

Framework Contract EuropeAid/132633/C/SER/Multi  
Lot 12: Humanitarian Aid, Crisis Management & Post-Crisis assistance  
Contract N° 2015/369367

# Final Report

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

### Volume I

*September 2016*

Funded by the European Union



Implemented by



This report was prepared with the financial assistance of the European Commission. The views expressed in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Commission.

# Table of Contents

<b>List of Graphs .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Acronyms and Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background .....	1
1.2 Evaluation objectives and scope .....	1
<b>2 Profile of the IfS Crisis Response Component .....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Coverage of the Instrument .....	2
2.2 Statistical overview of the IfS Crisis Response Component .....	3
<b>3 Methodology .....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Evaluation phases .....	5
3.2 Data collection and analysis .....	6
3.3 Evaluation questions .....	7
3.4 Limitations .....	7
<b>4 Evaluation findings based on EQ's .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5 Conclusions .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>6 Recommendations .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>7 Overall assessment .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Annexes (see volume II) .....</b>	<b>62</b>

## List of Graphs

---

Graph 1: Pie charts 1 and 2: Distribution of funding and projects per region 2007-2013.....	3
Graph 2: Pie charts 3 and 4: Distribution of projects and funding per implementing partner type 2007-2013.....	4
Graph 3: Distribution of funding/projects per implementing partner per year .....	5

## Acknowledgements

This evaluation was prepared by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) and Particip GmbH.

The evaluation was carried out by three key-experts, Volker Hauck (team leader [TL], also TL for the DRC country visit), Andrew Sherriff (also TL for Pakistan), both ECDPM, and Karen Sherlock, consultant (also TL for Lebanon). Five additional consultants were contracted: Dylan Hendrickson (TL) and André Kahlmeyer for the Nigeria country visit, Fernanda Faria for DRC, Matthieu Zamecnik for Pakistan and Anna Ohannessian Charpin for Lebanon. Matthias Deneckere, ECDPM, provided research support and James Mackie, ECDPM, quality support. Angela Weiss, Particip, and Joyce Olders, ECDPM, assisted with logistics.

The evaluation team would like to thank all interviewees and online survey respondents for their time made available to respond to the evaluation team's questions. Thanks go also to FPI and staff in EUDs for providing logistical support and for providing detailed feed-back on earlier drafts of this report.

## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADE	Aide a la Decision Economique
CAR	Central African Republic
CCBLE	Civil Capacity building for law enforcement
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSRP	Comité de Suivi de la Réforme de la Police
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development - UK
DG DEV	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAM	Exception Assistance Measures
EC	European Commission
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights

ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EQ	Evaluation Question
ERMES	European Resources for Mediation Support
EU	European Union
EUD/ EUDs	European Union Delegation/ European Union Delegations
EUR	Euro
EUSEC	EU Mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the DRC in the area of defence
EUTF	End User Technology Fund
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instrument
HQ	Headquarters
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IfS	Instrument for Stability
IfS CRC	Instrument for Stability Crisis Response Component
IMRAP	The Malian Institute of Research and Action for Peace
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
IRP	Interim Response Programme
JC	Judgment Criteria
JSSR	Justice and Security Sector Reform
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAX-QDA	Statistical text analysis programme
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MONUSCO	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en République Démocratique du Congo
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOC	Non-Objection Certificate
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAMF	Policy Advice and Mediation Facility
PCNA	Post-Crisis Needs Assessment

PDNA	Post-Disaster Needs Assessment
PNC	<i>Police nationale congolaise</i> (Congolese National Police)
PRAG	Procedures and Practical Guide
PSC	Political and Security Committee
ROM	Results Oriented Monitoring
SECPOL	Security Policy and Conflict Prevention (EEAS)
SfCG	Search for Common Ground
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
USA	United States of America

## Executive Summary

---

**Objectives of the evaluation:** The objective of this instrument evaluation is to provide stakeholders in the European Union and the wider public an independent assessment of the overall implementation of the IfS Crisis Response Component (IfS CRC), paying particular attention to the results achieved against its objectives, and to draw key lessons and recommendations in order to improve current and future action financed under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

**Nature of the Instrument:** The IfS was established formally in November 2006 and was implemented during the period 2007-2013. The IfS provided the EU with a new strategic tool to address security and development challenges and as a mechanism for rapid and flexible responses to situations of political crisis or natural disasters in third countries (Art. 3), to help build long-term international, regional and national capacity to address pervasive trans-regional and global threats (Art. 4.1), to support international efforts to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials and agents (Art. 4.2) and to develop international pre- and post-crisis capacity building (Art. 4.3).

The IfS CRC (Art. 3) covered a broad range of activities, such as confidence-building, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation efforts, support to the development of democratic, pluralistic state institutions, including measures to enhance women in such institutions, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of violence, defending human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, amongst other. Interventions took the form of *Exception Assistance Measures (EAM)*, limited in duration to 18 months (with the possibility to extend for 6 months), and longer-term *Interim Response Programmes (IRP)* which should build upon the results of EAM with a view to establishing or re-establishing the essential conditions for the implementation of EU external cooperation policy. IRP may last up to 36 months. A number of small-scale and highly-focused activities were funded up to an amount of EUR 2 million through the Policy Advice, Technical Assistance, Mediation, Reconciliation (PAMF) arrangement. These were based on annual standing financing decisions thereby reducing the decision time to take action.

**Funding:** Nearly EUR 1.076 million were committed for IfS CRC interventions during the period 2007 to 2013. The majority of funds were spent in the MENA region (34%) and in Sub-Saharan Africa (34%). Most projects were implemented in Sub-Saharan Africa (36%), followed by the MENA region (15%) and Asia/Pacific (15%). In terms of implementing partners, UN agencies (46%) and (mostly) international NGOs (25%) implemented the majority of funds. Most projects were implemented through (mostly) international NGOs (42%), followed by UN agencies (23%).

**Scope of the evaluation:** The evaluation covers the period 2007-2013 and all the countries / regions in which the IfS CRC has been implemented, and it focuses on four sectors: SSR/DDR; IDPs and refugees; dialogue/ mediation/ confidence building; economic recovery/ integration/ livelihoods/ reconstruction and rehabilitation.

**Methodology:** The evaluation was carried out between January and July 2016 and was divided into four phases: inception, desk, field and synthesis. 12 people were involved in the study. The field missions took place between 31 March and 13 May 2016. Four countries were visited during two-week missions, each: Lebanon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan and Nigeria. The evaluation is structured around nine evaluation questions and 28 judgement criteria. Data and information were collected through a comprehensive literature study (66 documents), a statistical analysis of the interventions, a meta-analysis of 61 financing decisions and 131 interventions, an

online survey sent to former and current FPI staff members (31 replies), an electronic key-word analysis of searchable documents and 237 interviews and 24 focus group meetings were conducted with: key informants from FPI and other EU institutions (EEAS, DG DEVCO, DG NEAR and ECHO) at HQ level as well as in EU Delegations (EUDs); with representatives of implementing partners (international NGOs, international agencies); diplomats, partner government officials, local NGOs and with beneficiaries.

## **Conclusions**

The evaluation team has identified eight clusters of conclusions.

**Conclusion I – The relevance of the IfS CRC for EU external action was generally high** – The IfS CRC has been a very useful Instrument in supporting the EU to act in situations of (emerging) crisis and protracted crisis as stated in the Treaty of the European Union but the Instrument's political potential has not been fully exploited.

**Conclusion II – IfS CRC effectiveness and sustainability increased when linked to complementary EU, international partner or country initiatives** – Given the limitations of the Instrument (short timeframe, comparatively little funding per project) the ability of the IfS CRC interventions to reach out and become effective beyond its immediate sphere of influence to promote stability increased once it was embedded or linked to a wider EU comprehensive or political approach to address the crisis. Both, smaller as well as bigger projects showed to be useful for this purpose. The same applied for the sustainability of results where the likelihood of outcomes to be maintained and carried on after the termination of the IfS CRC increased when the intervention could be combined with complementary funding or follow-up funding provided through other EU instruments, the funding of other donors or the national government.

**Conclusion III – Overall, the IfS CRC portfolio was efficiently implemented and well coordinated, but it was constrained by insufficient human resources** – FPI has managed to build the IfS CRC into a well-functioning EU external action instrument since its creation in 2007. The allocation of resources per intervention was considered mostly adequate and the majority of interventions appeared to have met their project results despite some delays caused by partner capacity constraints, country context and EU administrative procedures. EU visibility was mostly adequate.

FPI appeared to have an adequate and efficient set-up for coordination and made good use of formal as well as informal coordination mechanisms within the EU institutions to secure the initiation of interventions and their implementation. The extent to which the EU took a coordinating role, or active role in coordinating activities at the field level varied from case to case and depended on its physical presence on the ground and the political priority given to a crisis.

Differences were noted between the preparatory phase of IfS CRC interventions and their implementation. The EU had not allocated enough human and administrative resources at field level, in particular, which caused delays and impacted negatively on the coordination, accompaniment, monitoring and evaluation of interventions.

**Conclusion IV – Cross-cutting issues need more attention** – Cross-cutting issues on, human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance were not clearly enough addressed and mainstreamed throughout the IfS CRC portfolio. However, attention has been paid to gender and informal conflict sensitivity was overall adequate. Though there appeared to be room for improvement by working more through conflict analysis with a view to promote a more shared conflict sensitivity and institutional memory on the conflicts.

**Conclusion V – Incidents of consistency of interventions increased with political guidance and conflict analysis** – Consistency of interventions within the IfS CRC portfolio and vis-à-vis other EU external action interventions was sought when IfS CRC projects were prepared and designed. There is evidence that this has led to projects being well linked to other interventions, also creating synergetic effects and/or leveraging change. Against these findings, one can conclude that consistency and comprehensiveness was promoted and achieved, but more could have been done. There is evidence that, in the absence of a shared conflict analysis and clear political guidance, the Instrument's interventions became implemented rather on their own, missing opportunities to create change beyond the immediate sphere of influence of the project. The evaluation team concludes, that frequency of consistency increased if a political and/or strategic guidance founded in a shared analysis of the conflict and the country was available and used.

**Conclusion VI – Overall, the Instrument compared well with those of other EU member states and international donors and was of high added value to EU external action** – The IfS CRC was of high added value to EU external action as it was the fastest and most flexible non-humanitarian crisis response Instrument, which the EU had at its disposal. It also compared well with the crisis response instruments of other EU member states (in as far as they had such instruments) and to other international donors. Another added value was the ability of the IfS CRC to bridge between security, humanitarian and development interventions, which no other EU Instrument could.

A clear added value was the IfS CRC's flexibility, for example the non-programmable nature of the Instrument, or the broad thematic scope, and its relative speed. A limited number of other EU member states (e.g., UK and Germany) and international donors (e.g., USA, Norway, Canada, Switzerland) could deliver faster for pre-designated crisis areas (e.g. disaster response) but the amounts were often more limited. In terms of speed this compared unfavourably against the IfS CRC, yet the Instrument had a wider thematic scope which could provide substantial amounts of funding within relatively short timeframes.

There is also evidence that the IfS CRC could fill gaps which EU member states and other international donors could not address. With the end of the IfS, recourse to use the PAMF, a special arrangement within the IfS CRC, which allowed a quicker response to different (political) crisis situations with a funding up to EUR 2 million, was discontinued. This is a loss in the opinion of the evaluators.

**Conclusion VII – Learning, monitoring and evaluation could have been more focused on** – Over the evaluation period, FPI gave increasing attention to learning about the IfS CRC and to improving the monitoring and evaluation of interventions. Important strides were made but there remains room for further improvements on a number of aspects related to learning and evaluation, not least because of the wealth of relevant and pertinent knowledge generated by the IfS CRC interventions.



**Conclusion VIII – The IfS CRC portfolio helped to preserve peace and create stability** – A strong attribution of the IfS CRC outputs and its outcomes to impact in a wide range of crisis situations is difficult to establish based on the findings from this evaluation. But it is safe to say that the IfS CRC did make some relevant contributions to reducing crises which were on the global agenda for shaping stability (see JC9.2 for examples) within the parameters given to the Instrument, the scope of its operations and considering the extent to which it was used politically within EU external action.

### **Recommendations**

To improve current and future action financed under the IcSP seven clusters of recommendations are made by the evaluation team:

#### **Cluster I – Continue to stress the political nature of the Instrument**

- (1.1) Use the Instrument more explicitly in considerations of the political engagement of the EU in a given crisis context instead of seeing it as a gap-filler, only, and inform EUDs in particular to work with the Instrument as a tool to promote the political goals of the EU as they relate to peace and stability. => **Action FPI, EEAS and EUDs**
- (1.2) Use the Instrument not only as a tool to address particular topical issues of conflict and crisis in a vertical manner but to use it more proactively to straddle the divides embedded in the security-humanitarian-development nexus when aiming to work comprehensively across EU services. The latter should also address the bridging between CSDP missions, SSR and complementary development actions. => **Action FPI in collaboration with EEAS, ECHO, DG DEVCO and DG NEAR**
- (1.3) Where the Instrument, in the absence of alternatives, has to be used for activities on economic recovery and livelihoods, pay more attention to promoting the political goals of the EU external action as they relate to stability and peace. => **Action FPI**

#### **Cluster II – Enhance effectiveness and sustainability through shared country assessments and conflict analyses**

- (2.1) Inform interventions through a better understanding of the political context, conflict-related changes in country and in the sector of engagement. To the extent possible, EUD and FPI staff should undertake or draw on regular political economy studies and conflict assessments for this purpose, either through rapid assessments or more thorough studies completed by themselves or others. => **Action EUDs and FPI**
- (2.2) Avoid interventions which arise solely because of EU political pressures to act and which are not informed by lessons learnt, do not make use of country-specific assessments or studies (to the extent available) and are not built on a thorough exchange about the type of crisis response needed between HQ and EUDs. => **Action EEAS, EUDs, FPI**
- (2.3) While recognising the flexibility of the IfS to plan and implement interventions without the involvement of national government, seek agreement from influential national stakeholders to enhance the likelihood of effectiveness and sustainability when it is necessary, particularly for the security sector. In certain political and institutional contexts, recognise that working with adequate buy-in from the national government authorities for certain types but not all crisis response actions is essential. => **Action EUDs and FPI**
- (2.4) FPI should ensure through its established practice of coordination and collaboration with partners that enough attention is given to questions of follow-up and sustainability of the interventions supported through the Instrument. => **Action FPI and EEAS (SECPOL2), DG DEVCO, ECHO, DG NEAR, EUDs (political and development cooperation sections)**

- (2.5) Possible political pressures to prioritise interventions with a larger funding volume so that an enlarged IcSP portfolio can be addressed with comparatively less human resources should be resisted. The benefit of working through small or smaller projects in politically sensitive situations (which can be analysed through good assessments) should not be underestimated. => **Action EU authorities, EEAS, FPI**
- (2.6) To remain a politically effective and relevant Instrument for EU external action, the FPI should make great effort to maintain staff well versed in conflict sensitive approaches and with good sector knowledge of the design, implementation and monitoring of peace and stability interventions at HQ and field level. The EU's enhanced attention towards new policy priorities, such as the SSR and the migration crisis should be reflected in considerations about adequate staffing. => **Action FPI**
- (2.7) Through staff development measures, FPI should further promote conflict-analysis, how to straddle the security-humanitarian-development nexus and how to connect crisis response on security, migration, humanitarian action and peacebuilding/dialogue in a "politically savvy" manner to promote the peace and stability goals of EU external action. => **Action FPI in cooperation with EUDs, EEAS (SECPOL2), DEVCO, NEAR and ECHO**

**Cluster III – Recognise that efficiency and good coordination depends also on sufficient human resources**

- (3.1) EU authorities should recognise the specificities of FPI's services and allocate sufficient and experienced human resources to plan, coordinate and implement the use of this Instrument. The difficult country and security contexts in which the Instrument is implemented should be recognised as well. Decision-makers in the EU should recognise that the comparative large number of small-scale projects demand more time to administer and support than big projects. => **Action EU authorities**
- (3.2) EUDs and FPI should pay attention to ensure that staff for the crisis response interventions can devote sufficient time to attend to the post-initiation phase of an intervention so that projects can be properly supported and monitored. => **Action EUDs and FPI**
- (3.3) Sufficient administrative resources and time should be made available to enable FPI HQ to undertake, or participate in (joint EU) missions that have implications for identifying, monitoring and evaluating projects. In addition, FPI staff should be invited by other services to join relevant missions. => **Action EU Authorities**
- (3.4) Ensure that sufficient FPI country knowledge remains available at HQs and at field level so that interventions can be properly identified, prioritised, formulated, accompanied and monitored. => **Action FPI**

**Cluster IV – Pay more attention to cross-cutting issues and visibility**

- (4.1) Context and conflict assessments should pay more specific attention to cross-cutting issues to identify where and to what extent these can be promoted during the design, implementation and monitoring of the interventions. These assessments should ask in particular, how the respective cross-cutting issues could potentially enhance the quality of the intervention and promote their objectives more thoroughly. => **Action FPI and EEAS (SECPOL2)**
- (4.2) Terms of references for evaluations implemented under the lead of FPI HQ, EUDs or the implementing partner, should include standard questions about cross-cutting issues as a default. => **Action FPI and implementing partners**

- (4.3) Briefings and guidance to FPI staff should focus more attention on cross-cutting issues. Templates for the design and formulation of interventions should include standard questions about the respective cross-cutting issues, plus separate briefing sheets and guidance notes to explain why and how the respective cross-cutting issues should be addressed. => **Action FPI**
- (4.4) While the preparation and implementation of the IfS CRC portfolio displayed an adequate conflict sensitivity at the informal level, include the topic more specifically in project preparation templates and guidance notes requiring an explanation as to how conflict sensitivity is being achieved. => **Action FPI**
- (4.5) To avoid that an enhanced attention to cross-cutting issues becomes a box-ticking exercise, pay enhanced attention to these issues during learning, knowledge exchange and monitoring activities. The collection and/or compilation of baseline information in projects should be promoted and could allow for a more efficient monitoring and learning about cross-cutting issues. => **Action FPI**
- (4.6) Guidance on gender should be sharpened in the project-preparation templates so that issues of gender are understood beyond giving attention to women issues, such as women and health, or women and sanitation. Issues of gender, including their implications for girls, boys and men, and issues of empowerment, such as the enabling of women to raise their voice and participate in decision-making should be more sensitised in the briefing on gender. => **Action FPI**
- (4.7) Briefings on conflict sensitivity should address the extent to which EU visibility can be given in a particular context including the option of no or very limited visibility. Better EU guidance on how to work on visibility in fragile and conflict-affected countries should be provided (e.g., through formulating a 'visibility plan' for interventions in politically sensitive areas). => **Action FPI, DG DEVCO, EEAS (SECPOL2)**

#### **Cluster V – Exploit opportunities for working in a more consistent manner**

- (5.1) FPI should provide better guidance to FPI staff as well as to EUDs to promote consistency and coherence of IcSP interventions with other EU external actions as standard principle in line with the TEU, while underling the possible use of the Instrument independently from other forms of EU engagement. => **Action FPI**
- (5.2) FPI should counter a more limited understanding of the IfS/ IcSP among EUDs and other EU services, that see it as an Instrument to be used autonomously from other EU external actions, or as an Instrument that is only used to fill gaps, by emphasising the need to consider linkages to other EU political interventions. => **Action FPI**
- (5.3) FPI should clarify towards staff and stakeholders that it uses the term 'consistency' instead of 'coherence' for its evaluations in line with the IcSP regulations. => **Action FPI**

#### **Cluster VI – Further enhance the Instrument's value added:**

- (6.1) FPI should assess past experience in working through the PAMF and how alternative measures introduced after its termination of the PAMF helped to compensate for this loss to see what has been successful and what gaps remain. => **Action FPI**

- (6.2) FPI should undertake a detailed study to compare the speed and scope of IcSP interventions with those of other international donors while taking into account the human resources, institutional and operational arrangements and procedures which are deployed to intervene effectively in a speedy manner. This study should inform options for creating, or re-creating mechanisms and other ways of working that could be used very rapidly for (politically) urgent actions. FPI should take the findings of this up with the Secretary-General of the Commission and the financial authorities if this requires a new interpretation of the Financial Regulation (or requires renegotiation in the next Financial Perspectives) => **Action EU authorities, EEAS and FPI**
- (6.3) FPI should encourage staff to consider the IcSP also as a tool for innovation and for engagement in new domains (evidently depending on context analysis). Lessons drawn from such engagements and the added value created through such innovations should be captured and fed back into FPI so that institutional memory can be created for other possible similar areas of work. => **Action FPI and implementing partners**

#### **Cluster VII – Put more emphasis on learning, monitoring and evaluation**

- (7.1) FPI should provide guidance to implementing partners for evaluations commissioned under the respective project budget. This guidance should point at the internationally recommended practice on how to do evaluations in situations of crisis and fragility and make solid reference to FPI's new approach in working through a ToC per intervention and working through outcome indicators. => **Action FPI**
- (7.2) FPI should verify how its spending on regional, country and sector evaluations commissioned under the FPI HQ evaluation budget compares to the OECD average spending on evaluations and the good practice of other leading international partners. More real-time/quick evaluations that focus on course corrections to improve effectiveness and impact in projects should be considered. => **Action EU authorities and FPI**
- (7.3) FPI should strengthen its system of training and content-exchange to enhance learning among FPI staff, to promote learning across EU services and with stakeholders on crisis response in other donor institutions and individual experts (e.g., drafting briefing sheets; establishing a learning repository; research on emerging topics; extending the annual FPI workshop; regional FPI learning/exchange seminars). => **Action FPI**
- (7.4) FPI should share lessons learnt on crisis response interventions more systematically across EU services and thereby position itself as a learning hub for straddling the security-humanitarian-development divide. The use of DG DEV's Capacity4dev web-site and dissemination functions, which is an established dissemination tool within the EC, should be discussed as one of the options to enhance sharing and learning. => **Action FPI and DG DEVCO**
- (7.5) FPI should make a dedicated budget available to make these changes meaningful and set up a dedicated service at HQ, sufficiently staffed to lead and guide these innovations. In order to have appropriate critical distance from individual units as recommended by international best practice and able to spread IcSP learning wider in FPI, across EU services and with relevant stakeholders outside the EU institutions, an expertise placed at an appropriate level within FPI to execute this mandate is recommended. => **Action EU authorities and FPI**

## **Overall assessment**

Given the current institutional and operational set-up of the EU's external action and efforts made by the EU to be more relevant internationally on (emerging) crisis and protracted crisis in line with Title V and Article 21 of the Treaty on the European Union, the IfS CRC showed itself to be a very useful Instrument to underpin the ambitions of the EU and help in translating EU policy objectives into its global operations. Within the parameters given, FPI acted flexibly and pragmatically and built an effective provision of expertise within a relatively short time-span.

