



Civil Society Dialogue Network Funding Instruments Meeting
Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation
Instrument – Global Europe

Thematic Programme on Peace, Stability and Conflict
Prevention

Informal consultation on Annual Action Programme 2023

Tuesday 8 & Wednesday 9 November 2022, Online

MINUTES

Abbreviations	
AAP	Annual Action Programme
BUDG	DG for Budget
CAAC	Children and Armed Conflict
CSA	Civil Society Actor
CSDN	Civil Society Dialogue Network
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DG	(EC) Directorate-General
EC	European Commission
EEAS	European External Action Service
FPI	(EC) Service for Foreign Policy Instruments
GP	Geographic Programme
HRD	Human Rights Defender
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
INGO	International NGO
IO	International Organisation
MAAP	Multiannual Action Programme
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MIP	Multiannual Indicative Programme
MTR	Mid-term Review
MS	Member State
NDICI-GE	Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PS&CP	Peace Stability and Conflict Prevention
RRA	Rapid Response Action
RT	(FPI) Regional Team
TP	Thematic Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
YPS	Youth Peace and Security

The [final agenda](#) of the meeting is available to download from the CSDN section of the EPLO website.

Day 1 (Tuesday 8 November 2022)

Session 1: State of play of the AAP 2022 and initial thoughts on the AAP 2023

The EEAS gave a brief introduction to the [MIP 2021-2027 for the NDICI-GE TP on PS&CP](#), and the EC gave presentations on the AAP 2022 and initial thoughts on the AAP 2023 for the '[Global, Trans-regional and Emerging Threats](#)' and '[Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Crisis Preparedness](#)' parts respectively.

Participants asked the following questions / made the following comments (left column), and the EC gave the following responses (right column):

	Question/Comment	Response
1.	Has 'media and mediation' been considered as a possible action under the AAP 2023? It was raised in the 2022 edition of the EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus on mediation has been discussed with colleagues from the EEAS and we would like to devote attention to 'ceasefires and mediation' and 'organised crime and mediation' under the AAP 2023. We do not plan to focus on 'media and mediation' in the AAP 2023 but it could be an action under the AAP 2024 or later AAPs.
2.	Regarding the focus on localisation, has there been any thinking on how the EU could change its administrative rules and grant sizes in order to ensure that local organisations can apply for and manage grants? Alternatively, might the EU envisage a funding mechanism in which a peace fund is supported or created, and managed either by a CSO or a consortium possibly also involving consultancy companies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not planning to propose to amend the EU Financial Regulation. In any case, this would go beyond FPI's remit and would require the involvement of other EC DGs and services, and lobbying from CSOs. We want to gather examples of best practices within the current rules. We are considering supporting funds and/or microgrants, and we are keen to receive input from CSOs on this as we do not wish to impose a particular model. We cannot change the EU Financial Regulation. We have to find a way to balance what we can provide with what is required in our partner countries. There have been examples of CSOs not being able to cope with the administrative burden of managing EU funding. We aim to be able to respond to local needs with local resources.
3.	Regarding the possible action on 'Mental health as a support to transitional justice': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include mental health as a budget line in all programming and mainstream mental health, especially in the context of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We welcome your inputs on MHPSS. We often discuss inclusivity and we acknowledge that we should always endeavour to include local voices in those discussions.

	<p>support to in-country CSAs, so that people working on the frontlines of conflict or those in highly stressful situations (e.g. HRDs) receive the support that they need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a strong local focus so that local peacebuilding organisations are included. 	
4.	<p>Will calls for proposals under the ‘Support to in-country civil society actors’ action under the AAP 2022 be launched in all regions? Will all three thematic priorities be included in every call for proposals?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have decided not to focus on all regions every year anymore due to the administrative burden that it places on RTs and the need for us to learn from and monitor projects. • Under the AAP 2022, calls for proposals will be launched in some regions (e.g. Asia and East Africa) and direct grants will be provided to certain organisations in other regions (e.g. the South Caucasus). • We do not yet know what the priorities will be for each call for proposals but we will advise RTs to try to focus on the three priorities that are set out in the Action Document where relevant.
5.	<p>Please provide more information about the EU’s role in the next edition of the Paris Peace Forum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EC has been supporting the Paris Peace Forum since its inception in 2018. • To date, this has been done on an ad-hoc basis but now we want to programme our support. • We believe that it is a very useful forum for discussions on areas that concern us. • With our contribution, we can choose one project to present and one subject to discuss: this year, we selected MHPSS. • Every year, EU-funded projects have been selected through the Paris Peace Forum’s competitive process. This underlines the complementarity between our objectives. • In 2021, 10% of the projects presented at the Paris Peace Forum were EU-funded.
6.	<p>How does the EU define ‘locally-led peacebuilding’?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are different ways to support local CSAs: we can work with the more institutionalised local CSOs but we also want to focus on other organisations that do not necessarily have a legal status. • We cannot work with unregistered organisations directly. However, we want to ensure that their voices are heard and that their work is promoted. • For us, ‘local’ means getting funding to where it is needed in order to provide local support to local needs. • We are not just looking for an NGO to have an address in the country in which the activity is taking place: we want to find a conduit that is able to deliver the resources to where they are needed for local action. Whether this is an INGO or a local CSO depends on the partner’s mentality and their objective.

