



EU-CIVCAP

Improving EU capabilities for peacebuilding

EU-CIVCAP Catalogue of Lessons Identified

in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding



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This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 653227



Introduction

The core objective of EU-CIVCAP is to investigate the recent conduct and performance of the EU's various efforts ("capabilities") in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding and to suggest specific ways to improve or enhance those capabilities.

Policy-relevant learning is a central concept in EU-CIVCAP, and can be viewed most generally as a type of deliberate political reform in an institution. It should be distinguished from other related forms of change, such as vague 'lessons of history' (i.e., analogical reasoning) or mere 'adaptation' to new circumstances. Work Package 7 (WP7) in EU-CIVCAP directly addresses this challenge by identifying examples of potential 'experiential institutional learning' in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Experiential institutional learning is defined as the need for changes in an institution's responsibilities/functions, rules/procedures, and resources/capabilities as a result of new information, observation, or experience.¹ These examples take the form of 34 specific 'Lessons Identified' in various areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, which have already been published in an **on-line Catalogue of Lessons Identified** available at:

<http://www.eu-civcap.net/lessons>

The database organises and cross-references these Lessons Identified on the basis of various keywords to make searches easier, grouped into six categories:

- i) conflict life cycle stage (conflict prevention, crisis response, conflict management, conflict resolution and peacebuilding);
- ii) policy-making phase (planning, policy-making, implementation, evaluation);
- iii) country or region where the lesson was identified;
- iv) institution(s) involved in the lesson (EU and otherwise);
- v) cross-cutting challenges involved² (warning-response gap, short-long term approaches, local ownership, civil-military coordination); and
- vi) other topics (personnel, post-mission sustainability, resources, strategy, technology).

Evidence for each of the lessons was collected from official documents and reports, secondary sources, and dozens of interviews with practitioners in Brussels and in the field. This evidence can be found in the various deliverables (DLs) cited at the end of each lesson. The DLs, in turn, are associated with several EU-CIVCAP work packages, particularly WP2 (Prepare), WP3 (Conflict Prevention), WP4 (Crisis Response), WP5 (Conflict Management/Mitigation), and WP6 (Conflict Resolution & Peacebuilding). Finally, the order of the Lesson Identified presented here is based on EU-CIVCAP's delivery schedule of the various DLs used to populate the database/catalogue, ranging from early 2016 to late 2018.

Lessons identified

Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Summary

Between the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) and the 2016 EU Global Strategy (EUGS), the EU has made significant advances towards developing a general framework for defining and prioritising its global interests. This process includes a number of more specific strategy documents, whether regional (Balkans, Horn of Africa, Sahel, etc.) or functional (the European Cybersecurity Strategy, the European Maritime Security Strategy, etc.). It also involves the general emergence of the EU's 'comprehensive approach' to certain international security/foreign policy tasks, which involves the deployment of a full range of EU capabilities, as necessary, to handle specific problems. However, within the realm of Civilian Crisis Management and conflict prevention and peacebuilding, there are still several areas of opportunity.

For example, DL 2.1 found that despite the efforts above, the EU still lacks more coherent strategies that start with all relevant players sharing a common understanding of the situation or the challenge at stake. Toward this end, the EU should devise a policy to make sure that all actors that can contribute to various stages of a conflict do not work separately but in a coordinated manner. In line with the comprehensive approach above, conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities should not be conceived as isolated efforts, but as a continuum of activities covering various stages of the full life cycle of conflicts (from rising tensions to the outbreak of conflict to post-crisis stabilization), including the various actors involved and also the instruments at its disposal.

Similarly, DL 3.2 identified a need for the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to jointly clarify in internal documents how the EU promotes conflict prevention as a way of acting in the world, how it can support and be supported by stabilisation, and how specific distinct activities (particularly conflict analysis, early warning, and mediation) contribute differently to conflict prevention, and the differences and synergies between them. Toward this end, senior management in the EEAS and the European Commission should mainstream conflict prevention as a matter of policy and practice across the EU's external action machinery (the DG for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, DG DEVCO, DG Energy, DG Trade, as well as the EEAS Headquarters and Delegations). This would involve prioritising conflict prevention, as well as crisis response.

Finally, the EUGS implementation plans should ensure that conflict prevention is prioritised across all the thematic areas identified, not only for the implementation of the section on 'an integrated approach to conflict'. It should also be prioritised in the implementation of the Security and Defence Implementation Plan (SDIP), the initiative on public diplomacy and other follow-up actions to the EUGS (i.e. resilience). Implementation and action plans should address these concerns directly and clearly identify resources, including institutional expertise and leadership, for preventing conflict as well as responding to it and addressing the important as well as the urgent.

Recommendations

Enhance strategic guidance and mainstream conflict prevention across all EU external action efforts, including in the context of the EUGS implementation.

Related Lessons

- N/A

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EC
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Civil-military coordination
 - Short-long term approaches
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Strategy

Lesson 02: Staff recruitment and selection

Summary

Although the EU possesses significant personnel resources to deploy various types of foreign/security policy missions, it also still relies very heavily on seconded staff contributed by its member states for certain conflict prevention and peacebuilding actions, as well as contracted staff. This reliance generates multiple coordination problems and can easily result in delays and shortfalls in the provision of adequate mission staff (among other problems, such as a lack of appropriate training). In part to address this problem, the EU's Goalkeeper project is intended to rationalise this EU capability, and it involves a specific element ('Registrar') devoted to recruitment and selection/deployment of mission staff (among other elements).

However, the research summarised in DL 2.1 found that despite a decade of development (since 2007), Goalkeeper was still in the process of full implementation in 2017. This delay (owing in part to bureaucratic changes, but also national sensitivities) has adversely affected staff recruitment, as the systems used by EU member states are heterogeneous and many of them present some gaps (i.e. the selection of personnel with limited specific competences or with weak language skills), with knock-on consequences for the work of the missions. The full implementation of the Goalkeeper system could considerably facilitate the civilian capability development process, provided that it is duly supported by member states. DL 2.1 also suggested that Germany and Sweden represent positive models for other member states and for EU standardisation in this area.

The issue of staff recruitment/selection was also highlighted by DL 3.2, which found that the SECPOL.2 division of the EEAS (responsible for conflict prevention and mediation) and the Commission's DEVCO unit B.7 were not adequately resourced in terms of personnel (including their expertise and their access to high-level decision-making), which could inhibit the EU's capacity to prevent important conflicts as well as respond to urgent crises. This finding was echoed in the conclusions of DL 4.1, which identified a shortfall in the provision of well-trained staff by EU member states, especially on a short-notice basis of the kind necessary for rapid crisis response. Maintaining EU expert rosters up-to-date has proven difficult and a database containing of former mission staff does not exist. This deliverable also pointed to the need to get the Mission Support Platform established and strengthened. Without the full deployment of Goalkeeper, and without more extensive standing staff resources in this area, EU member states have to work even harder to coordinate their efforts when a deployment is necessary.

Recommendations

Fully implement Goalkeeper, standardise recruitment procedures for civilian personnel among member states and ensure that SECPOL.2 and DEVCO unit B.7 are adequately staffed with qualified personnel.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 3
- Lesson 31

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - ESDC
 - EUSR
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Personnel

Lesson 03: Training

Summary

The EU and its member states have made considerable investments in training personnel for undertaking various conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, involving the establishment of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and the New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management (ENTRi). ENTRi in particular has improved the training system for civilian personnel to be deployed in peace operations, in terms of standardisation and in addressing specific civilian tasks (i.e. ROL, SSR, DDR). However, EU-CIVCAP research reveals a number of areas of opportunity here.

Specifically, shortcomings were identified during both the pre-deployment and deployment phases of CSDP missions, involving training provided by the EU and its member states. DL 2.1 found that context-based training for personnel involved in CSDP missions is lacking, and that coordination with EU member states on specialised courses could be improved. This could involve greater consideration of various aspects of local ownership and a deeper understanding of the specific cultural and historical context. Synergies among civilian, military and police components also could be improved through joint practical exercises. Finally, de-briefing activities should be strengthened and training at the national level standardized.

Similarly, DL 4.1 found that pre-deployment training was not always sustainable in the context of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, and that more resources for the ESDC in general and specific projects in particular could help to address this shortfall especially now that the ENTRi initiative is coming to an end. This would include pre-deployment training as well as relevant specialist training to contracted staff.

All missions should have a specific budget allocated to pay for such in-mission training. Research in DL 3.2 supports this lesson in terms of identifying a need to reinforce and tailor the support provided to EUSRs and heads of Delegations in charge of carrying out dialogue in conflict-affected countries (e.g. mediation and analysis training, support staff) and by including conflict expertise in their job descriptions.

Training problems could also be addressed by raising awareness within EU institutions and EU member states of the possibilities provided by ICT in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, as determined by research summarised in DL 2.1 and DL 3.1. Timely and precise information is essential for supporting conflict prevention and peacebuilding goals and activities, while official EU documents maintain that the EU should try to prevent conflicts before their eruption, and, as such, early warning constitutes an essential tool. This could be especially beneficial during the conflict prevention phase (i.e., early warning and early response) in terms of providing training regarding: 1) familiarising staff involved in the early warning and conflict analysis cycle with the available tools; 2) the role of ICTs in generating, collecting, and sharing conflict-related data that might feed early warning systems; 3) a common understanding among policy-makers of what conflict prevention entails in practice; and 4) a common view of how the division of labour should be managed among various actors involved. These problems can be addressed in part through enhanced training activities, both at national level and EU level.

Recommendations

Enhance pre-deployment and in-mission training for mission staff and include conflict expertise in job descriptions for EU Delegations (e.g. conflict analysis, conflict prevention)..

Related Lessons

- Lesson 02: Staff recruitment and selection

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EC
 - EEAS
 - OSCE
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Resources

Lesson 04: Standing resources

Summary

EU capabilities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding are highly contingent on possessing adequate resources to carry out certain tasks, whether in the form of physical/material or ideational/conceptual resources (including ICT/data). Some of these resources also may be viewed as permanent or standing capacities largely under the control of EU institutions (i.e., standing resources), while others are compiled on a case-by-case basis through contributions by EU member states and/or contracts (i.e., mission resources). EU-CIVCAP research has already identified several areas of opportunity here, beginning with the issue of standing resources.

As noted in other lessons, DL 2.1 found a delay in the EU's implementation of the Goalkeeper system; if this issue is addressed it might help to improve the EU's pool of standing staff resources for conflict prevention tasks (among other things).

In addition, DL 2.1 also noted that the EU might benefit from integrating data generated by simple (i.e., mobile phones) and more complex (drones, satellites, etc.) technologies within its early warning system and from providing a common picture and understanding of a conflict-related situation among the various actors operating in the conflict prevention and peacebuilding realm, given ICT's function in generating, collecting, and sharing data. This finding was echoed by the research in DL 3.1 in two ways: 1) a need for the EU to reflect upon how new technologies such as ICT and Big Data could be added, in a sustainable manner, to the existing technological tools for early warning and conflict analysis; and 2) a need to assure that technological tools for early warning and conflict analysis are aligned with EU policies on conflict prevention and vice versa. DL 3.1 also found, more generally, that the EU would

benefit from updating, mainstreaming, and coordinating various ICT/Big Data capacities and their use within different services dealing with conflict early warning and conflict analysis, in order to bridge gaps, improve interconnectivity, and avoid duplication. This would require investment, of course, but could help make the EU more cost-efficient in terms of deploying other resources when and where they would be most effective.

Similarly, DL 3.2 observed that the EEAS/Commission should make sure that SECPOL.2 and DEVCO B.7 are adequately resourced in terms of personnel and expertise, while any implementation plans for the EUGS should ensure that conflict prevention and peacebuilding is prioritised across all thematic areas and adequately resourced.

Finally, DL 4.1 found that funding for conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities could be moved from the operational CFSP budget to the administrative budget of the EEAS as necessary (such as to improve mission support services), while the EU should attempt to devise some form of standing civilian capacities (including administrative staff) for rapid deployment and its support, which would be especially useful during the early warning/conflict prevention/crisis response stages of a conflict. DL 4.1 also notes that various forms of this model have been used with success by the UN and the OSCE.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 02: Staff recruitment and selection
- Lesson 09: Integrating new technologies I – Imagery & analysis
- Lesson 10: Integrating new technologies II – Support & ICTs

Recommendations

Make better use of ICT/data in conflict prevention activities and use/enhance standing CFSP budgetary resources more effectively..

