

# ODA and non-ODA resources in combination to address violent conflict

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## Question

*What are the emerging lessons or conclusions on how international actors are using ODA and non-ODA resources in combination to address violent conflict?*

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# 1. Summary

This report provides examples and lessons learned from combining official development assistance<sup>1</sup> (ODA) resources and non-ODA resources by donors to countries experiencing conflict and fragility. Some donors, such as the UK, have created cross-departmental funds for responding to conflict and insecurity that make funds available to a wider range of government departments within the donor government. It should be noted, however, that although investments beyond aid are particularly important given their sheer scale, the availability and accessibility of data and literature on international peace and security resource flows to fragile and conflict-affected countries beyond aid is weak. This gap is reinforced by the lack of clarity about what non-ODA aid is and the general lack of literature/focus on how combining this with ODA might translate into better outcomes in fragile contexts. Hence, this review has focused on information from a few donor security/peace funds that explicitly combine ODA and non-ODA resources as part of their design. Where information is available, case studies of country programmes that used combined resources specifically have been highlighted. The review has also focused on lessons learned concerning the fund/approach itself where available. Better information is particularly needed on non-ODA resource flows to fragile contexts.

This review focuses on Denmark's Peace and Stabilisation Fund and the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), both of which explicitly use ODA and non-ODA resources combined. The review also looks at the US Government's approach to fragility, which has recently been reviewed with a number of recent documents exploring lessons learned and suggested reforms. Although not yet fully developed, the documents indicate that the new preventative approach will aim to streamline interagency coordination efforts and indicate the use of ODA and non-ODA resources in combination. Finally, general lessons learned from a systematic review of stabilisation and development programming in Afghanistan are presented in the final section. Given the limited timeframe for this review, it has not been possible to review all literature related to each of the donor programmes highlighted.

This review mainly focused on government and grey literature. While there is a growing body of information and experience in implementing pooled ODA and non-ODA resources from donors, the capture of lessons learned is limited, little practical guidance exists, and there appears to be little empirical evidence of what works best. In addition, the lack of systematic monitoring of non-ODA expenditure in fragile states makes it difficult to locate and review relevant literature. This is compounded by the lack of a clear definition of what is meant by "non-ODA resources" and consistent terminology/language in documents and across different institutions, for example, documents referred to non-ODA resources as security expenditure, budget support, foreign policy expenditure, non-development expenditure, non-aid, military spending etc.

Key findings include:

- In general, no clear lessons have yet emerged in relation to the use of ODA and non-ODA resources that are distinct and different from generic good practice lessons in

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<sup>1</sup> OECD (2018a, p. 1): ODA "is defined by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries. ODA is the resource flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions that are: i. Provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and ii. Concessional (i.e. grants and soft loans) and administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective". Military aid and promotion of donor's security interests and primarily commercial objectives are not considered ODA.

fragile contexts (e.g. contextual relevance, localisation agenda, involvement of host/recipient country and communities).

- The literature reviewed mostly reflects how resources have been used and programming has been implemented through stability funds, with little reflection on the difference (if any) pooled resources has on this implementation. There is an implicit assumption in the (limited) literature that pooled ODA/non-ODA resources are beneficial to programming in fragile contexts due to its flexibility, but without clear evidence supporting this.
- Much of the documentation related to the stability funds and the new US government approach acknowledge previous lessons learned, most of which are “not new”. Common themes include: localisation is the key; programmes must be flexible and adaptive; management of expectations is important as big changes in any outcomes are unlikely; smaller programmes are more likely to achieve modest outcomes; security and corruption must be addressed to enable success; accountability must be built into programmes; effective monitoring, evaluation and learning are key.
- The case studies presented for the UK CSSF provided an indication of the split between ODA and non-ODA resources used in each programme. It was noted that in the majority of CSSF programmes where ODA and non-ODA resources were combined, ODA resources were generally significantly larger than the non-ODA resources; despite the overall fund in 2017/18 being a relatively even split (47% ODA and 53% non-ODA).

## 2. Background

### Stabilisation efforts and aid

Stabilisation normally includes rapid reaction and military activities, but it can also include humanitarian assistance, recovery, and development activities (Rotmann & Steinacker, 2013; Hoshino & Kawaguch, 2018). According to the OECD’s [Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States](#) and [G7+ New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States](#), effective aid delivery across both fragile and stable states should show respect for country programming, systems, and staff; work in cooperation with other donors; and be a source of stability for recipient countries (Panuganti, 2017). According to the latest *States of fragility* report by the OECD (2018b, p. 11), donors spent US\$68.2 billion, or 65% of total earmarked funding, in 58 fragile contexts in 2016. Given that poverty will become increasingly concentrated in fragile states in the next decade, and that progress in these countries has been slow historically, it is likely that aid flows to fragile and conflict-affected states will continue their steady increase (Carment & Samy, 2019).

### “Whole-of-government” approach

Many donors have developed domestic strategies and coordination mechanisms to provide more effective and efficient humanitarian crisis management, the so-called “whole-of-government” approach (see Carter, 2015 for a review of lessons learned from multi-agency stabilisation operations). This implies a long-term perspective of development and prevention is embedded in responses, however, Hoshino and Kawaguch (2018) highlight that “cross-governmental decision-making in the capital has yet to translate well in the field”. Due to the fragmentation and limitations placed on aid, critical activities in the early peacebuilding stage may go unfunded (in comparison to the humanitarian and peacekeeping stages). To overcome this issue, some

donors have developed specific funds for transition activities, using pooled funds combining ODA and non-ODA financing to offer a flexible response in crises requiring a more holistic view of peacebuilding (Hoshino & Kawaguch, 2018).