7.	Please provide more information about countries and regions in which the EU Conflict Early Warning System has been implemented and the outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We focus on the tools that are used for the EU Conflict Early Warning System and that help us to programme conflict prevention or do more in terms of crisis response. • We are also in the early stages of trying to build the capacity of local early warning systems. • There is a lot of support for the EU Conflict Early Warning System. It is very useful for our work and we often use it in the identification of RRAs. • We also want to build early warning capacities outside the EU at different levels (i.e. international, regional, national and local). • We have had experiences with early warning systems at very local levels (e.g. Northern Ecuador)
8.	Does the EC intend to encourage local CSOs to apply for EU funding directly (i.e. without going through an intermediary)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are exploring ways to be more prescriptive in this sense in our funding.
9.	Have any geographic priorities been set for the AAP 2023?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TP on PS&CP has global coverage. • The geographic focus of AAP 2023 has not yet been defined. • Although we support activities in pilot countries and regions, we do not define them at the outset. • Regions in which no calls for proposals for 'Support to in-country civil society actors' action are launched under the AAP 2023 will probably have calls for proposals under the AAP 2024 or later AAPs.
10.	Has the EC already planned how it intends to implement the possible action on 'Mental health as a support to transitional justice'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This possible action will be the focus of the small group discussion on 'Mental health and psychosocial support as a tool for peacebuilding' on Day 2. We look forward to receiving your inputs on it.
11.	Please provide more information about the types of issues that might be addressed under the 'Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Security' (MIP Priority 8) action and how they are different to the types of issues that might be addressed under the 'Climate Change and Security' (MIP Priority 2) action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017, we launched a pilot action with UNEP in Sudan and Nepal, and we expanded it to a number of other countries in 2020. • We felt that there was a need for a complementary action that would allow us to engage with local communities so we decided to set up a sub-granting mechanism. • We are currently looking at how best to implement this action, including the sub-granting mechanism.
12.	Regarding the possible action on 'Mediation': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposed focus on 'ceasefires and mediation' have strong links with constitutional processes? • Will it also include a focus on security in electoral processes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is too early to say what will the focus on 'ceasefires and mediation' will be. • We are currently funding / about to fund actions that are related to electoral violence under the MAAP 2019-20 and the AAP 2022. We do not envisage a focus on this area under the AAP 2023.
13.	Please provide information about any funding for CAAC that has been provided to date under the NDICI-TP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This has been proposed as a specific theme for the 'Support to in-country civil society actors' action under the AAP 2023.

	on PS&CP and any CAAC-related activities that may be prioritised under the AAP 2023.	
14.	Might media development programmes be included as priorities in calls for proposals under the 'Tackling disinformation in conflict-affected contexts' action under the AAP 2022?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was a typo in the presentation. 'Tackling disinformation in conflict-affected contexts' was an action under the AAP 2021 not the AAP 2022. • We are in the process of finalising contracting and seeing what to learn from the selected projects.
15.	Will YPS be prioritised under the AAP 2023 or is the planned small group discussion on 'Taking the youth, peace and security agenda forward' intended to contribute to the ' Inclusivity in peace and security ' action under the AAP 2022?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YPS will be prioritised in the 'Support to in-country civil society actors' action under the AAP 2023.

Session 2: Exchange of views on the final report of the 'Final sector evaluation of IcSP support to in-country civil society actors in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness'

The external evaluators gave a presentation on the [Final Sector Evaluation: IcSP Support to In-country Civil Society Actors in Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Crisis Preparedness](#).