An important element of the Instrument is that it can focus on peace and stability in a way that no other EU instruments are able to, including addressing issues such as peacebuilding, mediation, SSR, IDPs and refugees. Given its broad scope (considered by stakeholders as a significant asset as the evaluation revealed) the IfS CRC has shown an ability to promote the political dimensions and values of the EU, which other instruments cannot address in the same way. In addition, the IfS CRC is the fastest non-humanitarian tool at the EU's disposal as it is not subject to tendering requirements and has global reach. It is also non-programmable which is highly valued within the EU system. However, the obligation to follow other aspects of the EU Financial Regulation often relating to contracting can result in delays, which – according to implementing organisations – a few other international donors face less. The discontinuation of the PAMF with the end of the IfS meant that the EU relinquished a standing annual financing mechanism to react more quickly, or to fill (small) funding gaps up to EUR 2 million which could not be addressed through other sources. This reduces the EU's ability and scope to act (politically) fast in particular cases.

The likelihood of the IfS CRC interventions realised impact increased when used as part of a well-informed and EU-wide (political and strategic) engagement in particular sectors or countries, commonly described as a comprehensive approach. Being able to straddle the security-humanitarian-development nexus, the Instrument was impactful when responding to crisis vertically per sector, or area, and when deployed horizontally to establish connections between different areas, or sectors of engagement where other EU instruments have limitations to act.

The Instrument's impact could have been higher if it was bolstered by political engagement throughout the lifecycle of interventions, in particular at the level of EUDs, and more upfront in considerations on how to fit the Instrument into the overall longer-term EU crisis response, as mentioned above. Its impact could also have been higher if its potential as a learning hub, as a cross-EU service knowledge facilitator, and as an operational testing ground for the EU's growing need to respond to crisis were to be acknowledged. In addition, the need to work through big as well as a variety of small or smaller projects in order to remain politically relevant, often demanding a significant amount of work, and human resources, should be understood by EU Authorities.

# 1 Introduction

---

## 1.1 Background

---

This report is the principal deliverable of the “Final Evaluation of the Instrument for Stability – Crisis Response Component (2007-2013)”. The evaluation is an independent assessment of the overall implementation of the Instrument’s Crisis Response Component (IfS CRC) commissioned and accompanied by the Unit 2 of the Service for Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI) of the European Commission. The evaluation was carried out between January and July 2016 under the Lot 12 of the Framework Contract EuropeAid/132633/C/SER/Multi and implemented by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM, The Netherlands) as lead implementing partner, and Particip GmbH (Germany). This report presents the objectives and scope of the evaluation, provides information about the profile of the IfS CRC, summarises the methodology applied for the evaluation, describes the findings per evaluation question, synthesises conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations.

## 1.2 Evaluation objectives and scope

---

The overall objective of this Instrument evaluation, as stated in the Terms of Reference (TOR, Annex 1) is to reflect more thoroughly on the IfS CRC,<sup>1</sup> to draw lessons from what has worked and what not since the start of its implementation in 2007, and to provide relevant stakeholders in the European Union, including policy-makers and the wider public, with:

- An independent assessment of the overall implementation of the IfS CRC, paying particularly attention to the results achieved against its objectives; and
- Key lessons and recommendations in order to improve current and future action financed under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

The specific objectives of this Instrument evaluation are to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of the IfS CRC in:

- Providing a response to situations of crisis or emerging crisis and
- Contributing to stability by providing an effective response to help preserve, establish or re-establish the conditions essential to the proper implementation of the EU’s development and cooperation policies.

This evaluation also assesses:

- The added value of the EU’s IfS, both with regard to its design and implementation;
- The complementarity, consistency<sup>2</sup> and coordination of the Instrument with the EU external action strategy, with other EU instruments for external assistance, and with the activities by EU Member States, and other donors when relevant; and
- Whether the cross-cutting issues gender, human rights, conflict-sensitivity, democracy and good governance were taken into account in the identification, formulation and implementation of the projects and their monitoring.

---

<sup>1</sup> Article 3 of the IfS Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006.

<sup>2</sup> The evaluation team uses the term ‘consistency’ instead of ‘coherence’ as requested by FPI in order to respect Article 2.2 of the IfS Regulation and Article 2.2 of IcSP which succeeds IfS since 1 January 2014.

The evaluation covers the period 2007-2013; all the countries / regions in which the IfS CRC has been implemented; and it focuses on four sectors: i) SSR/DDR, ii) IDPs and refugees, iii) dialogue/ mediation/ confidence building, and iv) economic recovery/integration/livelihoods & reconstruction and rehabilitation.

## 2 Profile of the IfS Crisis Response Component

---

### 2.1 Coverage of the Instrument

---

The IfS was established in 2006<sup>3</sup> and covers the period of the 2007-2013. The IfS provided the EU with a new strategic tool to address security and development challenges and as a mechanism for rapid, flexible and adequately funded initial responses to situations of political crisis or natural disasters in third countries (Art. 3), to help build long-term international, regional and national capacity to address pervasive trans regional and global threats (Art. 4.1), to support international efforts to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials and agents (Art. 4.2) and to develop international pre- and post-crisis capacity building (Art. 4.3).

As mentioned above, this evaluation is concerned with the IfS CRC (Art. 3) which covers a broad range of activities, outlined in Article 3(2), such as confidence-building, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation efforts, support to the development of democratic, pluralistic state institutions, including measures to enhance women in such institutions, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of violence, defending human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, amongst other. In accordance with Article 6 of the IfS Regulation, interventions should take the form of *Exception Assistance Measures (EAM)*, and *Interim Response Programmes (IRP)*. EAMs are limited in duration to 18 months (with the possibility to extend for 6 months) and benefit from an accelerated and simplified decision-making process by the Commission. IRPs are adopted with a view to establishing or re-establishing the essential conditions, necessary for the effective implementation of EU external cooperation policy, and shall build on previous EAMs. In practice, this may last up to 36 months.<sup>4</sup> Lastly, a number of small-scale and highly focused activities were funded through the Policy Advice, Technical Assistance, Mediation, Reconciliation and other areas of assistance (PAMF) to support third countries affected by crisis situations.

---

<sup>3</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 November 2006, establishing an Instrument for Stability

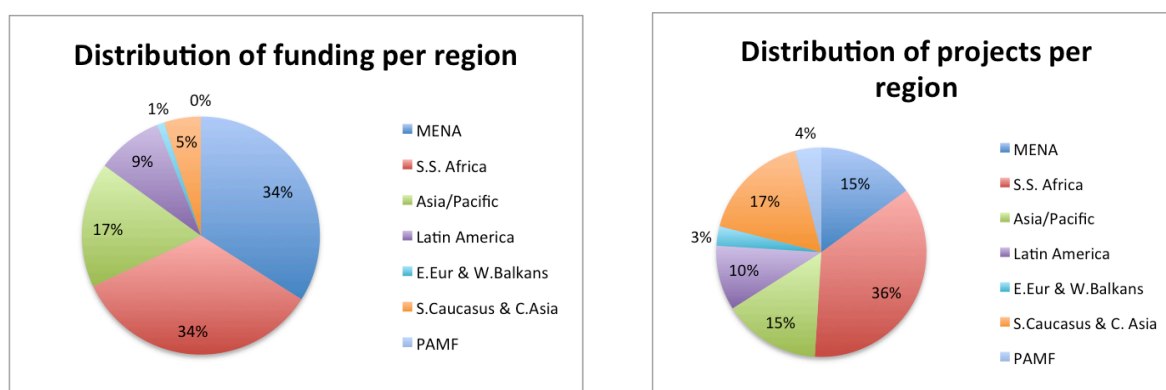
<sup>4</sup> No maximum limit on the duration of IRPs has been set under Article 6.4 of IfS Regulation. Applicable rules allow for IRP to be adopted for a period of up to 36 months.

## 2.2 Statistical overview of the IfS Crisis Response Component

According to the IfS Annual Reports<sup>5</sup> nearly EUR 1.076 million were committed for IfS CRC interventions during the period 2007 to 2013.

**Regional distribution** (see Graph 1): In terms of regional distribution, for the overall period 2007 to 2013, the greatest expenditure was in Sub-Sahara Africa (34% of total IfS CRC funding, representing 36% of the total number of CRC projects) and on the MENA region (34% of funding and 15% of the projects), Asia/Pacific (17% of funding spent on 15 % of the number of projects) and Latin America (9% of available funding spent on 10% of projects). The South Caucasus and Central Asia region received 5% of total available funding allocated to 17% of the total amount of projects funded under the IfS CRC. Less funds were spent in Eastern Europe / Western Balkans (1% of total funds went to 3% of IfS CRC projects) and for projects under the PAMF (less than 1% of the total funding and 4% of the projects).<sup>6</sup>

**Graph 1: Pie charts 1 and 2: Distribution of funding and projects per region 2007-2013**



From comparing the statistics *displayed* in the above pie charts, it can be observed that an equal share of funding went to Sub-Saharan Africa and to the MENA region. However, from the fact that the funding allocated to Sub-Saharan Africa represents a larger share of the total number of projects compared to the MENA region, it follows that interventions funded in Sub-Saharan Africa were, on average, smaller in scale. Conversely, funding that targeted the MENA region was used for fewer, but larger-scale interventions.

**Type of implementing partners** (see graph 2): The IfS Annual Reports distinguish between the following types of implementing partners under the IfS CRC: UN organisations, other international organisations, international and local NGO's, private sector, EU Member State agencies / bodies, third country governments and their respective agencies. Over the entire period 2007 to 2013, the highest number of projects was implemented by international and, in a small number of cases,<sup>7</sup> local NGO's (42%) followed by UN organisations and the private sector (23% and 17%, respectively). Other international organisations implemented 11% of the projects, while EU Member States agencies implemented 4% and third country governments and their respective agencies 3% of the total number of projects funded under the IfS CRC.

<sup>5</sup> For full references to these Annual Reports, see Annex 4 (Literature and documents consulted).

<sup>6</sup> Data on the distribution of funding are taken from the IfS Annual Reports 2007-2013, whereas the statistics on the distribution of the number of projects is derived from our own analysis.

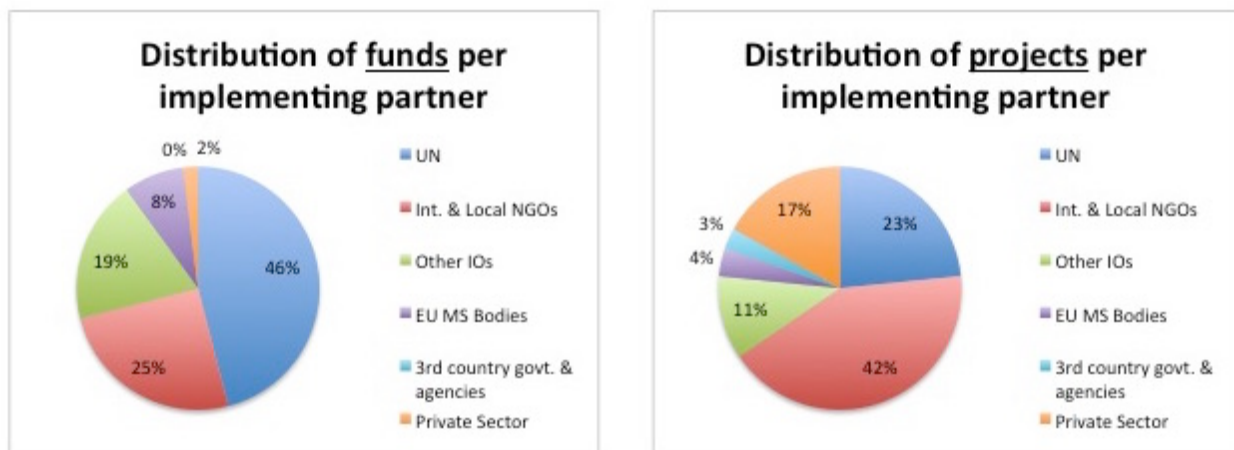
<sup>7</sup> For example, the POLE Institute in the East of DRC (headquartered in Goma).



However, looking at which partners implemented the largest share of the funding, UN agencies come out on top, representing 46% of the funding, with NGOs following at 25%. Other international organisations implemented 19% of total IfS CRC funding. EU Member State Bodies (8%) private sector (2%) and third country agencies (less than 1%) only implemented smaller shares of the total funding.<sup>8</sup>

It can be concluded from these data that UN agencies implemented fewer projects, but with larger budgets, whereas more projects were implemented by NGOs, but these projects were smaller in scale. Also, the private sector appears to have implemented mostly smaller-scale projects.

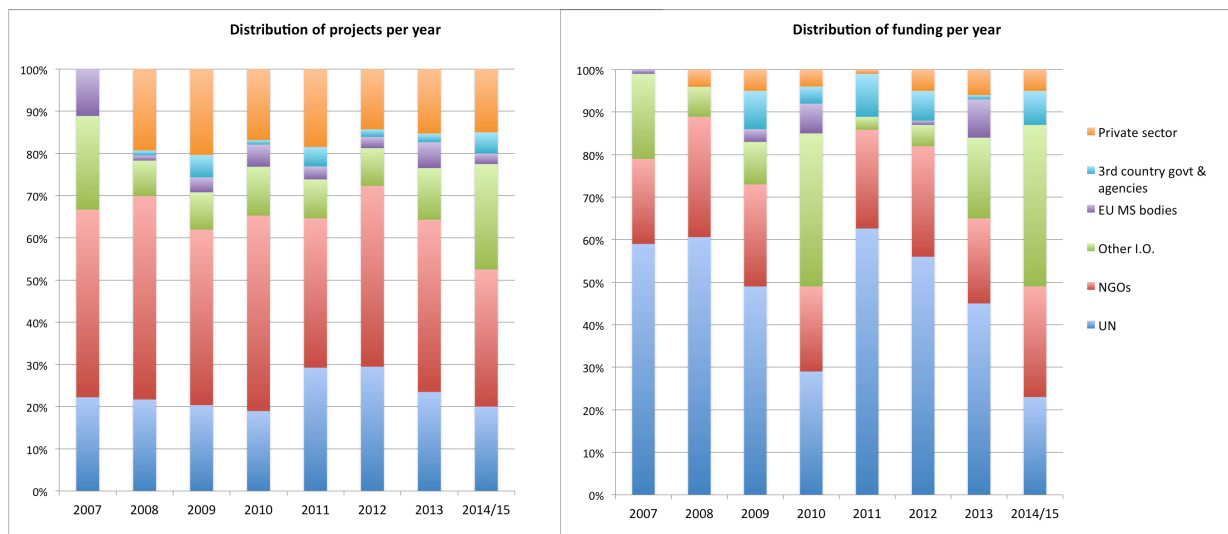
**Graph 2: Pie charts 3 and 4: Distribution of projects and funding per implementing partner type 2007-2013**



**Spending per implementing partner type per year:** Graph 3 below summarises the percentage of spending per implementing partner per year (see also Annex 5). In terms of trends, one can observe that the UN became gradually a less relevant partner to work with over the years, though there are peaks in 2011 and 2012 when the EU still counted substantially on partnering with UN organisations. NGO's were another prominent implementing partner throughout the years, floating between 20% and 28% of funding throughout the period 2007-2013. Other international organisations came in third in most years, but showed significant peaks in 2010 and 2014/15. The other partners played an overall minor relevance for the implementation over the entire period. It is evident from this analysis that UN organisations as well as NGOs remained by far the most important implementing partners through each year of the evaluation period.

<sup>8</sup> Data on the distribution of funding are taken from the 2013 IfS Annual Report, whereas the statistics on the distribution of the number of projects is derived from our own analysis.

**Graph 3: Distribution of funding/projects per implementing partner per year**



## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Evaluation phases

The evaluation was conducted in four phases, i.e. the inception phase, the desk phase, the field phase and the synthesis phase. Six data collection and analysis methods were applied across the four phases, which are explained (see section 3.2). Interviews were conducted during all four phases of the evaluation.

During the **inception phase**, the inception report with the evaluation framework (see section 3.3) was drafted, a cloud-based project database was created and documents for the desk study were collected.

During the **desk phase**, the literature review and project document review (meta-analysis) took place, four mission work plans were produced for Lebanon, Nigeria, DRC and Pakistan, respectively, an online survey was prepared and disseminated and a desk report was produced and presented.

**Field phase:** FPI requested the evaluation team to execute four field visits to selected countries covering three regions. Each mission lasted two weeks on average. The selection allowed to study projects dealing with refugees and IDPs (Lebanon), livelihoods and economic recovery, including post-disaster projects (mostly Pakistan, but also Nigeria and DRC to some extent), SSR (Pakistan, Nigeria and DRC) and dialogue, confidence building, mediation (mostly Nigeria, but also DRC and Pakistan). See Annex 3 for an overview of projects studied per mission country.

During the **synthesis phase**, the online survey summary report was produced, four summary notes/ reports were compiled (one per field mission) and presented to FPI. A draft final report was drafted and presented to FPI, followed by the writing of the final report.

## 3.2 Data collection and analysis

---

Data were collected through six different methods.

- A **desk review of relevant literature, reference documents and country and other meta-evaluations** was undertaken during the desk phase (Annex 4).
- A limited **statistical analysis** of the IfS CRC interventions for the period 2007-2013 was undertaken to enhance the evaluation team's understanding of the Instrument in terms of funding, geographical coverage and implementing partners (see Section 2.2). In addition, international statistics on fragility from the OECD and the World Bank were compiled and used to answer one of the JC (Annex 5).
- During the evaluation period (2007-2013) over 130 EC financing decisions and close to 650 crisis response interventions were formulated and implemented. The ToR requested for the desk phase a **meta-analysis of project documents for the period 2010-2013** covering the four sectors mentioned above (see section 1.2). For this period (2010-2013) the evaluation team was asked to focus on 61 financing decisions and 131 interventions, selected by the evaluation team in close collaboration with FPI (Annex 2). The evaluation team reviewed 105 (80%) of the interventions and 57 (93%) of the financing decisions<sup>9</sup> requested by FPI. The methodology for this meta-analysis is described in Annex 6.
- **Electronic analysis of searchable documents through MAX QDA** software was applied as a complementary methodological element, tested and applied for the EQ on cross-cutting issues to provide additional information to our findings from the meta-analysis. The rationale for using this tool is further explained in Annex 6.
- An **online survey** (Annex 7) was sent to 50 former and current FPI staff members of whom 31 responded (Annex 8).
- A total of 237 **interviews**<sup>10</sup> were conducted with key informants from FPI and other EU institutions (EEAS, DG DEVCO, DG NEAR and ECHO) at Headquarter level as well as in EU Delegations (EUDs), with representatives of implementing partners (international NGOs, international agencies), diplomats, partner government officials, local NGOs and with beneficiaries visited during the four field missions. The interviews were conducted in person or by phone with interviewees based in Brussels, Geneva, Bristol (UK), Maseru (Lesotho), and N'jamana (Chad) and during the field visits (Annex 9). In addition, 24 focus group meetings were held (see Annex 9). The evaluation team's visits to Pakistan and DRC also had site visits to view physical infrastructure and participated in implementation activities organised by implementing partners during the four field missions. Interviews were conducted along an interview guide, which was adapted to respondent profile and context (Annex 10).

---

<sup>9</sup> One financing decision can cover several interventions.

<sup>10</sup> Some of the interviewees provided information during two or more meetings.

### 3.3 Evaluation questions

The evaluation team developed an evaluation framework from the initial list of evaluation questions (EQs) listed in the ToR. It consists of 9 EQ, 28 judgement criteria (JC) and 67 Indicators.<sup>11</sup> The 9 EQs are:

EQ1 on <b>relevance</b> : To what extent have the objectives of the IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio been relevant in promoting the overall policy objectives of the EU's foreign policy toward countries affected by crisis, and are these objectives still relevant?
EQ2 on <b>effectiveness</b> : To what extent do the results of the IfS Crisis Response Component interventions contribute to achieving the objectives of the IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio?
EQ3 on <b>efficiency and timeliness</b> : To what extent did the pursuing of, and working through the IfS Crisis Response Component allow results to be achieved in a timely and visible manner and at a reasonable cost, taking into account the political imperatives at the time IfS measures were adopted?
EQ4 on <b>sustainability</b> : To what extent have the effects (results and impacts) of IfS Crisis Response Component interventions, which have come to an end, been maintained over time?
EQ5 on <b>cross-cutting issues</b> : To what extent have the cross-cutting issues of gender, human rights, conflict sensitivity, democracy and good governance been integrated and promoted in the IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio?
EQ6 on <b>co-ordination and complementarity</b> : To what extent and with what effect have the IfS Crisis Response Component interventions been designed and implemented in coordination and complementarity at different levels both within the EU and with other donors and partners?
EQ7 on <b>consistency</b> : To what extent are the interventions carried out under the IfS Crisis Response Component consistent with each other, and with the EU external action strategy?
EQ8 on <b>value added</b> : What has been the distinct contribution and value added of the IfS Crisis Response Component interventions in particular cases relative to EU member states and other donors?
EQ9 on <b>impact</b> : To what extent has the IfS Crisis Response Component had some impact overall on preserving peace and creating stability?

