



EuropeAid FWC BENEf Lot 12 – Humanitarian Aid, Crisis Management and Post Crisis Assistance

Request for services 2013/326853/1

**Evaluation of the Instrument for Stability
Crisis Preparedness Component
(2007-2013)**

*FINAL REPORT
March 2014*



This project is funded by
The European Union

A project implemented by



This report was prepared by external consultants through financing of the European Union. Its contents should not necessarily be taken to represent the official position of the European Union.

EuropeAid FWC BENEf Lot 12 – Humanitarian Aid, Crisis Management and Post Crisis Assistance

Request for services 2013/326853/1

Evaluation of the Instrument for Stability Crisis Preparedness Component (2007-2013)

Final Report

March 2014

Report drafted by:

**Peter BRORSEN, Team Leader, and
Karen SHERLOCK, Leila BOUCEHBOUBA BRODIN, Andre KAHLMEYER, Michel
VANBRUAENE, Fernanda FARIA, Johannes Reiner SCHOT, Evelien Elisabeth
WELLER, Ana Carina FRANCO, Marla ZAPACH**

Project Implemented by:

Italtrend C&T (Consortium Leader), Socaba and EPRD

1 Executive Summary¹

1.1 Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the results of the implementation of the Crisis Preparedness component under the Instrument for Stability (IfS) during the period 2007-2013. More specifically, the evaluation reviews the implementation processes, analyses outcomes and impact, produces a baseline for future monitoring, and provides recommendations on how to maximise future impact with regard to four thematic areas and one cross-cutting area which cover a partial selection of IfS funded activities: (1) Capacity building of civil society in conflict prevention, crisis preparedness and peacebuilding; (2) Mediation and dialogue; (3) Natural resources and conflicts; (4) Women, peace and security (WPS); (5) Gender mainstreaming (GM).

The 2006 IfS Regulation distinguishes between assistance in response to situations of crisis or emerging crisis (Article 3, short term component) and assistance in the context of stable conditions for cooperation (Article 4, long term component). The Regulation foresaw that at least 73 percent of IfS funding be allocated to actions in response to situations of crisis or emerging crisis under Article 3 in the period 2007-2013. Activities funded under Article 3 will not be directly assessed by this evaluation and where they are taken into account, the assessment will only be made in relation to the degree which they focus on activities funded under the IfS Crisis Preparedness component.

The long-term and programmable component of the IfS (Article 4), includes three areas of technical and financial assistance: (1) threats to law and order, to the security and safety of individuals, to critical infrastructure and to public health; (2) Risk mitigation and preparedness relating to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials or agents; and (3) Pre- and post-crisis capacity building (the IfS Crisis Preparedness component).

This evaluation focuses on the pre-and post-crisis capacity building component of Article 4.3.

Article 4.3 of the Regulation “Pre- and post-crisis capacity building” defines the scope of IfS Crisis Preparedness component:

"Support for long-term measures aimed at building and strengthening the capacity of international, regional and sub-regional organisations, state and non-state actors in relation to their efforts in:

- (a) promoting early warning, confidence-building, mediation and reconciliation, and addressing emerging inter-community tensions;
- (b) improving post-conflict and post-disaster recovery.

Measures under this point shall include know-how transfer, the exchange of information, risk/threat assessment research and analysis, early warning systems and training.

Measures may also include, where appropriate, financial and technical assistance for the implementation of those Recommendations made by the UN Peacebuilding Commission falling within the objectives of Community cooperation policy."

The Regulation further defines the allocation for the IfS Crisis Preparedness component as no more than 5 per cent of the total funding which for the period 2007-2013 amounted to EUR 103 million.

¹ For the sake of brevity, references and examples listed in the main body of the report are excluded here.

This evaluation is directed at all interested IfS Crisis Preparedness component stakeholders, including EU Delegations, the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO), the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO), the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Parliament (EP) as well as civil society actors and other international, regional and sub-regional actors and donors. The executive summary will be available to the public and stakeholders worldwide in English, French and Spanish.