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EC
 - EEAS
 - OSCE
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Resources
 - Technology

Lesson 05: Mission support

Summary

Although the EU has a wide range of both short-term and long-term approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, involving many different policy tools under the more general rubric of the 'Integrated Approach', it still relies fairly heavily on a mission-oriented response framework, using the CSDP in particular. As most of these missions (particularly the larger ones) are resourced on a case-by-case basis by a combination of EU institutions, EU member states, and private contractors, there is considerable room for improvement in terms of providing adequate staff and equipment, as well as ensuring that every mission is working as a coherent entity in order to carry out various conflict prevention and peacebuilding related tasks.

DL 3.2 for example found that the EU could develop further its capacities for preventive diplomacy in situations at risk of escalating into conflict. This could include for example reinforcing and tailoring the support provided to EUSRs and heads of Delegations in charge of carrying out dialogue in conflict-affected countries (e.g. mediation and analysis training, support staff) and by including conflict expertise in their job descriptions (for example, conflict analysis, preventative diplomacy, mediation and dialogue). Such measures could apply to both short-term CSDP missions and long-term dialogue/state-building efforts on the part of the EU.

Similarly, DL 4.1 found that although the EU has made major advances in terms of equipment, mission support, procurement procedures, and the establishment of the CSDP warehouse, the 'key shortfall' has been in the area of mission support. The recent agreement to establish a Mission Support Platform is helpful in this respect. Paid for by the missions collectively, this Platform will lead to the centralisation of support functions in Brussels and allow the EU to retain key expertise once a mission winds down. However, the proposed Mission Support Platform still does not live up to the EU's ambitions for conflict prevention and peacebuilding; nor do the EU's efforts as a whole bring it closer to the conflict prevention and peacebuilding practices employed by the UN and the OSCE. Ideally, according to DL 4.1, the Mission Support Platform should clear the field missions from most administrative procedures, but also provide capacity when launching new missions. This clearly requires more than, say, one logistical expert in Brussels, meaning that the Platform needs to be not just established as quickly as possible, but also strengthened.

Finally, and in addition to its more general recommendation about fully implementing Goalkeeper, DL 2.1 noted that mission resources/support could be enhanced (along with standing resources) if the EU could more effectively integrate data by ICTs within its early warning system. This would help EU staff in Brussels and in host countries gain a better understanding of conflict dynamics in general and identify countries at risk of conflict in particular, a finding echoed by DL 3.1.

Recommendations

Provide more conflict prevention support to EU Delegations, make better use of ICT/data, and expand the Mission Support Platform by increasing the number of personnel allocated to it.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 02: Staff recruitment and selection

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EUSR
 - OSCE
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
 - Short-long term approaches
- Topics:
 - Resources

Lesson 06: Internal co-ordination

Summary

One of the key challenges for the EU's development of an integrated approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding involves the fact that no central body within the EU itself has complete authority over this policy domain. Instead, it is decentralised and requires extensive coordination among a range of stakeholders, in Brussels and beyond. In addition, a number of stakeholders in the EU (e.g. Commission, EEAS) have developed their own capacities for related tasks, such as conflict analysis and crisis management, that may undermine the EU's coherence, and thus effectiveness, if they fail to communicate and/or work at cross-purposes.

Accordingly, this need for greater internal coordination was identified by three research outputs produced by EU-CIVCAP. For example, DL 2.1 noted that internal coherence and coordination are core organisational goals of the EU, especially in the areas of equipment, staff training, and logistics. Yet DL 2.1 found that various aspects of conflict prevention and peacebuilding (such as civilian, military, and intelligence aspects) were lacking in their overall coherence and exhibited special problems regarding the tasks of early warning and coordination between EU and national institutions.

Likewise, in the realm of technological shortcomings, DL 3.1 found that the EU was not coordinating very well the use of various technologies in terms of early warning and conflict analysis. This lack of coordination also prevented the EU from effectively bridging the early warning-response gap, limited the potential for interconnectivity between various stakeholders and their activities, and resulted in some degree of duplication of resources and effort.

DL 3.2 also identified a coordination problem between the EEAS/Commission regarding their responsibility to provide coherent and consistent leadership within and across the EU's external action machinery, and particularly, in relation to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Further, and in addition to adequate standing resources and mission support resources, the relevant EEAS/Commission stakeholders (PRISM and DEVCO B.7) also need to have access to high-level decision-making so that the EU coordinates its efforts to prevent important conflicts as well as respond to urgent crises.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 04: Standing resources
- Lesson 05: Mission support

Recommendations

Strengthen civilian/military/intelligence synergies, with specific reference to early warning between EU & national institutions. Update, mainstream, and coordinate various technological capacities and their use within different services dealing with conflict early warning and conflict analysis. Enhance coordination over staff selection/training among relevant ministries of EU member states.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.3 Report on EU comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EC
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
 - Civil-military coordination
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Technology

Lesson 07: Concepts

Summary

EU strategies for various aspects of conflict prevention and peacebuilding (including the EU Global Strategy), whether in functional/technical or geographic terms, must be supported by specific concepts in order to implement them. In other words, clear and consistent EU concepts/doctrines provide specific guidance about how the EU expects to achieve its strategic goals regarding certain external conflict prevention and peacebuilding challenges. Although the EU has made great progress in producing various concept and guidelines papers since the late 1990s, there is still some room for improvement here.

For example, DL 2.1 notes the EU needs to ensure a common understanding of various situations/challenges regarding conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It also found that the use of ICT resources for early warning in particular was not being leveraged very effectively. Therefore a concept paper (or similar document) to raise awareness across the EU might be useful toward these ends.

Echoing this point, DL 3.1 found that there is a need for the EU to reflect upon how new technologies such as ICT and Big Data could be added, in a sustainable manner, to the existing technological tools for early warning and conflict analysis. In addition to improving material resources/staffing in this area, a concept paper or similar document might help the EU make better use of new technologies. This would also help to assure that technological tools for early warning and conflict analysis are aligned closely with EU policies on conflict prevention and vice versa.

Similarly, DL 3.2 concluded that EU should clarify how it aims to promote conflict prevention; more specifically, the EEAS/Commission could be more effective in terms of mainstreaming the EU's view of conflict prevention across different bureaus, which might require clearer concepts/guidelines as well as training. Within the EEAS/Commission, they need to ensure that PRISM and DEVCO B.7 continue to provide leadership, technical support, and expertise within the EEAS, DG DEVCO and across the EU's external action machinery, which also points to clearer and consistent concepts/guidelines in this area.

Finally, DL 4.1 noted the EU's Warehouse 2.0 concept to enhance mission support, but also noted that individual missions still have primary responsibility over procuring resources. The newly established permanent Mission Support Platform might help in this regard, although it is likely to be small (at least at first) relative to UN mission support resources.

Recommendations

With new concept/guideline papers as well as training, raise awareness and share expertise regarding EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding goals in general as well as the specific capabilities provided by ICT/Big Data resources and by EU stakeholders (PRISM and DEVCO B.7). Enhance the conceptual as well as material/staffing basis of the EU's Warehouse 2.0 and Mission Support Platform concepts.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 03: Training
- Lesson 05: Mission support

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EC
 - EEAS
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Technology

Lesson 08: Procedures & rules

Summary

As a weakly institutionalised and decentralised policy domain with many stakeholders in the EU, in EU member states, and in host countries, EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts require extensive and ongoing coordination across a number of stakeholders. Although general strategies and concepts/doctrines can be helpful in this regard, and although the EU has already devised specific procedures through the CFSP/CSDP and related policy tools, some EU-CIVCAP research outputs also identified more specific needs regarding how stakeholders should carry out their tasks, or in other words clearer procedures/rules.

DL 2.1: Consistent with other lessons regarding strategies, concepts/guidelines, and general coordination, the EU also needs to ensure that it is effectively generating, collecting, and sharing data regarding conflict prevention and peacebuilding, whether through the use of ICT/Big Data or other resources. Specific procedures/rules in this realm, including how to integrate data across the EU, would be helpful in this regard, especially in the area of early warning.

DL 3.1 makes a similar point regarding the mainstreaming of new technologies for early warning and conflict analysis. This objective could be aided by general concepts/guidelines and new training courses but also by more specific procedures/rules about the EU's adoption, diffusion, and use of new technologies by various stakeholders. This also could involve the regular review of such technologies in terms of their value-added but also other factors (such as privacy, security, cost-effectiveness, etc.).

Taking a more general perspective, DL 3.2 pointed out that, in addition to clarifying, mainstreaming, and prioritising EU conflict prevention through concepts/guidelines, three specific activities (conflict analysis, early warning, and mediation) were very important as well, and these could be enhanced through the development of clearer procedures/rules across relevant EU stakeholders. EU working procedures should also ensure that time is available for personnel to generate and implement conflict analysis across the EU's external actions, supported by PRISM and DEVCO B.7.

Finally, DL 4.1 analysed the potential for 'virtual' standing civilian capacities, which requires not only the availability of trained personnel but also much clearer procedures so that EU missions can quickly draw upon staff from the Commission, the EEAS/CPCC/CMPD, and EU member states (as well as former mission staff). This could include the creation of a database for monitoring/deploying such staff.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Lesson 04: Standing resources
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 07: Concepts

Recommendations

Develop more specific EU procedures/rules in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding regarding ICT/Big Data usage, the adoption of new technologies, conflict analysis, early warning, mediation, and a virtual standing capacity of mission staff. This also extends to general staff working procedures and the development of specific implementation plans for the EUGS.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - CMPD
 - CPCC
 - EC
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Technology

Lesson 09: Integrating new technologies I – Imagery & analysis

Summary

One of the critical components of a capability analysis of the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts involves the role of new technologies. The fast pace of technological change and the increasingly wide range of technologies useful for civilian conflict prevention applications are very relevant to the EU-CIVCAP research agenda. In fact, most EU-CIVCAP deliverables either touch upon or directly address these issues, and technological factors can be found in other general lessons generated from the very beginning of this project. DL 2.1, for example, notes the importance of ICT/Big Data for early warning/conflict analysis, while DL 3.2 refers to a need to provide technical support across the EU external action machinery; these technology-related lessons identified appear elsewhere in this database (i.e., standing resources, mission support, training, coordination, concepts, and procedures).

However, some deliverables have also generated more specific lessons regarding technological capabilities. Many of these appeared within DL 3.1, in terms of raising awareness of new technologies through training, concepts, and procedures, as well as integrating various types of data/intelligence within the EU's early warning system. DL 3.1 also focuses specifically on the changing capabilities of earth observation geospatial information, ICT/Big Data, analytical tools, and the specific role of the EU Satellite Centre, which should improve imagery-related intelligence to the EEAS, PSC, and other stakeholders. Even so, a critical lesson here is that the EU still needs to balance the opportunities and limits/risks of these technologies and attempt to address those limits/risks using other capabilities (technological or otherwise) at its disposal.

For example, imagery-related shortcomings include: the fact that such technologies can detect only physical signs of change to a situation; the need for expert processing (whether human or automated) of imagery data to make it useful; the need for secure methods of communication to share the data; the potential for unintended or adverse consequences of certain technologies (such as intrusive surveillance drones); the need to comply with various regulatory authorities; and the vulnerability of these technologies to various countermeasures, such as jamming and physical attacks.

Similarly, complex analytical tools such as the Global Conflict Risk Index and the European Media Monitor are 'passive' instruments that rely on the principle of 'data in, data out.' This means that they might be subject to bias or distortion because the original source data are subject to various types of errors. Thus, as with imagery analysis, the need for a human element to interpret such data sources before harmful errors spread across the EU's institutional machinery becomes increasingly critical.

Recommendations

In addition to raising general awareness of and exploiting opportunities regarding new technologies, various EU stakeholders need to manage the specific technical limits and risks regarding the use of geospatial information, drones, social media, and other imagery, early warning, and conflict analysis tools.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 03: Training
- Lesson 04: Standing resources
- Lesson 05: Mission support
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 07: Concepts
- Lesson 08: Procedures & rules

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EEAS
 - EUSC
 - PSC
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Technology

Lesson 10: Integrating new technologies II – Support & ICTs

Summary

One of the critical components of a capability analysis of the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts involves the role of new technologies. The fast pace of technological change and the increasingly wide range of technologies useful for civilian conflict prevention applications are very relevant to the EU-CIVCAP research agenda. In fact, most EU-CIVCAP deliverables either touch upon or directly address these issues, and technological factors can be found in other general lessons generated from the very beginning of this project. DL 2.1, for example, notes the importance of ICT/Big Data for early warning/conflict analysis, while DL 3.2 refers to a need to provide technical support across the EU external action machinery; these technology-related lessons identified appear elsewhere in this database (i.e., standing resources, mission support, training, coordination, concepts, and procedures).