### 3.4 Limitations

For a complex EU instrument evaluation, six months is very short which required the evaluation team to work within extremely compressed timelines making a proper preparation of the missions challenging. The short timelines did also not allow for buffers to accommodate unforeseen developments. One of them was the withdrawal of the originally selected team leader for the Nigeria mission for private reasons, which put additional pressures on the team to meet the deadlines without too many delays.

The quality of project documents and their (independent) evaluations that were available to the team to analyse varied considerably across projects. The meta-analysis of project documents helped to better understand the scope of the interventions and their immediate achievements but provided relatively little information about the extent to which the IfS CRC was relevant and of added value in a wider political country context or EU external action context. The interviews and the field visits, in particular, compensated for this deficiency and helped to gain the insights needed to evaluate the Instrument.

<sup>11</sup> The JC are mentioned in Chapter 4, Indicators are listed in the methodological framework in Annex 13.

The team encountered also limitations due to the security situation in Pakistan and Nigeria. Travel to Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Peshawar in Pakistan, where considerable amounts of IfS CRC funding were invested, was not possible, with official permission from the Pakistan government in the formal issuing of Non-Objection Certificates (NOCs) unclear even once the mission had arrived in the country. However, Lahore and selected rural areas in the Punjab could be visited with police escort, making the mission worthwhile. In Nigeria, a short mission to the Delta region in armoured cars could be organised but only two out of 12 project sites could be visited. Visits to Jos and selected sites in the Jos Plateau, accompanied by police escort, were possible, making this mission also worthwhile. Visits to DRC (Kinshasa and Goma) and Lebanon (Beirut, Beqaa Valley in Southern Lebanon, and Nahr El-Bared Palestinian refugee camp in Northern Lebanon) could be undertaken without any problems.

A further limitation to the Pakistan, Nigeria and DRC visits was the time passed since the projects had been implemented. The teams could still find relevant informants, but not all people the teams would have liked to talk to were still available.

## 4 Evaluation findings based on EQ's

**EQ1 on relevance: To what extent have the objectives of the IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio been relevant in promoting the overall policy objectives of the EU's foreign policy toward countries affected by crisis, and are these objectives still relevant?**

*In this EQ, we will assess the extent to which the support activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipients and partner institutions. More specifically, the IfS CRC focus will be assessed, the intervention logic and portfolio against defined crisis policy response objectives.*

The IfS CRC helped to promote the EU's commitments vis-à-vis countries affected by crisis as stated in Title V and Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). IfS CRC interventions were targeted towards those countries most affected (directly or indirectly) by (violent) conflict, protracted crisis or natural disaster that may have political consequences and fall primarily in the main areas of conflict prevention, crisis response, security and stability that are common to all the EU communications and policy documents that deal with conflict related response. The broad remit of the Regulation and its flexibility allowed the IfS CRC to straddle the security-humanitarian-development nexus and – being a first-responder of the non-humanitarian instruments for a crisis before mobilising international cooperation instruments– made it a particularly relevant Instrument for the EU's external action. While the EU has made considerable efforts over the past years to clarify where, when and how to respond to crisis, there was not enough shared understanding across the EU services about the political dimensions of crisis, what drives conflicts and how to deal with protracted crisis. This impacted on the IfS CRC which, designed as a political instrument, appeared to have been underexploited for this purpose.

### Judgement Criteria

**JC1.1 – The objectives of the IfS CRC portfolio are tailored to the overall policy objectives set out in Title V and Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and EU communications dealing with conflict and conflict response.**

*Summary judgement: Overall there is confirmation from both the desk study and field missions that the IfS CRC interventions were in line with the EU commitments in Title V and Article 21 of the TEU. The broad nature of the IfS Regulation helped the development of interventions that could address a variety of different situations, which required a crisis response, particularly those areas that fell between the (funding) cracks and spanned the security-humanitarian-development nexus.*

*There was more emphasis on addressing crises that were already on-going, which was in line with the crisis response nature of the Instrument, rather than preventing crisis from occurring. There appeared to be different situations showing how the IfS CRC was deployed at the EUD level: Some interventions were part of a wider joint effort while other interventions appeared more random and disconnected. This impacted on the political relevance of the IfS CRC interventions and is discussed further under EQ 9 (JC9.1).*

The IfS CRC interventions were in line with the EU commitments in Title V and Article 21 of the TEU, specifically those that addressed democratic principles, humanitarian disaster, conflict and conflict response. These interventions also linked to successive EU policy communications<sup>12</sup> that have been developed to ensure more comprehensive guidance on emerging priorities that relate to the IfS Regulation. In the majority of the interventions, the crisis tended to be protracted when the IfS CRC was deployed so overall the emphasis tended to be less on emerging or new crises, which was understandable as many of the crises we see over the last years are of a protracted nature.<sup>13</sup> This was in line with the mandate of the IfS CRC. Its role in conflict prevention was limited.

The broad nature of the IfS Regulation allowed for interventions that addressed an eclectic array of situations requiring a crisis response, particularly those areas that fell between the cracks and spanned the security-humanitarian-development nexus. As such, the IfS CRC appeared as the more appropriate Instrument for example to address humanitarian needs in contexts where there were real security concerns (e.g. support for refugees) and areas that no other Instrument could cover such as economic recovery, livelihoods, reconstruction and rehabilitation. In this way, the relevance of the IfS CRC was adaptable depending on the fluidity of the crisis.

Some IfS CRC interventions were found to include some analysis of the underlying drivers of conflict and thus promoting a bottom-up approach to achieving stability. Crisis tends to expose the structural weaknesses inherent in a country's historical development that become vulnerabilities and thus threaten stability. In Lebanon in particular, the Syrian refugee crisis 2011-2014 exposed the overall weaknesses of the Lebanese State institutional capacity (e.g. health service) through the sheer volume of people in need of public services.<sup>14</sup> The IfS CRC was deployed as part of a wider crisis strategy to address this issue. However by contrast in Nigeria, there was little evidence of the IfS CRC interventions being linked to a wider EUD approach to address the crisis, which according to the evaluation team's field visit report, would have helped to make the IfS CRC interventions more relevant in this context. Looking at the IfS CRC portfolio as a whole, the political relevance of the interventions appeared to be on a spectrum from those that are overtly political to the broadly political, which raises the question of how political value can or should be defined in the interventions.

### Judgement Criteria

**JC1.2 – Overall contribution the objectives stated in the IfS Regulation have made to the EU's capacity to respond to situations of crisis or emerging crisis.**

*Summary judgement: The bespoke and flexible merits of the IfS CRC helped to enhance the EU's response to crisis in complex areas that required a comprehensive approach to straddle the security-humanitarian-development nexus, something highly relevant for projects in fragile and conflict states. The broad remit of the Regulation also allowed for the relevance of the IfS CRC to be adaptable, especially where emerging crises developed from protracted crisis situations, and particularly when efforts were linked to strong conflict/context analysis. It was also a highly*

<sup>12</sup> EU Communications on: Conflict Prevention (2001); Security Sector Reform (2006); Situations of Fragility (2007); and Resilience (2012).

<sup>13</sup> 'Emerging crisis' is understood by the evaluation team as a new crisis which is in the process of scaling up; 'protracted crisis' is understood as a longer term and non-linear crisis, characterized by different levels of intensities over time.

<sup>14</sup> Contract 335173 (2013) - Conflict reduction through improving health care services for the vulnerable population in Lebanon (UNHCR).

*relevant Instrument in helping to bridge transitions, particularly being a first-responder to a crisis before other development cooperation instruments were mobilised. Both EU and external stakeholders agree that the IfS CRC was a crucial tool that facilitated the EU's response to crisis. The extent to which it has been used more politically, however, differs between EUDs.*

The partnership modalities, the broad remit of areas that the IfS Regulation spanned, and the lack of ODA-eligibility requirements enhanced the EU's capacity to respond to situations of new crisis or protracted crisis. For example, the IfS CRC was able to fund certain activities that other EU Instruments cannot, or only under certain circumstances, such as military justice support<sup>15</sup>, peace-building activities including with a regional dimension, support for emerging themes such as countering violent extremism (which exacerbate crisis) or resilience projects that straddle the humanitarian-security-development nexus. Being able to respond in this comprehensive manner was a unique contribution to enhancing the EU's toolbox of possible responses, particularly when addressing these areas that fell between the (funding) cracks or that straddled several areas at the same time.

In some EUDs, the objectives of the IfS CRC were more aligned with their development cooperation instruments than others. In Pakistan, interventions were strong in the areas of rehabilitation (post-disaster) and resilience with a political lens (to address governance concerns) thereby bridging the political-operational divide. The Instrument also worked where originally IfS CRC funded initiatives transitioned to DCI funding (e.g. MDTF in Pakistan)<sup>16</sup>. This highlights a potential gap in how transitions occur from crisis to more regular cooperation where some areas can more easily make the link than others. In another case, in Lebanon, the IfS CRC UNHCR intervention addressed growing tension and conflict in the primary health-care sector<sup>17</sup> during the Syrian refugee crisis, which marked support in a new sector for the IfS CRC that usually requires a purely humanitarian response. The intervention was considered highly relevant at the time of the crisis since no other instrument was available to fund this area at the time. This therefore increased the EU's capacity to respond overall in Lebanon since it enabled the EUD to address a gap that was a potentially destabilising factor.

From the online survey<sup>18</sup> there was a very positive commendation of the IfS CRC as a crucial tool with many respondents citing the Instrument's main properties as: responsiveness; rapidity; quick delivery; flexible procedures; and shorter approval circuit. There were fewer comments that noted its importance in crisis orientated and sensitive situations, its non-programmable nature, the political dimensions and gap filling/bridging to other EU external action instruments. This suggests that overall the IfS CRC was most relevant for EUDs because of its ability to be deployed quickly and flexibly and complement other development Instruments. In addition, the majority of survey respondents seem to agree that the IfS CRC has been able to fill gaps in (emerging) crisis situations. This perhaps says more about the rigidity and limitations of development cooperation Instruments in that EUDs tend to see the IfS CRC's value as being quick and flexible rather than necessarily seeing the Instrument's political value per se.

In the desk study, the IfS CRC is mentioned as the only tool in some instances that could respond 'politically' but sensitively in Georgia,<sup>19</sup> and to provide 'flanking' measures for broader political initiatives (Indonesia-Aceh).<sup>20</sup> According to some key EU officials and other stakeholders<sup>21</sup> development cooperation is becoming more political/conflict-sensitive. However the picture looks rather diverse at the EUD level with some EUDs having used the IfS CRC more strategically and as part of a wider engagement rather as opposed to other EUDs who didn't

<sup>15</sup> Contract 308518 (2013) in DRC

<sup>16</sup> Contract 249232 (2010)

<sup>17</sup> Contract 335173 (2013) in Lebanon (UNHCR)

<sup>18</sup> See Online Survey – summary findings.

<sup>19</sup> Particip, 2015.

<sup>20</sup> ECO3 & Conseil Sante 2012.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with EU officials, 07.03.2016 and 26.05.2016; interview with NGO representatives in Brussels, 15.04.2016 and 20.04.2016.



really recognise it as a potential useful political instrument. From interview data gathered during field missions,<sup>22</sup> it appears that as a political instrument the main positive contribution of the IfS CRC was that it was flexible and could be swiftly put in place in contrast with the EDF and DCI. However, other external stakeholders also note that it has added to the fragmentation of the decision-making process and made the Instrument more prone to become “*too much of a political tool and that is not responding to the needs of partner countries*”.<sup>23</sup>

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC1.3 – There is a common EU understanding of “crisis” and “emerging crisis” and how the IfS Crisis Response Component is responding to that.

*Summary judgement:* In terms of a common EU understanding of crisis, it is clear from the desk study and field missions that there are limitations to how “shared” the understanding was, at and between, all levels. One key element was securing agreement on the priority status of a crisis, which in the absence of a shared conflict analysis (often the case) may prove hard to secure. It appeared, that a crisis tends to be most frequently responded to through IfS CRC interventions once it was deemed to be fully on-going or protracted since it then become an undisputed priority.

Crisis is a general term that is understood and widely shared, however more nuanced information about how to define a crisis, how it emerges and its likely course of development was less clear or shared. As noted in the desk study successive instrument evaluations have noted a lack of precision in the terms used surrounding crisis, which caused problems for conflict-related EU action. In particular, the 2011 evaluation of the IfS noted that the lack of shared understanding leads “... to broad and differing interpretations, and a consequent lack of focus and coherence”.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, in the desk study, concerns were raised about evidencing more systematic and concrete steps to enhance understanding about an emerging crisis, protracted crisis and post-crisis. This was, for instance, reflected in interviews with EU officials, who noted that the shared understanding of crisis among EU institutions is improving, e.g. through coordination meetings, discussions in the DEVCO Fragility Unit, and the joint DEVCO-EEAS work on conflict assessment, yet still saw a long way to further improve.<sup>25</sup>

Agreeing the priority status of a crisis and how it needs to be responded to, are important elements that corresponded most often to IfS CRC interventions. For example, in Pakistan there were some differences between Headquarter (HQ) and the EUD perspectives, especially around addressing countering violent extremism or in addressing forgotten crises such as the India-Pakistan relations in the Kashmir region (that seen from the EUD perspective should have been funded by the IfS CRC). The issue of setting of priorities about the status of a crisis, and who does it, highlights a point raised in the desk study about whether the EU really had the mechanisms and working processes in place to thoroughly analyse and understand when interventions were needed, and how the IfS CRC could be used to appropriately respond to crisis in any given context.

The on-line survey seems to confirm the lack of definition with 63% of respondents feeling understanding of the terms crisis and protracted crisis are only “somewhat shared”. From some of the comments respondents note that there is no real definition of crisis, however this is not necessarily the real problem since it is more about correctly identifying the priority status of the crisis. However, how the priority of any crisis is decided upon is complicated. Several respondents highlighted the interests of different actors: “*the action is often divergent because of different interests, political considerations and other imperatives*” and “*up to a certain point a common understanding of whether there is an (emerging) crisis, or not, is a bargaining deal*”.

<sup>22</sup> From interview data gathered during three of the four field missions (Pakistan, Lebanon, DRC) with other EU member-states, donors, international organisations and implementing partners.

<sup>23</sup> Interviews 15.04.2016 and 20.04.2016

<sup>24</sup> INCAS (2011, p. 30).

<sup>25</sup> Interviews with EU officials, 11.03.2016, 07.04.2016 and 26.05.2016.



*between real needs on the ground and political interests*". This highlights the complex decision-making process that often accompanies prioritising a crisis and who ultimately makes the decisions. Is it from a top down perspective or bottom up? This particularly makes operationalising the concept of "emerging crisis" a source of tension between the understanding of the term from the HQ, EU Member States and diplomatic missions perspective and the EUD field level understanding. At the field level, there can also be differences in shared analysis between the EUD and international actors. In the DRC, international actors appeared to concur about the political situation but draw different conclusions about how to follow-up and respond to the crisis situation. There was no shared EU conflict and political economy analysis for DRC, making it challenging for the IfS CRC to respond appropriately. As noted, a thorough political dialogue in line with Art. 8 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement does also not exist in the DRC. This echoes findings from the Lebanon, Pakistan and Nigeria missions.

The use of the IfS CRC was the result of internal negotiations and pragmatism to address different forms of crisis, most often those that were on-going and or longer-term protracted crises. From the replies received, it appears that the shared understanding about the urgency of the crisis, much less than a common normative understanding of what crisis and crisis response should be, helped shape agreements on the need to respond and to use the IfS CRC for this purpose. As such, its relevance was underpinned.

## **EQ2 on effectiveness: To what extent do the results of the IfS Crisis Response Component interventions contribute to achieving the objectives of the IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio?**

*In this EQ, we will assess the extent to which the support provided has attained its objectives. The focus will be on the effectiveness of the IfS CRC overall with findings extrapolated from individual project reviews, interviews, evaluations and complementary information received from literature reviews.*

The majority of IfS CRC interventions have helped to achieve the objectives of the IfS CRC portfolio and – through a growing portfolio over the years – was able to increasingly address relevant geo-political regions in the world. Financing Decisions and project documents were grounded in the EU's political objectives and paved the way for interventions which, in most cases, related well to the different political contexts. Projects led to results that were overall in line with their stated objectives although the short-term funding nature of the IfS CRC and the relative small funding per project created limitations. Achievements and contributions towards creating stability beyond the immediate sphere of influence of an intervention were in most cases limited though this should not be a surprise as the Instrument, given its limitations, could only create a certain amount of leverage on its own. Effectiveness therefore was higher where the IfS CRC projects were combined with complementary or follow-up support as part of a more comprehensive action to address the crisis, either through political and policy dialogue and/or the funding of other EU instruments, international agencies or partner governments. Monitoring and evaluation practice appeared to be mixed suggesting that improvements can be made to enhance effectiveness of interventions. Selected cases identified through the field missions and the desk study also suggest that gains in using the Instrument could have been enhanced through the application of EU conflict assessments for a country (preferably to be undertaken by EUDs) to identify better priorities concerning the areas, sectors and scope of the interventions.

### **Judgement Criteria**

**JC2.1 – The objectives of the IfS Regulation and the specific political objectives of the EU were reiterated each time when a new IfS measure was decided.**

*Summary judgement: Overall, Financing Decisions and project documents (Description of Action) built on the EU political objectives and translated them into well-designed interventions relating to*

*the different political contexts. However, the extent to which these were promoted during implementation varied witness to information collected during the desk study and the Pakistan and DRC field missions. The political and operational discussions preceding these decisions through formal and informal exchanges at various levels were considered adequate and generally aligned with the relevant discussions at country level, among relevant services and in the Council.*

The articulation of the EU's political objectives were generally clear in the Financing Decisions and in project documents but there are significant variations in the extent to which follow-up political engagement by EUD staff took place on the ground. In DRC, a monitoring of the implementation of political objectives was an implicit element of the overall monitoring of interventions informing, for example, the EU engagement in the police reform through a combined and timely well-composed funding via IfS CRC and EDF resources. In the case of Pakistan, the IfS CRC was used elaborately but spread too thin to allow a clear political messaging suggesting that the translation of political objectives of the EU were reiterated at the project level but not vis-à-vis the engagement of the EU towards the country as a whole.

The strengthening of public institutions in the security sector of the partner government was seen as a political objective that contributed to the IfS overall objectives. But how this political objective related to the partner country (security) policy more specifically seemed secondary. This can lead to insufficiently targeted political engagements. For example, an evaluation report of an IfS CRC intervention in Nigeria found that a political dimension at the Federal level, complementary to the IfS CRC was lacking: the project supported the Presidential amnesty and DDR process but did not secure the full support of the Federal Government. In the case of Chad, this political dimension was lacking.<sup>26</sup> The evaluation team's visit to Nigeria also observed that the follow-up political engagement by the EUD has been generally insufficient (due to shortage in human resources, as will be discussed further below) making IfS CRC projects in some cases appear to be implemented as a (more rigid) development cooperation measure rather than as one implemented through a political instrument.

Political discussions preceding the Financial Decisions and the formulation of the project documents have been generally intense taking place at various levels between the EEAS, FPI, EUDs, DG DEVCO, ECHO and DG NEAR through a mix of informal and formal exchanges. The evaluation team's Lebanon visit noted particularly effective political discussions within the EUD, in exchange with HQ, at the height of the crisis in 2012 to decide the priorities and the best use of the IfS CRC. Having more formalised systems for consultation and exchange was not advocated as timely discussions among informed individuals in EUDs and headquarters working on similar projects or similar geographic regions were generally seen as effective. The practice of (political) discussions has been well summarised by one respondent to the online survey: *"the amount of formal and informal discussions that preceded the adoption of an IfS CRC measure obviously varied significantly. In some situations one would not want elaborate discussions to precede funding decisions (response to a natural disaster), but in most situations IfS actions were aligned with on-going Council discussions, discussions in the country (with MS on the ground) and with the services concerned in Brussels"*.

Not surprisingly, there are cases where opinions between EU staff at HQ and between the services concerned, within EUDs or between EUDs and HQ differed about the extent to which an intervention could achieve results and thereby would help to promote the political objectives of the EU. For DRC and Pakistan, cases were mentioned during interviews where the EUDs, including staff from FPI, were reluctant to follow guidance from HQ for the implementation of a particular intervention when it was considered as driven by the political agenda at HQ without sufficient contextual understanding. In the judgement of this field-based staff, this would have made it difficult to implement and unlikely to succeed. Insufficient knowledge about the country, the absence of critical thinking at HQ about the country, or the lack of taking into account the views of country (government) partners was criticised in these cases. Beyond that, HQ staff also observed a

<sup>26</sup> Contract 278940 (South Sudan), 308518 (DRC), 278457 (Nigeria), 319474 (Chad).

lack of involvement of the EEAS in the IfS CRC which has resulted in some cases in funding allocations that did not sufficiently take into account political needs and priorities.<sup>27</sup>

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC2.2 – IfS Crisis Response Component interventions have coherent Theories of Change (ToC) where objectives and results chains can be monitored.