### **New financing tools**

Poole and Scott (2018, p. 17), as part of a wider OECD and the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) research project to support improved co-ordination and management of development finance for greater impact, produced a guidance paper for how to develop financing strategies for fragile contexts. They found that promising new tools and approaches to developing country level financing strategies are emerging (Poole & Scott, 2018, p. 17). These tools may not yet be fully adapted for use in crisis-affected, fragile and at-risk settings, but there are transferrable approaches and lessons, which can be drawn from these experiences. These tools and approaches have many common elements (Poole & Scott, 2018, p. 19):

- they typically aspire to align financing flows, actors, and policy to support the delivery of results against national-level priorities;
- they often identify key actors and institutions, including those who should lead prioritisation and strategy development, those who should co-ordinate, those who should be held to account, those who are responsible for financing and delivery, and those who have a stake in design and holding the system to account;
- they often assess and identify gaps in policy and capacity;
- they often include an assessment of the financing landscape and sometimes include a costing of financing needs and identification of financing gaps;
- they typically elaborate strategies to mobilise finances from a range of sources to meet these financing gaps.

### **Better use of resources**

Clement and Samy's (2019, p. 2) recent paper's core argument is that "aid is poorly targeted in fragile states; in particular, current aid allocations in the chosen country-cases do not pay sufficient attention to the issues of authority and legitimacy, both of which are important for understanding why countries are fragile". They further argue that "aid could be better targeted to these weaknesses in order to improve its effectiveness" (p. 3).

Petrikova and Lazell (2017) explored the security-development nexus in relation to multilateral donors and fragile states, and found that "there is a significant disconnect between the multilateral policy discourse and actual aid commitments" (p. 507). Furthermore, they found that "aid provided by three major multilateral donors is channelled to conflict, peace and security activities, but fails to underpin the establishment of democratic, inclusive societies in conflict-affected states". Thus reflecting the "short-termist nature of aid programming...with donors more willing to invest in conflict-resolution activities deemed to yield quick results than in initiatives requiring longer-term investment" (p. 507). Aid agencies are under pressure to demonstrate positive development aid results and also value-for-money in the design of projects. It may be "difficult to yield demonstrably positive development outcomes through investing in democratisation programmes in conflict-affected states" (p. 508). Further research by Lazell and

Petrikova (2019) looked at how the securitisation<sup>2</sup> of development has affected the distribution of bilateral development aid by sector focusing on four donor countries: UK, US, Sweden and Denmark. The “new data produced indicate that the securitisation of development has had the most significant effect on aid commitments to states not affected by conflict and that the strategic importance of conflict-affected states and the domestic character of donor governments both influence the strength of aid securitisation” (Lazell and Petrikova, 2019, p. 1).

### Issues with tracking non-ODA funds

The lack of systematic monitoring of bilateral security expenditure makes it difficult to gauge the levels of global investment in security as a global public good versus investments in security in the national interest (OECD, 2015, p. 73). For example, the UK’s International Development Committee (2018) when discussing ODA, stated that the UK’s Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF)’s “blend of ODA and non-ODA activities...has resulted in the redaction of large tranches of information for national security reasons, making it difficult to assess the quality of significant elements of programming” (p. 25). The report recommends that cross-government funds significantly improve their transparency levels, as without transparency it is impossible to assess the effectiveness of the cross-government funds (International Development Committee, 2018, p. 26).

## 3. Denmark’s comprehensive approach

Denmark is an example of a whole-of-government approach to conflict, with the Danish Whole of Government Stabilisation Committee being set up in 2010. The Stabilisation Committee is a forum for strategic and operational decision-making, and is authorised to administer the resources of the Danish Peace and Stabilisation Fund (PSF). In 2014, Denmark published a new strategy paper outlining its approach to future stabilisation operations (Denmark’s Integrated Stabilisation Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Areas of the World, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark et al., 2013), which refined (but did not replace) the Danish understanding of the “comprehensive approach”. The paper retained the comprehensive approach as the guiding star of Danish stabilisation efforts, but refined it in a way that reflects lessons learned from the field (especially in Iraq and Afghanistan). The paper highlighted the following lessons (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark et al., 2013, p. 3-4):

- Stabilisation efforts must be based on a thorough understanding of the drivers of conflict. Without insight into local and regional political dynamics and priorities, it will be difficult to provide sustainable results. This underlines the need for local dialogue and ownership – and a focused Danish presence.
- A shared understanding of the task at hand must be ensured among the implementing actors. This implies early involvement and joint training across civilian, military, and development policy divisions.
- Capacity and institution building are key to long-term stability. Building legitimate and representative local and state institutions is very important for long-term sustainability of stabilisation efforts.

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<sup>2</sup> Securitisation of development “is understood to mean that development agencies conceive of conflict and instability in the Global South as an international security threat” (Lazell & Petrikova, 2019, p. 1).

- Innovation and willingness to take risks are crucial to stabilisation. Stabilisation efforts often take place in very fragile states, which means that they will involve a certain level of risk whether operational, fiduciary, reputational or security- related. Hence, it is necessary to think along new lines in order to achieve results.
- Denmark must take into account the human rights situation in the individual countries. Stabilisation efforts should include clear imprints in terms of, i.e. education and training in human rights and international humanitarian law.
- Danish efforts must be part of an international framework, including the UN, the EU and NATO. Denmark is a small country and it can achieve greater results through regional, international, and multilateral cooperation than it can bilaterally.
- There is a need for aligning expectations on an ongoing basis, both at home and abroad. Development in fragile and conflict-affected states does not improve from one day to the next. These are generally long haul efforts, which require realism and patience.
- There is a need for continuously monitoring and evaluating the results of the Danish stabilisation efforts. This may contribute to ensuring that efforts work and that resources are used effectively.