Participants asked the following questions / made the following comments (left column), and the external evaluators gave the following responses (right column):

	Question/Comment	Response
1.	<p>Regarding the finding about effective women's empowerment in several locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think that the support that the EU provided to in-country CSAs under the IcSP has been so successful in this area, especially compared to other areas? • To what extent do you feel that the success was not only dependent on the quality of the EU's support but also the contributions made by other actors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We found that mainstreaming existed across projects and that some projects were very successful in pushing the debate on women's empowerment and leadership to the forefront in their society. • Media was a very useful tool and also the timing of the interventions was also sometimes helpful (e.g. Miss President project in Kenya). • Many actors were responsible for pushing the agenda so it is difficult to attribute successes to any specific one.
2.	How many CSAs other than INGOs did you speak to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We met more local CSAs than INGOs. • On average, we saw one or two local implementing partners for each project that we reviewed during the field missions.
3.	<p>Regarding the finding about EU rules and requirements for funding local CSOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were you able to document any flexibility? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 80% of the EU officials that we spoke to stated that they wanted to see increased flexibility. • We did not identify specific examples of the flexible application of EU rules. However, we did

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be very useful to have some examples of flexibility in the application of EU rules in order to help to inform those EU officials who are not involved in the implementation of TP on PS&CP-supported activities (e.g. DG BUDG) about the possibilities that exist and practices that have been successfully employed to date. 	<p>find that some INGOs were not making full use of the flexibility that currently exists, possibly due to risk aversion linked to accountability issues with other donors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, IcSP funding was deemed to be relatively flexible.
4.	We would very much welcome a follow-up discussion with FPI and, if possible, DG BUDG on the outcomes of the evaluation report.	

Participants added the following questions and comments in writing after the meeting (left column) and the EC gave the following responses (right column):

	Question/Comment	Response
1.	How much of the budget for the RRAs pillar is allocated to the PS&CP component?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no specific allocations under the RRAs pillar.
2.	Please publish a directory of RT members and an overview of FPI 2 staff members' regional and thematic portfolios.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The heads of the RTs are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ignacio Burrull (Horn, East and Southern Africa) Joris Heeren (MENA) Mario Mariani (Americas) Giovanni Squadrito (West and Central Africa) Paolo Zingale (Asia/Pacific)
3.	How does the EC decide on the type of implementing partner (i.e. CSO, EU MS agency, IO etc.) for each action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the 'Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Crisis Preparedness' part of the TP on PS&CP, the implementing partners are chosen on the basis of a call for proposals, and under exceptional circumstances, by direct award.
4.	Are there examples of activities that were initially supported as RRAs and that have been continued as part of either GPs or TPs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We usually do not continue RRAs as such as part of GPs or TPs. However, we try to ensure complementarity between RRAs and actions under the GPs and TPs.
5.	Will climate/environment and conflict be prioritised more in AAP 2023 than it was in previous years? The EU can play a key role in funding flagship initiatives on the climate and conflict nexus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing climate-related security risks and natural resource management in fragile contexts will be a priority under AAP 2023 and there might be a stronger focus on climate/environment and conflict under AAP 2024.
6.	There seems to be a strong focus on supporting local CSOs under the AAP 2022. Has it materialised and, if so, what has the EU learned from the experience? If not, how does the EC plan to implement it under the AAP 2023 and beyond?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lessons learned from the external final sector evaluation of IcSP support to in-country CSAs will be taken into account. Under AAP 2023 there will be a stronger focus on local peacebuilding organisations and capacity building.

	This is a very welcome initiative. However, based on the outcomes of the CSDN FIM on supporting local peacebuilding that took place in May, it seems that the EC does not know how to implement it, and many local CSOs still lack the capacity to manage EU grants.	
7.	Regarding the budget for the TP on PS&CP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much is earmarked for each type of implementing partner (i.e. CSO, EU MS agency, IO etc.)? • Would it be possible to make this more transparent in the AAP 2023? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no earmarking by type of implementing partner.
8.	How does the EU decide on the countries in which activities that are supported under the PS&CP component of the RRAs pillar take place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is decided on the basis of the political circumstances in the region in response to the EU's political priorities.
9.	Is any TP on PS&CP funding allocated via framework contracts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facilities on transitional justice, mediation and gender.
10.	Please provide more information about the MTR of the NDICI-GE, particularly the MTR of the TP on PS&CP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No MTR has taken place yet.
11.	The IcSP Map has been archived. Does the EC intend to create a 'TP on PS&CP & RRAs Map' to replace it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IcSP Map will not be replaced.

Day 2 (Wednesday 9 November)

Session 3: Small group discussions on possible priority areas for AAP 2023

A civil society participant gave a summary of the issues that had been raised in the small group discussion on '[Mental health and psychosocial support as a tool for peacebuilding](#)'.

A civil society participant gave a summary of the issues that had been raised in the small group discussion on '[Conflict minerals/extractive industries](#)'.

A civil society participant gave a summary of the issues that had been raised in the small group discussion on '[Taking the youth, peace and security agenda forward](#)'.

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 (Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace). 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 fourth phase of the CSDN will last from 2020 to 2023. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).