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ANNEX V

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the 2023 annual action plan for the global threats part of the thematic programme on peace, stability and conflict prevention

Action Document for Expert Support Facility (ESF)

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

| | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act | Expert Support Facility (ESF) OPSYS/CRIS ¹ number: ACT-61671 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-Global Europe) Regulation | | | |
| 2. Team Europe Initiative | No | | | |
| 3. Zone benefiting from the action | The action shall be carried out worldwide. | | | |
| 4. Programming document | Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention Thematic Programme 2021 – 2027 | | | |
| 5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results | Area of intervention: Global, trans-regional and emerging threats Priorities and expected results 4 to 8 of the MIP | | | |
| PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION | | | | |
| 6. Priority Area(s), sectors | Global, trans-regional and emerging threats 152 - Conflict, Peace & Security | | | |
| 7. Sustainable Development (SDGs) | Main SDG: 16 (Promote Peace and end violence) Other significant SDGs and where appropriate, targets: 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action), 5 (Gender Equality), 3 (Good Health and Well-being) | | | |
| 8 a) DAC code(s) | 15210 – Security system management and reform - 100 % | | | |
| 8 b) Main Delivery Channel | PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS – 10000 | | | |
| 9. Targets | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance | | | |
| 10. Markers (from DAC form) | General policy objective @ | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Participation development/good governance | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | Aid to environment @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Trade development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

¹ Depending on the availability of OPSYS at the time of encoding, a provisional CRIS number may need to be provided.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| | Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Disaster Risk Reduction @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Nutrition @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | RIO Convention markers | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Biological diversity @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Combat desertification @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change mitigation @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change adaptation @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Internal markers and Tags: | Policy objectives | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Digitalisation @ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services | YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Connectivity @ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | digital connectivity energy transport health education and research | YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Migration @ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Reduction of Inequalities @ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Covid-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| BUDGET INFORMATION | | | | |
| 12. Amounts concerned | Budget line(s) (article, item): BGUE-B2023-14.020230 – STABILITY AND PEACE - GLOBAL AND TRANSREGIONAL THREATS Total estimated cost: EUR 2 002 726 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 2 002 726 | | | |
| MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION | | | | |
| 13. Type of financing | Project Modality Direct management through Procurement and grants | | | |

1.2. Summary of the Action

The **seventeenth edition of the Expert Support Facility (ESF)** will continue to support the identification, formulation, evaluation and implementation of actions under the Global Threats part of the Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention Thematic Programme 2021 – 2027.

In addition, to ensure a closer monitoring of all components of the Global Threats Programme and strengthen coordination, coherence and complementarity among the various components at regional and trans-regional level, both within the programme itself (internal coherence) and with respect to any other relevant initiative (external coherence).

All components will be implemented in full complementarity with bilateral and regional programmes and in coordination with EU Delegations and relevant units in the Directorates-General for International Partnerships (INTPA) and Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (NEAR).

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

The relevance of the Expert Support Facility (ESF) has been confirmed since 2008 by the previous phases (1 – 16) of the facility. In such sensitive and highly technical areas as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and global and trans-regional threats to security, considerable expertise is needed to identify and prepare actions, as well as to identify priorities and longer-term needs of partners, and to address them in the best possible way.

To this end, these partners, and the EU as a whole must be able to draw upon the expertise primarily provided by EU Member States' public and para-public institutions to support the identification, programming and implementation of assistance in addressing global and trans-regional threats and emerging threats. The expertise shall take into due consideration the strategic orientations of the Commission including the link to the internal-external security nexus where relevant.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

The unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation constitutes a major security challenge for the EU.

The threat posed by the areas covered by the programme to international peace and security is increasing. COVID-19 has weakened security structures in many countries as efforts have been redirected towards responding to the pandemic, and has exacerbated existing dynamic security trends in terrorism and violent extremism, as well as created new opportunities for organised crime groups.

At the same time, the virus outbreak has significantly affected international security operations as well as data and information gathering activities. Global assistance in the field of security has been hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic and will be further impacted by a reallocation of resources towards public health and economic recovery. Nevertheless, the rising security threats suggest that EU partners may be more than ever in need of specialized assistance that is both rapidly deployable and tailored to their specific situations.

In line with the thematic priorities identified in the MIP, this Facility will allow for quick mobilisation of expertise as needed.

EU Fundamental Values

The action will support partner countries to address security threats in compliance with human rights and the rule of law.

In particular, the action will contribute to compliance in line with the recommendations of the 2020 EU Council Conclusions on Counter-terrorism that, recalling its conclusions on EU priorities in UN Human Rights Fora of 17 February 2020, underline that “all counter-terrorism measures must be conducted in full compliance with EU core values including the rule of law, and in full compliance with international law, in particular international human rights law, humanitarian law and international refugee law. To this end, the EU will continue to proactively support and promote human rights and the principles of international law, in all aspects of the global counter-terrorism efforts and in all its strategic partnerships, including in the regular reviews of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”.