1.2 Methodology

This evaluation was commissioned in the context of broader political and policy discussions on the Commission's proposal for the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, stocktaking of the 2007-2013 Framework, as well as on a replacement for the Instrument for Stability for the period 2014-2020. The evaluation was carried out during September to December 2013 by a ten-person consultant team provided by a consortium led by Italtrend. The evaluation did not include a review of project budgets.

The overall methodology followed EuropeAid guidance and the evaluation questions were based on the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, with the addition of two ToR-defined criteria, namely 3Cs (co-ordination, complementarity and coherence) and EU added-value, as well as one additional evaluation issue defined by the evaluation team as 'partnerships and knowledge creation'. Each criterion provided a necessary part of the answer to whether and how the IfS Crisis Preparedness component has delivered results. The combination of these criteria also allowed for a critical analysis of how results can be further enhanced.

In order to strengthen the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings, each project was analysed through three types of data (documents, interviews and an online survey), which were triangulated, where feasible. These detailed data provided a baseline for further monitoring and evaluation of the IfS Crisis Preparedness component.

The evaluation was carried out in a staged fashion, with each phase concluding with a deliverable informing the subsequent phase. The four phases were (1) Inception phase: Case study selection, evaluation and thematic question development; (2) Headquarters Phase: Interviews and document research; online survey design; (3) Field Phase: Field visits and data collection in 13 countries, online survey process; (4) Synthesis phase: Compilation and analysis of findings.

1.3 Findings

The 2006 IfS Regulation, quoted above, defines the IfS Crisis Preparedness component objective as "building and strengthening the capacity of [a range of organisations and actors] in [a range of peacebuilding areas]." This evaluation assessed whether the IfS Crisis Preparedness component had achieved its objectives as defined in the Regulation, i.e. the evaluation sought to answer the overall question:

Has the IfS Crisis Preparedness component built institutional capacity to address conflict?

The evaluation found that the **IfS Crisis Preparedness component allows the EU to address conflict issues in the broadest sense, and that individual projects have indeed built or strengthened the capacity of organisations to contribute to peace-building efforts.**

1.3.1 Thematic areas

The thematic areas serve as a useful tool to categorise projects and focus attention on specific EU policy frameworks or initiatives. Capacity building of civil society is a prominent issue sought after by the EU that should continue to be mainstreamed throughout IfS Crisis Preparedness actions. The evaluation recommends, however, that it is re-oriented as a cross-cutting issue across the component. Gender mainstreaming has been identified in some projects and there is evidence of increased gender concerns addressed in several actions, although not in all. Natural resources and conflict is an emerging thematic area, and the evaluation recommends that the EU invests further in this theme in order to create dividends from earlier efforts and bring substance to new policy initiatives. Women, peace and security is a theme common to – and popular among – many development agencies, and is increasingly attracting international actors' attention. The evaluation recommends that the EU refines its focus of the IfS Crisis preparedness component, specifying which aspect of this broader topic could best be addressed. Through the IfS Crisis Preparedness component the EU has quickly established itself as a key player in the mediation and dialogue thematic area. Also here the evaluation recommends a review of the specific sub-areas where the component can produce greatest added value for the EU.

1.3.2 Relevance

The evaluation found that the IfS Crisis Preparedness component is highly relevant to the general objectives of the EU and its international commitments, particularly by funding actions in fragile states for peace-building and conflict prevention pre- and post-crisis. Further to the findings of the 2011 *Evaluation of the Crisis Response and Preparedness Components of the European Union's Instrument for Stability*, **the present evaluation concludes that the IfS Crisis Preparedness component is an indispensable element of the comprehensive EU peace, security and development architecture and should be fully embedded into this structure.**

The IfS Strategy Papers and Multi-Indicative Programmes (MIPs) reinforce the flexibility of the component by providing a wide remit for adapting to new themes, engage with new emerging actors, and respond to new relevant international initiatives. The various funding modalities (direct grants and calls for proposals) are helpful in retaining this flexibility within the component. By an open approach to innovative projects and emerging themes, the component increases its relevance to both the external stakeholders who cannot secure other funding sources for such initiatives, and to the EU which benefits from the knowledge products and experiential learning from such projects.