Larsen and Nissen (2018) highlighted that the comprehensive approach often involves prioritising somewhat incompatible goals and working with conflicting timelines. Military efforts aimed at eliminating immediate threats to stability and civilian interventions aimed at capacity-building often point in different directions when it comes to working with local actors. Civilian and military activities can therefore risk facilitating conflicting engagement with existing power balances in different areas of activity. This places even greater emphasis on the need to facilitate coordination within and between different policy components, as institutionalised in the PSF, and the need to develop not only a clear and shared definition of which stabilisation activities to cover but also a common understanding across government bodies of what is meant by stabilisation.

## **Peace and Stabilisation Fund (PSF)**

The Danish comprehensive approach is formally entrenched in the framework of the Danish PSF, established in 2010. The aim of the PSF is to systematise collaboration across ministries and government bodies through regular meetings, formalised planning and coordinated implementation (Larsen & Nissen, 2018). The PSF operates through two funding windows: a recurrent programmatic window that contains multi-year regional programmes, which focuses on long-term institution-building, and which can accommodate the need for large and non-earmarked contributions to multilateral organisations' efforts. The other quick response window contains funds that can be realised swiftly and flexibly in connection with emergency needs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark et al., 2013, p. 25).

The PSF is headed by an Inter-Governmental Steering Committee of high-level officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice and the Prime Minister's office, which monitors the coherence of policies and strategies, and approves programmes and allocations (Larsen & Nissen, 2018). A small inter-governmental secretariat at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversees the implementation of PSF policy and supports the work of the Committee. The fund currently holds around 450 million Danish Kroner (DKK) (equivalent to approximately USD 68 million) annually with a combination of development and non-developments funds from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish Ministry of Defence (Danish Ministry of Defence, 2019). Typically, engagements under the PSF is

implemented through multi-year regional programmes combining activities around a common objective. Regional programmes are being implemented in Syria-Iraq, Ukraine, Sahel, Eastern Africa and Afghanistan.

The PSF is the institutional and strategic structure dedicated to implementing the comprehensive approach. It works at the intersection between development and security in fragile states. According to the Whole-of-Government Steering Committee (n.d., p. 2), in 2017, peace and stabilisation activities supported by the PSF were conducted in a number of the hot spots around the world, specifically Syria-Iraq, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and Afghanistan-Pakistan. In addition, activities were also focused on a number of thematic priority areas such as anti-radicalisation and the prevention of terrorism in the Middle East, maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, and the UN's capacity for conducting stabilisation and peacekeeping activities. Overall, in 2017, the PSF held DKK 368 million, of which approximately 75% was development assistance. Funds are provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ODA and non-ODA resources) and the Ministry of Defence (non-ODA resources). Within the framework of the new Danish Defence Agreement 2018-2023, it was decided the Ministry of Defence's contribution to the PSF would be gradually increased during the period of the agreement from approx. DKK 84 million to DKK 150 million in 2023 (Whole-of-Government Steering Committee, n.d., p. 2).

## **PSF Case Studies**

The following are examples of the regional programmes supported by the PSF in 2017 with specific activities highlighted where information allows, however, the literature does not explicitly say whether ODA or non-ODA funds were used.

### **Syria-Iraq**

During 2017, DKK 128 million was distributed specifically from the PSF to the programme's three thematic focus areas: 1) political dialogue and peacebuilding, 2) resiliency and rapid response, and 3) community security and governance. Specific activities include continued support to the UN-led political process and the cohesion among the peace initiatives in Syria. Another example is the Access to Justice and Community Security Programme (AJACS), which supports and builds the capacity of moderate civil stakeholders in order to maintain security as well as uphold law and order in opposition-controlled and newly-liberated areas in Syria (Whole-of-Government Steering Committee, n.d., p. 5). The programme was also supported by a number of other donors. Support was also provided to the UN's programme for reconciliation in Iraq, the purpose of which is to begin a comprehensive Iraqi-led process of reconciliation, particularly in the areas previously controlled by Daesh. The process is intended to promote conditions for a lasting and stable peace in Iraq and prevent a resumption of conflict (Whole-of-Government Steering Committee, n.d., p. 6).

### **The Middle East**

The PSF supports a regional pilot programme for preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalisation (total budget of DKK 58.5 million from 2016 to 2018) with a focus on strengthening the capacities of Daesh frontline states (e.g. Jordan and Lebanon) to prevent and combat terrorism. The programme complements other Danish country-level activities in the region. Focus in 2017 partly involved cooperation with the UN and national police schools in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq on training of law enforcement authorities. By strengthening the ability

of local authorities to combat financing of terrorism and conduct investigation and prosecution in accordance with human rights principles, Denmark contributes to countering the spread of violent extremism in the region. The programme also contributes to countering Daesh's messages and ideology online, through support to "strategic counter-communication" (Whole-of-Government Steering Committee, n.d., p. 10).

## **Libya**

In 2017, with resources from the PSF's pool for unforeseen needs, Denmark supported the UN's efforts to contribute to the stabilisation of select municipalities in Libya and to promote the legitimacy of the coalition government among the Libyan people (contributing DKK 20 million). The focus included rebuilding infrastructure damaged through conflict, building the capacity of local authorities and strengthening local capacities for conflict resolution and mediation (Whole-of-Government Steering Committee, n.d., p. 3-4).

## **Horn of Africa and Somalia**

The PSF's programme for the Horn of Africa ran from 2015 to mid-2018 and had a budget of DKK 210 million, of which about 60% was DAC funds and 40% non-DAC funds (assistance by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark and initiatives by the Ministry of Defence) (Danida, 2018, p. 20). The programme integrated defence, police and development initiatives in a merged model and comprised three components: stabilisation of Somalia, strengthening of regional peace-keeping capacity and combating regional threats. Of these funds, approximately DKK 100 million directly targeted Somalia, and the remainder of the activities were implemented in Kenya and Ethiopia, respectively (Danida, 2018, p. 20). In Somalia, emphasis was on instability and conflict, and the initiatives include stabilisation at local and federal levels, rehabilitation and re-integration of al-Shabaab defectors and building of constitutional state institutions with a particular focus on the prison service for the purpose of transferring convicted pirates from third countries (Danida, 2018, p. 20). The Serendi Centre, which Denmark supported since 2012, has developed in a positive direction and appears as the model for rehabilitation of al-Shabaab defectors according to the Federal Government of Somalia.

