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ANNEX I

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action programme for the Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Crisis Preparedness part of the Thematic Programme Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention for 2024

Action Document for the Support to in-country civil society actors in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness

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	Support to in-country civil society actors in conflict prevention, peace-building and crisis preparedness OPSYS number: ACT-62426; JAD-1368284 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)			
2. Team Europe Initiative	No			
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out globally			
4. Programming document	Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme on Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention 2021-2027			
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	Priority 1: Continuing to enhance capabilities relating to analytical tools, methodologies, and mechanisms to better detect early signs of conflicts, monitor conflicts and design appropriate responses; Priority 2: Promoting conflict prevention and conflict resolution measures, including by facilitating and building capacity in confidence-building, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation processes; Priority 3: Supporting peace processes and transitions of conflict-affected societies, communities, including stabilisation and peacebuilding efforts.			
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION				
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention			
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG : 16 Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies Other significant SDG: 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls			
8 a) DAC code(s)	15220 - Civilian peace building, conflict prevention and resolution			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	21000 International non-governmental organisations (NGO) 23000 Developing country-based NGO			
9. Targets	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant	Principal

(from DAC form)			objective	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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	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 type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity @	<input checked="" 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"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line: BGUE – B2024-14.020230-C1 - STABILITY AND PEACE Total estimated cost: EUR 14 644 609 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 14 644 609			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Direct management through grants			

1.2 Summary of the Action

The proposed action aims to support in-country civil society actors in their effort to prevent conflicts, respond to crises and build peace. Through funding disbursed and managed by the service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), in close cooperation with EU Delegations, it is envisaged to support actions implemented by civil society (local civil society organisations and international non-governmental organisations) in conflict-affected contexts to strengthen their institutional, operational and networking capacity in thematic priority areas relating to conflict prevention and peace-building, with a specific emphasis on increasingly resilient information ecosystems. Other thematic priorities that will be considered include areas such as, but not limited to: inclusivity, disinformation, climate change, land disputes and security, and the role of religious actors in peacebuilding.

The proposed action will thus continue to strengthen the role of civil society as an actor and beneficiary that 1) Promotes the protection of people from threatening situations and creates a conducive environment for stabilisation; 2) Increases the sense of inclusivity of a wider population to prevent and respond to conflict and

crises, and; 3) Contributes to enhancing the capacities and agency of local actors to become positive change agents and the building blocks of more peaceful and resilient societies.

1.3 Zone benefitting from the Action

The Action shall be carried out globally.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Across the world, the space for civil society actors has been shrinking dramatically, with many of them being persecuted by populations and/or regime authorities. Such developments have devastating impacts on democracy, the rule of law, human rights and overall stability in countries and regions. In conflict and post-conflict context, restrictions upon civil society actors and organisations may represent a significant impediment to peace-building. Supporting and empowering civil society to play a role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes is a fundamental aspect of the EU External Action, including through EU's political, diplomatic and advocacy efforts. This is highlighted in the 2012 Communication on CSOs, "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations"¹; the 2016 EU Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy²; the 2017 Joint Communication on "A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action"³; the 2017 New European Consensus on Development, with its focus on peaceful and inclusive societies⁴; and the 2018 Council Conclusions on "the Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises"⁵ and the 2022 Council Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security. The Gender Action Plan III – An ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action⁶, the Women, Peace and Security Action Plan 2019-2024 and the Youth Action Plan in EU External Action 2022-2027⁷, also highlight the importance of women's leadership, and support to and participation of civil society, in particular national and local civil society actors in peacebuilding and conflict prevention at all levels. Moreover, the 2023 Joint communication "A new outlook on the climate and security nexus: Addressing the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on peace, security and defence"⁸ underlines the importance of enhancing cooperation and dialogue with civil society organisations. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 is also a strong policy foundation for civil society capacity building.

CSOs have a significant potential to identify opportunities for impact in the thematic areas relating to conflict prevention and peace-building, hence contributing to EU overall engagement in effective and inclusive conflict prevention, peace-building and crises preparedness. In this respect, continuous support has been provided to actions aiming at strengthening capacities of in-country civil society actors through different EU funding instruments, including the Instrument for Stability (IfS) (2007-2013), the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) (2014-2020), and the current Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (2021-2027).