However, some deliverables have also generated more specific lessons regarding technological capabilities. During the first phase of EU-CIVCAP (2016) many of these appeared within DL 3.1, in terms of raising awareness of new technologies through training, concepts, and procedures, as well as integrating various types of data/intelligence within the EU's early warning system. DL 3.1 also focuses specifically on the changing capabilities of earth observation geospatial information, ICT/Big Data, analytical tools, and the specific role of the EU Satellite Centre, which should improve imagery-related intelligence to the EEAS, PSC, and other stakeholders. Even so, a critical lesson here is that the EU still needs to balance the opportunities and limits/risks of these technologies and attempt to address those limits/risks using other capabilities (technological or otherwise) at its disposal.

For example, the wide scope of the EU makes it difficult to manage and support technological resources in the service of common goals, while the results from capability development projects do not always lead to new tools and applications. The EU's contract rules also may make it difficult to encourage the participation by outside stakeholders, such as Small & Medium Enterprises.

In the realm of ICTs, the EU must cope with an increasingly vast amount of data, from an increasingly wide range of sources. These types of data also tend to be unstructured and, as with imagery/social media analysis, this in turn requires greater investment in interpretative resources, whether automated and/or human, to make sense of it all. The EU may also need to take steps to bridge the 'digital divide' among various stakeholders in the EU and in host countries in order to maximise the benefits and limit the risks (including the risk of exclusion) regarding the adoption of new technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 03: Training
- Lesson 04: Standing resources
- Lesson 05: Mission support
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 07: Concepts
- Lesson 08: Procedures & rules
- Lesson 09: Integrating new technologies I – Imagery & analysis

Recommendations

In addition to raising general awareness of and exploiting opportunities regarding new technologies, various EU stakeholders need to consider how to enhance broad support for technological integration across the EU as well as the possible adoption of new software for ICT data analysis/organisation/fusion.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EEAS
 - EUSC
 - PSC
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Technology

Lesson 11: Partnerships I – Resources

Summary

The EU has developed complex and productive partnerships with a range of outside actors, whether international organisations (IOs), third states, and civil society groups. Such partners are also mentioned in many EU strategies and concepts related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding as part of the EU's broader commitment to 'effective multilateralism' (see DL 2.1). One virtue of such partnerships is that they allow the EU to draw upon the expertise and, in some cases, the resources of like-minded actors in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. A second virtue, but also challenge, is the need for all outside actors in a host country to avoid working at cross-purposes (at a minimum) and to coordinate their activities to enhance their effectiveness (at a maximum); this issue of coordination will be examined.

Several EU-CIVCAP outputs mention in various ways the important role of partners; DL 2.1, DL 3.2, DL 3.5, Report on the EU's support to the conflict prevention work of other actors DL 4.1, DL 4.2, and DL 6.1 in particular provide various assessments of their capabilities, as well as the potential for further resource-sharing among these actors. For example, DL 2.1, DL 3.2, and DL 6.1 note the critical role of local civil society partners in implementing various conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related programmes, which can contribute to a sense of local ownership and 'buy in'. This can be especially critical to make longer-term capacity-building programmes more effective and sustainable. External partners are also involved in Europe's New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management. However, there is also a clear need to strengthen existing partnerships in this area and clarify how the EU defines and chooses its 'local' partners, as well as develop new ones as the EU increases its global conflict prevention and peacebuilding ambitions.

In addition, and while resource exchanges have been positive in the case studies assessed by DL 4.2 (Kosovo, Mali, Armenia) and DL 6.1 (the Western Balkans and the Horn of Africa), there is room for improvement. The EU for example does make staff contributions to other IOs for the purposes of conflict prevention and peacebuilding and related tasks; however these contributions are made by EU member states and this approach may limit the EU's leverage in such cases. Similarly, the EU's overall approach to resource exchanges (staff and otherwise) and capacity-building often does not seem to be driven by a broader political or strategic perspective to help it gain more influence in the host countries where such efforts occur. The EU has considerable financial weight in particular in many host countries, yet the divided control of such resources (through the EEAS and the Commission in particular) depending on their budgetary sources can undermine the EU's pursuit of a more coherent and strategic approach.

Finally, the EU should be aware of certain risks unintended consequences involved in exchanging/sharing resources with certain actors, such as failing to match the spending levels of other donors in a major crisis or, conversely, generating feelings of resentment when providing resources (such as salaries) that greatly exceed the capacities of other donors seeking to help.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 03: Training
- Lesson 12: Partnerships II – Coordination
- Lesson 13: Local capacity-building I – General points

Recommendations

Develop a clear concept regarding the identification of external and local partners, and link it more directly to the EU's overall strategic approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. This should include a risk assessment about partnerships.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 3.5 Report on the EU's support to the conflict prevention work of other actors
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE
- DL 4.2 Partners in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: How the EU, UN and OSCE exchange civilian capabilities in Kosovo, Mali and Armenia
- DL 6.1 Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Africa
 - Armenia
 - Balkans
 - Kosovo
 - Mali
- Institutions:
 - EC, EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Resources

Lesson 12: Partnerships II – Coordination

Summary

Following on from the issue of resource-sharing between the EU and its partners, there is also a need to improve a full range of coordination mechanisms where these actors share responsibilities in a host country. In some cases the EU has had to coordinate its takeovers of responsibilities from the UN, NATO, and the OSCE; in other cases the EU had to help fill a security gap until UN forces could arrive in the host country, and then coordinate a handover back to UN forces once they arrived. In this sense the EU can be seen as a crucial support mechanism for UN (and AU) operations in Africa in particular, with potential for other theatres.

Based on the findings of DL 2.1, DL 3.2, DL 4.1, DL 4.2, and DL 6.1, one critical lesson from these activities is that various donors like the EU and the UN have not just different resources/capabilities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding; they also may have different definitions and concepts regarding conflict, which can inhibit effective coordination. The EU therefore should attempt to improve its understanding of how its major partners prioritise their own conflict prevention and peacebuilding actions, as well as handle central issues like early-warning, capacity-building, local ownership, civilian-military coordination, and legitimacy. Greater understanding and, hopefully, the improved coordination that could result from it might inspire a more strategic approach to certain countries/regions (such as the Horn of Africa) where there is sustained interest on the part of several major donors, or in certain thematic areas regarding shared problems, such as the seven strategic areas for EU-NATO cooperation agreed at Warsaw (2016).

Also, the specific procedures of coordination for EU and its partners, whether formal or informal, have not always worked as desired depending on the host country and EU partner(s) involved; regularly evaluating and enhancing such measures along the entire chain of command for the EU and its partners should be a priority in all ongoing conflict prevention and peacebuilding missions (including via learning/lessons). The focus on enhancing the utility of informal methods could be very important as the tendency in the literature is to focus more on formal arrangements agreed among headquarters of IOs (see DL 4.2), and such formal methods (such as Berlin Plus between the EU and NATO) are not always effective. The EU should also consider how the presence of multiple donors (whether third states or IOs) in particular host country might even undermine or disrupt any shared conflict prevention and peacebuilding objectives, as some projects are implemented in countries/regions facing a range of political competitors to the EU (and other donors). This would include forecasting and mitigating the problems raised by alternative models of conflict prevention and peacebuilding and local capacity-building promoted by other donors, such as Russia, Turkey, and the United States.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Recommendations

Strengthen coordination mechanisms between the EU and its major partners regarding not just the implementation but also the concepts/strategies, planning, and evaluation of shared conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. These should include formal and informal methods, and should always consider the potential negative impact of working with certain partners and other outside donors.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE
- DL 4.2 Partners in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: How the EU, UN and OSCE exchange civilian capabilities in Kosovo, Mali and Armenia
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation
- DL 6.1 Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Horn of Africa
- Institutions:
 - AU, NATO, OSCE, UN
- Policy phases:
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Civil-military coordination
 - Local ownership
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Strategy

Lesson 13: Local capacity-building I – General points

Summary

Local (i.e., host country) capacity-building (CB) is now a central part of the EU's longer-term approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. This is a natural progression from earlier, but often fairly small scale, CSDP missions that pursued similar tasks (i.e., monitoring, mentoring, and advising; security sector reform; rule of law; and training). In some cases, such as the Horn of Africa, such efforts are part of a major, broader regional approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related problems; in other cases, such as EU SSR Guinea-Bissau, the effort is isolated and minor. Following on from this wide difference in scale of effort, a variation in CB outcomes is also evident when examining specific cases, as noted in DL 6.1 in particular. These findings suggest several important lessons regarding this aspect of the EU's approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding and related tasks.

One is that the success of CB is highly contingent on various elements of the local context. The local context is the 'raw material' targeted for change by CB programmes of the EU and other stakeholders. Therefore, such outside stakeholders must gain as much local knowledge as possible when planning and implementing such programmes, which includes engaging meaningfully with interlocutors (and not just local elites) to determine the nature and scope of the challenge at hand. Local actors should be central to the planning, implementation and evaluation of EU projects and activities, as well as those of EU partners engaged in CB in the host country (see DL 4.2 on this point).

Following on from this point, CB that is not sensitive to local needs and based on in-depth fact-finding or exploratory missions (including pilot projects with local experts) are not likely to succeed. This 'fit for purpose' approach should be the norm rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. This lesson also extends to the training of EU personnel who will serve in the host country, which would include local knowledge and language training where possible; the EU should also give due consideration to the possibility of extending the duration of deployments (also see DL 2.1 on staffing/training issues).

Fact-finding missions should also help to match the external resources required to achieve the scale of change necessary for CB to succeed. If such programmes are driven (or hampered) by resource limitations, which is often the case, then the ambition of donor programmes should not exceed the resources available to support them (especially material resources, which are valued more highly). Such expectations-management by the EU could also help to secure local ownership and therefore enhance the legitimacy of programmes once they succeed in achieving their aims. Therefore feasibility and impact assessments, including assessments of potential winners and losers of reform, should be carried out before and after the deployment of EU missions and operations, both by internal and external evaluators.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 03: Training

Recommendations

Identify and involve local actors as early as possible in the planning of conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks (including the fact-finding process). Modify their roles as necessary during the implementation stage to meet local needs while also managing expectations about the resources the EU can provide to meet those needs.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.5 Report on EU support to work of others on conflict prevention
- DL 4.2 Partners in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: How the EU, UN and OSCE exchange civilian capabilities in Kosovo, Mali and Armenia
- DL 6.1 Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building
- DL 6.3 Report on best practices in EU local capacity-building

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Africa
 - Guinea-Bissau
- Institutions:
 - AU
 - EC
 - EEAS
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - Personnel

Lesson 14: Local capacity-building II – Effectiveness and local ownership

Summary

Local capacity-building (CB) programmes have been pursued by the EU in various settings, but as with the CFSP/CSDP more generally, most attention has been directed towards the Balkans and sub-Saharan Africa (including the Horn of Africa). These efforts provide several important lessons regarding the potential and limits of this approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as detailed in DL 6.1 specifically, which examines their effectiveness, sustainability, local ownership, and legitimacy.

In terms of effectiveness, for example, one critical area of opportunity is the need for the EU to develop more robust and consistent measures of whether various CB programmes actually produce the desired results, and not just in narrow terms of fulfilling their mandates. This is especially difficult, but still important, in complex sectors (like maritime security) and in terms of a more holistic (i.e., comprehensive) approach that recognises how the reform of one sector could be highly dependent on other sectors. The existence of multiple donors/EU partners, as in the Horn of Africa, as well as multiple local owners/stakeholders, only intensifies this need for a more holistic, coordinated approach to make sure they are not working at cross-purposes.

Sustainability can also be framed as part of effectiveness, if CB programmes are meant to reduce the reliance of host countries on donors and become self-sustaining at some point. Yet this outcome is highly contingent on the local capacity already present in the host country, which may be too limited to benefit from short-term or sector-specific CB programmes. Every CB project therefore needs a critical mass of local, adequately trained and motivated staff who can be empowered to take over once the donor leaves.

Under such circumstances, it is possible to achieve fairly sustainable results, as with the Peace Support Operations Training Centre in Bosnia.