*Summary judgement:* The review of data and information gathered across the different interventions revealed a rather diverse picture in terms of objectives, result chains and risks that could be monitored by the implementers along a coherent ToC or a well-developed intervention logic. IfS CRC interventions were pragmatically adjusted when needed and when faced with changes in their respective environment. While log-frames were mostly present their quality and use revealed a mixed picture. ToCs, still a more recent tool to monitor interventions, were used occasionally. From the findings, the evaluation team judges that it is worth exploring a more systematic formulation and use of ToC and intervention logics to enable a better monitoring of objectives and results and thereby to create gains in terms of effectiveness.

While most projects had log-frames with project objectives and higher-level objectives they were formulated with differing levels of clarity.<sup>28</sup> Main problems identified include: weak (i.e., overambitious, non-measurable, too long-term) objectively verifiable indicators, absence of an M&E plan or baseline, unstructured or unsystematic monitoring systems, inappropriateness of using a classical project-cycle-management approach,<sup>29</sup> too many or diffusely formulated assumptions and too complex log-frames. The attention given to outcome indicators and their quality was overall limited with little effort put into monitoring and assessing explicitly the extent to which an intervention had contributed to a course of (political) change, or triggered some change to happen.

Noting that the formulation of ToC is a more recent phenomenon in international cooperation and crisis response, most of the IfS CRC interventions did not detail in an explicit manner their ToC.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, ToC were often implicit in the way that implementing partners worked or from what could be discerned from their result frameworks as the visit to Nigeria revealed. In DRC, in some instances assumptions were questioned and learning was subsequently integrated into the portfolio (e.g., the discontinuation of support to the project dealing with civil-military relationship building; or the research and work on children in artisanal mining).<sup>31</sup> Overall, IfS CRC interventions were adjusted when needed and when faced with changes in their respective environment. For projects relating to dialogue/trust building, for example, the documentation reviewed reveals that 80% of projects for which information was available adjusted their intervention to respond to contextual changes and evolving geopolitical realities (e.g., change of approach, postpone or cancel activities).

What appeared to be missing across the Instrument, however, was a more thorough and systematic process of formulation of the assumptions and risks underpinning the ToC of an intervention, which is the key part of a ToC. Two projects reviewed during country visits to DRC (civil-military relationship building) and Pakistan (Civil capacity building for law enforcement - CCBLE)<sup>32</sup> showed overly ambitious assumptions about what could be realised, or even contributed to during a timeframe of 18 to 24 months. A similar finding came from Nigeria where implicit (and

<sup>27</sup> Interview with EU officials, 07.04.2016 and 27.05.2016 (both Brussels).

<sup>28</sup> For IfS CRC interventions in relation to SSR/DDR and dialogue/trust building, for example, more than 50% of the interventions for which an appraisal of their monitoring system was available (final evaluation, ROM reports) appeared to have weak monitoring systems.

<sup>29</sup> The evaluation for contract 315364 (Myanmar) reported, for example, that the flexible project design necessary to respond flexibly to the needs of the peace process and allow forward planning was difficult to implement according to a project management logic.

<sup>30</sup> Some interventions appear to have a sound ToC according to evaluative material, i.e. contracts 276306 and 279016 (South Sudan), 316533 (Mali), 322635 (Nigeria), 334904 (Syria); 311903 (Pakistan).

<sup>31</sup> Contract 284107 (DRC) and evaluation of Pole Institute, contract 283808, Davis, L. February 2014. Evaluation finale du projet « Action citoyenne pour une paix durable à l'Est de la RDC ».

<sup>32</sup> Contracts 284107 (DRC) and 231840 (Pakistan).

unrealistic) assumptions were made about the extent the Government could contribute to a comprehensive peacebuilding process.<sup>33</sup> Yet there are questions about how much this over-ambition comes from implementing partners original proposals or are more of a requirement and encouragement of the EU to make the proposition more attractive to fund.

### Judgement Criteria

#### **JC2.3 – The IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio has contributed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention that have made an impact in line with the Component’s objectives.**

*Summary judgement:* There is evidence across all data collected for this evaluation that the funding through the Instrument, as well as the mere announcement by the EU to engage through it, had contributed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Project results, mainly outputs, were overall in line with their stated objectives though there were clear limitations on the impact given the short-term funding and the political leverage these (often comparatively small) projects could achieve. Where smartly combined with complementary or follow-up support, either through the funding of other EU instruments, international agencies or partner governments, effectiveness and the achievement of outcomes and impact increased as some projects reviewed reveal. This was, however, not the case across the portfolio for various reasons (further discussed below) and shows that the potential of the Instrument could be further exploited to enhance effectiveness.

The IfS CRC project results were overall in line with their stated objectives and have made a contribution to stabilisation and conflict transformation, which is positive. This concerns in many cases the achievement of immediate outputs in the direct sphere of influence of the project. The same picture emerges from the evaluation team’s country visits<sup>34</sup> and is supported by a review of project documents.<sup>35</sup> IfS CRC interventions to promote dialogue and confidence building, for example, report that 90% of the support had an impact and contributed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention in line with their stated objectives. Many of these received a comparatively small amount of funding.<sup>36</sup> Results are reported with regard to better policy decision-making; confidence building; changing of public perceptions on a situation and how to deal with it; awareness raised; a common understanding promoted in a particular situation; and conflicts prevented at community level. This assessment is supported by research on the EU’s support to transitional justice and mediation.<sup>37</sup> A similar message can be distilled from projects to strengthen livelihoods and economic recovery.

However, there are clear limitations on the impact of such interventions given the short-term funding and the acute challenges faced in ensuring adequate follow-up support. Effectiveness was evidently higher where interventions could be linked to longer-term approaches in support of reform programmes, such as the support to the police reform in DRC, which has been funded through a combination of IfS CRC and EDF funding. Effectiveness was also higher where the Instrument could be linked to country-owned processes of institutional (and political) reform, such as in the case of military justice in DRC, or to the primary health care sector reform in Lebanon.<sup>38</sup>

Effectiveness of the Instrument could be high or limited through a range of factors, as highlighted in

<sup>33</sup> Contracts 284107 (DRC), 334669 (Pakistan/India), 322635 and 338772 (both Nigeria).

<sup>34</sup> In particular Nigeria and DRC.

<sup>35</sup> Contract 323412 (Nigeria), 330752 (Somalia), 290815 (Ethiopia), 335547 (Guinee), 237991 (Bangladesh), 316962 (Mali), 260109 (Bangladesh), 289193 (Gaza Strip), 260027 (Kyrgyzstan), 260114 (Pakistan) and financing decision 23754 (Niger, several projects), 313679 (Zimbabwe), 355296 (Georgia), 310061 (Syria), 244667 (Ecuador), 299273 (Armenia/Azerbaijan), 288060 (Thailand), 311903 (India/Pakistan), 260415 (Kyrgyzstan), 276306 (South Sudan), 260858 (Sudan), 334612 (Niger), 282188 (Ivory Coast).

<sup>36</sup> Results based on desk review.

<sup>37</sup> “The Instrument for Stability is an important tool for the EC in peace processes as it has a fast and flexible financing mechanism. Through the IfS, the EC has supported numerous short- to medium-term mediation interventions by third parties, including interventions initiated by the Commission.” - Davis (2014, p. 97).

<sup>38</sup> Contract 335173 (Lebanon) - The IfS CRC intervention helped to reduce tensions between Lebanese citizens and Syrian refugees through supporting access and the improvement of health services for the vulnerable population of Lebanon (researched during evaluation team’s visit to Lebanon).

the online survey replies. These related to the strength of the implementing organisation, political will and assertiveness of the political partners, the absence of a politically "savvy" understanding of the context or the political leadership, follow-through and focus from decision makers within EU institutions and EU Member States. In some contexts, as the evaluation team's visit to Pakistan highlights, the formulation and decision of IfS CRC interventions without the full involvement of the national government (which the Instrument can do) can impact negatively on the effectiveness of sensitive interventions that often require high government buy-in. Yet, it is important to note that the flexibility to proceed in Pakistan on cross-border peacebuilding with India, where more informal relations with the government rather than official approval was necessary, also proved to be an added value. On the other hand, effectiveness was also reduced when a project was poorly targeted as the evaluation team's visit to Nigeria highlights. IfS CRC interventions in the Delta and the Jos region in Nigeria have generally been very limited in scope and widely dispersed across large regions which has had limited impact outside particular groups of beneficiaries or small communities. Some negative outliers were recorded across the portfolio,<sup>39</sup> caused partially by working with the wrong partners, though these should be qualified rather as exceptions and do not call the effectiveness or utility of the Instrument as a whole into question.

The extent to which the IfS CRC has contributed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention can also be distilled from the online survey. Nearly 80% of respondents noted that interventions under the IfS CRC have "somewhat contributed to changes and effects in their respective implementation environments". The remaining part believes that they have "strongly contributed" though there is an overall message from the survey warning that some nuancing is necessary to understand how much can be achieved through micro-scale and short-timeframe projects: *"Some measures contribute strongly, others fail in achieving their objectives" and "For IfS perhaps even more so than for normal development efforts, success is often mitigated, and so is failure"*.

Success and failures should not only be looked at in relation to operational achievements, but also understood in terms of political importance. Sometimes, the mere announcement of an intervention, which the Instrument might make possible, can have political relevance. The case of Gaza is illustrative: *"The IfS was asked to help refurbish and extend the Kerem Shalom border crossing. For a broad range of reasons concerning Israeli and Palestinian actors, the funding could not be used and the project was finally closed without having funded a single new brick. This failure can be blamed on the many local actors who did not want to collaborate, or it can be blamed on the political naivety of those who took the decision to make funding for a fairly complex infrastructure measure available from an instrument that is short-term and hence not well suited to this type of work. From an operational perspective the operation clearly failed. Politically, it did however mean that the EU was involved in the discussions on access to Gaza, frustrating though they were, from a different angle than would have been the case without such a project"*.

In terms of stakeholder perceptions about IfS CRC interventions, documents reviewed for dialogue/confidence building interventions reveal that nearly 80% of projects for which information on stakeholders' perception on the IfS CRC interventions' approach was available, stakeholders' appraisal appeared to be positive overall though, as mentioned throughout the documents, it is impossible over such a short timeframe to evaluate the actual impact.<sup>40</sup> For interventions in relation to livelihoods and economic recovery, often focused at the lowest level of societies, there is evidence how these have helped to realise change at the level of the immediate beneficiaries, or contributed to establishing different relationships between the communities and local governments.<sup>41</sup> Interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries during the four country visits reveal a similar picture across all type of IfS CRC interventions.

<sup>39</sup> Contract 231840 (Pakistan) – more than EUR 11 million were spent to venture into the domain of civilian capacity building for law enforcement but without reaching any tangible results; contract 252490 (Haiti; earthquake 2010) - The Haiti project was positive on the project's success in rallying high-level political support but the support provided was described as in-effective, in-efficient and a waste of money. A follow-up project was formulated which built on the recommendations of the critical evaluation of the first project.

<sup>40</sup> Contracts 288060 (Thailand), 299602 (Georgia), 330662 (Armenia/Turkey), 315364 (Myanmar), 248111 and 260537 (Kyrgyzstan), 276306 (South Sudan), 316533 (Mali), 334612 (Niger) and 278762 (Libya).

<sup>41</sup> Contracts 323412 (Nigeria), 330752 (Somalia), 290815 and 290843 (Ethiopia), 237991 (Bangladesh), 260109 (Pakistan), 288498, 296396 and 298595 (Niger).

## Judgement Criteria

**JC2.4 – The IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio has taken into account different geographical dimensions of (potential) conflicts and has been effectively targeted in regions and contexts where they were most needed.**

*Summary judgement: The IfS CRC has since its creation increasingly addressed relevant geo-political regions and in the countries visited by the evaluation team, the IfS CRC was most strongly focused on regions and contexts where critical conflict issues had to be addressed. The highest assistance has been close to Europe due to the Syrian refugee crisis. The IfS CRC has been effectively used in many instances and contexts (see other JC under EQ2) but selected cases from DRC, from Nigeria and the desk study suggest that improvements can be made. Dedicated and shared EU conflict and context assessments were absent in all four countries visited by the evaluation team raising questions by the evaluation team whether the choice of region and the amount spent per project was sufficiently well informed.*

In all four countries visited by the evaluation team, the interventions through the IfS CRC had a strong focus on regions and contexts where the need was high and where critical conflict and stability issues had to be addressed. Close to Europe, investments were highest (during 2011-2015, the EU – including IfS CRC funding – was the largest donor supporting the Syrian refugee crisis).<sup>42</sup> Though it was not fully apparent, how decisions were taken per country regarding the relative allocation of resources per region and per project (with the exception of disaster-related interventions which provided imperative justification for immediate assistance, such as the 2010-floods in Pakistan which also provided a window for more politically oriented stability actions).

All financing decisions reviewed highlight broadly the reasons why certain regions and contexts needed to be addressed and where IfS CRC interventions were most needed. However, the evaluation team could not find any more detailed information that would explain why certain countries or conflict regions were addressed with priority. We judge that this could be improved. In none of the countries visited, was decision-making informed by a dedicated EU conflict assessment. For DRC, the existence of an EU Strategy for the Great Lakes Region provided some guidance to prioritise the Eastern parts of DRC but conflicts do exist in other parts of DRC. In the absence of a comprehensive EU strategy on how to engage politically in DRC priority setting for IfS CRC interventions and how to support them became challenging, witness to two projects (showing mixed results) with engagements in regions falling outside the DRC's East and the capital.<sup>43</sup> From the material reviewed, it is also difficult to trace why some interventions at the interface between longer-term stabilisation, resilience and development fell under the remit of the IfS CRC, while one should expect that long-term protracted crisis, such as in Ethiopia, could potentially be addressed through EU Development Instruments as well. Similar questions emerge from the evaluation team's Nigeria country visit where projects were visited in support of livelihoods and economic recovery, which were rather developmental in nature with no political dimensions or dialogue linked to them.<sup>44</sup>

In the absence of such analysis, we found in Pakistan that the EU used the IfS CRC funded Post-Crisis Needs Assessment for certain regions of Pakistan, and did draw on the overarching (if very broad) EU-Pakistan 5 year engagement plan. This example shows that, in the absence of such country-wide assessments (which we highlighted in response to JC2.2 ) there are means to orient the priority setting leading to effective interventions. But the negative examples found suggest that more could be done so that the IfS CRC could be used in a more effective manner.

At the global level, the IfS CRC became an increasingly relevant EU Instrument for crisis response. Considering the information provided in Annex 5 (international statistics on fragility) it is evident that the IfS CRC, through an increase in portfolio, addressed over the years 2007 to 2013 a gradually increasing number of hotspots, which required urgent attention according to the international community.

<sup>42</sup> Source EU country fiche Lebanon and interview with EUD staff.

<sup>43</sup> Contracts 308193 and 284107 (DRC).

<sup>44</sup> Contracts 23598 and 290843 (Ethiopia) and 320960 and 323412 (Nigeria).

A support substantially beyond 40% of (internationally considered) fragile countries was addressed during the years 2012 to 2013. However, it is important to note that the IfS CRC remained a small EU Instrument and was only able to mobilise a certain number of crisis responses per year of relative small financial amounts thus limiting its scope.

**EQ3 on efficiency and timeliness: To what extent did the pursuing of, and working through the IfS Crisis Response Component allow results to be achieved in a timely and visible manner and at a reasonable cost, taking into account the political imperatives at the time IfS measures were adopted?**

*In this EQ, we will assess how efficient the outputs (qualitative and quantitative) have been achieved in relation to the inputs provided. In doing this, we will pay particular attention to issues of timeliness, flexibility and visibility.*

The allocation of budget per project or sector of IfS CRC interventions was considered mostly adequate for the purpose and the objectives of the intervention. While financial resources for the EU's crisis response have been growing with the implementation of the IfS, these have not been equalled by a corresponding growth in human resources to manage the portfolios properly. This was signalled as a growing problem from colleagues at FPI, colleagues from other services, implementing partners and other donors. – (Human) resources and time management were used efficiently in the preparatory phase of an intervention, seeking agreements for funding amongst a variety of stakeholders through various forms of (informal) exchanges, but the contracting period took normally longer than what FPI had communicated to implementing partners. – The IfS CRC has been without any doubt the fastest and most flexible non-humanitarian crisis response tool at the EU's disposal. Its interventions were mostly timely on the ground for situations of protracted crisis, i.e. implemented at optimal moments in a crisis cycle. The IfS CRC was not subject to tendering requirements, which explains this relative speed compared to other EU instruments, but it could encounter delays and contracting constraints as it had to follow the EU Financial Regulation (see also EQ8). – Looking at the achievement of results overall, the majority of interventions seem to have met their project results despite difficulties and delays. These related mostly to the country context and/or partner capacities though findings also point to EU administrative procedures or risk avoidance on the side of the EU staff not familiar with the IfS CRC that created delays. – The IfS CRC portfolio's implementation reflected overall sensitivity to conflict situations and to adapting appropriately EU visibility in differing contexts. Visibility was generally well covered though there is room for improvement when working with multilateral organisations, the UN in particular.

#### Judgement Criteria

**JC3.1 – Adequate EU resources (financial and [management] capacity) have been allocated to the IfS Crisis Response Component.**

*Summary judgement: Within the financial and human resources available to manage the IfS CRC, FPI did very well in building the Instrument into a well-known and well-functioning part of EU external action since its creation in 2007. During the evaluation period and the initiation of the IcSP, EU crisis response spending has been growing while human resources to manage the portfolios did not, something colleagues at FPI, colleagues from other services, implementing partners and other donors have all commented upon as a growing problem. – Well placed, knowledgeable, and qualified FPI staff in HQ and the field have acted as significant multipliers for the effectiveness and possible impact of IfS projects. Good country knowledge to understand the conflict dynamics and identify meaningful interventions was of paramount importance to making this Instrument work efficiently.*



Between 2007 and 2013, a relatively small and highly committed team at HQ and in the EUDs managed to build the IfS CRC from scratch into a well-known and well-functioning EU Instrument for external action.<sup>45</sup> Feed-back from colleagues in other EU services and partners about the work of FPI and colleagues in EUDs has overall been very positive and described as highly responsive, hands-on and engaged. Colleagues in EUDs noted the positive engagement by FPI, its timely guidance and responses.

Human resources have been a concern throughout the evaluated period but it is an increasing problem in light of current human resource budget cuts, whilst financial budgets for crisis response - and arguably the complexity of the intervention environments together with the EU's ambition - have increased under the IcSP. Colleagues from other EU services noted that FPI faces increasing challenges to uphold the level of quality and engagement that they used to have. In terms of human resources at HQ level, change of EEAS desks, dealing with payment credits in time, but also FPI desks, and the ability of IfS Crisis Response Planners to monitor their portfolio's properly through field missions were noted as problems in the online survey. Another problem noted were country context/security related issues making it difficult to find and/or retain staff with good thematic and country knowledge. Respondents from implementing organisations noted that FPI staff in EUDs were generally very responsive and helpful during the formulation and start-up phase of an intervention but were much less available during implementation to exchange about progress or difficulties, which points at insufficient staff capacity to properly accompany and monitor the interventions.<sup>46</sup> Some degree of frustration about the balance between bureaucratic tasks and the necessity for quality to develop a good knowledge of thematic and regional stability dynamics was a common theme amongst staff responsible for the IfS/IcSP interviewed during the evaluation team's country visits.

The lack of available human resources to efficiently manage IfS CRC interventions was mentioned during interviews at HQ level<sup>47</sup> and during the evaluation team's visits to Pakistan, DRC and Nigeria. Compared with other international partners running similar types of operations, FPI clearly has much fewer staff. In Pakistan, the UK and Germany have more capacity and smaller budgets and a more focused portfolio of activities running their Conflict Security and Stability Fund (UK) and the stability fund (Germany).<sup>48</sup> In DRC, the EU appears to have only between half and one third of the capacity to work on crisis response compared to the UK, the USA and the Netherlands. DfID has three persons of which one is permanently based in Goma (East of DRC). The Dutch have one person in Goma, one in Kinshasa and one in Kigali covering their regional programme in this field of work. USAID has one person based in Goma and two in Kinshasa. The absence of a permanent EU presence in the East of DRC clearly contrasts to the practice of other donors and impacts on the ability of the IfS officer to properly monitor the portfolio.<sup>49</sup> From Nigeria, issues were raised about the capacity of FPI staff to effectively manage the administration, monitoring and reporting of activities given the large number of activities, their geographical spread, and problems of access due to insecurity. External stakeholders raised also questions during country visits whether for some portfolios there was enough critical mass of expertise available within the EUDs to engage sufficiently well in sometimes highly political and sensitive domains.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Well noting that experiences in working with the previous EU Rapid Response Mechanism could be used.

<sup>46</sup> Focus group discussion with several NGOs, 12 May 2016; also mentioned by interviewees during Lebanon country visit of the evaluation team and confirmed by IfS officer in DRC who could not monitor and accompany all interventions spread throughout this vast country adequately.

<sup>47</sup> Interviews with EU officials, 7 March 2016 and 19 May 2016 (both in Brussels)

<sup>48</sup> 50% of one job at the German Embassy in Islamabad is to manage their stability fund which is only EUR 10 m a year.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with the IfS officer at the EUD in Kinshasa, well noting that a detailed comparative workload study would be needed to clarify the precise workload in managing the respective portfolios.

<sup>50</sup> This picture somewhat differs from the online survey where respondents replied that resource allocations (financial and staff) to manage IfS CRC interventions have been "very adequate" (7%), "mostly adequate" (70%) and "mostly inadequate" (22%). It appears from the replies on "mostly adequate" that some respondents related this question also to the capacities of implementing partners. Among the "mostly inadequate" replies, comments were made in relation to the Optimus workload assessment, which apparently did not take into account the extra workload of IfS/IcSP projects.