2.2 Problem Analysis

Civil society organisations (CSOs) play a crucial role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In many conflict-affected contexts, CSOs are the only, or among the few stakeholders, able to organise and manage initiatives to tackle violence and insecurity in a gender-responsive manner, and bring about positive change for communities. Whether they are local and community-based organisations or international non-governmental organisations, CSOs are often best placed to detect early signs of tension and conflict and to provide responses tackling root causes and symptoms of these conflicts. They are present on the ground, have knowledge of the context in which the conflict emerges, are

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0492:FIN:EN:PDF>

² https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017JC0021&from=en>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/european-consensus-development_en

⁵ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5413-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

⁶ JOIN(2020) 17 final, 25 November 2020

⁷ JOIN(2022) 53 final, 4 October 2022

⁸ JOIN (2023) 19 final, 28.6.2023

often deeply integrated in the social fabric. and have a better understanding of the differences in how men and women are impacted by the conflict. They also play a critical role in articulating citizen's concerns, in engaging in the public arena to demand responsive services, reforms and accountable governance. As conflicts continue to threaten global security, it remains crucial to rely on local perceptions and experiences and organise tailored responses to bring about positive change for communities. However, in many countries and regions, civil society organisations and actors are sidelined and impeded from playing their complementary role as safeguards of a number of principles of democracy, human and civic rights and gender equality. Therefore, in many instances, the fabric of civil society needs to be rebuilt and protected

Empowering inclusive and progressive civil society organisations (including those representing or involving youth, women, minorities and indigenous people) to play an active role in conflict-affected contexts is therefore a building block to more resilient societies, more vibrant state-society relations and to long term peace.

Support to in-country civil society actors under the conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crises preparedness AAP 2024 will include a specific emphasis on increasing resilient information ecosystems. Other thematic priority areas that could be considered includes areas such as, but not limited to: inclusivity, climate change/land disputes and security and the role of religious actors in peacebuilding. Supporting civil society actor's capacities and initiatives in these areas is an essential part of conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. Other priority areas will also be considered.

Disinformation in conflict-affected contexts thrives on a combination of several factors: the absence of effective and transparent frameworks and oversight bodies to regulate the flows of information, notably online; a weak independent media sector that struggles to provide reliable and fact-based information to the public; low levels of media and digital literacy rendering the penetration of harmful content easier; pre-existing tensions, insecurity and social divides that can be instrumentalised for political gain. These shortcomings have provided a conducive environment for all kinds of disinformation, and harmful content in recent years. This includes propaganda from violent extremist groups, hate speech and incitement to violence, orchestrated information manipulation and interference. Furthermore it encourages disinformation flows that either benefit from or enhance gender stereotypes and sexism, or deliberately discourage civic participation, democracy and state building by utilising gendered strategies to target women politicians, women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders who work for conflict prevention and resolution. As global disinformation flows are increasing, getting more complex and finding fertile ground in conflict-affected contexts, it is critical for the EU to strengthen societies' resilience in this regard. Another significant challenge to peace and security in the years to come is the fact that conflict parties, proxies and backers, acquire new digital capabilities and fight online disinformation wars.

Local civil society organisations play a crucial role in combating disinformation as they are often deeply connected to their communities. They can raise awareness about the nature and impact of disinformation within their communities, educating people on how to identify and counter information manipulation. Non-governmental organisations, community groups and activists can act as watchdogs and fact-checkers, by monitoring and analysing disinformation trends and incidents, scrutinising sources and disseminating accurate, fact-based information. Linking civil society initiatives with independent media actors is also critical to strengthen a more resilient media ecosystem. Supporting civil society in this area is crucial and a collaborative approach, coupled with robust support mechanisms, can empower civil society to play a pivotal role in the fight against disinformation at local level, fostering a more resilient and well-informed society, actively countering the spread and impact of disinformation at the grassroots level.

Addressing gender equality, as well as existing inequalities discrimination and exclusion more broadly, is essential for a more conducive and enabling environment for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Studies have shown that exclusion and gender inequality are aggravating risk factors in conflict and instability, increasing the likelihood of prolonged violence and/or a return to violence when and if peace processes are exclusive and gender-blind. Gender inequality, notably women's security, is also a key predictor of conflict and instability. EU policy frameworks, in particular the Gender Action Plan III for 2021-2025, the Youth Action Plan in EU External Action 2022-2027, the Women, Peace and Security Action Plan 2019-2024 as well as both Council Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security (2018, 2022) clearly call for gender mainstreaming in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding, and for an enhanced role of women and youth as change makers and essential partners in peace and security. There is a need to proactively address shortfalls and gaps in peacebuilding and conflict prevention initiatives by specifically addressing exclusion and inequality and by supporting youth-led peacebuilding organisations.