Finally, both sustainability and effectiveness are partly contingent on the degree of local ownership, which in turn also impacts upon the legitimacy of CB programmes offered by outside donors. As DL 6.1 notes, however, defining who is 'local' and what 'ownership' actually means in terms of rights and responsibilities can be very sensitive issues. The same holds true of defining 'legitimacy': certain host government officials (i.e., the 'entry points' discussed in DL 6.1) may welcome CB programmes, but do they have the wider support of the public as well, so that legitimacy is 'thick' rather than 'thin' or superficial? These problems especially require more involvement by 'locals' in planning CB programmes, and more in terms of what host countries actually require rather than what donors are willing and able to offer. Instead, a 'supply-driven' approach was in evidence both in Africa and (to a lesser extent) the Balkans, which may have limited the success of these programmes in terms of their effectiveness, sustainability, local ownership, and legitimacy. Therefore the strict process of devising CB programmes within the EU before 'offering' them to host countries (as in the case of EUCAP Nestor for example) may need to be seriously reconsidered, if the EU really intends to enhance the local ownership and legitimacy of such efforts.

Recommendations

Develop a clear concept regarding the evaluation of various conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks in terms of their effectiveness (short and long-term). This concept should incorporate and define other key parameters such as sustainability, local ownership, and legitimacy, as well as the overall cost-effectiveness of specific conflict prevention and peacebuilding actions.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 02: Staff recruitment and selection

Related Deliverables

- DL 3.5 Report on EU support to work of others on conflict prevention
- DL 6.1 Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building
- DL 6.3 Report on best practices in EU local capacity-building

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Africa
 - Balkans
- Institutions:
 - N/A
- Policy phases:
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - Personnel

Lesson 15: Learning

Summary

The emergence of a learning culture is a major development in the evolution of the CSDP and of conflict prevention and peacebuilding more generally, as compared to the period before 2003 (the launch of initial CSDP operations). This culture has been institutionalised throughout the EU's civilian and military domains for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and also feeds into the training programmes and materials discussed in other lessons. It also involves the generation of lessons based on actual operational experiences, as reported in the earlier EUCONRES research programme (2008-13). Learning processes and lessons identified also inform the development of best practices and relationships with other organisations, as well as the production of broad EU strategies and more specific EU concepts/guidelines for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Overall, these learning processes are intended to help enhance the effectiveness of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities in host countries as well as (potentially) inspire reforms to the EU's general approach to conflict resolution.

As always, however, there is room for improvement in this realm, as found by several EU-CIVCAP research outputs. For example, early warning followed by quick preventative action is a key part of the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategy, yet most EU-CIVCAP outputs have found that the EU is still deficient in this area. The EU, therefore, needs to enhance the discovery of lessons identified from outbreaks of previous conflicts (whether the EU participated or not) and incorporate these lessons into its early warning/conflict analysis systems (see DL 2.1 and DL 3.2 in particular on this point).

DL 3.2 also noted that both the EEAS and the Commission could enhance their methods of capturing lessons identified from past EU experiences in conflict zones, which could include a more effective knowledge management system to strengthen the EU's the evidence base for future conflict prevention work.

A related lesson derived from EU-CIVCAP and EUCONRES research involves a need to ensure that the EU is following its own rules regarding the production and dissemination of lessons. This would involve the appointment of learning officers for most if not all CSDP/conflict prevention and peacebuilding missions, the production of periodic lessons identified reports according to a fixed schedule, and the release/dissemination of the lessons beyond their inclusion in a database or similar knowledge management system (including release to important EU partners, like the UN and AU; see DL 4.1). Although these learning mechanisms and processes have been in development in the EU for over ten years, various EU stakeholders still are not consistent in following them. This may require some form of compliance-monitoring and/or auditing in the realm of lessons/learning, beyond the informal methods that already exist.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Lesson 03: Training
- Lesson 11: Partnerships I – Resources
- Lesson 12: Partnerships II – Coordination

Recommendations

Link the EU's specific learning processes to the evolution of its more general approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding (see other lessons in this database) in terms of early warning and conflict analysis. This should include enhancing the monitoring of learning processes and pursuing greater synergies, if not complete harmonisation, between the learning activities conducted by all EU actors involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, particularly the EEAS and the Commission.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE
- DL 7.4 Institutional Learning and Lessons Identified in EU Civilian Conflict Prevention: A framework for analysis

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - AU
 - EC
 - EEAS
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - N/A
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Resources

Lesson 16: CSDP missions I – Integrating conflict analysis

Summary

Several EU-CIVCAP outputs have noted the varying approaches to, and definitions of, key terms such as conflict, prevention/early warning, local ownership, and so on; these problems directly inspired Lesson Identified 7 on 'concepts'. This challenge also applies to the use of CSDP missions for the purposes of conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks, as discussed in detail on the 'Report on integrating conflict prevention in CSDP', as part of DL 3.3, which relied in part on original survey data to investigate this issue.

Specifically, DL 3.3 notes that in addition to other problems already cited in previous Lessons Identified, CSDP in particular has not been very useful as a conflict prevention tool. This problem is traceable to not only a lack of resources and political differences among EU member states; it also stems from what the authors of this report call the 'human factor': differing interpretations about what 'conflict prevention' involves, and a corresponding gap between conflict prevention and peacebuilding policy and practice owing in part to those differing interpretations. These different interpretations are apparent across a range of EU actors/partners and can involve the time frame of the interventions (i.e., short versus long-term), the targets of the interventions (i.e., state versus societal stakeholder), the end goals of the interventions, and other factors.

These different interpretations also stem from a range of other differences among actors/stakeholders involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, based on psychological, sociological, historical, and national/cultural factors. Such factors help determine how we interpret critical terms such as 'peace', 'security' and 'violence,' and then how the EU acts upon those interpretations, e.g. when deciding about the need for a CSDP mission involving conflict prevention and peacebuilding

tasks. Although such missions may be backed by a support network of like-minded professionals in Brussels, who may even share some elements of an esprit de corps or even an EU strategic culture, they are typically staffed at the operational or field level on a case-by-case basis by individuals with highly varied professional backgrounds, and those mission staff in turn may be susceptible to these differences of interpretation regarding their roles and objectives.

Drawing attention to, and attempting to explain, such differences, is a necessary initial step in attempting to mitigate their effects when debating a new CSDP mission for the purposes of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Raising overall awareness of the issue through the use of surveys, staff selection methods, feedback/learning tools, and other measures should become a regular part of the EU's approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Further, this should be done on a regular basis to help facilitate a common understanding of conflict dynamics. However, recognition of this problem must be followed up by changes to other elements of the CSDP decision-making process, as will be discussed in Lesson Identified 17.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 02: Staff recruitment and selection

Recommendations

Integrate a more holistic approach to conflict analysis in the context of deploying civilian CSDP missions for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks; this approach would address various aspects of a specific conflict such as cause-effect dynamics (including root causes), stakeholders, and objectives in the host country and for the EU as a global actor (i.e., the EU's own political interest in becoming involved in a specific conflict).

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis
- DL 3.2 The EU's Capabilities for Conflict Prevention
- DL 4.1 Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Strategy

Lesson 17: CSDP missions II – Planning & training

Summary

Following on from the issue of harmonising differences of interpretation regarding various aspects of conflict analysis (Lesson Identified 16), the EU also needs to link that general effort with the more specific decision-making, planning process, and training required to staff and launch a new CSDP mission. A key challenge here is that like other aspects of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, CSDP planning & training can involve a range of actors in Brussels (particularly within the Commission and the EEAS) and in EU member states depending on the nature of the mission. Further, there is a distinct difference between military and civilian CSDP actions. If the EU hopes to close the civilian-military gap through the use of CSDP actions and other tools then it will have to find a way to streamline the overall planning process.

DL 3.3 in particular highlighted the importance of accurate conflict analysis as a factor in the success of civilian CSDP efforts, and notes that the planning process for civilian missions should take into consideration a deeper approach to such an analysis. This is especially critical when outlining the specific mandate and objectives of a new CSDP mission in terms of what specific types and sources of violence should be targeted by the mission in order to help prevent or resolve the conflict. In addition, the fact that such missions are often debated in response to a crisis means that the EU could help pave the way towards reaching an agreement more quickly by encouraging such reflection on the part of CSDP decision-makers.

Similarly, after the launch of a new CSDP mission, pre-deployment briefings and ongoing in-mission training could be useful to help reduce biases and harmonise the views of various staff regarding not just their tasks (i.e., what they do) but also the reasoning behind those tasks (i.e., the how and why of a particular conflict). This should involve intensive engagement with a range of stakeholders in the host country (public/private; state/societal) and with a view towards a shared understanding of the root causes of a particular conflict. This approach, in turn, should help facilitate a common view regarding whether a specific CSDP mission has in fact prevented or resolved a conflict in the long-term, as opposed to simply suppressing it temporarily and/or shifting its locus away from the geographic deployment area of the mission. This is especially critical as a 'mission' approach to the CSDP typically means that such missions should come to end at some point, although some CSDP missions have in fact been deployed for many years (as in the Balkans for example). All of these efforts towards cohesion, finally, may be aided by the adoption of a more open and cooperative 'participatory analysis workshop approach' to planning, staffing, and training, as reflected in the EU's People's Peacemaking Perspectives project.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 03: Training
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 16: CSDP missions I – Integrating conflict analysis

Recommendations

The planning, staffing, and training processes for civilian CSDP missions should be explicit about exactly which dynamic and risk of violence is being targeted by the mission activities and how different conflict stakeholders will position themselves in relation to the mission; this should also involve a critical reflection on how and why the mission activities will be successful in overcoming the obstacles of the context in order to transform that dynamic or risk.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.3 Reports on integrating conflict prevention in CSDP, EU trade policy and EU development policy

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Balkans
- Institutions:
 - EC
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Civil-military coordination
 - Local ownership
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Personnel

Lesson 18: EU development aid and trade

Summary

A central feature of the EU's comprehensive, or integrated, approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding involves the use of a full range of foreign policy tools. Here the EU has a distinct 'value-added' relative to many other international organisations, as it can draw upon a number of instruments ranging from diplomatic to economic measures (trade and aid), and from light police/military power to heavy military power. With its status as the world's largest development aid provider, and with 141 EU delegations around the world, the EU has a vast network of aid delivery mechanisms that could be deployed in the service of conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. The EU also hopes to enhance the political and economic development of many host countries where it operates, as part of its broader, long-term approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in general and conflict prevention in particular. The EU's own experience in promoting reform in its own member states as part of their accession process also helps inspire this effort, which in turn gives the Commission a key role to play in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding given its responsibility for EU trade/development policy.

However, as most conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts take place in less-developed countries, some of which are linked to the EU through other policy instruments (such as the European Neighbourhood Policy), and which suffer from many other problems beyond conflict, it is worth investigating whether there is room for improvement here.

DL 3.3 examined this question in detail and found that despite the mention of 'conflict' in various EU trade/aid policy statements, there was little consistency in terms of definitions regarding the terminology associated with conflict and conflict prevention, a finding very similar to those in other Lessons Identified regarding concepts, procedures, and conflict analysis (Lessons 7, 8 and 16). This problem in turn may affect the perceptions and behaviour of various conflict stakeholders in host countries where the EU engages in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and trade/development activities.

In addition, DL 3.3 framed this problem in terms of a need for more 'due diligence' (i.e., research & analysis) on the part of EU actors involved in these activities, for two general reasons: 1) to minimise the potential for harm where the EU engages in conflict prevention and economic development activities; and 2) to maximise the EU's responsible use of its resources in such a way that would enhance their overall effectiveness. The critical point when engaging in such efforts is to not just harmonise the EU's terminology involving the conceptual links between conflict, aid/trade, and development, but also to ensure that those concepts are clearly reflected in terms of the EU's operational efforts in host countries. These efforts, in turn, can vary depending on the specific circumstances on the ground, which would be investigated in terms of due diligence through the use of conflict analysis, early-warning tools, fact-finding missions, and other measures.

Recommendations

In addition to harmonising its overall terminology regarding conflict and conflict analysis, the EU should consider developing a clear framework for due diligence regarding the link between its trade/aid policy and conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. Toward this end, a five-part checklist of key components for such a framework is suggested by DL 3.3 (p. 66).

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Lesson 07: Concepts
- Lesson 08: Procedures & rules
- Lesson 16: CSDP missions I – Integrating conflict analysis

Related Deliverables

- DL 3.3 Reports on integrating conflict prevention in CSDP, EU trade policy and EU development policy

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EC
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
 - Short-long term approaches
- Topics:
 - Resources

Lesson 19: Partnerships III – Exchanging capabilities

Summary

Following on from the previous Lesson Identified 11 (Partnerships I: Resources), which identified the importance of close working relationships between the EU and other actors in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, it is also possible to identify more specific lessons in this area based on evidence from specific case studies. DL 4.2 in particular examined the EU's experience with key partners (the UN and the OSCE) in several host countries: Kosovo, Mali, and Armenia. It focused on the issue of exchanging civilian resources for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks; such resources can involve funds, staff, and equipment but also non-physical resources such as diplomacy and political support. Such exchanges can also involve formal and informal methods, and the EU could consider using both channels rather than rely exclusively on one or the other.