The statistical analysis of the IfS CRC portfolio reveals a high number of smaller IfS CRC measures, which require considerable administrative support to manage them properly. Over the entire period of the IfS CRC implementation period, some 62% of the 620 measures financed were below EUR 1 m (see Annex 11) requiring a comparative high number of staff hours per project. The general comment from EUD staff interviewed was that the heavy administrative burden generally was detracting them from the ability to master the complex and shifting country dynamics. The pressures on IfS project officers and others with responsibility for the IfS in the field are amplified by a shortage of EUD staff for political and early warning monitoring work within EUD's Political Sections. Quite frequently and pragmatically, Heads of Delegations use inputs from staff working in other sections, for example those managing the programmes of the IfS (now IcSP) for more analytical functions. This has often caused problems as IfS/IcSP related tasks could not be pursued properly.<sup>51</sup>

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC3.2 – Delays and risk management have affected results/impact overall.

*Summary judgement: Delays in implementing IfS CRC interventions were quite common, requiring an intervention to last in most cases 24 months. Though the majority of the interventions appear to have met their project results. Delays related mostly to the country context and/or partner capacities though there is also evidence that administrative procedures or risk avoidance on the side of non-FPI staff (some of them not familiar with the Instrument and not having worked on crisis response before) created delays. – Regular learning about risks and how to manage them mostly took place on the job at the level of individual FPI staff, which has led to improvements in project implementation and better results but this learning was infrequently shared and mostly erratic.*

Looking at the achievement of results overall, the majority of interventions seem to have met their project results despite difficulties and delays. Delays were quite common. Most IfS CRC interventions reviewed during country visits were extended to a period of 24 months, or continued through a follow-up project.<sup>52</sup> The review of evaluations and narrative reports<sup>53</sup> equally show that delays occurred which also affected the achievement of results. The interventions took place in highly fluid, fragile and volatile contexts. Delays were often related to the political and legislative context, bureaucracy, technical considerations, capacity of implementing partners, logistical bottlenecks and requests by beneficiaries. Delays also occurred due to over-ambitious project objectives, as the evaluation team could witness during the DRC visit.<sup>54</sup> There were also perceived heavy administrative procedures on the side of FPI and/or implementing partners (mostly UN organisations) and risk-avoiding behaviour of EU colleagues not very familiar with IfS CRC interventions that were revealed during interviews in the country visits and meetings in Brussels.<sup>55</sup> But the consulted documentation showed that flexibility has been applied by FPI and EUDs to deal with risks, with or without an initial risk mitigation strategy. This points to the finding that results and impact could be achieved across the portfolio and that risks and delays could be managed.

<sup>51</sup> Interviews in Brussels; Pakistan field mission, see also Helly, D., Galeazzi, G. (2014).

<sup>52</sup> 19 out of 26 projects reviewed during country visits required more than 18 months - seen Annex 3.

<sup>53</sup> Financing Decisions 23754 (Niger/Mali – programme evaluation) and 24898 (Niger – programme evaluation), contracts 260027 (Kyrgyzstan) 288060 (Thailand), 255510 and 299602 (Georgia), 311903 (India/Pakistan), 242516 (Aceh/Indonesia), 276306 (South Sudan), 310061 (Syria), 275718 and 331139 (Lebanon), 334295 (Jordan), 334306 (Jordan/Syria), 270513 (Dominican Republic), 319291 (Guinée), 307808 (DRC), 276199 (Afghanistan), 293346 (Pakistan).

<sup>54</sup> Contract 284107 (DRC).

<sup>55</sup> Focus group discussion with NGO representatives, 11 May 2016, and interview with NGO representative 13 May 2016.

Learning from project implementation and how to mitigate risks and delays during further implementation of a project, or for new projects, did take place at the level of FPI staff as the evaluation team's country visits showed. Learning was mostly organic and part of the monitoring and accompaniment of projects,<sup>56</sup> through there were also cases where a special lessons learnt document has been developed or where steps were taken to share lessons learnt more widely.<sup>57</sup> Yet the loss of institutional memory when key staff changed or left at HQ but particularly at the level of the EUDs was significant. Overall, the learning about risks and how to manage them appears to be erratic and not systematically shared.

### Judgement Criteria

#### **JC3.3 – Measures funded under the IfS are considered timely and cost efficient.**

*Summary judgement: Compared to other EU Instruments, the IfS CRC has been without any doubt the fastest and most flexible crisis response tool the EU had at its disposal during the evaluation period. Its interventions were overall timely on the ground for situations of protracted crisis, i.e. implemented at appropriate moments in a crisis cycle. Various findings confirm that FPI used (human) resources and time efficiently to prepare interventions. A range of formal and informal exchanges were sought within a short period of time to seek agreement from different stakeholders in the EU system before a decision was taken. But the contracting period plus the time needed to start with the implementation took normally longer than what implementing partners expected based on projections provided in the beginning of project trajectory. Constraints and delays were caused due to work planned in difficult environments as well as administrative procedures caused by the Financial Regulation of the EU. – It appears that sufficient attention was given to cost efficiency throughout the interventions. Some outliers were noted where interventions demanded for political, strategic or tactical reasons caused high costs compared with the outputs and outcomes realised.*

*[Note: The replies to this JC should be read as complementary to the replies to JC 8.2; the focus for this JC is on efficiency].*

The IfS CRC has been used in many situations of protracted crisis portraying different levels of intensity throughout time. In such situations, the Instrument could be deployed generally in a timely manner, as findings from the DRC, Lebanon and Pakistan country visits showed. This was also mentioned in various evaluations and project documents reviewed<sup>58</sup> and particularly highlighted for targeting the needs of refugees and IDPs.<sup>59</sup> Several interviewees and respondents to the online survey have pointed out that timeliness and speed are not the same thing<sup>60</sup> although a period between conception and delivery, which is too long, can undermine performance significantly.

From the review across the IfS CRC interventions, it appears that speediness was required to a lesser extent as many interventions were provided in situations of protracted crisis. Speed has been important mostly in relation to natural disasters but also for very timely political responses, such as the provision of communication equipment to four DRC police battalions in Kinshasa ahead of the 2011 national elections.<sup>61</sup> This could be realised through PAMF funding, a

<sup>56</sup> In Nigeria, better collaboration and learning among implementers of different IfS CRC projects in the Jos plateau was encouraged resulting in some synergies as witnessed by the evaluation team.

<sup>57</sup> Contracts 244667 (Ecuador) and 260109 (Pakistan); also contract 335173 (Lebanon): a lessons learnt document was produced by the implementing partners though without much follow-up according to the evaluation team's recording

<sup>58</sup> Contracts 238938 and 299602 (Georgia), 330662 (Armenia/Turkey), 315364 (Myanmar), 311903 (India/Pakistan), 242516 (Indonesia), 244667 (Ecuador), 317571 (Columbia), 330752 (Somalia), Financing decision 23754 (Niger, several contracts).

<sup>59</sup> Contracts 255510 and 355296 (Georgia), 310061 (Syria), 334306 (Jordan).

<sup>60</sup> Online survey comment: "One can be speedy but can choose to slow down in reaction to changes in the situation and wait for the right moment."

<sup>61</sup> Contract 265705 (PAMF 5).

mechanism which has been discontinued at the end of the IfS<sup>62</sup> and which respondents felt is a currently missing element since its discontinuation reduced the EU's ability to react quickly and flexibly in very specific (political) situations.

Under particular circumstances, the IfS CRC could act very quickly such as in Syria (2012) when several armoured cars were delivered to the UN in a record-speed of less than a month.<sup>63</sup> Though these were the positive outliers as several interviewees in HQ and during country visits underlined. All respondents noted that the IfS CRC was much quicker and flexible than any other EU funding Instruments. But it could still take up to six months or longer to get activities up and running after the funding was approved for projects. *"The limits to speediness and timeliness come from the fact that IfS interventions usually take several months to put together, thus blunting their use as a true urgent response to crisis."*<sup>64</sup> Several respondents from implementing organisations mentioned that – on average – it took double the amount of time or more to get started on the ground compared to what had been originally envisaged.<sup>65</sup> What appears not always clear to implementing partners, however, is an understanding that delays can relate to contracting, and that this relates to the Financial Regulation which require a high level of accountability.

From various interviews among FPI staff, it appears that the preparatory phase was relatively quick and time and resources were efficiently used to find an agreement between the EUD, EU Member States, EEAS and other EU services.<sup>66</sup> This was done through various forms of (informal) communication before a project was presented to the PSC for information in advance of a formal Commission Decision so that a proposal for an IfS CRC intervention did not encounter any surprises. It was the next step which often created delays, i.e. the *"contracting periods which are longer than expected"*, according to one online respondent, and as confirmed during interviews.<sup>67</sup> Also, during the field mission to Pakistan, it was mentioned that the contracting for IfS CRC required exactly the same process and time period as other EC instruments, including the DCI (because the country had been declared formally under a crisis situation by the EU allowing for direct awards). However, there are other factors, which can influence speed in this phase of an intervention, such as the availability of staff in EUDs to process the work, the experience of an implementing partner in working with the IfS CRC, the start-up of a new project versus the continuation of an activity, or the absence/presence of a framework contract to mobilise the implementing partner.

In terms of efficiency of projects, different messages can be distilled from the review of documents suggesting attention to costs when possible. Several interventions appeared to be cost-efficient due to having activities implemented on-budget and project results delivered broadly in line with stated objectives. The final evaluation reports for projects in Kyrgyzstan, for example, mention that project activities and outputs have been delivered efficiently, in a timely manner and at a reasonable cost. In Libya, the final report mentions that the implementer acted efficiently in terms of providing value for money though the full picture was difficult to capture due to the lack of

<sup>62</sup> PAMF stands for Policy Advice and Mediation Facility but was used for a broad scale of activities. They have enabled more rapid procedures that allowed financing smaller actions with funding below EUR 2 million each at the sub-delegated level by avoiding the need for further individual full financing decisions. It was discontinued at the end of the IfS as a legal issue was identified where there was no specific reference to PAMF included in the new IcSP Regulation as adopted by the co-legislators – European Parliament and the Council.

<sup>63</sup> Contract 293264 (Syria).

<sup>64</sup> Respondent's reply to question about speed and flexibility in online survey.

<sup>65</sup> "We are told that after a PSC decision is taken, it will take 2-3 months before an activity can start, but in reality it is often 6-8 months." (Interviewee of an implementing organisation, 12 May 2016; confirmed by interviews with other NGOs and implementing organisation on 15 April 2016 and 13 May 2016).

<sup>66</sup> This includes the possibility of pre-dating the financing decision (pre-financing) and thereby the start of the project. Though interviews with implementing partners revealed that this requires a risk-taking on the side of the implementers for contracts discussed before the financing decision has been adopted as it is never 100% sure that a contract will be awarded.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with EU staff, 7 April 2016 and 20 May 2016.

a monitoring system. For the support to the Armenia-Turkey normalisation process, the results were impressive in terms of quality, quality and variety according to the evaluation report.<sup>68</sup> In the case of DRC, the combination with EDF interventions was evaluated as an efficient approach and the reallocation of funds dedicated to infrastructure towards the building of a national police and gendarmerie school was noted positively for the CAR.<sup>69</sup> However, there were also negative outliers, such as the projects on Haiti and Pakistan<sup>70</sup> mentioned under JC2.3, above.

#### Judgement Criteria

#### JC3.4 – The overall programme budget is adequate for the purpose it is intended to cover and per sector and geographical region

*Summary judgement:* The allocation of resources per IfS CRC interventions per project or sector is considered mostly adequate for the purpose and the objectives of the interventions. This has also been assessed positively for the IfS CRC's engagement based on findings from the desk studies, country visits and the online survey.

From the online survey among current and former FPI staff, it appears that stakeholders perceived the allocation of resources as “adequate” (67%) and “very adequate” (11%) against “not very adequate” (22%). This rating was generally confirmed from the respective country visits. No mention was made during interviews in Nigeria about the programme budget posing a particular limitation for IfS CRC activities. In Pakistan, apart from one project where the budget was seen as excessive (see JC3.3), there have been no instances where the extent of the programme budget has been mentioned as a specific problem. Project stakeholders in DRC generally confirmed that the IfS CRC funding was sufficient for the purpose and the objectives of the intervention. In the case of an NGO, an interviewee mentioned that the funding was even too much for the short-time timeframe of the projects, putting pressure on the organisations absorptive capacity and ability to sustain the intervention thereafter (see also EQ4). In the case of Lebanon, assessing the availability of IfS CRC funding for the period 2007-2013 overall, EU and other stakeholders considered the IfS interventions, compared to other EU funded interventions, commensurate with the scale of the refugee problem in Lebanon.<sup>71</sup>

A respondent from an NGO provided the following interesting comment: “The IfS CRC funding is not very quick compared to some donors we are working with but it provides us with substantial resources so that we can plan and engage meaningfully on mediation over a two-year period. Other donors can't do this”.<sup>72</sup> Indeed the ability of the IfS CRC to fund India-Pakistan confidence building ‘at scale’ was also viewed positively in Pakistan in contrast to what other donors could provide. Though the online survey refers also to experiences where resources have been limited, it was impossible to fulfil all stakeholders’ expectations, in particular where stakeholders could not differentiate between the IfS CRC and other EU instruments.

#### Judgement Criteria

#### JC3.5 – EU visibility is adequately covered throughout the IfS Crisis Response portfolio.

*Summary judgement:* EU visibility was overall adequately covered throughout the IfS CRC interventions though there is some room for improvement when working with multilateral organisations, the UN in particular. The portfolio's implementation reflected sensitivity to conflict situations and to adapting visibility approaches in differing contexts. Selected examples identified

<sup>68</sup> Contract 330662 (Georgia)

<sup>69</sup> Contracts 260415 (Kyrgyzstan), 278762 (Libya) and 330662 (Armenia/Turkey/Georgia), 168890 and 307808 (DRC), 331225 and 342825 (CAR).

<sup>70</sup> Contract 252490 (Haiti; earthquake 2010) and contract 231840 (Pakistan; Civilian Capacity Building for Law Enforcement; with rates for consultants and trainers of EUR 2505 per day plus per diem while achieving no real impact or legacy).

<sup>71</sup> The EU overall has provided €506.6M since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis until September 2015. Since 2012, DG Echo has provided €170M for humanitarian needs. ENI provided more than €260M since 2012. Total expenditure 2007-2015 of IfS interventions in Lebanon: €108.66M, €63.4M was targeted on refugees.

<sup>72</sup> Interview, 13 May 2016.

*should remind FPI that continued attention to conflict sensitivity needs to be given when promoting visibility and that sharpening EU guidance on how to deal with visibility in conflict affected and fragile environments is relevant.*

From documents containing information about EU visibility, a picture similar to the findings from the four country visits emerges. In terms of flagging and informing about the EU's role in an intervention, many projects appeared to give adequate attention to visibility through a variety of visibility and communication instruments. EU guidance on visibility was broadly followed.<sup>73</sup> The evaluation team's country visits report that the EU was perceived as a critical and visible actor in the Lebanese crisis situations and that EU visibility has been welcome in DRC giving also recognition to areas of work, i.e. strengthening civil-military relationships, which were consequently taken "more serious by the authorities".<sup>74</sup> In Nigeria, the EU received great visibility in the projects supported both in the Delta region and in Plateau State (Jos) though the immense EU visibility also created big expectations about follow-up support among the beneficiary communities, which could not be realised in all cases thereby affecting the image of the EU.

Across most of the material collected, it appears that EU visibility was diluted when working with UN organisations. This was the case for the EU's cooperation with MONUSCO (DRC), to some extent with the UNDP implemented Local Government Rehabilitation project in Pakistan and some reports reviewed during the desk phase raise questions about whether implementing partners have been more visible than the EU itself.<sup>75</sup> In Lebanon, dominated by UN agencies, however the UN has made efforts to promote the EU widely although it should be noted there are gradients of difference between the UN agencies. In Nigeria, the EUD raised concerns in the context of the UNODC-implemented criminal justice training project that the EU was not given sufficient visibility.

Throughout the information collected, it appears that IfS CRC interventions have shown to be sensitive overall to conflict situations and ready to adapt approaches to visibility according to the context. Where an experienced implementing partner, knowledgeable about the context, framed the conflict sensitive approach of an intervention and the level of visibility that could be given to an intervention, the advice was followed pragmatically (Somalia). There were also examples where the EU took conscious decisions to avoid (Niger)<sup>76</sup> or diminish visibility (evaluation team's Pakistan visit) assessing that visibility would rather undermine than support international and government efforts to respond to crisis. Generally in Pakistan, it was found that there was a sophisticated conflict-sensitive approach to EU visibility that was widely appreciated by implementing partners and confirmed as an appropriate response by third parties.

This being said, there is a constant need to remain conflict-sensitive, remind partners to indicate where visibility might become a problem and adapt visibility accordingly. The final evaluation of a Chad intervention reports about a failing communication strategy and even "negative perceptions" reported at the level of all stakeholders: "targeted beneficiaries, host communities, government, donors and technical partners." Additionally, the final evaluation on Zimbabwe notes "complications surrounding EU visibility for many projects".<sup>77</sup> Formulating specific visibility plans and how to deal with conflict-sensitivity can be helpful in certain contexts, as noted positively for Ecuador and the Palestinian refugees support,<sup>78</sup> but also – as an EU staff member in DRC noted – more guidance on how to engage on EU visibility in fragile and conflict affected environments would be helpful.<sup>79</sup> Finally, it should be noted that visibility is not assessed throughout all final project reports and evaluations despite this issue being an important feature of EU external action.

<sup>73</sup> Contracts 254405 (Philippines), 260468 (Afghanistan), 282245 (Kyrgyzstan) and 334612 (Niger).

<sup>74</sup> Interview with NGO representative in DRC, 22 April 2016.

<sup>75</sup> Contract 258664 and 258666 (Indonesia), 308518 (DRC) and 276199 (Afghanistan).

<sup>76</sup> Contracts 330752 (Somalia) and 288498 (Niger).

<sup>77</sup> Contracts 319474 (Chad) and 281188 (Zimbabwe).

<sup>78</sup> Contracts 244667 (Ecuador) and 310690 (Palestinian Refugees).

<sup>79</sup> E.g., the "EU Staff Handbook (2014) Operating in Situations of Conflict and Fragility - Tools and Methods Series, Reference Document No. 17" does not provide any guidance on EU visibility.

**EQ4 on sustainability: To what extent have the effects (results and impacts) of IfS Crisis Response Component interventions, which have come to an end, been maintained over time?**

*This EQ will assess impact in terms of activities being maintained and/or carried on after termination of the IfS CRC support. It should be mentioned, though, that the IfS CRC finances short-term interventions to respond to crisis. This can impact on how ‘sustainability’ is understood as a concept, as local actors and their organisations might not be able to carry on and maintain activities over time due to capacity problems, lack of local financing or insecurity. The answer to this evaluation question takes this IfS CRC specific issue into account when assessing this criterion.*

There is evidence that IfS CRC interventions were capitalised upon at different levels of intensity. There is also evidence that project results and their outcomes could act as a catalyst for upstream interventions and had catalytic benefits to a certain extent. Capacity development, building political leverage and other areas that require ownership and long-term support such as peacebuilding tended to absorb a lot of resources and yielded less clear cut sustainable elements. – The results of IfS CRC interventions that contributed to stability when placed in a wider country context as part of a comprehensive approach tended to be more capitalised upon rather than in situations where the IfS CRC projects were more operating on their own. In the latter case, the contribution of project outputs to further outcomes that helped to create stability were mostly temporary due to the short timeframe and limited resources, limited national capacity to take on the engagement, or no follow-up through other instruments.

**Judgement Criteria**

**JC4.1 – Extent to which IfS Crisis Response interventions were approached in a comprehensive manner considering other EU external financing instruments or actions funded by other donors.**

*Summary judgement: Overall, concerns about the sustainability of the IfS intervention results have been taken into consideration to find appropriate follow-up funding in many cases from the design phase. However there were exceptions to the rule where the IfS CRC intervention spanned various areas (refugees/counter-terrorism) and where no single Instrument was available to facilitate a smooth transition to ensure the sustainability of the result outcomes. Priorities can also differ in the transition between Instruments, which left the IfS CRC effectively sustaining some interventions through follow-up IfS projects. The majority of IfS CRC activities were felt to be capitalised on as evidenced in the desk study, the on-line survey and confirmed by the field visits.*

From the desk study, it appears that sustainability has been approached overall in a comprehensive manner from the design phase in many interventions. The Financing Decisions (FD's) and the Description of Actions (DoA's) reviewed during the desk phase highlight the potential links available to capitalise on stability created by the results of IfS CRC activities mainly through a range of other EU funding instruments (EDF, ENI, DCI, ECHO, EIDHR) or other donors. According to the on-line survey 32% of survey respondents felt IfS CRC measures “always” take into consideration linkages with appropriate follow-up actions funded by other EU external action instruments or other donors, 43% believe this occurs regularly, while 25% believe it occurs “sometimes”. During the evaluation team’s country visits, it was possible to track, to a certain extent, the outcomes and verify if interventions were approached from a sustainability perspective and follow-up funding did actually occur. In the DRC, sustainability concerns (funding) were taken into consideration to the extent possible from the onset of the interventions in a comprehensive manner. The most prominent example was the support to the National Police (PNC),<sup>80</sup> where the

<sup>80</sup> Contracts 150041 (2008) and 307808 (2012)

IfS CRC interventions complemented EDF funding so that project results could be sustained. In Pakistan, surprisingly some degrees of sustainability were observed in most of the eight IfS CRC funded actions assessed. In Lebanon, in the UNHCR project<sup>81</sup> it was clear from the design that the sustainability of the result outputs and outcomes from the project would be continued through a smooth transition to ENI funding once the IfS CRC intervention finished. In this case although ENI funding could have funded this area from the beginning funding priorities focused on secondary care in the health sector during the Syrian refugee crisis. This left a gap in funding in the primary healthcare sector, which was becoming a source of conflict so the IfS was able to fill this gap and facilitate the transition for ENI. Through this approach, the ENI intervention was able to capitalise of the results of the IfS intervention, e.g. build on the stability resulting from the IfS intervention. These were some good examples of well planned and smooth transitions that helped stabilise key areas and contribute to broader comprehensive approaches.