The third phase of Denmark's Peace and Stabilisation Programme for the Horn of Africa 2018-2022 covers Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia with a special focus on the ongoing conflict in Somalia. With an expected total budget of DKK 219 million over a 4-year implementation period, the total commitment includes DKK 179 million in ODA from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and an expected DKK 40 million non-ODA contribution from the Ministry of Defence (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark & Danish Ministry of Defence, 2018, p. 1).

The programme will contribute to addressing key challenges for the region as well as direct and indirect threats to Denmark's security and welfare, such as violent extremism and terrorism, maritime crime, and irregular migration flows. The overall objective is "improved peace and stability in the Horn of Africa by strengthening local, national and regional actor's capacity and ability to manage conflict and insecurity, counter threats and exercise legitimate authority" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark & Danish Ministry of Defence, 2018, p. 7). It emphasises the ability and capacity of regional and local actors to address conflict, counter violent extremism in Somalia and the region, and counter cross-border threats on land and at sea, including maritime crime (Danida, 2018, p. 20).

The strategy paper for the third phase also emphasises that “the Programme’s mix of ODA and non-ODA funds makes it especially suited for a comprehensive approach. The Whole-of-Government approach has been operationalised both through more abstract complementar[ity] of engagements such as civilian stabilisation efforts by Somalia Stability Fund and military efforts of AMISOM supported by training, as well as in very concrete civilian and military cooperation through deployment of Danish defence, navy, police and civilian expertise” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark & Danish Ministry of Defence, 2018, p. 7). The paper further highlights that “A comparative advantage of the PSF is its flexibility to respond to opportunities in fluid contexts, such as in Somalia. The Programme 2018-2022 includes DKK 25 million of unallocated funds. The priority in programming these unallocated funds will be to extend or expand existing engagements or current thematic priorities as new options arise” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark & Danish Ministry of Defence, 2018, p. 42). From the Programme Budget it is expected that non-ODA funds will go to support Regional capacity – Eastern Africa Standby Force and peace support training centres; Maritime security - Kenya Navy; and Management, knowledge (M&E, review, studies) and communication (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark & Danish Ministry of Defence, 2018, p. 41).

Denmark’s initiatives in Somalia build on valuable experiences and results from the long-standing Danish engagement since the partnership with Somalia was resumed in 1998. General lessons learned from Denmark’s experiences in Somalia include (Danida, 2018, p. 4):

- Local ownership is a condition for success but also that it is vital not to be absorbed in local politics and clan dynamics.
- Development results with direct impact on the population are primarily created at the local level.
- Development, emergency aid and stabilisation cooperation must go hand in hand with close political dialogue in a strongly politicised and conflict-affected context such as that in Somalia.

The Programme also builds on lessons learned from the two previous phases of the programme, analysis of current trends and developments relating to conflict and stabilisation dynamics in the region and in Somalia, and violent extremism. Lessons specific to the Programme include (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark & Danish Ministry of Defence, 2018, p. 10-11):

- The need for the new PSF programmes to make extra efforts in identifying strategic and targeted short term peace and stabilisation engagements to maximise opportunities for impact. This was seen as particularly important for smaller international partners such as Denmark.
- The 2017 Mid Term Review found that the Programme 2015-2017 had been deliberate in choosing well-performing regional engagements by directing efforts towards trans-boundary challenges and opportunities that are likely to be most effectively addressed through a regional approach. Thus, a whole-of-government approach has been applied. Furthermore, the programme is developed with a focus on complementarity and avoiding the duplication or crowding out of initiatives in the development and humanitarian domains.
- Programming, implementation and monitoring in Somalia is challenging, and even more so without a continuous Danish physical presence. This situation is likely to continue during the implementation period of the Programme. Hence, a Third Party Monitoring

mechanism will be introduced for risk-prone engagements that are not already covered by other partners' Third Party Monitoring systems.

- Stabilisation efforts are meant to achieve results in the short- and medium-term but proper analysis, trust-building, lesson-learning and partnership-strengthening take time. This points towards a need for longer programme implementation periods. Hence, the implementation period for the Programme has been increased from 3 years to 4 years.
- There is a need for continuing institutionalisation of the decentralised management arrangements for the Programme, including the streamlining of reporting channels.
- The Programme emphasises the importance of firmly and concretely operationalising gender perspectives and always ensuring that women are included in the engagements. Involvement and participation of women in all aspects of the interventions under this Programme is essential if lasting stabilisation outcomes are to be achieved. The Programme will also continue to work with youth, such as in relation to al-Shabaab disengagement and defectors' rehabilitation.

## 4. UK's whole-of-government approach

The UK's Stabilisation Unit is one of the most advanced forms of whole-governmental approach to conflict (Rotmann and Steinacker, 2013, p.16). It is a cross-government, civil-military-police unit based in London, funded through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and are governed through the National Security Council. It consists of core civil servant staff members from 12 government departments, as well as serving military and police officers. The unit supports the integrated co-ordination of UK government activities in fragile and conflict-affected states by being a centre of expertise on conflict, stabilisation, security and justice (Stabilisation Unit, n.d.).

### Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF)

The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) was established in April 2015, as the latest in a series of cross-government conflict prevention funds. From the top down the CSSF takes a cross-government approach to support and deliver programmes that build stability and tackle fragility (HM Government, 2018, p. 5). It takes direction from the National Security Council. Programmes blend ODA and non-ODA funding which allows departments to deliver a broader range of interventions. The model builds on lessons from the Iraq Inquiry, which highlighted the importance of departments working together in an integrated way (HM Government, 2018, p. 5). The CSSF's overall direction is guided by the priorities set out in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review and the UK Aid Strategy. It delivers against two national security objectives: 1) Protect Our People; 2) Project Our Global Influence; and three UK Aid objectives (strengthening global peace, security and governance, and strengthening resilience). In 2017/18 the total spend for the fund was £1.18bn (47% ODA and 53% non-ODA) (HM Government, 2018, p. 3).

In 2018, ICAI undertook a review of the CSSF, giving it an overall review score of Amber/Red<sup>3</sup>. It found that "The CSSF is flexible and responsive to the priorities of the National Security Council, but variable programme quality, weak results management and insufficient learning undermine its contribution to building peace, stability and security" (ICAI, 2018, p. 3). However, ICAI's

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<sup>3</sup> Defined as: "Unsatisfactory achievement in most areas, with some positive elements. An area where improvements are required for UK aid to make a positive contribution" (ICAI, 2018).

findings, comments and recommendations relate only to the CSSF's aid programming, which in its first two years of operation amounted to £353 and £460 million (or 34% and 41% of the CSSF's total spending). The ICAI review notes that (ICAI, 2018, p. 18):

With its ability to blend ODA and non-ODA spend and to act nimbly, the CSSF is equipped to help address such immediate risks, and we saw a few examples of this happening. More commonly, and in each of our case studies, we saw evidence of programming that was changed swiftly to seize opportunities, address risks and reflect broader progress – or regression – in pathways to peace, stability and security (such as the Colombian peace agreement, the retreat of Daesh in Iraq, and the increasing instability in central Mali).

The most recent CSSF annual report 2017/18 highlights changes and improvements the CSSF has made over the last year in response to feedback and recommendations from the ICAI review and other reviews (HM Government, 2018, p. 3). An annual two-day lessons learned workshop is held in London each July, bringing together CSSF staff from every region as well as departmental, regional and policy leads. The key lessons for 2017's event were (HM Government, 2018, p. 11-12):

- *Relationships matter*—coordination across HMG, with other donors, with host countries and with implementing partners are vital to successful CSSF programmes.
- *Politics matter*—programming must consider the political context and be conflict sensitive as the CSSF is a political fund, and political engagement is key to transformative change
- *Theories of Change must be realistic*—programmes must have strong political and conflict analysis underpinning them. Theories of Change must be clear on how the programme will bring about change using evidence, expertise, and risk assessment.

Since the outset of the CSSF, programmes have been subject to Annual Reviews (ARs), which assess a number of technical and programme management standards, as well as contextual factors such as changes to the political environment (FCO, 2019, p. 1). Broader lessons and recommendations are also drawn out from these ARs, with a synthesis being undertaken by the Stabilisation Unit. The synthesis of the 2017/18 ARs found that they demonstrate that “innovative approaches are being applied across CSSF programmes to address key issues such as risk management, conflict sensitivity, and harnessing political access and influence” (FCO, 2019, p. 2). They also show that there is still a need to continue learning lessons and setting clear standards where necessary. The main reason given in ARs for outcome scores being below output scores was due to theories of change and results frameworks needing improvement (FCO, 2019, p. 3).

## CSSF Case Studies

The ARs also provide lessons learned and recommendations. The following are a number of selected case studies from the CSSF portfolio where information could be found in the 2017/18 ARs that the programme used both ODA and non-ODA resources, and is not exhaustive. The information is taken from the ARs as presented. Please note that in only two out of the seven selected case studies were non-ODA resources larger than ODA (the Multilateral Strategy UN Peacekeeping Programme and Lebanon CSSF Security Programme).

## **Multilateral Strategy UN Peacekeeping Programme**

April 2016 – March 2020; **ODA £1.61m and non-ODA £2.4m**

This programme aims to make UN peacekeeping operations more effective and efficient, with more and better capabilities to deal with the challenges of modern peacekeeping. This should contribute to conflict containment, the reduction of violence and ultimately the resolution of conflicts to create the stability necessary for peace to flourish (HM Government, 2019c, p. 1).

Some of the recommendations for the next year included (HM Government, 2019c, p. 2):

- *Decide whether to take a broad or more targeted approach:* In the case of our support to the DPKO/DFS projects, we should decide whether there are specific areas we need to focus on.
- *Create more systematic decision-making processes:* Deciding which extra-budgetary projects and deployments to support is at a crucial stage in the programme cycle and should be more formalised and systematic.
- *Strengthen the working relationship between the programme team and deployments*
- *Improve monitoring and evaluation*
- *Ensure that the outcome and output indicators are appropriate, realistic and measurable*

## **MENA: Jordan CSSF Internal Security Programme**

April 2016 – March 2019; **ODA £4.4m and non-ODA £0.83m**

The Internal Security Programme (ISP) originated as a capacity building programme for selected Jordanian security organisations to enable them to become more effective at contributing to public safety. The UK wanted to offer agile, tactical responses to an urgent need in the wake of the Arab Spring (e.g. public order policing) and the Syrian crisis (e.g. community policing in Azraq and Zaateri). The challenge for the Jordan Security Sector Project, the main project in the programme and its successor, is how broader security sector reform can be achieved. A primary goal is to enable these organisations to respond more effectively to major incidents such as terrorist attacks. UK support has evolved in response to the operational context and covers a range of activity encompassing community policing, investigative policing skills, critical incident response and countering violent extremism (HM Government, 2019a, p. 1).