On climate change, and land disputes and security, according to the 2019 IPCC Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems⁹, climate change creates additional stresses on land, exacerbating existing risks to livelihoods, biodiversity, human and ecosystem health, infrastructure, and food systems. The 2023 Joint communication “A new outlook on the climate and security nexus”¹⁰ highlights that climate change and environmental degradation pose an increasing risks to international peace and security. Extreme weather events, rising temperatures and sea levels, water scarcity, environmental pollution and contamination threaten the health and well-being of humanity, and can create the potential for greater migratory movements, social unrest, instability and insecurity. Added social tensions are also among the effects of land degradation and climate change. In view of the impact of land use on conflict, support to inclusive dialogue and mediation efforts at the local, national and regional levels around the use of land and natural resources management is crucial.

As far as the role of religious actors is concerned, exploring how these actors can play a protagonist role in mediation, peacebuilding or conflict prevention and resolution is crucial in the current contexts. As influential and trusted people within their communities, religious actors of different faiths regularly exert positive influence in certain constituencies affected by conflict and they are well positioned to promote peace through their networks. Strengthening this role and empowering religious actors to act as proponents for peace and to prevent and address conflicts could be promoted by CSOs.

⁹ <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl>

¹⁰ JOIN (2023) 19 final, 28.6.2023

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

- International and well-established national civil society organisations, as direct beneficiaries of EU funding: their role is to manage the overall implementation of the projects to be funded in the framework of this action. They have the thematic expertise as well as the operational and financial capacity to manage EU funding effectively and transparently. They have established partnerships with local civil society actors and independent media aiming to strengthen local capacities to deal with challenges to stability and peace. They are also able to engage national and international actors to advocate for changes at policy and practice levels;
- National and local civil society actors, as partners of direct beneficiaries: their role is to implement activities of the projects to be funded in the framework of this action. They have the relevant thematic expertise to partner in the implementation of EU funding. They have extensive networks with local communities, local and national authorities, and media that allow them to detect early signs of conflict at local, regional, national level and propose solutions for peace. They will profit from capacity building support from international and/or national civil society organisations and potentially will be able to receive direct EU funding in future;
- Conflict-affected communities, community level structures such as peace committees, traditional leaders, youth and women's associations and organisations, Indigenous Peoples' organisations, peacebuilders, human rights and environmental activists working on peace and conflict prevention, as ultimate beneficiaries: their role is to take both part and /or benefit from the activities of the projects to be funded in the framework of this action. They often do not have any formal or legal existence and therefore little, if any, capacity to manage processes or large scale funding on their own. They can benefit from collaboration with local, national or international civil society organisations that support their local level peacebuilding initiatives in order to maximise their effectiveness and sustainability. They may take part and/or benefit from EU support;
- National and local authorities and stakeholders such as private sector organisations, media, unions, etc. may also take part in project activities. They also benefit from the projects' outcomes that support their mandate to better respond to communities' needs;
- The final beneficiaries are the populations of countries at risk of or affected by conflict or on post-conflict situation.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (impact) of this action is to build and strengthen sustainable, in-country capacities for effective conflict management and peace-building and support (sub-)national and regional initiatives in countries affected by/or emerging from conflict or whose peace and stability is at risk.

The Specific Objectives of this action are to:

- 1 Strengthen and, where necessary, restore the institutional and operational capacity of in-country civil society actors with regards to the thematic priority areas relating to conflict prevention and peace-building, in an inclusive, climate and conflict sensitive, gender and age-responsive manner;
- 2 Improve in-country civil society actors networking and advocacy skills, and increase civil society involvement in the thematic priority areas relating to both long-term and short-term conflict prevention and peace-building;
- 3 Establish or enhance cooperation between civil society actors and local, national, regional or international institutions on subjects related to the thematic priority areas relating to conflict prevention and peace-building, in a way that does not harm or create unintended negative impacts on conflict drivers.

The outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (outcomes) are:

- A. contributing to Outcome 1: institutional and operational capacity building interventions to better respond to challenges and opportunities in the thematic priority areas relating to conflict prevention and peace-building;
- B. contributing to Outcome 1: peacebuilding interventions responding to the challenges and opportunities in the thematic priority areas relating to conflict prevention and peace-building;
- C. contributing to outcomes 2 and 3: strategic capacity building interventions to strengthen advocacy engagement and networking among civil society actors.

The action will be designed and implemented in complementarity with actions financed under the two NDICI Thematic Programmes on Human Rights and Democracy, and Civil Society Organisations. In terms of support to capacity building on peacebuilding and conflict prevention, complementarity will be sought also with the actions foreseen under the bilateral geographic multi-indicative country programmes targeting Civil Society. Synergies will be sought when addressing the shrinking space for civil society in politically complex contexts, including through the EU's political, diplomatic and advocacy efforts.

3.2 Indicative Activities

The following activities, inter alia, are examples of what could potentially be envisaged:

- Establish partnerships with local media to promote public interest and responsible journalism, accurate reporting and ethical editorial practices within the community and to improve media operability and viability;
- Support local fact-checking initiatives to verify the accuracy of the information circulating within communities;
- Support local efforts to counter technology-facilitated gender-based violence;
- Engage with local communities through workshops, seminars, communication campaigns, and outreach activities to raise awareness about the nature and impact of disinformation and how to counter it;
- Promote counter-narrative and positive messaging campaigns aiming to tackle hate speech, violence incitement, disinformation and other harmful content being spread online;
- Organise training and capacity building to enhance the skills of local organisations in areas such as disinformation analysis and monitoring (of narratives as well as tactics, techniques and procedures), media literacy, digital security and crisis communication;
- Organise training and capacity building to tackle gendered disinformation and identify and address organised gendered-disinformation campaigns, including campaigns targeting women politicians, peacebuilders and human rights defenders;
- Develop civil society driven technological responses to tackle online disinformation;
- Promote engagement of journalists, fact-checkers, young people, influencers, digital media, public relations companies and cultural actors to empower them to become advocates against disinformation;
- Enhance civil society collective mobilisation and advocacy initiatives to address media and information regulations, to improve local moderation on social media platforms;
- Organise training programmes and workshops to enhance the skills and capacities of local organisations, networks and communities,
- Improve networking and advocacy skills;
- Facilitate community-level initiatives aiming to establish dialogue and cooperation mechanisms (some to address disinformation);
- Support intra-community dialogue;
- Support efforts to strengthen local advocacy and awareness-raising on prevention and accountability for sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence ;
- Strengthen capacity of communities affected by land disputes and climate change, amongst others, to settle disputes and to demand better governance from their authorities;
- Support to women's and youth organisations engagement and networking on land and climate change related issues, including on their role and participation in conflict resolution and management and their participation in decision-making;
- .

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Environmental degradation, such as access to, and management of, natural resources, biodiversity loss, and pollution, are critical drivers of conflicts, especially when aggravated by the effects of climate change. Implementing partners will ensure that the design of their respective projects and the implementation of activities take these risks into account and address them when relevant.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

The action will contribute to the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III) and the EU policy

framework on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that projects to be funded in the framework of this action should take into account the differences in the experiences and needs of men, women, boys and girls when designing and implementing activities. At community level, negative impacts on gender and women's equality should be avoided by only supporting traditional leaders and/or community representatives that actively include women, youth and minorities in consultations.

Human Rights

Projects to be funded in the framework of this action should aim to uphold human rights principles and a human rights based approach, in particular: participation in decision making processes, accountability of duty bearers, equality and non-discrimination, empowerment of individuals and communities to exercise their rights. The action should also take into account specific human rights of Indigenous Peoples, such as the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent supported in the 2017 Council Conclusions on Indigenous Peoples, and where applicable, specific provisions for Indigenous Peoples in peace agreements.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. Specific security and safety concerns related to people with disabilities should be addressed across the thematic areas to the extent possible, as well as their right to participate in peacebuilding when appropriate and relevant for the objectives of each project. The concept of "inclusivity" needs to be read broadly, referring to aspects of gender, age, nationality, sexual orientation, language, religion, ethnicity, socio-economy, persons with disabilities, etc.