However there were examples that highlighted the difference between the extent to which sustainability may, or may not, have been promoted as well as shortcomings in transitioning to other instruments. In the DRC, a disputed intervention in Kananga (although linked to efforts by EUSEC and Belgium) had been approached from a “political necessity” rationale without fully recognising the limitations of the approach in the absence of the DRC Government commitment to wider army reform, or more comprehensive efforts sustained by an effective political dialogue. The political necessity of the intervention therefore meant that the engagement was funded through the IfS CRC without further clarifying how it could link up with complementary or follow-up measures. In Lebanon, ensuring sustainability for UNRWA support to Palestinian refugees<sup>82</sup> transition to other Instruments was complicated as the intervention spanned the security-humanitarian-development-nexus. In this case, despite the inappropriateness of the IfS CRC (as a short-term instrument) to address a protracted crisis, it has been deployed for successive interventions in 2008/2009, 2011 and 2013. However, at the time of writing, the most likely sustainable solution could be the new Madad EU Trust Fund. In Nigeria, the five IfS CRC activities examined had moved into a second phase (or where about to do so) and there was no clear follow up to capitalise on results when the IfS CRC funding came to an end.<sup>83</sup> This highlights some clear areas where sustainability can be problematic: a) where interventions are a political necessity; b) where there is no obvious one single Instrument to sustain result outcomes and outputs (and it is an international community commitment); and c) where IfS CRC interventions purely fill gaps and are not linked to a wider analysis or a comprehensive approach.

The fact that the IfS CRC allowed for interventions to address emerging crisis contexts or cover areas where others didn't (or couldn't) fund made ensuring sustainability through other Instruments a challenge. From the Lebanon and Nigeria examples, successive IfS CRC interventions highlight that this has been a way to manage this problem. In Pakistan, a previous lack of donor coordination in the rule of law area and counter-terrorism activities made finding sustainable solutions difficult for projects in this domain, indeed other donors also suffered similar problems to the EU. Linkages with other EU activities explored in the Nigeria field mission proved to be weak and whilst account was taken of other donor activities. Though IfS CRC activities were not closely coordinated with other donor activities. Therefore bridging the gap is often a smoother transition in some areas rather than others, depending on the type of intervention, donor coordination and the country context.

<sup>81</sup> Contract 335173 (2013) - in Lebanon (UNHCR) The IfS project ended and the next day ENI funding took over making this a very smooth transition much appreciated by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) who were not affected by transition.

<sup>82</sup> UNRWA Projects: 275718 (2011); 331139 (2013); and 335729 (2013) in Lebanon.

<sup>83</sup> This has been discussed in the evaluation team's Nigeria field visit report.

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC4.2 – IfS Crisis Response interventions have relevant results within stakeholder and beneficiary communities that can be a catalyst for maintenance of results and further interventions.

*Summary judgement:* In the online survey, most respondents felt the result outcomes from the IfS CRC projects have been a catalyst for other interventions to a lesser or greater degree. From the desk study and the field visits, there appears to be good evidence that result outcomes do act as a catalyst for upstream interventions and/or have catalytic benefits to a certain extent. It is also clear that interventions can have outputs resulting in further outcomes that are really useful, especially practical and infrastructure outcomes. Some capacity development, building political leverage and other areas that required ownership and long-term support such as peace-building in the DRC or security sector reform in Zimbabwe tended to absorb resources but yielded less clear cut result outcomes since these elements are hard to quantify.

In the on-line survey, the majority of respondents (92%) see that IfC CRC interventions have been “catalytic” (46%) or “somewhat catalytic” (46%). Only 7% see them as “highly catalytic” but no-one sees them as “not at all catalytic”. In the desk study, there are examples of catalytic benefits that include post-conflict stabilisation by reducing negative trends such as emigration (Georgia); the potential to replicate methodologies and scaling up authoritative guidance (Kyrgyzstan, Niger and Nigeria); building of peace institutions and expansion of peace constituencies (Myanmar, India/Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Philippines) or policy uptake at a higher level of decision making (Philippines, Mali).<sup>84</sup>

From the evaluation team’s country visit in Pakistan, there were some examples of unexpected results that had catalytic effects. For example, the digitisation of records still being used and with a large scale multiplier effect from the Local Governance Rehabilitation project improving areas from domestic revenue collection, future disaster resilience and anti-corruption.<sup>85</sup> In Pakistan, also, the Post-Crisis Needs Assessment (PCNA) assisted in providing a reference point and framework for intervention of donors, the federal and provincial government and initiatives funded by other EC Instruments years after it was originally delivered. Some other projects had results that were capitalised on such as bomb disposal vehicles that are still in use and research outputs still being used. In Lebanon, the UNDP IfS CRC funded project has been the catalyst for a new intervention set up using Peace Labs (founded by one of the UNDP project) staff and Mercy Corps that builds on some of the peace-building work in communities started during the UNDP project.<sup>86</sup>

In the DRC, evidence from project documentation, stakeholders and beneficiaries confirm that outputs and resulting outcomes created by the IfS CRC interventions could be built on or functioned as a catalyst for maintenance of results and for enabling further interventions. However, the absorption capacity of NGO partners needs consideration (in the DRC but also for other projects funding NGOs) where large-scale funding within a short time-span has challenged the respective organisation’s ability to continue the same level of engagement after the project ended.<sup>87</sup> Ownership for sustainability and the maintenance of results and the achievement of wider outcomes was challenging to realise and appeared to only be partial in some IfS CRC projects. Trying to gain political leverage resulting in wider outcomes of an intervention was dependent on “capacitated individuals” (however there was often high turnover). In Nigeria, basic capacities have been created with regard to peace-building and communities have also been enabled so they could “step down” training to lower levels and build additional capacity. However, progress to date has been heavily dependent on the injection of EU resources. Beneficiaries that

<sup>84</sup> Contracts 299602 (Georgia), 260415 (Kyrgyzstan), 334612 (Niger), 322635 (Nigeria), 315364 (Myanmar), 311903 (India/Pakistan), 248111 (Kyrgyzstan), 331729 (Philippines), 316533 (Mali).

<sup>85</sup> Contract 260114 (2010) Local Governance Rehabilitation following 2010 Floods (Pakistan).

<sup>86</sup> Contract IcSP 365583 (2015) Governance and Community Action programme (2015-2017), Mercy Corps/Maharat/PeaceLabz that builds on contract 269689 (2011) – Supporting Civil Peace and Reconciliation in Lebanon (UNDP)

<sup>87</sup> Interview with NGO representatives, April 2016 (DRC)



were consulted mentioned that they would require additional resources from the EU to keep activities going.

Some respondents in the on-line survey did provide comments that nuanced responses to catalytic benefits. Much depends on what is understood as catalytic, and how this is measured, particularly knowing that there are many factors that contribute to an action creating follow-up and sustainability and that much depends on the context. In addition, follow-up is difficult due to the limited capacity to consult stakeholders and beneficiaries years after the project has closed down. This was particularly the case for beneficiaries who were not able to distinguish one EU Instrument from the other, particularly when there was smooth transition of follow-up funding to the IfS CRC as the field visits revealed.

#### **EQ5 on cross-cutting issues: To what extent have the cross-cutting issues of gender, human rights, conflict sensitivity, democracy and good governance been integrated and promoted in the IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio?**

*This EQ will assess to what extent the cross-cutting issues gender, human rights, conflict sensitivity, democracy and good governance been systematically promoted with a view to enhancing the effectiveness and political relevance of the IfS CRC portfolio.*

The extent to which cross-cutting issues have been integrated in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects is overall mixed. Context clearly matters and determines how pro-actively cross-cutting issues can be promoted. Overall it appears that a rather pragmatic and non-ambitious approach was followed in practice whereby cross-cutting issues were included “where opportunities arose”. – Whilst not all cross-cutting issues are relevant in a conflict situation, some of them, like good governance and human rights, can be more relevant than others. However these appeared to be rather down-played in the interventions or they were not integrated in a meaningful way. – Strong guidance on gender has been given by FPI and mainstreaming of gender has been noted throughout the IfS CRC portfolio though it has been mainly framed in terms of paying attention to women issues without linking it more strongly to peacebuilding, rights or empowerment. Similar guidance on the other cross-cutting issues was surprisingly absent which correlates with the above mentioned modest attention given to human rights, (good) governance and rule of law, in particular. Informal conflict sensitivity was generally adequate while more systematic approaches to conflict sensitivity, e.g. through conflict analysis, were generally weak (see other EQ3).

#### **Judgement Criteria**

##### **JC5.1 – Cross-cutting issues are clearly addressed with appropriate measures in the EU policy and design of the IfS Crisis Response Component portfolio.**

*Summary judgement: The mainstreaming of gender has been slowly improving although there are contexts where gender cannot be included. Other cross-cutting issues such as human rights, democracy and good governance are mentioned in very broad terms. In some cases, these issues are considered to be significant for an intervention. However, this is not reflected in the way such issues are often integrated into projects. There is little or no policy guidance to help integration or realise impact in these areas. This leaves a mixed picture concerning cross-cutting issues that do not necessarily relate to the context and with a risk that efforts in this area become a box-ticking exercise.*

From the desk study, there is uneven reference to cross-cutting issues within contracts, however some of these issues are addressed comprehensively<sup>88</sup> whilst others are not comprehensively addressed or do not include cross-cutting issues explicitly.<sup>89</sup> However, mainstreaming gender (or

<sup>88</sup> Contract 277647 (Sudan), 282118 (Cote D'Ivoire) and 317571 (Colombia).

<sup>89</sup> Contracts 308193 (DRC), 331139 and 335729 (Lebanon) and 278457 (Nigeria)

more specifically including women) appeared to be more frequently considered. Clearly efforts to integrate the 2008 Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security were noticeable in over 50% of the projects analysed as part of the desk study across the sectors. A search through MAX QDA software using various terms relating to the cross-cutting issues across the intervention sectors (see Annex 6 and Annex 14) provides complementary information. Overall, across the four sectors from over 200 searchable documents, some 66% included reference to gender, nearly 17% to democracy and close to 12% to human rights. These are very broad terms that cover a wide range of specific aspects that relate to the areas of cross-cutting issues (for example gender equality, gender empowerment or gender based violence; good governance and participation or emphasis on specific groups of rights – civil, political, social, economic and cultural). However more specific terms were more randomly applied across the interventions selected.

A review of the FPI Guidance Notes (from 2011 onwards) provides additional information. The Guidance Notes ask that prospective proposals pay attention to gender, but there are no similar questions with regard to conflict sensitivity, governance, democracy or human rights. There is also a specific annex available with guidance on gender, providing access to relevant EU policy documents, while there are no similar annexes with regard to the other cross-cutting issues. However from the evaluation team's country visits another perspective emerges which is that it is useful to distinguish between projects designed with the specific objective of addressing particular cross-cutting issues – for example human rights or addressing gender issues – and those projects which tried to address all the various cross-cutting issues within an intervention aimed generally at crisis response (e.g. not through a specific cross-cutting lens). In addition, evidence from the field visits (except Nigeria) suggests that conflict sensitivity has been applied more often in the interventions than the data from the searchable terms suggests.<sup>90</sup> Similar findings concerning human rights or good governance could not be found from the country visits.

The overall sense of cross-cutting issues in the projects was that some attempts have been made to include them despite the complicated environment. In some of these interventions, cross-cutting issues may not even be relevant, for example in the UNRWA interventions in Lebanon which did not appear to include cross-cutting issues.<sup>91</sup> Findings from Nigeria indicate that the IfS CRC projects did not systematically include and address crosscutting issues such as gender, human rights, conflict sensitivity, democracy and good governance. They tend to contain a short (and not very detailed analysis) of the main conflict drivers to be addressed.

Though women and youth were regularly mentioned as relevant target groups. In Lebanon, women and conflict sensitivity were the most regularly addressed cross-cutting issues. Social and economic rights were the most frequently analysed rights in the refugee projects although there was no in-depth analysis linked to a broader context i.e. long-term prospects for refugees in Lebanon (which may have caused impact). The Financing Decisions for Lebanon mentioned cross-cutting issues but not systematically. In the DRC several projects, in particular those implemented by NGOs, mainstreamed cross-cutting issues more systematically than others across the intervention areas of the projects but there were also IfS CRC projects that targeted particular cross-cutting issues, such as the fight against impunity (human rights).<sup>92</sup> However, despite this more or less explicit focus on cross-cutting issues in the design phase, the extent to which gender or democracy have been addressed in the projects overall remained rather modest. As for conflict sensitivity, also mentioned further below, the field visits showed that informal conflict sensitivity, among FPI staff and implementers, was overall adequate.

From the Pakistan findings, it is clear that what hampers mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues in the country is an asymmetric perception between the EU and the Government of Pakistan on human rights and gender issues in particular. Many human rights and gender issues were considered as an application of Western standards by the government of Pakistan and for that

<sup>90</sup> Only 6% for conflict sensitivity and risk management terms combines

<sup>91</sup> Contracts 275718 (2011) - in Lebanon (UNRWA); 331139 (2013) - Nahr el-Bared Camp (UNRWA); and 335729 (2013) - in Lebanon (UNRWA).

<sup>92</sup> DRC: Contracts 284107, 283808, 308261, 308193 (all NGOs) and contract 308518 (Prosecution Support).

matter many Pakistanis. While they were aware that they were below international standards on these matters, they did not consider this situation is in itself a problem that would require an EU response. Moreover, Western values were perceived as not necessarily fitting well with Islamic society values; hence the EU's soft power wasn't well received in much of Pakistani state and society. EU – Pakistan dialogue on these issues was challenging.

#### Judgement Criteria

##### JC5.2 – Evidence of integrating cross-cutting issues in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

*Summary judgement:* Overall, findings convey a mixed picture about the extent to which the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of cross-cutting issues in IfS CRC interventions were taken into account. In some interventions, cross-cutting issues were highly appropriate and played a strong role, but in others they were either an add-on or not included as they made no sense. Some cross-cutting issues, good governance and human rights, were particularly relevant in a conflict situation. However these appeared rather randomly applied, or informally applied (as for conflict sensitivity) in the interventions or they were not integrated in a meaningful way. Whilst it appears these cross-cutting issues were recognised as important by EUD staff in the on-line survey, guidance from HQ on these subjects is a current gap. In contrast, gender was the exception to the rule, where guidance did exist.

Evidence from the on-line survey suggests that cross-cutting issues appeared to be variably integrated across the interventions, ranging from poorly addressed to very good.<sup>93</sup> Regarding the inclusion of gender in design, respondents seem quite split. Around half of respondents (46%) perceived that gender considerations have played a strong role in programme design (only 1 respondent believes gender considerations were very strong), against 43% who believe gender was rather weak, and 7% for whom gender did not play a role. In terms of human rights, respondents appear more positive, with 60% believing human rights played a “strong” role in programme design, and 18% a “very strong” role, whereas 18% found it “rather weak” (only 1 respondent thinks that human rights considerations were very weak). For democracy and good governance, an overwhelming majority of respondents think that this was a “very strong” (18%) or a “strong” (70%) factor in design, with only 10% thinking it was “rather weak”, and only 1 respondent thinking it did not play any role. In interviews with key EU stakeholders and implementers cross-cutting issues tended to be thought of as “usually about ticking boxes”. Most importantly they also noted they are all equally important but it depends on the context in the country<sup>94</sup>.

Some on-line survey respondents additionally identified various reasons why cross-cutting issues were not effectively addressed consistently in designing and implementing IfS CRC interventions: a) the IfS CRC was not necessarily the right Instrument to include cross-cutting issues; b) some IfS CRC actions may be able to integrate cross-cutting issues and others are not, with one respondent commenting that “*conflict settings are very specific, so it is challenging to respond to cross-cutting issues*”; c) other respondents noted that “*it is important to accept that it is not always possible to insert cross cutting issues in IfS CRC projects*”. This echoes the mixed findings across the desk study, on-line survey and field visits. Findings show that in the examined projects cross cutting issues were often considered on an ad-hoc basis. Beyond that, it seemed difficult to demonstrate visibility for cross cutting issues in interventions and their strategic relevance was not always clear in a country context. Specifically in the DRC, for example, cross-cutting issues were addressed during design and up to a certain extent promoted during implementation “when opportunities arose”.<sup>95</sup> In Nigeria, cross-cutting issues such as considerations around inclusion of women appeared to be cursory with a few activities targeting women specifically. And human rights and conflict sensitivity considerations appeared not to have been developed sufficiently in grant applications and funding documents for all of the projects reviewed.

<sup>93</sup> Contract 282118 (Cote D'Ivoire) and 317571 (Colombia).

<sup>94</sup> Interview representatives of NGOs, Brussels 11.05.2016.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with EU staff, Kinshasa – April 2016.

Monitoring and evaluation of cross-cutting issues analysed in the desk study of IfS CRC evaluations tends to reveal they were not covered well. There was some consideration given in external evaluations and lessons learned but overall there was a lack of data about monitoring cross-cutting issues. Monitoring within the projects tended to be around direct outcomes and results of the projects, where cross-cutting issues were often not included. In some external evaluations, evaluators note that cross-cutting issues were included well in projects.<sup>96</sup> However many either mention it in a limited way or don't mention it at all so cross-cutting issues appeared to be more of an exercise that needed to be done rather than being truly integrated into the project as a whole.<sup>97</sup> Another criticism is a lack of disaggregated data collection and/or baseline information in projects that would allow for more efficient monitoring of cross-cutting issues. In the on-line survey respondents commenting on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices for cross cutting issues again reveal respondents are split on the issue of gender, with 48% thinking that it plays a "very strong" (4%) or "strong" role (44%) and 52% thinking it plays a "rather weak" (40%) or "not really" (12%) a role. Over half of survey respondents think that human rights considerations have a "very strong" (12%) or "strong" (44%) influence on M&E, against 32% who see it as "rather weak" or "not really" (12%). The majority of respondents say that democracy and good governance have played a "very strong" (16%) or strong (56%) role in M&E, against 16% who see it as "rather weak" and 12% as "not really".

From the desk study, it appears also that conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis was generally not conducted in a systematic way across the portfolio. FPI's Guidance on preparing programme proposals does not require anyone to pay specific attention to conflict sensitivity. However interestingly from the on-line survey 61% of survey respondents "agree" with the statement that "conflict assessments and analysis are used to identify gaps and make judgements about potential impact", while 25% "fully agree" and 14% "somewhat agree". Complementary comments provide further insights. They pointed out that decisions for funding were mainly driven by political priorities and "*hence do not necessarily need to rely on a conflict analysis*"; they also stressed that the flexible and speedy nature of IfS CRC interventions means "*Quick and dirty assessments seem more appropriate*"; "*conflict analysis are not always formally conducted, it is rather implicit*" and "*findings of studies are not systematically used.*" The evaluation team's field visits provide further insights: In Nigeria, there were limited reflections on conflict sensitivity criteria and lessons or on side effects or unintended consequences that resulted from the work. In the DRC, conflict analysis in each IfS CRC intervention tended to be implicit in the interventions (*ad hoc*) rather than using conventional conflict analysis.<sup>98</sup> In Pakistan, there is evidence of use of analysis but through a non-systematic application of conflict analysis.<sup>99</sup>

These findings tend to point to diverse practice around the issue of conflict analysis. From the online survey replies, but also from the field visits, it appears that informal conflict sensitivity and individual understanding of it was generally adequate, but more formalised and more systematic approaches to conflict sensitivity, such as the use of conflict analysis and which would have helped to shape a more shared knowledge and institutional memory about conflict issues, were less prevalent.

#### Judgement Criteria

##### **JC5.3 – Evidence and extent of each issue across the portfolio interventions through objectives, results and indicators.**

*Summary judgement: The extent to which cross-cutting issues were integrated in the IfS CRC interventions depended on whether the interventions were specifically designed to focus on specific cross-cutting issues, or whether they included cross-cutting issues as part of the intervention. Naturally, interventions with a specific focus on a cross-cutting issue, do tend to have better integration and results concerning these issues than the other interventions. Human rights*

<sup>96</sup> Contract 237991 (Bangladesh), 244667 (Ecuador) and 343646 (Syria).

<sup>97</sup> Contract 335547 (Guinee), 276306 and 279016 (South Sudan) and 316533 (Mali).

<sup>98</sup> Though IfS CRC funding was used to generate a regular context and conflict analysis, shared within the EUD, about the situation in the East of DRC by one of the implementing partners.

<sup>99</sup> Project 241306 (2011) Post Crisis Needs Assessment (PCNA) for KP and FATA (Pakistan).

*and good governance, whilst considered important, were not integrated in any depth into many of the projects explored during the desk study and during the field missions. Evidence concerning measurable results, stakeholder perceptions and changes on the ground within IfS CRC interventions for cross-cutting issues is overall weak.*

From the field missions measurements to track cross-cutting issues in IfS interventions has been variable, both in terms of accessing the data and determining whether the gathered data was used or not. In the PNC projects in the DRC<sup>100</sup> human resources were registered according to sex but the data was not used to make gender-specific analysis or to use it for discussing policy options or particular decision-making. From the Nigeria field visit, evidence of cross-cutting objectives, results and indicators has been sub-optimal. For example “increased performance on human rights” was one of the objectives of the Strengthening Criminal Justice Responses project<sup>101</sup> but no evidence of this having been achieved was noted during the evaluation. This raises questions about whether gathering the data actually has a purpose.