DL 4.2 also found several areas where exchanges could be improved, beginning with a need for a joint strategic approach to crises in host countries where the EU works closely with other partners. Coordination with partners is most intensive at the operational/tactical level, yet the EU and its partners could benefit from a more holistic and integrative approach so that resources are maximised for effectiveness and the possibility of duplicated effort (or working at cross-purposes) is minimised. This lesson also clearly dovetails with Lesson Identified 1 (EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding). In addition, enhanced strategic coordination could help improve the negative perceptions of the EU as a security actor held by other partners; such perceptions were found in all three host country cases examined by DL 4.2.

A joint strategic approach to crises by the EU and its partners also might expand the range of possible resource exchanges between them, and therefore enhance the effectiveness of such measures (at a maximum) and reduce wasted efforts (at a minimum). For example, DL 4.2 found that exchanges typically take the form of financial resources and diplomatic/political support. The case of Mali, however, shows that there is some scope for the exchange of mission support structures, as occurred between the UN and the EU in this instance. Even in the realm of diplomatic support, the EU could make a greater effort to issue supporting statements regarding the work of its partners and therefore help enhance their status in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It should also take steps to reduce institutional fragmentation over the control of its own resources, across the EU and within specific bodies like the EEAS (see also Lesson Identified 6: Internal coordination).

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 16: CSDP missions I – Integrating conflict analysis

Recommendations

Consider developing a joint strategic approach where the EU works closely on conflict prevention and peacebuilding with other key partners; this should include expanding the realm of resource exchanges beyond those already considered, while using both formal and informal coordination channels at the same time. The EU also should attempt to manage the perceptions of it held by other actors, as far as possible, while enhancing its own internal coordination and control over mission resources and their exchange with outside partners.

Related Deliverables

- DL 4.2 Partners in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: How the EU, UN and OSCE exchange civilian capabilities in Kosovo, Mali and Armenia
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Africa
 - Armenia
 - Balkans
 - Caucasus
 - Kosovo
 - Mali
- Institutions:
 - EEAS, OSCE, UN
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - N/A
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Resources
 - Strategy

Lesson 20: Post-mission sustainability

Summary

The deployment of EU personnel to conflict prevention and peacebuilding missions/operations in various host countries does not happen in an isolated fashion but is always embedded in a larger framework of external and local strategies. The strategies must encompass short and longer-term goals and plans to help ensure that peace is sustainable long after the mission ends (see also Lesson Identified 14). Thus, the implementation of EU-initiated agreements and policies also does not stop once the EU decides to pull out a mission or after the mandate ends. Of particular importance in fragile conflict-prone environments, a follow-up strategy is required to ensure a proper transition for sustainable and durable peace. In this sense, the planning and implementation of a phase-out strategy determines the legacy of a particular EU mission.

This problem was examined as part of DL 5.2, focusing on conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities in the Western Balkans, specifically the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue and by DL 6.1 focusing on local capacity-building in the Western Balkans and the Horn of Africa. For instance, DL 5.2 argues for a clear post-mediation strategy to help overcome deep disagreements about the local implementation of the Brussels Accords, where concerns regarding this goal led to increased levels of local violence in the region. So far, however, the EU's institutions involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding have not shown much interest in the unintended sideshows accompanying the implementation of the dialogue.

As a way forward, DL 5.2 calls for systematic political support from the EU for Track II and Track III dialogues, both within and between Kosovo and Serbia, to ensure an inclusive process and sustainable agreements in mediation dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The EU's political support should encourage national ownership of dialogue processes by recognising the importance of credible internal dialogues in both communities run by local actors such as national NGOs, enhancing its reach into the Track I dialogue. Track II dialogues could also be supported financially by the EEAS or the Commission. Finally, note that the goal of achieving post-mission sustainability is also highly contingent on the local capacities already present in the host country, as well as on the involvement of relevant local stakeholders, as discussed in Lesson 14 (Local capacity-building: Cases).

Related Lessons

- Lesson 14: Local capacity-building II – Effectiveness and local ownership

Recommendations

The planning/policy-making process for all conflict prevention and peacebuilding-focused missions and related activities should also include a detailed analysis of the post-conflict environment that is being sought once the mission has ended. Toward this end, the mission mandate should include specific post-mission strategies to ensure the sustainability and durability of EU-implemented policies.

Related Deliverables

- DL 3.5 Report on EU support to work of others on conflict prevention
- DL 5.2 Report on impact of EU engagement on mediation and local level dialogue initiatives in Western Balkans
- DL 6.1 Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building
- DL 6.3 Report on best practices in EU local capacity-building

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Kosovo
- Institutions:
 - EC
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict management
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - Strategy
 - Post-mission sustainability

Lesson 21: Regional engagement/mandates

Summary

Facilitating regional cooperation in areas of interest to the EU has long been a core goal of the CFSP/CSDP (see also Lesson 1). In this sense the EU has often attempted to export its own norms of institutionalised regional multilateral cooperation to other parts of the world, particularly around the Mediterranean/Middle East/North Africa. Yet this strategy has often run into difficulties in actual practice, so that regional initiatives have not always paid clear dividends regarding multilateral cooperation in general and crisis response/conflict management in particular. As a result, the EU still often resorts to individual interventions in single host countries even though the problem at stake might benefit from a broader regional strategy.

The EU's approach to maritime security off the Horn of Africa after 2008 is a key example of this tendency (see DL 5.1). Following the launch of EUNAVOR Somalia (or Atalanta) to help protect vessels facing the threat of piracy in this region, from 2010 the EU devised several follow-on missions to enhance maritime security more generally, and therefore promote capacity-building as well as regional cooperation among coastal states along the main maritime routes from the Gulf of Aden to the Straits of Malacca. EUCAP Nestor, the first regionally-focused CSDP mission, was a centrepiece of this regional strategy, and attempted from September 2012 to engage a number of states in maritime security capacity-building: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. However, after a comprehensive strategic review undertaken by the EEAS in 2015 the mission, renamed EUCAP Somalia, was reframed to focus solely on Somalia. EUCAP Somalia's redefined aim is to bolster Somalia's maritime security force, strengthen its ability to fight piracy, and increase its overall capacity to patrol its territorial waters.

In other words, the EU narrowed the mandate of this mission from a regional to a more national (Somalia) focus to better serve its objectives, following a comprehensive review. Although this was a clear learning experience in terms of changing the mandate to improve performance, it does indicate that the EU's approach to 'regions' must be considered very carefully in terms of defining the geographic 'region' at stake and framing the specific objectives the EU hopes to achieve in that 'region.' As EUCAP Nestor/Somalia clearly demonstrates, even the best-intentioned regional strategy can run into difficulties when it shifts to the implementation stage, so the EU must be open to re-defining such regions or otherwise revising such an approach in favour of a single-country approach in the face of new operational facts. This problem is also in evidence in the EU's approach to the Sahel, as discussed in DL 4.3.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Related Deliverables

- DL 4.3 Report on EU comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- DL 5.1 Report on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa and Western Balkans
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation

Recommendations

Although the EU should certainly consider a regional approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding for problems that involve multiple states/stakeholders, it must conduct regular reviews of the value-added of regional strategies. Following such reviews, EU member states and the CMPD/CPCC should be ready to make substantial changes to the mandate and resources of a CSDP mission in order to effectively meet its objectives, including – if necessary – narrowing the mandate or even terminating the mission.

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Djibouti
 - Eritrea
 - Ethiopia
 - Kenya
 - Mediterranean
 - Middle East
 - North Africa
 - Somalia/Somaliland
 - South Sudan
 - Sudan
 - Uganda
- Institutions:
 - CMPD
 - Council of the EU
 - CPCC
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Evaluation
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Short vs. Long-term approaches
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Strategy

Lesson 22: CSDP missions III – The Commission's role

Summary

Following on from the topics of internal coordination (Lesson 6) and the role of development aid & trade in conflict prevention and peacebuilding (Lesson 18), the Commission's involvement in conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks can be enhanced for several reasons. One is that the Commission already controls a wide range of EU civilian/economic policy instruments that can be deployed without relying on contributions by EU member states, which takes time to coordinate. A second reason is that the Commission also has a permanent presence in many prospective host countries, particularly in the developing world where many domestic conflicts originate. And a third reason is that the Commission has extensive experience in terms of promoting peaceful, long-term political and economic change as a result of its role in overseeing association agreements and enlargement policy.

In addition to operational experience gained by the EU since the 1990s, the EU (mainly through the Commission) also developed a range of specific policy instruments for conflict prevention, such as a Rapid Reaction Mechanism and (later) the Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace, as well as various crisis response/humanitarian aid tools, including for disaster response. However, these instruments are insufficiently used for the purposes of conflict prevention and peacebuilding and are not always regarded as appropriate by various other actors, such as EU member states. These findings were affirmed during a comparative review of research results presented at the Workshop on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities in the Western Balkans and Horn of Africa (DL 5.5), summarised in the follow-up report (DL 5.6), as well as in the analysis of the EU's integrated approach found in DL 4.3.

Even so, there clearly is room for improvement here, as the Commission: 1) financed a very early conflict prevention and peacebuilding-type mission (the European Community Monitoring Mission in Yugoslavia in 1991); 2) has played a supporting role for various CSDP actions (through humanitarian aid for example); 3) has conducted its own small-scale operations involving certain conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks (such as rule of law and security sector reform activities in the Balkans and Africa); and 4) has even played the lead operational role on one CSDP mission: the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova-Ukraine (EUBAM). The Commission could also play an important role in facilitating civil-military coordination and local ownership of various conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

Thus, if the EU hopes to develop its civilian capabilities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the Commission should play a greater role in this realm, ranging from planning and fact-finding missions to implementation to post-mission learning. Yet obstacles remain that hamper the proactive use of its conflict prevention instruments, particularly in the form of differing attitudes among member states towards EU engagements and a 'fractured' institutional architecture in Brussels. The role of the Commission in conflict prevention remains unclear, even though the Commission wields various policy instruments that could be crucial for addressing instability and root causes of conflict, such as corruption and failing states. Effective implementation of the EU's integrated approach also requires greater involvement by the Commission.

Recommendations

EU Member States should recognise the key role of the Commission within CSDP/conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and the Commission should enhance its own efforts towards stabilisation and conflict prevention in fragile states/regions.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 18: EU development aid and trade

Related Deliverables

- DL 4.3 Report on EU comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Balkans
 - Horn of Africa
- Institutions:
 - EC
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Civil-military coordination
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - N/A

Lesson 23: Integrated approach I – Institutions & training

Summary

As noted in Lesson 18 (EU development aid & trade), the EU has gradually developed the concept of a comprehensive, or integrated, approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, which involves the use of the full range of EU policy tools directed towards all phases of the conflict cycle, and towards various cross-cutting issues, for both short and long-term purposes (see also Lesson 1). This approach essentially builds upon several earlier attempts to reform EU foreign/security policy mechanisms, often framed in terms of 'cohesion,' 'coherence,' and 'coordination' (see also Lesson 6 on internal coordination). Even so, and despite years of discussions about the comprehensive approach since the advent of CSDP missions in 2003, there is still much room for improvement here.

Although a number of EU-CIVCAP outputs discuss the integrated approach in various ways, DL 4.3 in particular analyses this topic more intensively, while also comparing the EU's approach with that of other security actors (the UN, NATO, and the OSCE). Several lessons have been identified through this research, beginning with a need to further integrate the EU's overall strategies, institutions, and staff recruitment/training methods in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding towards a clearer and more consistent integrated approach. The EU has already made some progress here in broadening the notion of 'integration' well beyond the idea of bringing civilian and military tools to bear upon conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks, yet the EU's growing ambitions as a global actor (as reflected in the EU Global Strategy) raise the challenge of making sure the entire system is working towards the same goals while reducing, if not eliminating, any redundancy of effort.