The European Commission and its partners will ensure that measures are implemented in accordance with international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law, and the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2020-2024). A clear human rights perspective will be incorporated throughout the different stages of the project cycle (elaboration of the project documents; monitoring of implementation; evaluation) and relevant information will be included in the regular reporting.

Key cross-cutting issues

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action: Countries across the globe, particularly national security coordinators, relevant ministries (Interior/Home Affairs, Justice, Defence, Emergency/Crisis response) as well as law enforcement agencies and security services.

The geographical scope will be global with flexibility to adapt to the rapidly evolving threat in countries where there is both an urgent need and window of opportunity (owing notably to political conditions and interest in benefiting from international assistance).

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The overall objective of the ESF is to contribute to strengthening the effectiveness and impact of responses to security related threats. Actions under the ESF will enhance coordination with other donors, particularly, but not exclusively, with EU Member States.

The specific objective is the provision of reliable and effective technical assistance to beneficiaries in the areas covered by the Thematic Programme. To this end, the ESF serves as a centre of expertise to support the preparation and implementation of trans-regional and/or multi-purpose interventions (projects/programmes) at the programming and implementation levels. The present phase will focus on the Global Threats part of the NDICI-Global Europe – Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention Thematic Programme.

Expert Support Facility (ESF)

As in the previous phases, the expected outputs to be achieved and the corresponding activities to be undertaken by the present phase of the ESF may include the following:

- a) The capacity to support and assist beneficiary countries in the framework of regional or trans-regional initiatives is enhanced. Indicative activities: short-term training, legal advice, national security strategy development support, etc.
- b) The development of quality policy, strategies and overall programming is enhanced. Indicative activities:
 - Organising and facilitating workshops/seminars/conference/study visit programmes with high-level specialists gathered under consortia led by EU Member States;
 - Undertaking studies covering risk analysis, including using EU member states, the Global Conflict Risk Index and the Global Crisis Atlas prepared by JRC for measuring climate-related conflict risk and promoting situational awareness, gender analysis, assessments, identification/definition of needs, feasibility, analysis;
 - Identifying synergies with actions by other donors and other actors.
- c) Identification and formulation of projects and programmes is enhanced taking into account the real needs and priorities of beneficiary countries. Indicative activities:
 - Conducting needs and capacity-assessment missions;
 - Consultation meetings with beneficiary countries in order to ensure their ownership;
 - Drafting project proposals, terms of references, etc.;
 - Ensuring the final endorsement by the beneficiary countries.
- d) Monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects implemented in/with beneficiary countries. Indicative activities:
 - Monitoring with the maximum disaggregation possible (minimum sex) the ongoing programmes and projects financed under the thematic programme and providing recommendations on necessary corrective measures;
 - Carrying out evaluations sensitive to gender and human rights of programmes and projects including the assessment of outputs, outcomes and impacts.

3.2. Indicative Activities

Identified in each output in section 3.1

3.3. Mainstreaming

Actions in the area of ESF cut across many different sectors and issues, including human rights, gender equality and good governance. All project activities will be carried out in conformity with the principles of good governance, internationally recognised human rights standards as well as taking into account gender equality and the rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Environment and climate change will be taken into consideration as a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of actions, where relevant. The EU is investing significant effort to help raise global ambition and lead the way on accelerated climate action on all fronts while recognising and addressing the severe implications that climate change and the degradation of and lack of access to environmental assets pose to international security and stability. In addition, the ESF will aim to reduce its carbon footprint and environmental impact by limiting the use of dissemination materials and whitening chemicals for printing materials, and by prioritizing video conferences to reduce the environmental impact caused by frequent plane travel, and promoting carbon offsets for air travel.

3.4. Risks and Lessons Learnt

| Category | Risks | Likelihood (High/Medium/Low) | Impact (High/Medium/Low) | Mitigating measures |
|----------|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 2 | Doing more harm than good in the area of P/CVE. | M | M | Comprehensive and rigorous needs assessment will be carried out prior to commencing any work. The recipients will be carefully selected and supported in designing and developing robust programmes. |
| 2 | Lack of gender awareness, gender sensitivity, gender understanding increase existing gender inequality. | M | M | Include gender analysis and gender disaggregated data. Make sure there is gender balance among beneficiaries of the action. |
| 2 | Risk of non-intervention. | H | H | Regional insecurity may continue to increase in the absence of external support to the national administrations. |

Lessons Learnt:

The ESF was launched in 2008. Initially, priority was given to the preparation of the programming exercise for 2009-2011 through early consultations with beneficiaries and field assessment missions – primarily EU Member States' experts from various relevant agencies, departments and ministries and public sector organisations.