Reduction of inequalities

Projects to be funded in the framework of this action should aim at reduction of inequalities, related to age, gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic and so on. Strengthening the role of civil society as an actor and beneficiary is conducive to the reduction of inequalities and the promotion of social cohesion. Moreover, it increases the sense of inclusivity of a wider population to prevent and respond to conflict and crises and contributes to enhancing the capacities and agency of local actors to become agents of positive change and the building blocks of more peaceful and resilient societies.

Democracy

Projects to be funded in the framework of this action should uphold fundamental democratic principles such as transparent and accountable governance, participation and fair representation, balance of power, respect of human rights. Specific attention will be given to the risks related to the participation and activism of peacebuilders, including women, youth and minorities and those working on human rights, on advocating against the shrinking space to civil society, on environmental and climate degradation, on security forces accountability and so on.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

In line with the NDICI-GE regulations and the relevant requirements on conflict sensitive programming, projects to be funded in the framework of the action should be based on a solid understanding of local conflict dynamics, should do no harm and maximise opportunities to make positive contributions to build peace and resilience at all levels, while at the same time mitigating risks of unintended negative impacts. Heightened visibility of peacebuilders might have the undesired effect of making them more vulnerable or targets of violence. Specific conflict analysis / conflict sensitivity assessments should be undertaken for specific areas of work as appropriate. It will be implemented through a Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approach, ensuring coordination, coherence and collaboration in order to reduce overall vulnerability of unmet needs, strengthen risk management capacities, build resilience and address root causes of conflict.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Projects to be funded in the framework of this action should take into account any risks of environmental degradation, climate change and natural disasters overall and aim to reduce those risks, especially when constituting an opportunity to strengthen communities' resilience or achieving peacebuilding objectives.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
1	Deterioration of a security or political situation within countries/regions of implementation making it impossible or dangerous for implementing partners and final beneficiaries to conduct or take part in the planned activities.	Medium	High	FPI regional teams, in close cooperation with relevant EU Delegations, will maintain regular contacts with, and ensure that, implementing partners put in place adequate security measures adapted to the level of identified risk.
3	Lack of a reasonable pool of local civil society actors working on peace-building and conflict prevention issues and capable of effectively implementing projects.	Low	High	Partnerships between international or national NGOs and local civil society actors in-country should be actively encouraged.
4	Unintended negative impact on women, youth and minorities, and peacebuilders, due to lack of inclusion and participation and/or increased vulnerability linked to greater activism.	Medium	High	Carry out systematic gender-responsive conflict analysis and monitoring. Link up with EU funded and other protection mechanisms. Ensure specific protection measures for local peacebuilders and human rights defenders in a gender and age responsive way.

Lessons Learnt:

- Over the past several years, tangible results at grassroots level have been achieved through structural support to civil society actors. In this regard, the former have proven themselves effective in articulating responses to identified local peacebuilding and conflict prevention needs;
- Long term funding for civil society actors has constituted a flexible tool to support civil society led initiatives in the areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding globally and in different types of conflict-affected and transition contexts. Efforts will continue to be exerted to strengthen global efforts to ensure adequate, predictable, and sustained financing for peacebuilding by engaging with the peacebuilding community and other policy makers/donors;

Sub-delegating as much as possible the management of the Call for proposals and grant contracts to FPI regional teams, in close cooperation with EU Delegations, is the most effective management mode for this kind of action, allowing greater local/regional focus, increased cooperation with in-country civil society actors and closer monitoring and follow-up of projects. A sector evaluation of **support to in-country civil society actors in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness** under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) for the period 2014-2020 complements these lessons learned and underlines the following conclusions:

- EU 'localisation' efforts are not yet a clear objective/ambition across the portfolio and throughout the project cycle, thus reducing sustainability and potential impact. Nevertheless, the difficulties encountered by the implementation of the 2014-2020 IcSP projects were not unique to the EU and its partners. It is a serious common challenge to support local CSOs in building peace globally;
- EU under-utilises its size and status to (i) link/leverage its development and political efforts, and (ii) coordinate efforts within IcSP in-country/regional programmes and subsequent EU Delegation programming.