Some of the recommendations for the next year included (HM Government, 2019a, p. 2):

- The programme results framework should be revised to ensure that it includes more coherent outcomes and a set of outputs with realistic milestones for assessing progress. This is already in progress.
- With the ISP growing in scope and the need to maximise impact across all of the Embassy's inputs, the CSSF team should draw in external expertise on how the programme could benefit from access to security and justice reform advice on a drawdown basis.
- Map out and better understand across the British Embassy and CSSF team who owns and who is responsible for maintaining and developing the various relationships with the Government of Jordan, beneficiaries, other donors and implementing partners. Have a

clear plan to ensure these relationships are monitored and any risks to programme delivery flagged early through the country board.

- The CSSF team should take advantage of external Monitoring and Evaluation advice to help understand how to build evidence to demonstrate results and give a better understanding of what is working and what is not.
- Gain an in-depth understanding of how training/inputs provided contributes to delivering effective impact against the output aims. This should be reflected in the updated Results Framework as an indicator of success and monitored closely.

### **MENA: Lebanon CSSF Security Programme**

April 2016 – March 2019; **ODA £6.96m and non-ODA £8.80m**

This programme aimed to build Lebanese capacity to tackle threats to Lebanon and mitigate spill-over from the conflict in Syria. This support is delivered in three complementary areas, firstly building the capacity of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), with a focus on enabling improved border security. Secondly, building capacity of the Internal Security Forces (ISF) and LAF to successfully manage domestic security issues and build community cohesion. Thirdly, supporting locally-developed peacebuilding and reconciliation projects (HM Government, 2019b, p. 1).

The LAF-related activity continues to deliver benefits to Lebanon and to the UK Government's efforts in the country. Its excellent reputation was clearly demonstrated in discussion with Lebanese stakeholders and in anecdotal evidence gathered in regular reviews by the programme team. The strong institutional links it has developed have already demonstrated the ability to withstand changes in host partners at senior levels and urgent operational demands. Both these aspects also serve to allow the Embassy access and influence far beyond the remit of the programme. The peacebuilding and reconciliation projects delivered by implementing partners MARCH and Adyan, non-governmental organisations, have continued to deliver or exceed expectations against output-level targets (HM Government, 2019b, p. 1).

Some of the recommendations for the next year included (HM Government, 2019b, p. 2):

- *Results Framework*: The Results Framework should be reviewed in its entirety. There are currently issues related to the selection of the most appropriate metrics/data to demonstrate delivery at both output and outcome levels; a lack of weightings according to value and contribution to delivery of objectives.
- *Overseas Security Justice Assessments (OSJA)*: Given changes in context and activity OSJAs for each programme strand should be reviewed. If activity related to the security services around Preventing Violent Extremism work is pursued, the PVE strand will also need an OSJA.

### **Western Balkans CSSF Programme**

April 2017 – March 2018; **ODA £15.2m and non-ODA £2.2m**

The 17/18 Western Balkans Programme has focused on sub-objectives in the first two pillars of the Western Balkans HMG Strategy:

- Organised crime, CT/CVE (National Security Objective (NSO) 1 – Protect our People)
- Strengthening security sector capability, reconciliation, rule of law, corruption and transparency (NSO 2 - Project Our Global Influence)

It is structured around four country (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia) and three regional strands. Each has its own portfolio of projects, theories of change and results frameworks (HM Government, 2019g, p. 1).

Some of the recommendations for the next year included (HM Government, 2019g, p. 2):

- The Western Balkans (WB) region should review its overall structure and more clearly delineate between governance at the regional portfolio level and country and thematic programme level with appropriate documentation to match.
- The WB Regional Strategy Board should consider requesting that country level documents and theories of change that are owned by Post and set out their manifesto for all programmatic activity in country- both regionally and nationally led- are developed.
- Europe and EU Programmes Unit (EPU) should review roles and responsibilities and look to simplify where possible.
- EPU should build greater understanding and buy-in for the revised programme structure.
- Review and strengthen Theories of Change on a firmer evidential basis.
- MoD London to revisit and consider how to approach the regionalisation of defence capacity building support, determining which aspects are appropriate for regionalisation and which are more country specific.
- Review adequacy of programme staffing structures in line with expanding programme in FY19/20 and beyond.

### **South Asia: Sri Lanka CSSF: Delivering increased stability and reducing the risk of a return to conflict**

April 2016 – March 2018; **ODA £ 2.28m and non-ODA £0.18m**

The CSSF programme in Sri Lanka is designed to support reconciliation and strengthen democracy and the rule of law to ensure long-term stability, through targeted project activity such as Police Reform, Defence Engagement (DE), Anti Bribery and Corruption (ABC), Demining, Inter-faith Dialogue and Transitional Justice (TJ) (HM Government, 2019f, p. 1).

The scope of the programme and networking that takes place provides the UK Government with high-level access, visibility and influence on key issues across the island enabling the UK Government to punch well above its weight amongst the international community. This breadth also permits CSSF funding for activity in each of the UK Government's NSC target areas and there is good evidence that the programme is delivering value for money in this regard. It is however significant that whilst the programme has been agile and adaptive, overall progress has been affected by the Government of Sri Lanka's (GoSL) sporadic engagement throughout the previous financial year, which may be further impacted upon as Sri Lanka moves towards the forthcoming Parliamentary and Presidential Elections (2019-2020). It is therefore vital to maintain and not reduce this sphere of influence if the UK Government is to continue to play such a significant role in supporting reform and bringing about positive change in particular given the remaining window of opportunity to do so (HM Government, 2019f, p. 2).

## **Africa: Sahel – Support to Multilaterals Programme**

April 2015 – March 2020; **ODA £0.44m and non-ODA £0.36m**

The programme aims to improve security, stability and governance across the Sahel; gain UK influence through the provision of secondees; and maximise UK impact through closer working with key international partners. Through: provision of UK military support to the EU Training Mission and to the Malian Armed Forces; provision of International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, Gender and Gender Based Violence related legal and academic education to Malian Armed Forces; provision of UK secondees to multilateral and bilateral partners (HM Government, 2019d, p. 1).