As a political tool, the IfS Crisis Preparedness component has been used to great effect in creating strategic partnerships, particularly at the multilateral level with UN projects. Compared to the thematic and geographic instruments, the component has only a small envelope of funds, and yet it is designed to produce a significant impact on EU relations with several of the UN's specialised agencies. While not being a primary policy objective for the component, the evaluation found that the drive to create more UN inter-agency cooperation did not generate the expected results, and the evaluation recommends that this objective is re-assessed. Within the EU architecture, the component also aims to create coherence by facilitating support for identified funding gaps and providing a bridge for a longer term funding perspective, whether from the EU or other sources. The catalytic or seed funding is intended to kick-start work in areas that eventually complement longer-term work through the themed and geographic EU instruments. The evaluation found that only in a limited number of cases, the intended catalytic effects and the opportunities for coherence were achieved. This assessment echoes the finding of the 2011 IfS evaluation and, given the persistent challenge this represents,

this evaluation recommends that, as a matter of strategic planning routine, EU Delegations are encouraged to draw linkages to IfS activities.

The IfS strategic vision that drives its Crisis Preparedness component is compromised by difficulties in linking project-driven demands from the field with policy driven demands deriving from various EU commitments. Combined with, and possibly caused by, these diverging demands, the component does not have clear indicators for success. The evaluation recommends that, alongside the objectives set forth in the Strategy Paper, IfS defines success for each work stream, for example by identifying a range of optimal outcomes for specific interventions.

The projects funded under the component demonstrate a high degree of relevance to the respective country needs and priorities. The projects address thematic areas that are complementary to the geographic instruments. In most projects the emphasis on building capacity and networking between partners helps to strengthen the concept of a community of practitioners. The sub-delegation of the Calls for Proposal (CfP) aiming at building the capacity of civil society has been instrumental in making the projects relevant to the country contexts and ensure that they meet the priorities and needs, not just at country level but also locally. The regional projects awarded through sub-delegated Calls for Proposals, however, have sometimes lacked coherence and have not always meet the needs identified by the EU Delegations in the region they are intended to cover.

1.3.3 Effectiveness

The component has selected good implementing partners, who are key actors in their field, have relevant initiatives and who are effective project implementers. Most projects have effectively contributed to the MIP objectives 2012-13 “building conflict prevention and crisis response capacities.”

The effectiveness of cooperation with UN agencies has, however, been identified as an issue as certain projects have not been managed optimally on the ground, resulting in a lack of coherence and coordination with EU Delegations. A lower level of effectiveness was also created by inefficiencies such as staff shortages or logistical shortcomings. The evaluation noted difficulties in building relationships between different UN institutions, as well as making partnerships work in projects. This caused some projects to be less effective and was detrimental to the emergence of an understanding of a global community of practitioners. The evaluation found that support from EU Delegations, especially in the initial stages, is crucial for making projects more effective. That was equally the case for HQ-managed projects. The evaluation recommends that IfS, in consultation with its UN partners, re-assesses how they engage in order to align expectations of processes and outcomes.

On the whole, NGOs, both international and national, have been effective implementers. Elements that have made the projects effective are, *inter alia*, building on lessons learned, good project design, strong analysis of the context, or strong methodologies. In many projects, risk management has been a common element contributing to effectiveness. Evaluators found that risk management elements, such as risk assessments and contingency plans, have been included in most projects. There were also some good practice elements such as: pre-empting problems; remaining engaged in adversity; and working through risks and managing them jointly (EU Delegation and implementer).