Toward this end, DL 4.3 notes the importance of making sure that EU Member States as well as EU institutional

actors are working towards the same strategic priorities in specific host countries, which could involve the development of clear indicators about the use of the integrated approach for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. This also might require some monitoring and assessment of the extent to which EU Member States and other actors are supporting an integrated approach in a specific host country. Staff training procedures in the EEAS, Commission, and EU Member States might also be enhanced to raise awareness of, and develop common standards regarding, the integrated approach regarding various conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks (see DL 2.1 on this point). At the same time, the EU needs to be careful to avoid an overly bureaucratic or rigid approach to the integration of its various policy tools when devising a conflict prevention and peacebuilding-type intervention. Instead, the EU should select a few clear and consistent concepts to invest in, always keeping a close eye on its operational needs and the requests for assistance coming from Delegations and missions in fragile and conflict-affected countries. Finally, these lessons should be considered in light of the other two lessons involving the integrated approach: Lesson 24 (Delegations & partners), Lesson 25 (Technology) and Lesson 34 (Implementation).

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 18: EU development aid and trade
- Lesson 24: Integrated approach II – Delegations & partners
- Lesson 25: Integrated approach III – Technology
- Lesson 34: Integrated Approach IV – Implementation

Recommendations

In addition to enhancing the integrated approach in terms of coordinating EU strategies/concepts, institutional procedures, and staff training in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the EU should take steps to make sure EU Member States, and EU partners, are fully committed to the integrated approach, without necessarily formalising it into a rigid, 'one size fits all' model or 'box-ticking' task.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 4.3 Report on EU comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EC, EEAS, NATO, OSCE, UN
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
 - Short vs. Long-term approaches
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Strategy

Lesson 24: Integrated approach II – Delegations & partners

Summary

Following on from Lesson 23 on the overall coordination of the EU's integrated approach to foreign/security policy in general and conflict prevention and peacebuilding in particular, it is also clear that such an approach should be pursued (as far as feasibly possible) by the EU's own Delegations, institutional partners, and other stakeholders/local owners. This point also dovetails with Lessons 11, 12, and 19 on partnerships, as well as Lessons 13 and 14 on local capacity-building.

Specifically, DL 4.2 examined the EU's experience with key partners (the UN and the OSCE) in several host countries (Kosovo, Mali, and Armenia), while DL 4.3 noted the role of EU Delegations and external partners in developing the overall integrated approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. As the EU has permanent Delegations in most if not all prospective host countries, and often works with local institutional partners on conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks, it is critical that these actors are familiar with and ready to support the EU's integrated approach to foreign/security policy. This should extend to both the deployment/sharing of material resources among such actors and the overall conceptual or strategic plan designed to manage various conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks in a host country.

DL 4.3 also recommended that EU Delegations in particular should be modernised to help enhance the integrated approach, and their operating models updated. This should include reframing the terms of reference, mandates, physical presence, and operational models of staff working in Delegations, while also establishing new accountability lines and coordination platforms for fast mobilisation of capacities and resources when coping with conflict-related pressures in the host country. In addition to improving

overall performance, modernising and making Delegations more coherent in their operations would also contribute to a more positive perception of the EU as a partner for other international actors.

Finally, DL 4.3 also noted the importance of orienting the integrated approach towards greater harmony with other actors involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks (the UN, NATO, the World Bank, the OSCE, regional organisations, and civil society). Joint assessment of operational options and initiatives along the humanitarian-development peace continuum should be intensified to deliver comprehensive responses in the short-medium-long term and tackle specific country-level challenges. Similarly, more systematic information sharing, dialogue on regional and thematic cases, and exercises/simulations of crisis response should be promoted.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 11: Partnerships I – Resources
- Lesson 12: Partnerships II – Coordination
- Lesson 13: Local capacity-building I – General points
- Lesson 14: Local capacity-building II – Effectiveness and local ownership
- Lesson 19: Partnerships III – Exchanging capabilities
- Lesson 23: Integrated approach I – Institutions & training
- Lesson 34: Integrated Approach IV – Implementation

Recommendations

The integrated approach should be developed not only among policy-makers in Brussels but also among all EU Delegations and by local partners in specific host countries. This should be part of a broader strategy regarding the general modernisation of EU Delegations as well as joint information-sharing, fact-finding, policy planning, and implementation of conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives by the EU's local partners and other stakeholders.

Related Deliverables

- DL 4.2 Partners in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: How the EU, UN and OSCE exchange civilian capabilities in Kosovo, Mali and Armenia
- DL 4.3 Report on EU comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Armenia
 - Kosovo
 - Mali
- Institutions:
 - NATO, OSCE, UN, World Bank
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Resources
 - Strategy

Lesson 25: Integrated approach III – Technology

Summary

Following on from Lessons 23 and 24 on the prospect of enhancing the EU's integrated approach to security policy and conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks, it is also clear that various EU actors, partners, local owners, and other stakeholders might be able to make greater use of new technologies in this realm. This point also links back to previous Lesson 6 on fostering internal coordination, as well as Lessons 9 and 10 on integrating new technology (particularly dual-use technologies) for conflict prevention and peacebuilding purposes, especially regarding the warning-response gap and the conflict prevention/crisis response phases of the conflict cycle. As much EU-CIVCAP research has already confirmed, the management of a decentralised policy domain like conflict prevention and peacebuilding is a major challenge under the best of circumstances, and the difficulties could be reduced significantly if the EU makes greater use of various technologies already available on the market.

This challenge was identified more explicitly as part of the research summarised in DL 2.4 on the role of dual-use technologies and DL 4.3 on the evolution of the EU's integrated approach (formerly 'comprehensive approach') to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. As with Lessons 9 and 10, DL 2.4 notes a need for greater inter-institutional cooperation and the standardisation of various procedures to enhance the potential of dual-use technologies (such as imagery capabilities and drones), while DL 4.3 calls for a broader updating/modernisation of various information and communications technologies (ICT) and information-exchange platforms across the EU's institutional infrastructure as a first step towards enhancing the role of technology in the integrated approach.

As part of this process, the EU should also aim for greater harmonisation of the ICT tools it already deploys to support smooth communication, coordination, and interconnectivity among various actors and stakeholders, as well as to avoid duplication, isolation, and waste/inefficiency.

More specifically, in order to develop its integrated approach, the EU will need to keep on promoting, updating, and supporting financially a more efficient ICT platform to serve as the basis for integrated action. This could involve the use of various pilot programmes to investigate the value-added of new technologies, such as the use of geo-enabled platforms to collect, organise, and disseminate spatial data for multiple purposes, such as project execution, project monitoring, and evaluation in high-risk areas within host countries, including when conducted by third parties. The EU should also continue supporting research projects focusing on ways to incorporate ICT and Big Data in tools available to all those involved in EU external action, including on conflict prevention and early warning, in EU research funding programming and beyond.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 09: Integrating new technologies I – Imagery & analysis
- Lesson 10: Integrating new technologies II – Support & ICTs
- Lesson 23: Integrated approach I – Institutions & training
- Lesson 24: Integrated approach II – Delegations & partners
- Lesson 34: Integrated Approach IV – Implementation

Recommendations

The EU should consider inter-institutional funding opportunities to promote new technologies and standardising their role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. New technological solutions to foster coordination and enhance the integrated approach should be explored, along with modernising the EU's technology platforms and raising awareness of the possibilities provided by ICT/Big Data for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. Timely and precise information is essential to agree on coordinated, comprehensive, integrated, and effective actions, and the EU could consider various pilot programmes to experiment with new technologies that facilitate this objective.

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.4 Report on dual-use technologies
- DL 4.3 Report on EU comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - N/A
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Resources
 - Technology

Lesson 26: Integrating new technology III – Dual-use technology

Summary

Following on from technology-focused Lessons 9 (Imagery & Analysis) and 10 (Support & ICTs) and their associated research foundations, DL 2.4 examined more closely the role of dual-use technologies in the realm of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding. These technologies involve both civilian/private and military/government/public applications, and can be defined more specifically (per DL 2.4) as “tools and equipment with an innate or potential application for civilian and military use, whose character depends upon mental structures, and on the social networks in which they are developed and used.” Some of these technologies were addressed earlier in a more general fashion in DL 2.1 and DL 3.1; conversely, DL 2.4 focuses specifically on the EU’s recent efforts regarding satellites and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) for the purpose of conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks.

Specifically, DL 2.4 clearly shows that the EU has demonstrated both the political will and the funding commitments required to develop these dual-use technologies (and others). In addition, there is clear evidence of a willingness on the part of certain EU actors to deploy these technologies for various external purposes, as indicated by the examples of France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden. These states (and others) also engage in joint projects to help advance these capabilities. However, DL 2.4 also found that there has been a distinct lack of coordination regarding these various efforts, which obviously involve institutions/actors in Brussels as well as those in a number of EU member states beyond those examined in DL 2.4.

This lack of coordination is apparent in other areas related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and not just involving the use of technology; this problem provides further evidence of a need for stronger procedures (if not explicit structural reforms) to reduce the duplication of effort and promote synergies between these activities, in keeping with the integrated approach more generally. In addition, there has been a marked absence of political will (so far) to use RPAS in particular for civilian CSDP missions. DL 2.4 argues that this is a clear missed opportunity regarding certain conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related tasks such as border management, force protection, protection of civilians, restoring public order, and investigations/surveillance more generally (see the Annex to DL 2.4).

Related Lessons

- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 09: Integrating new technologies I – Imagery & analysis
- Lesson 10: Integrating new technologies II – Support & ICTs
- Lesson 23: Integrated approach I – Institutions & training

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States’ Capabilities
- DL 2.4 Report on dual-use technologies
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis

Recommendations

The potential for dual-use technologies in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding could be enhanced considerably by developing a clear EU policy on the role of dual-use technologies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks, specific EU training models on civ-mil cooperation regarding dual-use technologies and establishing adequate EU data dissemination policies for the EU’s security & defence community, especially in light of the development of the Copernicus programme. Interinstitutional EU funding opportunities for dual-use technologies should be exploited, in particular, in the context of the new European Defence Fund (EDF). The EU should also explore and enhance the contributions of the EU Satellite Centre in this realm, particularly regarding earth observation data.

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EDF, EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Civil-military coordination
 - Warning-response gap
- Topics:
 - Resources
 - Technology

Lesson 27: Capabilities-Based Assessment

Summary

Previous EU-CIVCAP Deliverables and Lessons Identified (6, 7 and 8) revealed a need to clarify some general concepts and procedures regarding conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related goals/tasks to help enhance the overall coordination of this domain; this problem also extends to the ongoing development of a general strategy for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Part of this challenge, which is summarised here as Lesson Identified 27, involves the identification of existing EU capabilities in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding and foreign/security policy more generally, and the systemic identification of gaps that need filling in this area. DL 2.6 directly addresses this problem, by adopting a more long-term and holistic approach to the various opportunities that exist for the EU to advance its role in this realm. This approach can be summarised as a Capabilities-Based Assessment (CPA).

The CPA approach follows on from a more general problem involving the EU's approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding: the decentralised/fragmented nature of the policy domain and of the various capabilities/resources available to support it, which can involve EU institutions in Brussels and in various EU member states. To help address this problem, DL 2.6 has identified a number of shortcomings in the EU's conceptual approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding and attempted to offer some initial solutions. These involve more specific definitions of key concepts (conflict prevention, peacebuilding, resources, capabilities); in turn, these can be operationalised in ways that could help the EU measure/monitor its existing capabilities as well as contribute to the development of new ones.

As capabilities are closely linked to resources, DL 2.6 also provides more detail about how to catalogue the various resources that could be available for EU initiatives in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding; adapting from military terminology, these can be summarised as doctrines, organisation, training, material, leadership, personnel, finances, and facilities, all of which directly relate to many other previous Lessons Identified. The key point is that these various resources must be linked directly to EU objectives in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, in terms of what is required to conduct specific conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related tasks in an effective and efficient manner. This involves, in turn, a systematic process of identifying objectives, determining current capabilities, identifying gaps in capabilities, and making recommendations about filling those gaps. Therefore, as the process starts with objectives rather than resources, the EU must be far more explicit in terms of setting those objectives in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, in both functional and geographic terms (i.e., 'preventing piracy in the Gulf of Aden'). The process then leads to the identification of functional 'capability clusters' required to fulfil the objectives, such as (for example) command & control, engage & implement, inform, set up & sustain, and duty of care. With the CPA approach, the EU should be able to ensure that its limited resources are adequate to meet its conflict prevention and peacebuilding objectives while (hopefully) avoiding waste or duplication of effort.

