will assess if there is a need to support specific projects on the Kimberly Process. A link between the Kimberly Process and natural resources programming can be established. For this reason, it is expected that the issue of natural resources shall be included under the scope of the proposed Article 4.
7. It is expected that the possible language for the proposed Article 4 will enable the future funding of this type of action.
8. The EC is interested in including transitional justice, including gender-sensitive transitional justice in the 2014-2020 programming and welcomes inputs.
9. The EC is interested in continuing to include youth- and child-related aspects in the 2014-2020 programming. However, it needs to consider the impact of past and ongoing activities as well as the take-up of youth- and child-related actions in partner countries before considering future priorities.
10. The process for selecting EU delegations is as follows: (1) The EC, in consultation with the EEAS, contacts all EU delegations and asks them to express their interest before a certain deadline. (2) The interested delegations submit a concept note by a certain

- deadline. (3) The EC and the EEAS assess the concept notes and select the EU delegations according to their respective merits.
11. The EC has raised the issue of providing regular and comprehensive information on past and ongoing programmable support with EU Member States in the context of wider discussions on the complementarity and efficiency of EU assistance. However, it has experienced some resistance in this regard.
 12. (Linked to the answer to the previous question) The 2013 evaluation of the Peacebuilding Partnership will only cover EC actions funded under Article 4.3 of the current IfS Regulation.
 13. Reference to existing OECD, while possible, only partially addresses the issue.
 14. The EC is interested in maintaining it in the 2014-2020 programming, particularly at a local level and in connection with actions targeting youth. It is also looking at social media and their role in mitigating and monitoring conflicts.
 15. The EC is interested in continuing to include it in the 2014-2020 programming and welcomes specific inputs and ideas in this regard.
 16. The communication will probably be tailored to the comprehensive approach to conflict and crises. It will be taken into account in IfS programming but there will be no linkage *sensu stricto*.
 17. In-country calls for proposals should be maintained in the 2014-2020 programming. To date, they have all been oversubscribed.
 18. Support for the IDPS and the New Deal framework should be included in the 2014-2020 programming. The determinants to the question of funding allocation are still under discussion.
 19. The EC relies heavily on the EU delegations to provide information and regular reporting on all IfS projects. To this end, EU delegations report twice a year in a structured format on the impact and results of all IfS projects including, in certain cases, programmable actions under Article 4.3. In terms of evaluation and based on a pilot action conducted in 2012, FPI has concluded that the results-oriented monitoring (ROM) approach used by DEVCO for 'classical' development assistance is not suitable. As of 2013, FPI will use staged evaluations better tailored to IfS needs. IfS funding has been subject to several evaluations: scoping study (2009), programme level evaluation (2011), Thematic Evaluation of EC support to Conflict Prevention and Peace-building (2011) (which also covered IfS actions), and the 2010 impact assessment which accompanied the 2011 legislative proposal for the new IfS Regulation as well as the 2012 annual report on the IfS.¹ In addition, IfS crisis preparedness activities carried out from 2007 to 2013 are currently being evaluated.
 20. A decision on the use of either EIDHR or IfS depends essentially on the substance and essential purpose of the proposed action: if it concerns an issue which is to be dealt with more from a human rights angle, then it should be funded under EIDHR. If it addresses the same issue from a reconciliation or conflict resolution perspective, it should be funded under IfS. It is essentially a question of judgment.

The EC invited participants and their colleagues to send additional suggestions for areas to be supported in the 2014-2020 programming by Wednesday 9 October 2013.

5. Instrument for Stability Annual Action Programme 2013 and 2014 programming – Global and transregional threats component / Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation component (Article 5)

The EC presented an overview of the [2013 Annual Action Programme for Article 4.1 and Article 4.2](#).

¹ Details of the evaluations are available on the [FPI website](#).

Participants raised the following issues:

1. What kind of strategy and programming might be envisaged for including climate change under the proposed Article 5? What would be the role of CSOs?
2. Please provide more details on the 'border management' initiative.
3. Please provide more details on the types of programming you envisage under 'countering terrorism'.
4. Do you see a correlation between IfS-funded interventions and their impact on counter-terrorism and corruption? What possibilities are there for common action between the EC and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)?
5. Is there a role for CSOs in actions under this component?
6. Is the EC able to use IfS funding to support research-oriented activities?

The EC gave the following responses:

1. The focus is security.
2. Border management is part of CBRN-related actions. It is open for a negotiated procedure with the EU Member States. The idea is to build further capacity in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, to detect the illicit trafficking of hazardous materials.
3. The EC is currently at the project identification stage. The *Action Fiche* includes ideas for reaching out to moderate communities and law enforcement capacity building. It also includes a proposal to fund the Centre for Counter-terrorism in Dubai.
4. There is a clear need for development assistance to play a prominent role.
5. CSOs have an important role to play in enabling the EC to understand what is happening in different countries. There may be for a role for CSOs in EU Member States' consortia.
6. The IfS cannot be used to fund research activities *per se*. However, studies have been funded under the Expert Support Facility (ESF). In those cases, studies are the precursors for the project identification stage.

6. Conclusions

The EC highlighted the important role played by civil society in the programming and implementation of the IfS, and reminded participants of the importance of the EU's actions for people living in partner countries. It also stressed the need for a swift conclusion of the negotiations on the new IfS Regulation.

EPLO thanked the speakers, moderators and participants, and reminded them about the EC and the EEAS' request for further input on areas to be supported in the 2014-2020 IfS programming. It also invited participants to continue the dialogue in a follow-up meeting in early 2014.

Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a three-year project co-financed by the European Union (Instrument for Stability) and aimed at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and EU policy-makers. It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), in co-operation with the European Commission and the European External Action Service. For more information please visit the [EPLO website](http://www.eplo.org).