As a result, the following lessons learned were drawn:

- Local CSOs closely engaged in analysis, design, decision-making and monitoring took ownership of projects, which improved sustainability;
- Increasing funding directly to local CSOs can substantially increase reach and scale of activities;
- Inclusive dialogues with stakeholders that have an adequate thematic and operational capacity and activities sustained over time are critical for bridging across divides;
- Longer-term support, building on previous projects' results, increases the chances of sustainability and enhances donor and implementing partners' credibility;
- Identify and pursue links with government or donor relevant projects running in parallel, for instance through referral systems, ensuring alternative options in case of underfunding or termination of activities by referral programmes;
- EU political engagement can be even greater, ideally coupled with direct EU dialogue with local CSOs; Women empowerment is effective in several locations, but there are still significant hurdles to advance gender equality and challenge stereotypes, especially in growing religious and highly conservative environments.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that if the EU continues to provide support to in-country civil society actors in key conflict prevention and peacebuilding areas, then relevant in-country capacities and processes will be more effective at tackling conflict and security challenges because:

- Local civil society actors themselves will be better able to engage on these areas on their own and in collaboration with others;
- Relevant state institutions and state led processes will benefit from civil society expertise, analysis and support;
- Partnerships between relevant actors active in specific fields will be strengthened and collective efforts and impact will be maximised.
- Relevant state institutions and state led processes will benefit from civil society expertise, analysis and support;Partnerships between relevant actors active in specific fields will be strengthened and collective efforts and impact will be maximised.In the longer term, continued support provided through the projects, capacity building and learning will contribute to further empower these local actors to become agents of positive change and the building blocks of more peaceful and resilient societies.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results	Indicators (@):	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To build and strengthen sustainable, in-country capacities for effective conflict management and peacebuilding and support (sub-)national and regional initiatives in countries affected by/or emerging from conflict or whose peace and stability is at risk.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of civil society actors supported (local and international) disaggregated by population groups (ethnicity, religion, sex, age, etc) 2. Number of conflict prevention and peace processes supported 3. % of women's civil society actors amongst those supported (organisation self identifying as women's organisation or as organisations working for gender equality and women's rights). 	To be determined according to each intervention's priority area and specific objectives	To be determined according to each intervention's priority area and specific objectives However, in terms of sex disaggregated data, proportion of women needs to meet minimum target of 50%, due to Gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment being a significant objective.	To be determined according to each intervention's priority area and specific objectives reports	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	Strengthened institutional and operational capacity of in-country civil society actors with regard to the identified priority areas.	To be adapted to each country context and priority area(s) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Number of appropriate locally-led measures identified and implemented by civil society to prevent conflicts and their outcomes 1.2 % of targeted population expressing confidence in and satisfaction towards civil society's effectiveness in tackling conflict risks, managing conflicts and building peace (disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity) 	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	To be determined according to each intervention's priority area and specific objectives reports	
Outcome 2	Improved in-country civil society actors advocacy skills, including increased civil society involvement in the identified thematic areas relating to both long-term and short-term conflict prevention and peace-building	To be adapted according to each country context and priority area(s): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Number of people directly benefiting from EU supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict peacebuilding and/or conflict prevention (disaggregated by sex, age and, if relevant and appropriate, other relevant criteria) 3.2 Number and type of policy advocacy actions undertaken by in-country civil society actors and 	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	

		<p>their outcomes</p> <p>Number of members of CSOs trained by the EU-funded interventions who increased their analytical/advocacy/negotiation skills (including conflict analysis and conflict resolution), disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, disability status).</p>				
Outcome 3 (specific objective)	Enhanced cooperation between civil society actors and local, national, regional or international institutions on subjects related to the thematic priority areas.	<p>To be adapted according to each country context and priority area(s):</p> <p>3.1 Number of civil society actors consulted by local/national authorities and involved in peace processes (e.g. conflict resolution initiatives, recovery plans).</p> <p>3.2 % of women's civil society actors (i.e. organisation self identifying as women's organisation or as organisation working for gender equality and women's rights) amongst those consulted and involved (as reported under indicator 3.1)</p>	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	To be determined according to each project's priority area and specific objectives	
Outputs	<p>The direct/tangible outputs will differ depending on the thematic priority areas selected and the contexts of implementation. These should be along the following general lines:</p> <p>1.1 Institutional and operational capacity building interventions to better respond to challenges and opportunities in the identified priority areas;</p> <p>1.2 Peacebuilding interventions responding to challenges and opportunities in the identified thematic areas;</p> <p>Strategic capacity building interventions to strengthen advocacy management among civil society actors.</p>	<p>Indicators will be defined according to the priority areas selected and the contexts of implementation should include the following:</p> <p>1.1 Alignment of the intervention with the correct understanding of the conflict situation (not at all, limited degree, medium, significant, fully)</p> <p>1.2 % of supported stakeholders which use new tools to address potential harmful language (disaggregated by sex, age, profile, geographical area, ethnicity)</p> <p>1.3 % of supported stakeholders which use new tools to address gendered disinformation</p>	To be defined	To be defined	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 a partner country regional organisation/territory