Some of the recommendations for the next year included (HM Government, 2019d, p. 2):

- There is need for greater clarity on how the programme's use of targeted interventions to steer international community policy will achieve higher level impact.
- Secondees and programme funding should be deployed with clear purpose in pursuit of specific influencing targets with progress measured using qualitative indicators.
- An appropriate focus for the next stage of programming is influencing the international stabilisation effort towards the UK model. The programme should articulate the UK approach to stabilisation, and identify how the UK Government can influence partners' approaches.
- Using qualitative Monitoring and Evaluation techniques such as the political access and influence methodology could improve the capture of results.
- With increasing UK ambition in the Sahel, the programme team will need increased policy leadership and programme support from London.

## **Africa: South Sudan National Conflict Reduction**

February 2016 – March 2019: **ODA £2.06m and non-ODA £0.09m**

The programme provided support to the institutions mandated by the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) which did not have the technical expertise needed to implement and carry out their mandates. Support consisted of funding for an implementer to provide technical support to the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM), as well as ad-hoc training courses or activities relating to implementation of the ARCSS. The programme also provided temporary members of UK Government staff, in both Juba and London, to coordinate internally and engage externally on the ARCSS. This also helps facilitate HMG's increased engagement with the process (HM Government, 2019e, p. 1).

Some of the recommendations for the next year included (HM Government, 2019e, p. 2):

- UK support to the peace process and institutions should for the moment be "no more but no less". It will be important to see how ongoing peace talks pan out and be nimble – the programme should be designed to support this as much as possible. The UK Government should encourage closer JMEC/CTSAMM ties, and consider carefully any potential future limiting of support to JMEC/CTSAMM for short-term operational reasons.

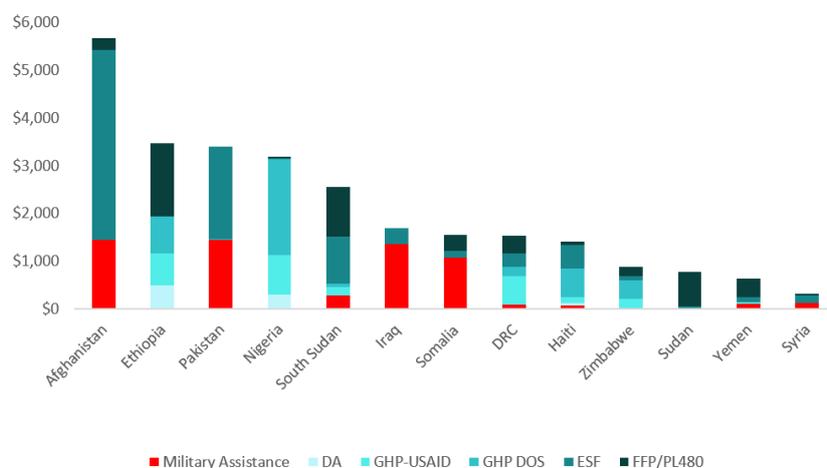
- The programme should retaining the ability to scale up or wind down interventions and develop reserve activities which can be implemented at short notice to take advantage of additional central resources.
- The UK Government team should ensure a clearer delineation between CSSF-funded UK Government advisors in JMEC/CTSAMM and those funded from other sources. Care needs to be taken to ensure that these roles are not used to fill other gaps where not appropriate.

## 5. US Government approach to fragility

The US (and other donors) are rethinking how to confront the particular challenges of fragile environments and support a path to greater country resilience, given that it is estimated that by 2030, 60% of the world’s poor will be concentrated in fragile states (D’Alelio, 2018). D’Alelio (2018) in a blog post for the Centre for Global Development highlights that “several new initiatives and proposed reforms seek to take stock of the lessons of the past to address shortcomings in how the US government delivers aid to address fragility”. For example, USAID, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense recently “completed the first-ever Stabilization Assistance Review in order to streamline interagency coordination efforts in conflict-affected areas, with a focus on learning lessons from Iraq and Syria” (D’Alelio, 2018) (see below).

D’Alelio (2018) took stock of the current landscape of US foreign aid to fragile states. In examining the types of foreign aid the US government gives to a specific set of fragile states, D’Alelio (2018) found that the majority (78%) was economic or development assistance (programmes with a development or humanitarian objective), with military assistance making up the other 22% (programmes for armed forces or to enhance partner military capability) (see Figure 1). US military assistance is concentrated in four countries where the US has either a troop presence (Afghanistan, Iraq), a large peacekeeping force (Somalia), or historic partner military ties (Pakistan).

Figure 1. US Assistance to Fragile States, by Appropriations Account



Source D’Alelio (2018), developed from Congressional Budget Justifications 2012-2016 (Actuals). DA = Development Assistance, GHP = Global Health Programs, ESF = Economic Support Fund, FFP/PL480 = Food for Peace. Includes Overseas Contingency Operations. Does not include IDA, PRM, DHCA, and other humanitarian accounts.

## Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR)

The Department of State, USAID, and Department of Defense launched the Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR) to identify ways that the United States can more effectively leverage diplomatic engagements, defence, and foreign assistance to stabilise conflict-affected areas, reviewing the significant lessons learned from past stabilisation efforts<sup>4</sup>. The SAR was released in June 2018, and recognised that “Stabilization is an inherently political endeavor that requires aligning U.S. Government efforts —diplomatic engagement, foreign assistance, and defense —toward supporting locally legitimate authorities and systems to peaceably manage conflict and prevent violence” (The Department of State et al., 2018, p. 1). The SAR also defined stabilisation as a short-term action, between two and five years, and established a clear chain of command, with the State Department as the overall lead, USAID as the supporting agency for development, and DoD as the supporting agency for security and logistics.