Recommendations

The EU should consider the formal adoption of a CPA approach to its various conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks, using the conceptual elements summarised in DL 2.6. In this light the EU also must be clearer and more forward-looking regarding its objectives in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding and foreign/security policy more generally, as an effective CPA approach cannot be undertaken when such objectives are too vague.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 07: Concepts
- Lesson 08: Procedures & rules

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.6 EU Capabilities for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: A Capabilities-Based Assessment

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - N/A
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Civil-military coordination
- Topics:
 - N/A

Lesson 28: Gender in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Summary

Ethical concerns such as democracy, the rule of law, human rights, gender, and equality are often built into the EU's relationships with third countries and international organisations. This is also true of its approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, where gender issues in particular may become very salient owing to prevailing assumptions about the roles of males and females in conflict zones, whether as perpetrators of violence, victims of violence, or rescuers/protectors of vulnerable populations. Academic work on gender and conflict also clearly demonstrates that these assumptions are not always correct; men have been victimised in some cases while women have played roles as perpetrators of violence and as protectors in other cases. Gender also plays a more general role in the social/political fabric of host countries in a conflict situation, in terms of how societies cope with the various side-effects of violence-related stress, involving for example public health, burying the dead, food acquisition/preparation, the care of children and the elderly, demobilisation/deradicalisation, reintegration of combatants, education/training, and so on. In a conflict zone, the demand for these kinds of tasks can challenge traditional gender roles and therefore provide risks and opportunities for re-thinking how the EU approaches its conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related goals.

These considerations are the central focus of DL 3.4, which generated several important findings summarised in this Lesson Identified. The most important conclusion is that despite its concern with gender as reflected in certain EU policy statements, this factor does not play a role in the EU's general approach to conflict prevention. This limitation, in turn, can help reinforce gender inequality in host countries, as well as contribute to the maintenance of broader stereotypes about gender roles that may inhibit the prospects for resolution of a conflict. Although the EU has paid some attention to this problem in the context of its Women, Peace, and Security agenda, it needs to do more to improve its overall effectiveness in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in general and gender equality in particular. This is especially critical in light of certain very broad EU foreign/security policy statements (e.g. the EU Global Strategy) that mention gender-related issues such as equality and countering terrorism/violent extremism as core goals; other EU documents with a geographic focus (e.g. the Africa-EU Partnership) also make questionable assumptions or claims about the role of women (and children) as objects of EU foreign policy. All of these considerations strongly suggest a need for the EU to think, plan, and act more carefully to avoid replicating the gender-related problems that could contribute to violent conflict or social instability/inequality more generally.

Recommendations

EU conflict analysis should pay closer attention to gender-related issues in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, which would include reaching out to a wider range of stakeholders, such as activists and scholars, who could enhance the EU's efforts in particular host countries. The EU could also undertake a process to revise and update its comprehensive approach to UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. Finally, EU efforts regarding conflict prevention and peacebuilding should pay closer attention to the role of gender in the power dynamics in specific host countries, and develop more sophisticated measures of success or effectiveness rather than, for example, simply counting the number of women present in various institutions.

Related Lessons

- N/A

Related Deliverables

- DL 3.4 Kissing the frog: Gender equality in EU conflict prevention and other fairy tales

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - N/A
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Policy-making
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
 - Short-long term approaches
- Topics:
 - Personnel

Lesson 29: Enhancing civil-military synergies

Summary

The relationship between civilian and military capabilities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks is one of the four central cross-cutting issues that play a role in the work of EU-CIVCAP researchers. Although the EU still remains a civilian actor for the most part, it also has some capacity for small-scale military operations, both land and maritime, that could be oriented towards conflict-related missions, whether directly or indirectly. In addition, even though the majority of EU CSDP missions since 2003 have been civilian in nature, there is still considerable scope for the EU to become more involved in the military aspects of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, which raises questions about the overall chain of command for missions that involve civilian and military tasks. This issue is also very salient regarding the EU's pursuit of an integrated approach to its foreign & security policy (see Lessons Identified 23, 24, 25 and 34).

These concerns are also a central focus of DL 5.3, which examined synergies between EU civilian and military capabilities during the conduct of specific CSDP missions. It paid special attention to EU activities in the Western Balkans and the Horn of Africa, two regions where the EU has been particularly active over the past decade or more. Although there is considerable potential for civil-military synergies to improve the impact/performance of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, and to reduce unnecessary costs (including avoiding duplication of effort), DL 5.3 also found that the EU's existing coordination mechanisms still fall short of this standard (see also Lessons Identified 6 and 12). This is partly a consequence of different mindsets among civilian and military actors/stakeholders involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, but also a product of three specific limitations identified by EU-CIVCAP researchers:

- 1) Mandates for coordination are left open to individual interpretation and rarely specific civil-military synergies;
- 2) limited authority for decision-making or prioritisation between EU instruments at the operational level; and
- 3) host countries rarely have the capacity to manage or coordinate multiple international actors with overlapping mandates (a problem that overlaps with Lessons Identified 13, 14 and 30 on local capacity-building).

Beyond these challenges, DL 5.3 also found that the EU's own terminology for civil-military 'cooperation' and 'coordination' is somewhat inconsistent and different from that used by other actors in this realm, which also relates to other conceptual problems identified in the course of EU-CIVCAP's work.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 07: Concepts
- Lesson 12: Partnerships II – Coordination
- Lesson 23: Integrated approach I – Institutions & training
- Lesson 24: Integrated approach II – Delegations & partners
- Lesson 25: Integrated approach III – Technology

Recommendations

To enhance civil-military synergies mandates for conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related missions should provide a more detailed and task-based approach to civil-military coordination. The EU should embrace opportunities for using high-level competences to offer leadership in coordinating civil-military actors. More decision authority should be delegated to mission leadership and staff; this delegation should include authority for taking actions in support of regional strategic objectives or other strategic actors. The EU should consider integrating civil-military chains of command at the theatre and operational level, which would be a more direct and hopefully more effective way to enhance synergies, as opposed to relying on more ad hoc civil-military coordination, no matter how formalised or consistent it is.

Related Deliverables

- DL 5.3 Report on Civil-Military Synergies on the Ground

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Balkans
 - Horn of Africa
- Institutions:
 - N/A
- Policy phases:
 - Policy-making
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Civil-military coordination
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Resources

Lesson 30: Local capacity-building III – Coherence and coordination

Summary

Building on Lessons 13 and 14 on local capacity-building as well as Lessons 11, 12 and 19 on partnerships, this Lesson Identified involves the coordination efforts among the EU and other participants in conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks, whether local stakeholders in host countries or other international actors/donors, such as the UN, NATO and the OSCE. This coordination, which should in turn enhance coherence, involves not just a range of various actors inside and outside the host country, but also a range of policy tools, funding sources, individual projects, and other elements that are rarely if ever under the authority of a single actor, whether a government or international organisation like the EU.

Accordingly, DL 6.2 first identifies three aspects of 'coherence' that could be enhanced through more effective coordination: horizontal (between sectoral policies), vertical (along the EU-national 'chain of command'), and inter-institutional (among various actors involved). It further argues that EU Delegations in host countries are often – but not always – uniquely positioned to serve as the lead coordinating actor for local capacity-building programmes. In this regard a key aspect of this lesson is the need for local knowledge about existing capacities, actors/stakeholders, and other resources that will be built upon (or reformed) as part of the overall effort. This knowledge, in turn, often requires a deep understanding of the host country that only a long-term engagement (as through EU Delegations or perhaps EU Special Representatives) can provide. DL 6.2 provides examples to support this Lesson Identified from fieldwork conducted by EU-CIVCAP researchers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, and the Horn of Africa/Ethiopia.

Although details and outcomes (i.e., horizontal, vertical, and inter-institutional coherence) varied depending on the specific situation, the key lesson is that the development of coordination mechanisms on the ground in host countries almost always fails to anticipate all of the kinds of information that must be shared regularly to deploy resources, avoid duplication of effort, and create a workable division of labour. These findings also suggest a range of more specific lessons or best practices depending on the host country, some of which are summarised below as recommendations.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 11: Partnerships I – Resources
- Lesson 12: Partnerships II – Coordination
- Lesson 13: Local capacity-building I – General points
- Lesson 14: Local capacity-building II – Effectiveness and local ownership
- Lesson 19: Partnerships III – Exchanging capabilities

Related Deliverables

- DL 4.2 Partners in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: How the EU, UN and OSCE exchange civilian capabilities in Kosovo, Mali and Armenia
- DL 6.2 International capacity building in the Western Balkans and the Horn of Africa: Lessons on coherence and coordination

Recommendations

- 1) Designate a responsible coordinator for local capacitybuilding programmes/projects;
- 2) Establish a 'rule of law' team in the EU Delegations to ensure intra-EU coordination;
- 3) Avoid weak or ad hoc coordination mechanisms in favour of specific roles/procedures;
- 4) Ensure that some degree of flexibility is built into the mandates of specific conflict prevention and peacebuilding actions/tasks;
- 5) Specify a long lead-in time for, and promote transparency in, the project formulation process, and begin coordination at the project design phase;
- 6) Engage the smaller, less prominent actors while addressing local needs and avoiding duplication; and
- 7) Create a 'circle of champions' among local partners to assist with host country projects and other initiatives within their specific networks.

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Balkans
 - Horn of Africa
- Institutions:
 - NATO
 - OSCE
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Policy-making
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
 - Short-long term approaches
- Topics:
 - Post-mission sustainability
 - Resources

Lesson 31: Pooling & sharing capabilities

Summary

Following on from personnel-focused Lessons Identified (Lessons 2, 3) and those discussing technologies (Lessons 9, 10; 25, 26), DL 2.5 examined more closely the role of pooling and sharing capabilities in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The process associated with this lesson was launched in 2010, after an informal meeting of EU defence ministers, and could be leveraged more to help enhance the EU's overall toolkit for handling conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related tasks. As DL 2.5 notes, there is one clear success story involving pooling and sharing (the European Air Transport Command), yet this approach to developing resources simply has not been pursued as vigorously as some had hoped. In some ways, in fact, pooling and sharing has been overtaken by more recent initiatives, such as Permanent Structured Cooperation, the Capability Development Plan, the European Defence Fund, and others.

Building on the earlier research findings of Work Package 2 (PREPARE: Capabilities in conflict prevention and peace-building – Technology, personnel and procedures), DL 2.5 argues that there is still considerable room for improvement of the pooling and sharing concept in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Including the sharing of training facilities; the pooling of experts and recruitment procedures; the deployment of satellite systems usable for both earth observation and satellite communication purposes; and RPAS.

In addition, the EU should attempt to leverage its various already-existing institutions and partnerships to support these efforts; these include the EDA, the European Security and Defence College, Frontex, Europol, the European Space Agency, and the EU Satellite Centre. These efforts, finally, could be supported in a more consistent and systematic fashion by functionally-related institutions and capabilities in EU member states; positive examples of this include the Multinational Space-based Imaging System for Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Observation (MUSIS), the EU Satellite Communications Market programme, and the Eurodrone programme.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 02: Staff recruitment and selection
- Lesson 03: Training
- Lesson 09: Integrating new technologies I – Imagery & analysis
- Lesson 10: Integrating new technologies II – Support & ICTs
- Lesson 25: Integrated approach III – Technology
- Lesson 26: Integrating new technology III – Dual-use technology

Related Deliverables

- DL 2.1 Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States' Capabilities
- DL 2.5 Policy paper on pooling and sharing of capabilities
- DL 3.1 Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis

Recommendations

The potential for P&S in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding could be enhanced by incentivising ex ante information-sharing among EU member states and avoiding duplication of effort through ongoing monitoring and coordination. In the area of training and recruitment, the EU needs to continue the harmonisation of training at the EU level, establish mandatory pre-deployment training, particularly regarding dual-use technologies, and standardising recruitment systems. Other specific measures include the creation of a European pool of RPAS assets that could be used for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks and harnessing the Civilian CSDP Compact.

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - N/A
- Institutions:
 - EDA
 - ESDC
 - EU Satellite Centre
 - European Commission
 - European Space Agency
 - Europol
 - Frontex
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Crisis response
 - Conflict management
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
 - Civil-military coordination
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Resources
 - Technology

Lesson 32: Conflict prevention and local ownership

Summary

Local ownership and the warning-response gap are two of the four central cross-cutting issues targeted by the EU-CIVCAP project. These components of our research attempt to respect the critical role of host country stakeholders in helping to manage all phases of the conflict cycle and highlight the importance of early warning in preventing or mitigating the effects of a conflict. In this light, it makes sense to examine closely the specific role of local owners in the conflict prevention process in hopes of drawing lessons and best practices from recent experience in the field.