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 60 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 measures¹¹.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The purpose of the grant is to build and strengthen sustainable, in-country capacities for effective conflict management and peace-building and continue to contribute to the enhancement of EU and civil society capacities to anticipate, prevent and respond to violent conflict and crisis and to support conflict-affected countries in building peace.

Actions aimed at reaching out and enhancing the dialogue with local civil society actors – in particular from conflict-affected countries – and where relevant with other stakeholders such as third countries authorities, international and regional organisations and private sector shall be encouraged.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

Civil society actors as defined in recital (46) of the NDICI Regulation 2021/947 are considered eligible under this Action. For international non-governmental organisation applicants, partnerships with local organisations established and active in the countries targeted will be particularly important in order to meet this measure's objectives.

Interventions will target: countries affected by/emerging from a conflict; countries affected by high levels of violence, or whose peace and stability is threatened; fragile states with weak capacity to perform core governance functions; countries in democratic transition, or where the lack of civic engagement and opportunities for participation in public life is seen as a factor threatening peace.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because the action has specific characteristics requiring a specific type of beneficiary for its technical competence and specialisation as per article 195, paragraph f) of the Financial Regulation (as specified under 1, 2 and 3).

¹¹ 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.

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to international and local civil society organisations selected using the following criteria: experience working in, and good knowledge of, the country of implementation, expertise in community resilience and peacebuilding, information ecosystems, expertise in gender equality, inclusion and diversity; capacity and credibility to foster collaboration with activist, human rights defenders, journalists, fact-checkers and media organisations, experience working with and strengthening capacities of local civil society organisations, institutional and financial capacity to manage EU funds, including sub-granting.

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

In case the selection of implementing partners as per the criteria and conditions set out above might not prove successful, changes from direct to indirect management mode will provide the possibility to identify other types of applicants according to the same criteria. Specific expertise on peace and security, conflict prevention and peacebuilding and inclusive approaches in the domain will be used as identification criteria to identify partners for either direct or indirect management.

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 subject to the following provisions.

The Commission’s authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Grants (direct management) – total envelope under section 4.3.1	14 644 609
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2	May be covered by another Decision
Audit – cf. section 5.3	
Totals	14 644 609

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The European Commission Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) will oversee the Action. In order to promote synergies with other actions, other relevant Commission services and the EEAS will be regularly updated.

The selection and subsequent management of the projects to be funded under this measure will fall under the responsibility of FPI Regional Teams unless a regional/local focus cannot be ensured, in close cooperation with relevant EU Delegations, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and EU Commission Services. In some instances, deconcentration of signature of interventions to the Head of Delegation can be envisaged. FPI regional teams will monitor and report against the projects specific objectives and expected results, in line with those set out in this document.

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 and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination.

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 partners 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) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

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).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

Data collection, analysis and monitoring will be the responsibility of, and carried out by, each project's implementing partners and will be financed under the regular budget of each project. In the case of multi-country projects, implementing partners will be requested to present how monitoring and data collection will be operated.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

The Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 30 days in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination¹². The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

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.

In line with the 2022 guidance document "[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)", 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

¹² https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/evaluation_guidelines/wiki/disseminating-evaluation

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 be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents instead, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as (tick one of the 4 following options);

Action level (i.e. Budget Support, blending)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
Group of actions level (i.e. top-up cases, different phases of a single programme)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#):
Contract level		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 2	
	(...)	
Group of contracts level (i.e. series of programme estimates, cases in which an Action includes for example four contracts and two of them, a technical assistance contract and a contribution agreement, aim at the same objectives and complement each other)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of contracts 1	