The SAR identified the following set of lessons/core principles that underline effective stabilisation efforts (The Department of State et al., 2018, pp. 6-9):

- *Set realistic, analytically backed political goals.* Stabilisation is inherently political, which means it must focus on local, national, and/or regional societal and governing dynamics, agents, and systems that lead populations toward inclusive, non-violent settlement and agreement. Its success depends on having a goal-oriented political strategy that aligns with local interests.
- *Establish a division of labour and burden-sharing among international donors and local actors that optimises the strengths of each.* There needs to be a clear understanding at the outset of a stabilisation effort of what the partner nation government is willing and expected to deliver in terms of political and financial commitments. There should also be a clear division of labour among international donors.
- *Use data and evaluation systems to assess strategic progress and hold partners accountable.* Tying diplomatic engagement and assistance to local qualitative impacts rather than solely quantitative activity outputs and using strategic level analysis will enable senior policymakers to consider whether policy adjustments are required to achieve objectives. The Review’s case study in Afghanistan found that using consistent data tied to specific political objectives —and sharing relevant information across U.S. Government Departments and Agencies—would have enabled better review and analysis by policymakers.
- *Forward deploy US Government and partnered civilians and establish local mechanisms that enable continuous engagement, negotiation, targeted assistance, and monitoring.* Significant security limitations on US Government civilian presence in conflict and post-conflict areas impede ability to identify and respond to emergent political opportunities and quickly adapt programmes.
- *Start with small, short-term assistance projects and scale up cautiously.* According to multiple studies, targeted and smaller programmes are better at the outset to achieve local outcomes and build momentum. Smaller projects driven by host-government and communities in support of a unified political strategy and diplomatic engagement are best suited to achieve short-term stabilisation objectives and to set the stage for eventual

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<sup>4</sup> Looking at US engagements in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Somalia.

management, financing, and ownership by national governments or regional administrations. For example, the Review's case study showed that in north eastern Nigeria, the U.S. Government has worked effectively at the community level to develop a nuanced village-by-village understanding of stabilisation challenges and political dynamics fuelling violent extremists.

- *Prioritise, layer, and sequence foreign assistance to advance stabilisation goals.* If stabilisation is a top goal for international engagement in a country, then the full range of non-humanitarian assistance the U.S. Government allocates to that country should be considered in terms of how it can advance the established political and diplomatic strategy without creating dependency.
- *Link subnational engagements with national diplomacy to advance stabilisation.* Both national and subnational engagements are needed to advance stabilisation, and need to be eventually nested together to achieve optimal effect. This process requires a flexible approach, recognising that subnational dynamics can vary radically from one geographic region to another.
- *Reinforce pockets of citizen security and purposefully engage with security actors.* Stabilisation is most likely to be successful where there is basic security on the ground. Basic security is defined as minimum conditions where U.S. assistance partners can operate and monitor activities, access appropriate local stakeholders, and where security actors can engage in building trust with local communities.
- *Seek unity of purpose across all lines of effort.* One of the greatest challenges to stabilisation is that different U.S. Departments and Agencies have different priorities, and regional and international actors often have other agendas that work at competing purposes. Stabilisation needs to be fully integrated and elevated across lines of effort. It should be incorporated into campaign planning as early as possible to help shape operational design and strategic decisions. Close civilian-military planning and coordination has been a key determinant in effective stabilisation outcomes across all cases examined.
- *Employ strategic patience and plan beyond stabilisation for self-reliance.* There is no single set time frame for stabilisation that is generalisable to all cases, but in no case should it be open-ended. While stabilisation efforts are intended to create targeted short-term effects, it usually requires time to achieve durable and legitimate political settlements at local and national levels. Strategic and resource planners should take this reality into account to build realistic, flexible, and achievable mile-stones and enable consistent funding. Effective stabilisation efforts also intentionally incorporate linkages to longer term development efforts into planning.

The SAR recognises that “most of the above findings are not new”, but they have not been systematically applied or institutionalised in how the US approaches stabilisation in conflict-affected areas (The Department of State et al., 2018, p. 10).

The SAR was released at a similar time to two other seminal new policy proposals for the US Government that also target a preventative strategy in dealing with fragility. The final report of the [Task Force on Extremism in Fragile States](#), mandated in the FY 2017 appropriations bill and mentored at the U.S. Institute of Peace, was released in February 2019; and the Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act of 2018 was introduced to the Senate in August 2018 (Ingram, 2019). Both the report and the legislation acknowledge from lessons learned, that localisation is the key, and that solutions cannot be imposed from outside. They must be based on the priorities

of the community and its leaders, and local actors must play a central part in the design and implementation of programmes. External donors can support activities, but they must be locally driven. Managers must have the authority to fit activities to local conditions, which often change, so activities must be adjusted to meet evolving circumstances. The ability to adapt programmes is critical to their relevance and effectiveness. Accountability must be built into programmes. Programmes must be inclusive and adaptive (Ingram, 2019).

## 6. Lessons from Afghanistan

Iyengar et al. (2017) systematically reviewed 89 available studies (including programme evaluations, government documents, the academic literature, and policy studies, with a focus on USAID/US military efforts) on stabilisation and development programming in Afghanistan, identifying common themes across the range of studies. The aim of the study was to identify the key factors that contributed to the success or failure of stabilisation programmes in Afghanistan and formulate recommendations for the design, implementation and evaluation of future efforts in Afghanistan and other conflict-affected states. The authors found the following overall findings, and emphasised that “almost none of these key points are new” (Iyengar et al., 2017, p. 30):

- Manage expectations because big changes in any outcomes are unlikely;
- Smaller programmes are more likely to achieve modest outcomes;
- Security and corruption must be addressed to enable success;
- Appropriate staffing is critical for implementation;
- Improve monitoring and evaluation in order to improve future programme performance.

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