This is the central objective of DL 3.5, which builds upon Lessons 13, 14, 30 and 33 on local capacity building. This research also summarises evidence from three cases (Nigeria Plateau State; the Democratic Republic of the Congo/South Sudan; and Mindanao in the Philippines) to highlight some of the challenges and opportunities for involving local owners in conflict prevention. On the positive side, the EU often does have a strong reputation as a fair, neutral, and effective outside interlocutor, and it has gained a great deal of operational experience over more than two decades. The EU's claims about respecting human rights can also enhance its attractiveness to those seeking outside assistance with conflict prevention/management. However, it is also true that the EU is not always consistent in its practices; nor does the involvement of local actors ensure a positive outcome in the conflict resolution process.

Based on the three cases noted above, several specific lessons can be drawn regarding local ownership and conflict prevention: 1) Support to capacity building in the security sector must place as much importance on relational aspects as it does for logistical and material considerations; 2) The EU should use its convening power to promote greater coordination and engagement with local actors in response to the LRA conflict; and 3) The EU should strengthen the capacity of EEAS Regional Teams (mainly regarding the team in Nairobi, to ensure the coordination of action with the EU Delegations in Juba and Kinshasa). More generally, the central lesson here is that local communities often can provide better conflict analysis and early warning capacities, as well as help to build trust among local parties in ways that outside actors cannot.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 13: Local capacity-building I – General points
- Lesson 14: Local capacity-building II – Effectiveness and local ownership
- Lesson 30: Local capacity-building III – Coherence and coordination
- Lesson 33: Local capacity-building IV – Best practices

Related Deliverables

- DL 3.5 Report on EU support to work of others on conflict prevention
- DL 6.1 Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building
- DL 6.3 Report on best practices in EU local capacity-building

Recommendations

To ensure local ownership and stronger partnership with local actors, the EU needs to ensure that conflict analysis is a continuous process across external action and that it provides local actors with the space and the means required to carry it out themselves. The EU also needs to prioritise support for community-centred and -led conflict prevention initiatives. In this regard, the capacity of EU Delegations to build relationships with and support local peacebuilders could be strengthened. Finally, the EU needs to ensure that EU assistance supports and is supported by a political process and dialogue and that it conducts institutionalised, regular conflict analysis exercises.

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - DRC
 - Nigeria
 - Philippines
 - South Sudan
- Institutions:
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Warning-response gap
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - Strategy
 - Post-mission sustainability

Lesson 33: Local capacity-building IV – Best practices

Summary

Building on previous Lessons 13, 14, and 30 on local capacity building and its relationship to post-mission peace and sustainability (Lesson 20), this lesson focuses on the findings of DL 6.3, which uses evidence from numerous interviews in the field in several conflict zones: Kosovo/Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Burma/Myanmar, Somalia/Somaliland, and Cambodia. It outlines some of the barriers to effective local capacity building as well as suggests several best practices to assist practitioners in the field. It also goes beyond peacebuilding/mediation tasks to address related areas of reform such as human rights and democracy.

A central focus here is on the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as the main conduits between various local stakeholders (i.e., framed as 'civil society' or otherwise) and international donors in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. However, this must be seen as only a starting point, reflecting the current state of practice and based on evidence from several case studies. Toward this end, the cases in DL6.3 address, in various ways, the key challenges involved in local capacity building for peacebuilding, as follows: 1) How local ownership and capacity building in peacebuilding are specifically conceptualised in the case study; 2) What are perceived as the substantial obstacles to achieving local ownership of peace initiatives, paying particular attention to the NGO-centric model; and 3) What are the best practices related to the particular historical context and the lessons to be learned for current and future peacebuilding interventions?

The main lessons identified from the five case studies involve the specific barriers to more effective local ownership. These include problems stemming from: varying donor policies/priorities; community-NGO-state interaction; funding structures; economic capacity; sustained inter-ethnic conflict; lack of a long-term strategy; lack of international accountability; lack of local capacity; development exhaustion; reporting requirements; the local political space; the disconnect between donor priorities and local needs; and varying timescales. The findings suggest a clear contrast between the current minimalist approach (i.e., where local ownership involves NGO-led local information gathering, some community participation models that seek to improve policy delivery, and the provision of technical training on peacebuilding, mediation, etc.) and a maximalist approach derived from a position in which local agency is foregrounded in projects, from project design, through implementation to evaluation.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 13: Local capacity-building I – General points
- Lesson 14: Local capacity-building II – Effectiveness and local ownership
- Lesson 20: Post-mission sustainability
- Lesson 30: Local capacity-building III – Coherence and coordination

Recommendations

This research advances several specific recommendations for the EU in this area: 1) Fund a broader range of civil society actors; 2) Foster inter-generational peace programming; 3) Establish a long-term stable peacebuilding fund; 4) Empower communities and address everyday problems as peacebuilding; 5) Provide core funding for organisations to sustain their activities; 6) Devote a portion of development funding to long-term peacebuilding activities; 7) Fund community engagement during the design stage of the tender process; and 8) Reduce the reporting burden on NGOs, ideally to one mid-term and one end-of-programme review.

Related Deliverables

- DL 3.5 Report on EU support to work of others on conflict prevention
- DL 6.1 Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building
- DL 6.3 Report on best practices in EU local capacity-building

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Bosnia & Herzegovina
 - Burma/Myanmar
 - Cambodia
 - Kosovo
 - Serbia
 - Somalia/Somaliland
- Institutions:
 - EEAS
- Policy phases:
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Conflict resolution & peacebuilding
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Local ownership
- Topics:
 - Post-mission sustainability

Lesson 34: Integrated approach IV – Implementation

Summary

Building on Lessons 23, 24 and 25 on various aspects of the integrated approach, evidence from EU-CIVCAP fieldwork further suggests other areas of opportunity regarding its overall implementation as an organising principle for the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities. This lesson also dovetails with Lessons 1 (EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding) and 6 (internal coordination), among others. The central challenge has been mentioned before in previous DLs/lessons: conflict prevention and peacebuilding is a decentralised policy domain, with multiple stakeholders in Brussels, EU member states, and host countries, so ad hoc, case-by-case coordination, no matter how formalised, is almost certainly going to fall short of delivering a truly integrated approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related tasks without a greater degree of institutional reform than is currently underway.

DL 5.4 in particular addresses this challenge, and examines some current attempts by the EU to overcome the inherent paradox of a decentralised (if not fragmented) yet integrated approach to crisis management. In this sense it also builds upon our understanding of the EU's already-existing Comprehensive Approach and related efforts, such as the creation of PRISM. It also questions the actual effectiveness of more informal methods of coordination ('harmonization' and information-sharing), as well as the leadership role of the EEAS in particular. Evidence for these conclusions comes from fieldwork from the Western Balkans and Horn of Africa, which suggests several best practices such as the establishment of a common strategic vision established between member states, EU Delegation, and CSDP missions, as well as the long(er)-term commitment and focus on prevention created through coordination with the UN and larger member states.

The exchange of staff and support between EUNAVFOR Atalanta and EUCAP Somalia are specific examples to follow in terms of civil-military synergies and cooperation across the civil-military divide.

The top-down changes in leadership required by the integrated approach (see Recommendations) further indicates a need to revise the lower-level resourcing and staffing of EU Delegations as envisioned in the comprehensive/integrated approach, as well as a more flexible exchange of resources and knowledge between the Delegation and CSDP missions and instruments. This would include enhancing shared conflict analysis and systems for sharing sensitive and operational information. With no common operational picture available to all EU staff (not just those sitting in coordination boards and committees), coherence will be severely challenged. The information shared should include EU common positions, but also an explication of positions where member states diverge, so that all EU staff are able to act and be perceived to represent a unified block by local partners, particularly host nation governments.

Related Lessons

- Lesson 01: EU strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Lesson 06: Internal coordination
- Lesson 23: Integrated approach I – Institutions & training
- Lesson 24: Integrated approach II – Delegations & partners
- Lesson 25: Integrated approach III – Technology

Recommendations

A strategy of coherence requires reforms to leadership, tasking, ownership, and incentivising. This includes the integration of leadership and command structures on the operational level and the delegation of decision-making. The EU should also provide resources for operational and tactical level conflict analysis and simple system(s) for sharing sensitive and operational information between instruments. Best practices from the Horn of Africa should be duplicated in other contexts.

Related Deliverables

- DL 4.3 Report on EU comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- DL 5.4 Report on the comprehensive approach and its implementation

Keywords

- Regions/countries:
 - Balkans
 - Bosnia and Herzegovina
 - Horn of Africa
 - Kosovo
 - Somalia/Somaliland
- Institutions:
 - EEAS
 - UN
- Policy phases:
 - Planning
 - Implementation
- Conflict-cycle stages:
 - Crisis response
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - Short-long term approaches
 - Civil-military coordination
- Topics:
 - Personnel
 - Resources
 - Strategy

Conclusion

Current trends in regional and global politics means that the EU is certain to remain involved in the realm of conflict prevention and peacebuilding for the foreseeable future. To be sure, the EU has made significant advances in here through its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and other policy tools, but challenges remain.

In less than 15 years, the EU has launched over 30 CSDP foreign security assistance actions, many of which involve conflict management goals, and has developed a range of strategies, concepts, guidelines, and other policy statements to guide its ambitions as a conflict manager and peacekeeper. Part of these ongoing processes also involves the generation of potential lessons (and related best practices) in this realm, which EU-CIVCAP has attempted to document.

However, there is still much room for improvement in light of the overall coherence, management, and resourcing of EU peacebuilding activities,³ different institutional approaches to learning, erratic compliance with agreed learning procedures, the varied roles of numerous stakeholders in a complex decentralised system, the use of veto points by EU member states during decision-making, various cross-cutting challenges,⁴ and other factors. For example, if the EU is really serious about learning and best practices, it should consider the creation of a formal authority for knowledge/learning in the management structure of the European External Action Service (and possibly in the Commission), as well as appoint knowledge/learning officers in all operational units that deal with external action and in all external operations/missions (including EU Delegations).

Moreover, even when learning has helped to develop and resource new foreign security actions, the integrated approach to crisis response is often still lacking, whether in terms of linking civilian and military policy tools or linking the EU's (shorter-term) security/conflict prevention agenda with its (longer-term) development/humanitarian agenda.⁵ The EU's failure to live up to the integrated approach in turn makes it seem as if the EU is not a proactive strategic actor capable of shaping events, but rather merely a reactive player that offers a token contribution in certain host countries before moving on to the next crisis.

The EU therefore must not just be more coherent, comprehensive, proactive, and strategic but also far more realistic in terms of what it can achieve and why it is attempting to achieve it. In addition, although the EU has made significant advances in the peacebuilding domain, and has built upon this experience through the creation of policy-relevant knowledge about conflict and crisis management, it does not always manage to meet the growing demand for decisive security assistance actions, especially on its borders. This is not for a lack of resources; the EU (with its member states) possesses the human capital, knowledge base, and material/technological tools to act like other major powers in many peacebuilding areas, yet it still falls short in this area as indicated by the lessons derived from recent practice summarised in this report.

Hopefully, drawing on the EU-CIVCAP lessons identified and best practices,⁶ future investigations and related institutional reforms will further empower the EU in terms of choosing its strategic priorities, streamlining its decision-making procedures, and resourcing its foreign security missions and operations adequately and quickly, whether in the civilian or military spheres. In today's world there is unfortunately no shortage of opportunities for the EU to get more involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding; the only question is whether the EU can find the political will – in Brussels and among its member states – to make the reforms suggested by the lessons gathered in this report.

Endnotes

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SUMMARY

Leading Partner	University of Aberdeen
Lead author	Michael E. Smith
Abstract	This document contains the Catalogue of 34 Lessons Identified in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding, drawing on various EU-CIVCAP research outputs.

Our Partners

All participants have demonstrated excellence in the field and have participated in many other projects at national, European and international levels.



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 This publication is a professionally designed version of EU-CIVCAP's Deliverable 7.1 (Version 2.0; 20 November 2018)

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The goals of preventing the outbreak of conflict and promoting sustainable peace remain a fundamental challenge to policymakers and analysts alike. The European Union (EU) and its member states require an adequate set of capabilities if they are to address this challenge in a timely and effective manner.

EU-CIVCAP provides a comprehensive, comparative and multidisciplinary analysis of EU civilian capabilities for external conflict prevention and peacebuilding in order to identify 'the best civilian means to enhance these capabilities' and address existing shortfalls.

EU-CIVCAP is led out of the University of Bristol's Global Insecurities Centre (GIC), which is housed within the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies. The University of Bristol leads a consortium of twelve institutions across eight different countries in Europe.

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 653227.