1.3.4 Efficiency

Most projects were on target to achieve the project outcomes within the allocated financial resources and time frame and the evaluation thus judges the IfS Crisis Preparedness component

efficient. While this conclusion has internal validity, the evaluation found it difficult to establish the external validity due to the unique nature of many projects. Based primarily on the online survey, however, the evaluation finds that the projects have delivered outputs with an efficiency factor comparable to similar projects funded through other financing instruments.

Where projects were less efficient this was primarily due to timing issues, lack of adequate resources and poor communication. Some no-cost extensions were granted to implementers for failure to complete activities in the given time-frame. The evaluation found that the EU human resources devoted to the IfS Crisis Preparedness component and project management was generally of a very high calibre but often insufficient in volume. At both HQ level and in the EU Delegations, too little staff time is allocated to manage the various aspects of the IfS Crisis Preparedness component. In particular, regional actions are often very time-consuming for EU Delegations. Meanwhile, the role of the Regional Crisis Response and Planning Officers (RCRPO) has not been fully developed and has occasionally caused further challenges to the reporting lines. The efficiency of a number of projects is hampered by sometimes intermittent communication between EU Delegations and HQ on specific issues. Communication between and within UN agencies was also found lacking. Yet, in most cases, the staff resources of implementing partners were considered fully adequate to the tasks.

1.3.5 Impact

Certain projects lack ways of measuring results, thus leading to difficulties in ascertaining impact. Nevertheless, some projects have established baselines either from existing data or by conducting new studies at the start of the project. Projects that most clearly coincide with demonstrated changes to the environment include the following, the first of which are likely to have helped reduce actual violence.

In Timor-Leste, the IfS-funded Early Warning and Early Response system has had an impact with government, civil society and international agencies. Project data is being used at all levels for policy briefings, security briefings and progress reports. The availability of trusted and timely data has reinforced community preparedness and responses to emerging conflict and inter-community tensions. The evaluation found that the number of conflicts in several geographical locations has decreased significantly after the introduction of the system. Other EU Delegations have already expressed interest in replicating this early warning model.

In Chad evaluators learned that the number of conflicts have drastically dropped in the areas where the IfS-funded CSO Radio FM Liberté has broadcasted its conflict-awareness programmes targeting herd owners, farmers and local authorities. Several other countries have shown an interest in the project, hoping to replicate the success.

In Zimbabwe, CSOs attributed the almost violent-free 2013 elections to efforts such as the IfS project which created a more peaceful election environment compared to the 2008 violence. IfS implementing partners confirmed a significant reduction in political violence and claimed this was a direct result of their interventions. Some have been able to provide evidence for this through surveys in follow up to baseline studies.

Positive changes have also been recorded in several Bolivian municipalities where an IfS-funded project has been operating for two years. The changes include an upswing in the effective implementation of traditional justice and consequent referrals to the ordinary judicial system. Discussions between the State and indigenous actors are now easier within some of the municipalities that have received IfS-funded trainings.

Several other projects have recorded a positive impact in terms of capacity building.

In Bolivia IfS project trainees are now raising awareness about dialogue and mediation in order to prevent and address conflict, thus far benefiting 400 people in their communities. In Jordan, evaluators found evidence of improved conflict prevention and resolution skills being acquired and applied within the management structure of several civil society organisations (CSOs). In Timor-Leste local civil society organizations have developed and strengthened their capacities for social lobbying, advocacy and institutional dialogue with justice bodies and public services, potentially contributing to the strengthening of democratic institutions and strengthening their roles as independent actors for development.

In certain other cases, impact has been more difficult to measure or has been absent. The general lesson that peacebuilding needs a long-term commitment in order to produce sustainable impact was highlighted in the IfS Crisis Preparedness component projects in Lebanon. The capacity building efforts would require a sustained input, especially on training of local mediators. It was generally noted in several projects, that awareness raising and capacity building are processes that require long term engagement. Project stakeholders commented that societal change is a slow process depending on many different factors. In addition some conflicts are deep-rooted and complex, making impact difficult to measure.

Some projects were positively affected by unintended consequences. This included helping to promote democratic practices and strengthen the role of civil society in the context of nation building. In Bolivia, for examples, minority and marginalised groups gained a voice through the IfS support.

