

## Group 3: Seed funding for peacebuilding

### Guiding questions

- Do you have examples of small funding mechanisms aiming to scope engagement, test ideas, assess needs, bridge engagement, etc.?
- What elements should the European Commission take into consideration when designing these kind of funding mechanisms for civil society organisations engaged in peacebuilding? (What pitfalls should it avoid?)

### Participants' comments and recommendations

- Seed funding could be particularly useful for:
  - bridging the gaps between the identification of needs and the start of projects (explorative actions)
  - conducting (joint) analyses to ensure the appropriate design of future projects
  - developing projects 'on the go', in a changing environment and/or when there is no certainty on their feasibility
  - providing upfront funding to civil society organisations (CSOs) which may not have sufficient cash flow to start an action
  - identifying and bringing together different CSOs involved in the same region (in particular local CSOs) and therefore avoiding future duplication of efforts or excessive competition
  - balancing/reverting the EU's current top-down approach to financing
- In order to be most effective, seed funding should:
  - respond to a particular need
  - be awarded for a specific idea (i.e. not based on an organisation's reputation)
  - be accessible to all types of organisations, including small, local CSOs
  - represent 5-10% of the total cost of a project
  - have a duration of approximately six months
  - have a less stringent application process than regular projects
  - not oblige the donor to continue its financial support to the grantee after the action, nor oblige the grantee to start a project after its completion
  - be followed up by further short- or long-term funding if there is a continued need and/or the if the context has evolved
- Challenges related to the allocation of seed funding include:
  - criteria for allocation: How to ensure fair and transparent access to funding, while maintaining speed and flexibility?
  - possible competition between CSOs to access seed funding: How to ensure that competition leads to productive outcomes and complementarity?
  - the follow-up to actions supported by seed funding: How to ensure that no obligations arise from the donor or the grantee to continue the action if there is no agreement on the identified needs?
  - duplication: How to avoid the duplication of existing projects?
- Possible ways for the EU to provide seed funding include:
  - providing venture capital to support innovative projects
  - providing upfront funding for different project phases (i.e. Phase 1: project assessment/concept, Phase 2: pilot project etc.)
  - supporting the pooling of different CSOs' resources (e.g. the type of networking activities which EPLO undertakes, including through the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN))
  - using a third party to administer it

*For more information about any of the issues which were raised in this small group discussion, please contact [Ben Moore](#).*