The ESF has proven to be crucial in providing the necessary elements for the definition of actions and for their subsequent implementation, or, in some cases, in providing elements leading to a decision not to finance an envisaged action.

Experience gained from this exercise shows that early involvement of beneficiaries is key and indicates that Member States' services are able to provide high quality expertise even at short notice.

3.5. The Intervention Logic

See below.

3.6. Logical Framework Matrix

| Results | Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10) | Indicators: (at least one indicator per expected result) | Baselines (values and years) | Targets (values and years) | Sources of data | Assumptions |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Impact | To contribute to the aims of the Global and transregional threats part of the Stability, Peace and Conflict Prevention Thematic Programme under NDICI-Global Europe, by ensuring the best use of the resources in terms of the priorities to be addressed and the impact of responses. | 1. Global and trans-regional efforts to address the threats posed by terrorism and organised crime, including illicit trafficking of human beings, drugs, firearms and explosive materials are supported; 2. Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) risks, whether natural, accidental or criminal are mitigated. | | | Commission's Annual Report on the NDICI Regulation. | <i>Not applicable</i> |
| Outcome 1 | To establish a flexible structure aiming at the provision of reliable and effective technical assistance to beneficiaries in the areas covered by the Global and transregional threats part of the thematic programme. | The number of activities and projects identified with support of the ESF and the number of assistance and support missions carried out. | | | Progress and Final Reports | |
| Output 1 related to Outcome 1 | The development of quality policy, strategies and overall programming is enhanced through the advisory groups and through access to quality studies and the establishment of sustainable relationships with the beneficiary countries; | Number of studies conducted based on scientific methods and complying with EU and international standards and approaches (incl. gender and conflict risk analysis). | | | Progress and Final Reports | |
| Output 2 related to Outcome 1 | Support is provided in the identification and formulation of projects and programmes; | Number of actions identified and formulated in a participatory and inclusive manner. | | | Progress and Final Reports | |
| Output 3 related to Outcome 1 | Experts are deployed on a short-, mid- or long-term basis for the carrying out of fact-finding and needs-assessment missions; the provision of ad-hoc technical assistance, advice, training courses, capacity building inputs, etc.; or the concrete implementation in full or in part of programmes and projects: | Number of experts deployed on a short-, mid- or long-term basis (including sex-disaggregated data). | | | Progress and Final Reports | |
| Output 4 related to Outcome 1 | Programmes and projects implemented in/with beneficiary countries are monitored and evaluated. | Number of actions that are a) monitored and b) evaluated (disaggregated by sector). | | | Progress and Final Reports | |

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner countries.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures².

4.3.1. Direct Management (Grants)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The overall objective of the grants under the Expert Support Facility is to provide reliable and effective technical assistance to beneficiaries in the areas covered by NDICI-Global Europe –Stability, Peace and Conflict Prevention Thematic Programme for Global Threats.

The type of actions eligible will be covered by the priorities of the Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme, which also defines the expected results.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

Potential applicants for funding will include local authorities, public bodies

4.3.2. Direct Management (Procurement)

The ESF will be achieved mainly in direct management, through the conclusion of contracts with third parties.

4.3.3. Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances

In the interest of the programme, or if the negotiations with the selected entities fail, this action may be implemented in indirect management according to the same selection criteria as above.

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

4.5. Indicative Budget

| Indicative Budget components | EU contribution (amount in EUR) |
|--|--|
| 4.3.1 Grant (tentative) | 1 000 000 |
| 4.3.2. Procurement (direct management) tentative | 1 002 726 |
| Evaluation, 5.2 – Audit, 5.3 Strategic communication and public diplomacy (cf. section 6) | It will be covered by another decision |

² www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The implementation of this project will be coordinated and led by the European Commission. As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality).

When training courses are delivered as part of the activities of a project, entry and exit tests will be done to assess the increased capacities of the trainees.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, evaluations of single components/projects are carried out via an implementing partner.

The Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake mid-term or final evaluations for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission,

partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale. Communication and visibility measures may be funded from the amounts allocated to the action. For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

The effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and concerned EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before work starts. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.

APPENDIX 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention³ (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a ‘support entities’. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| Option 1: Action level | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Single action | Present action: all contracts in the present action |
| Option 2: Group of actions level | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Group of actions | Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#): |
| Option 3: Contract level | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 1 | Not available yet |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 2 | Not available yet |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 3 | Not available yet |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 4 | Not available yet |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 5 | Not available yet |
| | (...) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Group of contracts 1 | |

³ [ARES \(2021\)4204912](#) - For the purpose of consistency between terms in OPSYS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI have harmonised 5 key terms, including ‘action’ and ‘Intervention’ where an ‘action’ is the content (or part of the content) of a Commission Financing Decision and ‘Intervention’ is a coherent set of activities and results which constitutes an effective level for the operational follow-up by the EC of its operations on the ground. See more on the [concept of intervention](#).