Gender is the main cross-cutting issue that has had the most specific guidance for IfS concept notes and mainstreaming into IfS interventions since 2011. However, guidance on how to integrate the more political dimensions of gender equality and women’s empowerment are not readily found in the policy or FPI guidance documents. During the field missions, in many of the interventions reviewed, it was possible to see gender was included, while more political dimensions of gender equality and women’s empowerment were not specifically addressed. For example, strengthening women’s rights or the decision-making role of women in interventions that allow women to play a more significant role in the social, political, civil, economic and cultural development of their societies.

As noted in the desk study “human rights” was the predominantly used term rather than more nuanced information about what kind of rights are being addressed (civil, political, cultural, economic or social rights). Similarly democratic values and good governance were mentioned as important issues in the on-line survey data. However, from the field visits it appears that some opportunities were missed in these areas. For example, in Lebanon an opportunity to address governance issues through the UNHCR project was even missed,<sup>102</sup> that could have helped improve the political relevance of the project overall. In the DRC, the extent to which civil society groups and experts not directly affiliated with the IfS CRC support were aware of the EU’s support to human rights and good governance appeared mixed. It was surprising to note that civil society organisations working on human rights and alongside the Prosecution Support Cells in the East of DRC were not aware that the EU/IfS CRC was funding the UNDP/ MONUSCO project in support of the Military Justice. The current inclusion of such themes in IfS CRC interventions therefore tends to be very broad and lacking in rigorous context analysis using a cross-cutting lens to identify entry points that could effect change on the ground.

**EQ6 on co-ordination and complementarity: To what extent and with what effect have the IfS Crisis Response Component interventions been designed and implemented in coordination and complementarity at different levels both within the EU and with other donors and partners?**

*This EQ will assess whether the FPI was able to coordinate its activities with other donors, but also with other EU institutions and with EU member states to an extent that the interventions through the IfS CRC contributed to well-coordinated and complementary crisis response actions*

<sup>100</sup> Contracts 150041 (2008) and 307808 (2012)

<sup>101</sup> Contract 327243 (2013)

<sup>102</sup> The national communications strategy was not operationalized which did not help to establish MoPH as the key authority in primary healthcare. In addition the issue of generic medicine could have made massive savings for MoPH if it had had better oversight of procurement processes for medication and medical supplies as well as helping enhance conflict sensitivity in the project (Information and more details from International Alert Conflict Sensitive Aid paper 2015).

of the EU.

The EC has several mechanisms for (political and operational) coordination at its disposal at HQ level, including crisis platforms and inter-service consultations. These were used to the extent possible by FPI (depending on human resources and time available) but the preparation and formulation of interventions relied also considerably more on informal channels of communication and coordination between HQ and the EUD, as well as between EU actors in the field to speed up the deployment of the Instrument. The results of this coordination approach, executed through a mix of formal and informal mechanisms, were found adequate and effective (see also JC2.1) and have led to complementarity between IfS CRC interventions and other EU mechanisms and instruments for external action. Attention to coordination was found stronger during the preparatory phase (also evident from financing decisions stressing the need for coordination and complementarity) compared to the implementation phase and follow-up phase of an intervention. The latter two contrast due to insufficient human resources at field level as highlighted under JC3.1. – At partner country level, IfS CRC staff or other EUD staff do participate in donor coordination on crisis response but the EU's role in coordination varies from case to case. The evaluation team found only one case, Pakistan, where attempts were made by the EUD to use the IfS CRC to foster a closer understanding among EU member states on how to address crisis from an EU perspective. Otherwise, no evidence could be found that the IfS CRC contributed to a strongly coordinated and complementary political crisis response (beyond the exchange of information) with other EU member states. – The extent to which the EU could engage strongly in donor coordination in crisis response greatly depended on its political ambitions and goals set (for example in DRC until 2011, where the IfS CRC was part of a wider EU engagement) but also on its physical presence on the ground, which was generally limited compared to other international actors. Findings from Pakistan, DRC and Lebanon field missions suggest that better and stronger EU engagement in coordination helped the EU to promote its objectives, avoided duplication and made its interventions (including IfS CRC projects) effective. In terms of operational coordination, the IfS CRC staff appeared to have cooperated well with initiatives (co-)funded by other international donors or EU member states. – The evaluation team found several instances at project level where lessons learnt from monitoring and evaluation of IfS CRC interventions were well used to promote more coordination and complementarity. An FPI-wide approach to channel lessons about using monitoring and evaluation for better coordination and complementarity of action across the portfolio could not be found.

#### Judgement Criteria

##### **JC6.1 – The mechanisms available for promoting coordination and complementarity available in crisis situations are adequate.**

*Summary judgement: Mechanisms were adequate. Commitment to and realisation of complementarity between IfS CRC interventions and other EU mechanisms and instruments for external action was generally achieved. However, there were instances where IfS CRC measures remained isolated due to factors often not fully under FPI's or responsible IfS staff's control (e.g. the understanding and buy-in of other EU departments in the IfS CRC's objectives and functioning). – The EU has several mechanisms for (political and operational) coordination at its disposal, including crisis platforms, inter-service consultations and joint assessment missions. These were used to the extent possible, depending on human resources and time available. A big part of the preparation and formulation of the Instrument was realised through a considerable use of more informal channels of communication and coordination between HQ and the EUD, as well as between EU actors in the field. This relative informality was a source of flexibility, but it was also dependent on personal relations, networks and experience of responsible staff. In contexts of high staff turnover, this may lead to a loss of institutional memory. Coordination was found mostly strong during the preparatory phase of an IfS CRC intervention, but less strong during implementation and follow-up.*

Field mission findings and interviews in Brussels suggest that the coordination and complementarity of IfS CRC interventions with other EU instruments for external action was well



promoted. For instance, with DG ECHO and the ENI being mobilised in the EU response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon, IfS CRC interventions were used in complementarity by ensuring assistance for both vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian communities in the health sector not covered by the other instruments. In Kobane, Syria, the IfS has funded demining activities that helped to establish humanitarian access for relief to be distributed through ECHO.<sup>103</sup> Also the field mission in DRC revealed a good coordination between the headquarters and the EUD, within the EUD and between the Delegation and partners on the ground, allowing for continuity of actions and complementarity with EDF-funded projects, as well as linkages with CSDP missions (EUPOL, in particular), resulting in a 'comprehensive approach'. The finding is further corroborated by the evaluation team's country visit to Pakistan, where the IfS CRC was seen as a tool for quick action to complement DCI measures in the country when urgent action was needed. The Pakistan field mission also observed a good current working relationship with ECHO, based on a clear division of labour in their respective fields of work and the ongoing sharing of information on what they were doing in geographic areas of engagement.<sup>104</sup> Especially representatives from the humanitarian community stressed the need for complementarity, keeping the IfS CRC as a distinct security tool.<sup>105</sup>

Still, while the intention of complementarity to other EU initiatives was often there, other factors beyond FPI's control played a role, such as the commitment to complementarity from other EC services, resulting in IfS CRC interventions that remained isolated or lacked follow-up. In addition, coordination and complementarity is at times hampered because not all non-FPI staff in the EU are well aware of the specificities of the IfS CRC.<sup>106</sup> The role played by the Head of Delegation, and the extent to which s/he promotes and requires cooperation between the political and operational sections of the Delegation, were also found to be key.<sup>107</sup>

The EU has dedicated coordination mechanisms to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication across EU actors and instruments, and jointly assess and plan for the design of crisis response. These notably include the crisis platforms, which allow for inter-institutional political coordination around given crisis hotspots, and the inter-service consultations used at the implementation level. In Lebanon, the crisis platform was found to be a useful tool to ensure complementarity of action with EDF-funded projects and allow the IfS to address gaps in the response. For Nigeria, however, no specific crisis situation triggered the establishment of such a platform. This supports the view that the practice of cross-EU coordination varies from case to case and depends, for example, on the perceived urgency and political relevance attached to a given crisis situation. This also relates to the limited time of FPI staff on the ground (discussed under JC3.1) to participate in all relevant coordination meetings, forcing them to prioritise.<sup>108</sup>

Other mechanisms found to be valuable are joint EU assessment missions, aimed at deploying various EU instruments in a coordinated manner.<sup>109</sup> Such coordination mechanisms were especially found to be important in the pre-design phase, where they allowed to break down institutional silos, jointly identify potential areas of duplication and decide which instrument should be used at which moment in the crisis response. An example is the joint assessment mission that took place in Haiti and coordinated with ECHO to explore synergies with the Humanitarian

<sup>103</sup> Telephone interview with EU official, 23 March 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Pakistan field mission discussions and interviews with EUD and ECHO staff.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with NGO representatives in Brussels, 20 April 2016.

<sup>106</sup> This leads to additional questions, resulting in a need for complementary exchanges and coordination to clarify administrative issues. Interview with EU official, 7 March 2016, referring to EU finance staff not knowing well the specificities of the instrument. Interview with EU official, 7 April 2016, mentioning that EEAS staff does not sufficiently understand the nature of the IfS CRC and how to use it in complementarity to other EU external action. See also JC 3.2 and references provided.

<sup>107</sup> This is supported by remarks made during interviews with EU officials (11 May 2016, 26 May 2016) and during focal group meeting with implementing partners (11 May 2016).

<sup>108</sup> Interview with EU official, 7 March 2016. Many coordination tasks can be done via telephone and e-mail but face-to-face coordination meeting have a different quality, which can't be compensated otherwise.

<sup>109</sup> Contract 252490 (Haiti), Contract 258664 and 258666 (Indonesia), 319291 (Guinee) and financing decision 23333 (South Sudan).

<p>Implementation Plan Haiti 2012 at community level. Regular coordination meetings between the EUD, ECHO and other present donors helped to avoid duplication of efforts.<sup>110</sup></p> <p>Although some officials interviewed stated that these mechanisms were not used systematically enough,<sup>111</sup> a significant amount of coordination and exchange between FPI, the EEAS, DEVCO, ECHO, the EUD as well as with Member States, happened informally via email, face-to-face or through videoconference. This had the advantage of retaining a high degree of flexibility and procedural lightness, but also depended on good personal relations between stakeholders in different agencies and prioritisation of this type of interaction amongst an already crowded workload. For instance, informal coordination in DRC was found to be used systematically and regularly (e.g. coordination between the IfS CRC and the EDF-funded project in relation to SSR were reported to be high). The case shows the high added value of having experienced staff on the ground, while pointing at the risks involved with high staff turnover in a system that is heavily dependent on flexible and informal coordination.</p> <p>Evidence suggests that coordination and complementary was particularly promoted during the design phase of interventions, but was a less systematic practice during project implementation and follow-up. This finding was supported through interviews with partner NGOs in Brussels,<sup>112</sup> and also observed during the visit to Lebanon, where FPI was reported to be highly involved in the design and set up of an UNHCR intervention, but far less engaged in coordination during and after the implementation of the intervention. The Nigeria and DRC cases also suggest that there was a good degree of information-sharing and coordination during the preparatory phases of IfS interventions, but this was not systematically sustained during implementation for all projects. Insufficient staff was mostly cited as the reason for this lack of follow-up. In Pakistan and Nigeria, the delicate security situation also played a role.</p>
--

Judgement Criteria
<p><b>JC6.2 – Role of EU in coordination of MS and other donors in situations of crisis or emerging crisis.</b></p> <p><i>Summary judgement: The extent to which the EU could fulfil a donor coordination role varied from case to case. In several cases, the EU was seen as an important gap-filling funder. While it often participated in donor coordination on crisis response with non-EU partners, it normally did not assume a leading coordinating role on crisis response. This impacted also on the IfS CRC and the extent to which it was used for shaping or enhancing coordination with EU member states and other donors. The UN was seen as the more natural actor to assume a coordinating role (which can also be to the benefit of the EU and EU member states). Findings from field missions suggest that the stronger the EU could engage in coordination, the more proactive it could promote its objectives and make interventions, including IfS CRC projects, effective. – The extent to which the EU could play a strong role in donor coordination in crisis response, and involve the IfS CRC for that purpose, depended partly on its political ambitions but also on its physical presence on the ground, which was generally limited compared to other international actors. With the presence of a CSDP mission or an EU Special Representative the political leverage, credibility and leadership of the EU amongst the donor community in the field of crisis response increased, as has been the case in DRC up to 2011. –Operational coordination of IfS CRC project interventions with EU member states and international donors to support the implementation of activities was performed well. The evaluation team did not come across major problems in this regard though limited human resources limited the extent to which IfS CRC staff could devote time to coordination.</i></p> <p>A substantial number of IfS CRC interventions reviewed had the objective of contributing to donor coordination on crisis response whether led by the EU or other donors, including EU member states. Though there is no specification whether this concerns strategic and sector coordination to address crisis, or operational coordination. There is also no qualification whether this should go beyond the exchange of information. Concerning operational coordination, the evaluation found</p>

<sup>110</sup> Contract 323014 (Haiti).

<sup>111</sup> Interviews with EU officials, 7, 9 and 11 March and 7 April 2016.

<sup>112</sup> Group interview with NGO representatives in Brussels, 12 May 2016.



no instances where coordinating tasks with other international partners, including EU member state funded initiatives revealed any particular problems.

The extent to which the IfS CRC could contribute to, what the evaluation team calls, strategic and sector coordination varied from case to case and largely depended on the willingness of the EU to aspire having a coordinating role in crisis response. In several instances, the IfS CRC was therefore rather more considered to be a funder and 'gap filler', rather than a contributor to coordination. This is supported by findings in Nigeria and the DRC, where the EUD – also speaking on behalf of the IfS CRC – participated in donor coordination on crisis response,<sup>113</sup> but did not assume a coordinating role in those efforts. Moreover, opinions on the adequateness of existing coordination mechanisms varied.<sup>114</sup> In the DRC, the EU limited itself to the provision of funding for the SSR during the recent years, being – for example – the only donor able to provide substantial funding in the field of military justice and the fight against impunity without promoting more coordination in the sector. This was a change compared to the past, when the EU still had a Special Representative for the Great Lakes region and two CSDP missions (EUPOL and EUSEC), which gave the EU more credibility, political weight and leverage as a leading international actor on crisis response.<sup>115</sup>

Lebanon and Pakistan both provide examples in which the EU did play a more leading role in terms of donor coordination. In Lebanon, the IfS focal point in the country served as coordinator of the Rule of Law, Justice and Security donor coordination group, providing a forum that helped to place the EUD in a position where its coordination role and political profile was appreciated by other donors. UN agencies were also found to be aware of the greater political role the Instrument could play. UNHCR was able to create political capital with the Ministry of Public Health from the IfS CRC intervention from which they benefited. Likewise, UNRWA did not only see the Instrument as a financial solution, but also saw its relevance for coordinating efforts on issues of wider security in Lebanon and for attracting new funders to help honour international commitments, showing that stakeholders do not only see gap filling the only added value of the IfS CRC.

In Pakistan, the EU has been able to contribute to donor coordination through the IfS CRC by investing in strategic initiatives such as the PCNA, which contributed to a higher degree of coordination and complementarity with other EU actors and the wider donor community. The EU played a pivotal role in the inception phase of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund, which provided a platform for donor coordination, including of action on the ground. The Pakistan example shows that the IfS CRC could indeed be an important contributor to donor coordination, provided that was is used in a well-informed manner.

Whether or not the EUD and IfS CRC staff could (successfully) assume a coordinating role was greatly dependent on the physical presence on the ground. Shortages of staff at headquarters and field levels being able to spend time on peace and stability matters made political and development-related coordination with partners in the field challenging.<sup>116</sup> This can affect the quality and effectiveness of the intervention. For example, the absence of an IfS officer or other EUD staff members in Eastern DRC, where many international efforts and interventions are coordinated, was found to be limiting the opportunities for the EU to coordinate and complement to other donors' and partners' initiatives, let alone play a leading role therein. In contrast, having a dedicated IfS officer in Pakistan was found to provide the capacity to coordinate with others on crisis and stability actions particularly in the peacebuilding, countering violent extremism sphere and in relation to FATA with the ability to share analysis and information, which would have been unlikely to happen if no IfS officer was present in the country.

Coordination can also depend on the behaviour of the host government: In the DRC, coordination was made difficult because of the fragmentation of international assistance with regard to the

<sup>113</sup> E.g. through joint feasibility study missions with non-EU partners during the pre-design phase, such as with the DFID Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme

<sup>114</sup> In the case of Pakistan, where information sharing and coordination in the Justice and Security sector was found to be very light even though many donors are involved in the sector.

<sup>115</sup> European Network for Central Africa (2016).

<sup>116</sup> Helly & Galleazzi (2014).

security/development nexus, and a national government that – since 2011, in particular – has shown decreasing interest in coordinating more widely with donors on SSR.<sup>117</sup>

Some respondents to the online survey argued that while EU coordination at programme level is welcomed, political coordination by the EU is not always appreciated. It was noted that the UN more naturally assumes a coordination role at the level of the broader international community (which can also be to the benefit of the EU) while the EU should play an important role in coordinating its Member States within the framework of Article 210 of TFEU.<sup>118</sup> The Peacebuilding in Kashmir project is an example of the latter: the project was used as an entry point for discussion with EU member States in Pakistan and helped to nourish the EU's political understanding of the dynamics on the ground at the HOMs level and EUD, including through a field mission of both the political and operational section staff to meet with project beneficiaries who were themselves either politically informed or part of the political dynamics.

### Judgement Criteria

#### **JC6.3 – Best practice examples of strong monitoring of coordination and complementarity in situations of crisis or emerging crisis.**

*Summary judgment: From the desk research and the online survey, the evaluation team could identify several instances where monitoring (and evaluation) results at the project level were used to feed into coordination efforts with positive results. In selected cases, this was also part of the project set-up (such as in the case of DRC's police reform). The findings also reveal that the use of monitoring for better coordination happened at the project level but that such experiences were not shared more systematically for wider learning across the portfolio. Channels for such sharing did not exist.*

There are instances of strong monitoring of coordination and complementarity in situations of crisis, with lessons learning from past experiences. In Lebanon, for instance, the UNHCR project funded under the IfS CRC made good use of a baseline, mid-term and end-line evaluation tool, handled by a local University Research Centre (La Sagesse), which helped to monitor progress and increase impact. Also other projects in Lebanon showed good practices, although it was noted that monitoring and evaluation tended to be more technical and project-specific rather than responding to a contribution to wider ambitions.

In the DRC, the IfS CRC helped to set up an inclusive *Comité de Suivi de la Réforme de la Police (CSRP)*. Stakeholders reported that the CSRP was a useful platform that has helped to discuss progress, share information and good practices, and bridge the gap between the government and security actors on the one hand, and civil society on the other by enabling dialogue and exchange about the police reform process.

Another positive example was the case of Syria, where the UNHCR independent evaluation points to an effective inter-agency and sector-level coordination that continuously improved during the response and supported knowledge-sharing and decision-making.<sup>119</sup> Successful coordination, taking into account monitoring & evaluation results, was also reported from Bolivia (evidence of a strong process-led intervention), Georgia, Nigeria (where progress reports were shared among monthly coordination meetings with other EC-supported groups), and South Sudan (where there were good communication and knowledge exchange channels between the EUD and UNDP).<sup>120</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Interviews with EUD staff and international agencies/donors during DRC field mission.

<sup>118</sup> In some cases, it is a Member State who assumes a coordinating role, such as the UK in Nigeria.

<sup>119</sup> Contract 310061 (Syria).

<sup>120</sup> Contract 207487 (Bolivia), 355296 (Georgia), 322635 (Nigeria) and 278940 (South Sudan).

While these findings from the project level highlight the ability to feed monitoring results into coordination mechanisms, there appeared to be no mechanisms in place to feed these more regulatory into wider EU practice. A barrier identified was the fact that lessons drawn from monitoring and evaluation were not shared, or only shared to some extent<sup>121</sup>, partly because efficient channels for sharing lessons were not available, and partly because the community of practitioners was relatively small (see also findings under JC9.3).

**EQ7 on consistency: To what extent are the interventions carried out under the IfS Crisis Response Component consistent with each other, and with the EU external action strategy?**

*This EQ will assess to what extent the IfS CRC portfolio, at design and implementation level, is consistent and consistent with related policies and activities of the EU and EU member states. Evidence of consistent strategies and analysis in IfS crisis response with other EU instruments assessing external action, but also with programmes other (international) actors, will be sought in the context of this assessment.*

Various examples highlight that the IfS CRC was generally used consistently vis-à-vis other EU instruments and was generally well linked up with engagements supported by other international partners or national governments. The non-programmable nature of the IfS CRC allowed it to remain flexible, but has led in selected cases to a rather unfocused and politically unexploited use as well as limited efforts to find linkages with complementary or follow-up EU funding. Where IfS CRC interventions were founded in a good understanding and analysis of the conflict and country situation, and embedded in a wider EU political approach in response to a crisis, the frequency of consistency with other EU external action instruments increased. – There is evidence that consistency within the portfolio of IfS CRC interventions was sought from the onset when financing decisions were taken and interventions were designed. Some findings from the field visits and project documents suggest that more attention could be given to consistency across the portfolio so that implementation of IfS CRC interventions, where this makes sense, are more consistent with each other.

**Judgement Criteria**

**JC7.1 – Evidence of consistency across the portfolio of IfS Crisis Response Component interventions**

*Summary judgement: The evaluation team's document study and country visits provide evidence that successful efforts were made to promote consistency of the portfolio, starting with the design and continued during the implementation of the decisions. But based on some findings from the desk review questions remain about the extent to which sufficient efforts were made to ensure that implementation of IfS CRC interventions, to the extent this made sense, were consistent with each other.*

There is good evidence from the review of IfS CRC financing decisions and project documents that upfront efforts were made to build on the accomplishment of previous IfS CRC decisions, to link interventions with each other and to create synergetic effects. Several examples show, for example, that interventions were set up in continuation of previous IfS CRC interventions.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Of the online survey respondents, 54% responded they are shared to some extent, while 18% that they are not really shared.

