



Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting

Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support in Transitional Justice: Gathering Input from Experts

kHaus, Kasernenstrasse 8, 4058
Basel, Switzerland

Friday 26 January 2024

Concept Note

Background

Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is increasingly recognised at the international level as a key component for a holistic approach to Transitional Justice (TJ). A number of EU policies and strategies recognise the importance of MHPSS in contributing to a people-centric approach to security and building peace. These include the 2021 [Strategic approach in support of Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of former combatants](#), and the [EEAS Peace Mediation Guidelines](#), which feature a specific chapter on psychosocial dimensions.

MHPSS in TJ processes were also identified among the priority issues for the 2024 Annual Action Plans on Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention under the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe funding instrument.

While there is growing global consensus on the need to integrate MHPSS in TJ, there are many questions around what that means in practice, how practitioners can overcome the challenges they face, and the ways in which policymakers and donors can best support the meaningful integration of MHPSS in TJ.

In this context, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), in cooperation with the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission (EC), and the [Facility on Justice in Conflict and Transition](#), is organising a Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting on MHPSS and TJ, which will take place on Friday 26 January 2024, in the wake of the 2024 Basel Peace Forum. Participants are invited to share their insights based on their experiences of MHPSS initiatives in TJ contexts.

Objective

The objective of this CSDN policy meeting is to gather input and analysis from civil society experts on future EU efforts in further integrating mental health and psycho-social support in transitional justice processes. This meeting will directly contribute to the creation of a set of operational guidelines for the EU.

More specifically, the discussions will reflect on:

- The relationship between the fields of MHPSS and TJ.
- Concrete examples of implementation of MHPSS approaches in TJ contexts.
- Challenges, tensions and complementarities in linking MHPSS and TJ approaches.

- How donors can support the integration of MHPSS in TJ.

Participants

The meeting will bring together the Facility's experts and a number of civil society experts from the TJ and MHPSS field.

Format

The meeting will take the form of a one-day facilitated round-table discussion under the Chatham House Rule¹. The discussions will be held in English.

Output

A meeting report including the key recommendations and summary of the discussions will be published.

Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a mechanism for dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on issues related to peace and conflict. It is co-financed by the European Union (Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe). It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), a civil society network, in co-operation with the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The fifth phase of the CSDN will last from 2023 to 2026. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).

¹ Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed (see: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/chatham-house-rule>)

AGENDA

Friday 26 January (9:00 - 15:30)

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8:30 – 9:00	Registration and coffee
9:00 – 9:15	Welcome, introduction, and objectives of the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peter Wagner, Head of the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), European Commission• Laurent Goetschel, Director, swisspeace• Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)
9:15 – 10:45	Session 1 – Overview and introductions: integrating mental health and psycho-social support in transitional justice <p>This plenary session will provide an overview of the objectives and methodology of the workshop and will lay the groundwork for the issues that will be developed in the following sessions.</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are some examples of the integration of MHPSS and TJ in practice?• What are some best practices and learnings from specific examples of implementation of MHPSS?• What are some practical and technical challenges to implementation of MHPSS? <p>Moderator: Sonya Reines-Djivanides (EPLO)</p>
10:45 - 11:15	Coffee break

11:15 – 12:45	<p>Session 2 – Addressing individual and collective trauma</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Integration into TJ towards rebuilding social fabric</u>: How can long-term emotional and psychosocial impacts of violence on individuals be considered and integrated in TJ design and practices? • <u>Context specificity</u>: What are some of the challenges practitioners and donors face in supporting a community-based approach to TJ and MHPSS? How to address stigma and taboos? • <u>Caring for the caretakers</u>: What are some of the main obstacles to providing and accessing wellbeing support for practitioners? What strategies have been used to overcome those challenges? <p>Moderator: Sonya Reines-Djivanides (EPLO)</p>
12:45 – 13:45	<p>Lunch break</p>
13:45 – 15:15	<p>Session 3 – Improving the work</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the EU, Members States and other donors address the challenges and build on the opportunities identified throughout the day? • How to ensure that MHPSS is integrated across EU external action policies and its practice is enhanced? • How can civil society and the EU, Member States and other donors partner more effectively in this area? <p>Moderator: Sonya Reines-Djivanides (EPLO)</p>
15:00 - 15:30	<p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Céline Aucouturier, EC • Sonya Reines-Djivanides, EPLO