1.3.6 Sustainability

Unlike development projects, conflict prevention activities seldom generate economic gains that can help sustain funding beyond a given project cycle. Sustainability also refers to outcomes, however, and such results can be achieved with a combination of good planning and effective engagement of stakeholders.

Some projects funded under the IfS Crisis Preparedness component have produced sustainable outputs at the level of organizational-technical capacity thereby contributing to achieving the overall aims and objectives of the component. Yet, several of the networks and partnerships that have been built up under the projects were not found to be sustainable and the results are likely to evaporate without further financial support.

Several CSOs are dependent on continued donor funding in order to sustain their operations and continue their projects. Arguably this may not be the concern of the IfS Crisis Preparedness component as it seeks to prioritise the initiation of projects with catalytic effects. Nevertheless, there are some ambitious sustainability expectations written into project designs that are not always compatible with pilot projects.

The EU offers support for CSOs to help maintaining human resource costs in some fragile and conflict environments. However, finding and securing access to new funding at the end of a project cycle is often highly challenging. In the absence of new funding, any recently built capacity is likely to dissipate, and the larger impact of the work is unlikely to materialise.

In many projects, securing ownership was a key element in their effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. This was achieved by engaging communities and the evaluators generally noted that participatory approaches in actions funded under the IfS Crisis Component helped secure such ownership.

Surprisingly, the *concept* of a community of practice did not resonate with many component partners during the evaluators field research. In practice, however, some projects did establish local communities of practice although they were not defined as such at the onset of the project.

1.3.7 Monitoring and measuring

Monitoring and evaluation of projects in the IfS Crisis Preparedness component programme is variable with only a few strong examples of baselines and sound ex post analysis. Follow-up at the EU Delegation level is particularly variable. Some IfS Crisis Preparedness component projects, particularly those managed by international or local CSOs, have had their own independent evaluations which points to good practice for continuous learning and improving design in subsequent projects. The evaluators note that weak monitoring and evaluation systems are a lost opportunity for capturing lessons, increasing accountability and building on successes. The evaluation recommends that the component projects are required to report on a minimum set of indicators, tailored to each thematic area, allowing HQ managers to identify in a comprehensive fashion the most critical successes and failures.

1.3.8 3Cs - Coordination, Complementarity and Coherence

Evaluation survey results, combined with interviews, indicate that coordination between MS and the EU Delegations has generally been effective. HQ led projects help deliver the 3Cs at the global level, which for some projects results in greater coherence across a thematic area. Better coordination between EU Delegations and UN agencies at country level would likely have improved the impact of some projects.

Complementarities with other EU initiatives is regularly lacking, and the evaluators found that IfS Crisis Preparedness projects are only receiving limited attention from non-IfS staff in EU Delegations, thereby reducing the opportunity for linkages and allowing component projects to feed into broader EU country initiatives. Similarly, in some projects the coherence in-country has been variable and in some regions there has been a lack of coherence between the MS and UN agencies.

1.3.9 EU added value

EU's particular added value includes the ability to support valuable projects which has no other donor. In some cases the IfS Crisis Preparedness component was a unique funding opportunity, for example in Jordan where no MS made conflict prevention funding available. The strong focus on women, peace and security was also considered a particular EU added value in some projects, including in Timor-Leste's early warning project.

Some component projects have been used to seize opportunities to support newly opened up areas of engagement, for example in Zimbabwe where the component funded 12 local CSOs specialised in peacebuilding and human rights. Overall, the evaluation survey found that 55 per cent of the EU Delegations consider that the projects 'inspired new ideas' and 27 per cent felt they 'inspired new projects.'

The evaluation also found that despite a limited budget, the IfS Crisis Preparedness component contributes to fulfilment of EU commitments related to women, peace and security and mediation and dialogue.

1.3.10 Partnership and knowledge creation

Relatively few knowledge products have been generated and captured by the component's projects, thus questioning the broader return on investment and the sustainability of lessons identified. On the global project on equipping actors with dialogue skills, for example, a specific objective to produce guidance notes has not yet been achieved. The material on natural

resources and conflict, however, has been broadly welcomed and it is critical that the EU follows up on this work in order to capitalise on the goodwill and knowledge products created. Meanwhile Timor-Leste has produced an effective database to record incident for its early warning system but it is unlikely to transfer directly as a product to other conflict-affected areas because it offers little conceptual progress that would help actors in other conflicts think afresh. In El Salvador, on the other hand, a project to support victims of social violence enabled the EU Delegation to better understand the issue and integrate this thinking into other programming. The evaluation recommends that the IfS consider seminars or platforms to capture lessons learned, discuss difficulties and promote continuous learning within the EU.

Project collaboration at HQ level is quite strong for the EU-UN partnership in terms of design, management and monitoring. This relationship, however, is more variable at the level of EU Delegation. For CSO implementers, evaluators recorded requests for more local, as compared to international, partners.

1.4 Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation found that IfS Crisis Preparedness projects have built or strengthened the capacity of organisations to contribute to peace-building efforts. Although attribution is difficult in fragile and conflict affected settings, several projects are likely to have helped reduce actual violence, and there is evidence of greater capacity for conflict prevention across all thematic areas. The IfS Crisis Preparedness component is highly relevant to the general objectives of the EU and its international commitments, and projects generally address thematic areas that are complementary to the geographic instruments. Some projects help to strengthen the concept of a community of practitioners but more can be done to link individual efforts and build on investments that could generate broader and more sustainable gains.

Overall, the consultant recommends:

1. Given the flexible, unique relevance of the IfS Crisis Preparedness component in support of the EU's ambitions globally, funding should continue and be increased for the IfS Crisis Preparedness component.

In order to maximise impact of IfS funding, the consultant also recommends:

2. IfS Crisis Preparedness component vision and strategy should be more clearly defined and widely communicated within the EU system, and it would be helpful if EU Delegations engaged in more analysis of how to effectively use the funding to link to long-term objectives.
3. Alongside the objectives set forth in the Strategy Paper, IfS should define benchmarks for success for each work stream.
4. The thematic area capacity-building of civil society should be re-oriented as a cross-cutting issue like gender mainstreaming. EU should invest further in natural resources and conflict to create dividends from earlier efforts and bring substance to new policy initiatives. The EU should review the specific sub-areas of the mediation and dialogue and the women, peace and security thematic areas where the component can produce greatest added value for the EU.
5. As a matter of strategic planning routine, EU Delegations should be encouraged to draw linkages with other IfS activities in other components.
6. The ambition to create more UN inter-agency cooperation should be re-assessed. More generally, through consultations with its UN partners, IfS should examine how to engage in order to align expectations of processes and outcomes, and that EU

Delegations and UN Agencies establish closer collaboration on the ground when UN agencies act as implementing partners.

7. The EU should consider ways to ensure sufficient human resource capacity, both at HQ and EU Delegation level, especially for follow-up of the projects. This will become even more critical if the IfS Crisis Preparedness component funding volume is increased.
8. In order to minimise single project spending with little sustained impact, ensure that good and replicable initiatives benefit from cross-fertilization, it is strongly recommended that the IfS Crisis Preparedness component invests in an ongoing effort to capture the experiences, follow-up and capitalise on the lessons learned.
9. In keeping with the IfS Crisis Preparedness component objectives, consideration should be given to allocating greater weight to the criteria of sustainability and catalytic effect.
10. All projects should have monitoring and evaluation procedures outlined in the initial design of the project. All project managers should subsequently be required to report on a minimum set of indicators, tailored to each thematic area, allowing HQ to identify in a comprehensive fashion the most critical successes and failures.
11. The IfS Crisis Preparedness component should consider some seminars/forums/web-platforms/community of practice or other forms of spaces to capture lessons learned, discuss difficulties and promote continuous learning within the EU.