<sup>122</sup> Contracts 299273 (Azerbaijan/Armenia), 238938 and 299602 (Georgia), 254405 (Philippines) 334612 (Niger), 242516 (Indonesia), 260537 (Kyrgyzstan), 276306 and 279016 (South Sudan), 277647 (Sudan), and 316533 (Mali), 319291 (Guinee), 313697 (Zimbabwe) and 276199 (Afghanistan).

There are also cases where the IfS CRC intervention in a country aimed to offer a consistent package, with actions that reinforced each other across sectors.<sup>123</sup> The financing decision for Georgia, for example, points to a strongly consistent approach where the EU played an important role in advancing conflict transformation and resolution as a security actor and official mediator while responding to the immediate needs of affected populations.<sup>124</sup>

Evidence about the extent to which this has led to more synergetic effects on the ground is difficult to get from the document review. Relevant pointers can be extracted from the evaluation team's four country visits. Three out of four country visits report an overall consistent approach. In Nigeria, most projects reviewed were considered relevant for the approach and objectives of the IfS CRC funding whereby the three projects in the Plateau State (Jos) complemented each other substantially. In DRC, the portfolio of the IfS CRC displayed, with two exceptions, consistency around two main interconnected clusters – SSR and dialogue/confidence building. Attempts were made to promote consistency from the design phase and – to the extent this was possible – promoted during the implementation of the projects.<sup>125</sup> In Lebanon, the focus of the majority of the portfolio was on the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis focusing on the needs of both the Syrian refugees and the vulnerable Lebanese population in an effort to reduce emerging tensions and prevent conflict in overburdened communities.<sup>126</sup> Information reported on Pakistan looks somewhat mixed. While there was good follow-up on successful IfS CRC initiatives with IcSP funding, the overall use of the Instrument has been very widespread. This generated a risk of losing consistency, as well as to making the rationale behind the use of the IfS CRC difficult to read for other donors, the Government of Pakistan and implementing partners themselves. This led to wider questions whether the EU knew what it wanted to prioritise where stability was concerned in Pakistan.

More critical comments were noted in project documents concerning interventions in Haiti, Zimbabwe and Pakistan. In Haiti, the Instrument was apparently strategically poor and the interventions were used in a fragmented and ad-hoc manner, which have reduced the effects of the intervention.<sup>127</sup> In Zimbabwe, there was an instance where IfS interventions duplicated the efforts through other interventions and in Pakistan inconsistencies appeared within the IfS programme.<sup>128</sup> These examples, plus cases found during the field missions and mentioned above, point at the need for paying attention to the portfolio's consistency and the consistency of individual intervention.

#### Judgement Criteria

##### JC7.2 – Evidence of consistent strategies and analysis in situations of crisis or emerging crisis with other EU instruments addressing external action

*Summary judgement: Findings from the desk review and the online survey highlight that the IfS CRC was used consistently vis-à-vis other EU instruments. Though findings from strategic EU*

<sup>123</sup> Contract 315364 (Myanmar); 330752 (Somalia), 237991 (Bangladesh), 335547 (Guinee), 319474 (Chad), 168890 and 307808 (DRC), 331255 and 342825 (CAR) and 294344 (Ivory Coast), 270513 (Dominican Republic).

<sup>124</sup> Financing decision 22474 and 24280 (Georgia).

<sup>125</sup> Top-down interventions implemented by government structures (support to the human resource management reform of the National Police and for the fight against impunity [Military Justice] – contracts 307808 and 308518), were complemented with bottom-up support, i.e. improving civil-military relations and accountability of the security actors and the promotion of social cohesion through dialogue and mediation (contracts 284107, 283808 and 308261).

<sup>126</sup> This approach has also been deployed within other EU instruments, something highly appreciated by Lebanese stakeholders concerned with stabilising the Lebanese vulnerable population where they noted other international donors mainly focused on the Syrian refugees, only, which caused resentment and conflict amongst Lebanese.

<sup>127</sup> In Haiti “... instruments ont souvent été utilisés d’une manière ad hoc et segmentée ce qui a appauvri les effets de l’appui apporté” and: “... les interventions sectorielles et thématiques ont montré une évidente pauvreté stratégique. Cela a entraîné une utilisation insuffisamment intégrée d’instruments spécifiques ...” European Commission (2014).

<sup>128</sup> Contract 281188 (Zimbabwe) and 293346 (Pakistan).

*evaluations and the field missions are more critical, telling that IfS CRC interventions were more consistent with other EU external action instruments if founded in a more thorough analysis of the country situation and based on a political guidance. Where a clear overarching EU political approach was provided, such as in Aceh, the consistency of the IfS CRC intervention with other measures could be enhanced. The non-programmable nature of the IfS CRC allowed the Instrument to remain flexible. In selected cases, such as in Pakistan, this resulted in a rather unfocused use of the Instrument and to difficulties to find linkages with complementary or follow-up EU funding (e.g. DRC). From these cases, it appears also that the political potential of the Instrument has been unexploited or at least not sufficiently exploited. Based on the above, the evaluation team judges that incidents of consistency, success and effectiveness increased when political and/or strategic guidance, founded on a good analysis of the conflict and the country, was available.*

As discussed under the previous JC, financing decisions and project documents promoted the consistency among IfS interventions. Consistency was also promoted with thematic programmes (in particular EIDHR), the geographic instruments DCI and EDF (in continuation of past, and in preparation of future programming exercises), EU humanitarian assistance, other EU member states initiatives and crisis responses by the UN and other international partners. In terms of implementation and follow-up, the online survey data say: 32% of survey respondents find that IfS CRC measures ‘always’ took into consideration linkages with appropriate follow-up actions funded by other EU external action instruments or other donors. 43% believe this occurred ‘regularly’ and 25% say it occurred ‘sometimes’ (see also JC4.1).

The desk review found also a good number of IfS CRC interventions, which were embedded clearly within wider EU external action strategies, such as for Central Asia or CSDP. For the North of Niger and Mali, the review shows that these interventions took place under a shared Sahel Strategy, which helped to guide political and operational priorities<sup>129</sup>. In Libya, the intervention was based on the EU Libya Roadmap, founded in a joint analysis, and the support provided in Ivory Coast was founded in the Government’s SSR strategy<sup>130</sup>.

The evaluation team’s country visits highlight that consistency and synergies could be created if IfS CRC interventions were embedded in country conflict and crisis assessments. In Lebanon, HQ and the EUD paid intense attention to the Syrian refugee crisis during the evaluation period. The evaluation team’s country visit reports that the IfS CRC in Lebanon relied on a fairly continuous conflict and crisis analysis, shared within the EUD, to identify priorities – especially those of a politically sensitive nature. Good synergies of IfS CRC interventions were created with ENI and DG ECHO in handling the needs of vulnerable Syrians and Lebanese together.<sup>131</sup>

In Nigeria, apart from an overall country strategy, there was no shared EU strategic conflict or political economy assessment that defined the continuum of crisis situations or spelled out EU strategic priorities for addressing them which made it difficult for the IfS CRC to respond and adapt effectively as a political instrument to the diverse crises in the country. The evaluation team did not come across a single example where an IfS CRC funded project was hooked on to any EDF funding that could take over and resulted in a patchwork of projects funded through different EU instruments, including the IfS CRC, without a clear indication of prioritisation or how individual activities were supportive of wider EU strategic interests in the country. The evaluation team’s Pakistan visit reports that IfS CRC interventions were consistent with the overarching and very widely defined EU-Pakistan Five-Year Engagement Plan. This has led to a diverse portfolio in terms of topics and issues covered and geographic focus in relation to crisis and stability issues. A certain lack of consistency as seen by other donors, government officials and implementers was reported raising questions about whether the Instrument could have been used more ‘politically’. Insights and networks gained from IfS CRC interventions did seem under-utilised by the EU/EUD.

<sup>129</sup> Financing decisions 23754 and 24898 [Nigeria]; and 24677 [Mali].

<sup>130</sup> Contracts 308322 (Libya) and 294344 (Ivory Coast)

<sup>131</sup> From the outset of the design the transition to follow-up funding by the ENI was built into the project so a very smooth transition occurred between instruments once the IfS CRC finished.

In DRC, the IfS CRC portfolio in relation to SSR has been mostly consistent with activities undertaken under CSDP missions, linked to EDF-funded interventions in the sector and based on a shared analysis at country level.<sup>132</sup> Though it was hampered by the lack of a shared vision of the EU on how to deal with the protracted crisis in DRC and torn between an overall and unambitious EU country strategy and an EU Global Strategy for the Great Lakes Region. In the absence of an EU country conflict and crisis assessment, some projects were shuttled into the country based on discussions in HQ, others – in support of civil society – were difficult to link with EDF-funding as such funds were limited and not prioritised for the East of DRC.

From evaluation reports dealing with EU external action and analysing the extent to which consistency efforts were successfully translated into the field, a somewhat less positive picture emerges. The 2011 strategic level evaluations of EU support to Justice and Security Sector Reform (JSSR) noted critically the lack of different instruments being framed in a more strategic response to the countries it was deployed in, including the IfS CRC.<sup>133</sup> Other critical observations on the inconsistent use of EU instruments (including specifically naming the IfS) can be noted from the assessment of the African Peace Facility<sup>134</sup> and other studies highlight how crisis interventions would benefit more from being embedded in wider strategies for change and engagement.<sup>135</sup> In Aceh (Indonesia), however, it was clear that the IfS CRC funded interventions were ‘flanking measures’ for an overarching political approach by the EU and this was part of the added value and success of the Instrument.<sup>136</sup>

**EQ8 on value added: What has been the distinct contribution and value added of the IfS Crisis Response Component interventions in particular cases relative to EU member states and other donors?**

*This EQ will assess whether the EU was best placed and had an added value to engage through the IfS CRC by filling and bridging gaps which other EU instruments, EU member states and international agencies could not respond to.*

This EQ has been answered based on judgements about flexibility, speed and whether the Instrument was able to fill gaps which other donors and EU member states could not address. Overall, the IfS CRC was of high added value and compared well to the crisis response instruments of a selected number of other EU member states and international actors. Interviews with representatives of implementing organisations, online survey replies and EU strategic evaluations showed value for the Instrument’s flexibility. Factors mentioned concerned the non-programmable nature of the Instrument and the direct award of grants. The broad thematic scope of funding was equally valued allowing, for example, different types of activities to be addressed at the same time. The ability to fund comparatively substantial amounts to specific conflict related actions that could be provided within relative short timeframes was also highly valued. The same sources appreciated the relative speed of the Instrument, in particular considering the amount of funds it could provide and the thematic scope it could cover. – The Instrument in contracting and realising funds was not always equally fast compared to a few other donors’ specific conflict and stability related instruments. However, these instruments were only quicker for the provision of more limited amounts of funding, or for the funding of pre-defined areas. In line with the findings

<sup>132</sup> The support to military justice (fight against impunity) emerged from a UN-led process, which showed continuity between Canadian involvement and EU involvement based on a shared assessment - contract 308518 (DRC).

<sup>133</sup> ADE (2011b): “At country level, while a mixture of financing instruments was used for supporting JSSR, synergies between them were often not adequately exploited. Commission used a wide range of financing instruments to support JSSR. Overall, ten different financing instruments were used, including geographical programmes (such as EDF, ENPI, Asia, Latin America, etc.) and the thematic budget lines (such as the IfS, EIDHR, etc.).”

<sup>134</sup> ADE, as partner of a consortium led by IBF International Consulting (2013, p. 84)

<sup>135</sup> This point of peace and stability projects being implemented within a ‘strategic deficit’ is not a new observation in evaluations – ADE (2011) & Smith (2004).

<sup>136</sup> Particip (2015)



documented under EQ 3, the informants and sources mention that the decision-making period was fast but the time until the action could start delivering on the ground was sometimes slower than that of certain other donors (the latter was mainly caused by EU administrative procedures and staffing constraints which are not within the sphere of influence of FPI). – With the discontinuation of the PAMF (ending under the IfS) the EU has given away a tool to react quickly, or to fill gaps that could not be funded otherwise, thereby reducing its scope to act politically in urgent cases.

#### Judgement Criteria

##### **JC8.1 – Evidence of coherent analysis and strategies to identify gaps not able to be filled by other donors in situations of crisis or emerging crisis**

*Summary judgement:* Based on different forms of exchange, formal as well as informal, and through strategic orientations provided by the EU in certain contexts, the IfS CRC was able to fill gaps in different situations which could not be filled by EU member states and other international donors (either because they did not have the scale of funding, no (political) interest or no funding available at a particular point in time). Evidently, the prospects of the IfS CRC to respond and adapt effectively as a political instrument to crisis increased if based on EU analysis and political guidance (as mentioned under EQ7).

There are several findings to show that the IfS CRC could fill gaps which other donors were not able or willing to fill. The Instrument was used flexibly at a point in time when other donors a) had no funding available for a particular engagement (e.g. resulting in the IfS CRC contribution to the fight against impunity in DRC, implemented under MONUSCO); b) had politically no interest (e.g. such as the support to vulnerable Lebanese during the Syrian refugee crisis) or c) no interest, or ability, to fund at a scale which the IfS CRC could provide (such as for peacebuilding in Kashmir).<sup>137</sup> The desk report for this evaluation highlights a wealth of additional examples from across the portfolio underpinning this finding.<sup>138</sup> From these example we can show the following findings: reports from the project in Mali highlights that the IfS CRC to assist the youth interventions was referred to as having no equivalent amongst projects implemented by other donors. In the cases of Nagorno Karabakh, other international agencies were reluctant to engage in this particular cross-border peace process. In Georgia, the confidence-building project was the only initiative that had access to civil society in Abkhazia (besides the ICRC) and filled a clear gap with regard to early recovery. Additionally, a media-related project in Pakistan highlights a sector that was funded which did not get attention from other international partners.

Though added value does not come from funding and filling gaps, only. The IfS CRC had the possibility to work around national governments but, if considered useful, could also choose to work through government. A direct exchange with government can help to create buy-in and can be a strong base for future success. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in Lebanon, for example, was highly positive with the EU's contribution through the IfS CRC. A representative of the MoPH declared that the EU was one of the “very rare donors that consults with us on what to do and how to do it.”<sup>139</sup> In Pakistan, where basically nothing can be undertaken without the Government closely following an engagement (as the evaluation team reports) the conclusion of a contract, or at least a MoU, where the two parts agreed on a common understanding on what was expected through IfS CRC intervention delayed the process to some extent but was considered acceptable as it aided significantly with the implementation.

The desk review of documents about IfS CRC interventions in the domain of livelihoods and economic recovery in Niger raises questions from the evaluation team why the IfS CRC was of best use in view of intense funding for the North of Niger provided by Germany, Denmark and the USA. Similar questions were brought up in relation to the drought assistance in the North of Ethiopia which, with better planning and foresight, potentially could have been funded from other

<sup>137</sup> Contracts 308518 (DRC), 335173 (Lebanon) and 334669 (India).

<sup>138</sup> Contracts 299273 (Azerbaijan/Armenia), 238938 (Georgia), 315364 (Myanmar), 260415 and 248111 (Kyrgyzstan), 242516 (Indonesia), 276306 (South Sudan), 316533 (Mali), 334612 (Niger); 3313679 (Zimbabwe), 276199 (Afghanistan), 260109 (Pakistan).

<sup>139</sup> Interview with representative of the Lebanese MoPH, 5 April 2016.

sources. Both had more of a develop-oriented nature, where the political nature of the Instrument was not apparent. Similar observations came from projects in Nigeria that focused on economic cooperation for peace and stability as the evaluation team visiting Nigeria noted.<sup>140</sup> From such instances one can observe that there should be scope for improving dialogue and analysis between the EU and other donors prior to the design of the IfS CRC intervention.

In most cases reviewed during the evaluation team's country visits, the analysis of gaps was based on a multitude of informal, but also formal exchanges supported by "appropriately and implicitly conducted quick and dirty assessments"<sup>141</sup> to judge whether the Instrument was of best use in a certain context. The presence of experienced and engaged FPI officers knowledgeable of the political situation in the country and well connected through networks at different levels helped to compensate for the absence of wider EU political guidance and conflict analysis (as described for selected cases under EQ 7).

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC8.2 – Evidence of a clear value added emerging from IfS Crisis Response Component interventions in terms of flexibility and speed

*Summary judgement: The IfS CRC has been clearly more flexible and fast compared to other EU instruments and it has been valued for its flexibility and relative speed by several implementing organisations interviewed for this evaluation. But – according to the perceptions and experiences of the same interviewees, online survey messages and other strategic EU evaluations – it was not always as speedy when compared to a few other donors' specific conflict/stability instruments. However, other international partners were only quicker when providing more limited amounts of funding, or for the funding of pre-defined areas. The undisputed added value vis-à-vis other international partners was derived from being more flexible in terms of scope and amounts that could be provided within relatively short timeframes. – Numerous other factors defining the added value of the Instrument have been researched, such as its non-programmable nature, its ability to explore and innovate and to select partners quickly without following competitive procedures. - With the termination of the PAMF at the end of the IfS in 2013, the EU has given away a tool to react quickly, or to fill gaps that could not be funded otherwise, thereby reducing its scope to act politically within a short time-span.*

In terms of flexibility, the Instrument was valued for a variety of reasons by EU staff but also by staff from implementing organisations. It is non-programmable, which was referred to as an immense added value by EU staff.<sup>142</sup> One senior interviewee from an implementing organisation underlined that the IfS has been unbeaten in terms of scope of activities it could support, the geographical coverage and the amounts of funding available, which made it a very valuable and flexible Instrument to their operations.<sup>143</sup> Several other aspects making the IfS CRC particularly valuable for EU external action and giving added value compared to several other EU member states and international funding agencies were highlighted: i) to help compensate for gaps where other EU external action instruments cannot act; ii) to act in a targeted manner and quickly by selecting suitable implementing partners without having to follow a competitive bidding procedure; iii) to use it for experimentation and supporting innovations;<sup>144</sup> iv) to fund in parallel a variety of activities in different sectors through selected partners;<sup>145</sup> and finally, v) in political contexts where

<sup>140</sup> Contracts under financing decisions 23754 (Niger) and 23598 (Ethiopia) and contracts 323412 and 320960 (Nigeria). In the case of Ethiopia, an identification mission was undertaken jointly with representatives of the USA.

<sup>141</sup> Comment noted from online survey (25% "fully agreed" with the statement that "conflict assessments and analysis are used to identify gaps", 61% "agreed" and 14% "somewhat agreed" – nobody disagreed).

<sup>142</sup> "The IfS CRC is the plumber of our services", as one Head of Delegation mentioned during an interview (April 2016).

<sup>143</sup> Interview with NGO representative, 13 May 2016; similar comments were made during interviews by other implementing partners (12 May 2016).

<sup>144</sup> Such as the first-ever EU-UN/DPKO cooperation when fighting impunity in DRC (contract 308518).

<sup>145</sup> "Openness to different projects, and urgent needs seen as extremely important for IfS." (Conseil Santé, 2013, p. 59).



the EU is viewed as more of a neutral actor, the IfS CRC actions were able to provide an added value over other international actors (including some EU member states) who were perceived as having clear strategic interests.<sup>146</sup>

It had also other advantages - such as direct award of grants and shorter deadlines for inter-service consultations. For countries that have been declared as a fragile context, such as Pakistan, special Commission procedures applied which meant that the EU could work through shorter deadlines with the DCI,<sup>147</sup> thereby making the IfS CRC a bit less of an added value though the wide thematic scope of the Instrument remained an advantage.<sup>148</sup> On the downside, the IfS CRC had some administrative limitations compared to other international donors (caused by the PRAG), which impacted on flexibility.<sup>149</sup>

A list of crisis response instruments used by a limited number of other donors (Annex 12) shows that speed is of high concern to some of the EU's other international partners. This message also emerges from wider evaluations of the European Commission's approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding: *"The capacity to react sufficiently quickly was questioned in all the country case studies where it had been used (Bolivia, CAR, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Sierra Leone): even though the deployment of the IfS has been faster than other EU instruments, its administrative requirements were still such that it took two to four months to start an intervention, which was slower than that of certain other donors".*<sup>150</sup> A similar point is made in an evaluation about Yemen: *"IfS decision-making processes have been comparatively 'quick' by EU standards but it still takes six months to reach an agreement – too long for the rapidly shifting needs of NGOs during periods of rapid change."*<sup>151</sup> This is supported by an online survey comment: *"The IfS CRC is more flexible and quicker than other EU financing instruments, but not necessarily more flexible and quicker than other donors' funding mechanisms (even traditional funding mechanisms),"* and by several interviews with implementing partners and experts.<sup>152</sup>

Feed-back from the evaluation team's country visits and interviews with implementing organisations<sup>153</sup> triangulates this information that originates from a selected number of donors.<sup>154</sup> The UK, Germany, Canada, Norway, Switzerland and USA were identified as having faster tools for funding than IfS/IcSP. Yet much of these are for smaller amounts of funds, or funds that have been pre-designated for crisis/conflict/security/peacebuilding issues with a narrower focus than the IfS CRC. So faster for a more limited scope of activities, yes, but not as flexible in terms of what they could fund. To deepen the analysis a more detailed study would be required.

Speed was also highly dependent on the presence and availability of experienced EU staff in-country which was often a problem and which slowed down the identification and implementation of an IfS CRC intervention. The EUDs, as highlighted under EQ3, compare overall unfavourably in terms of human resources in the field to funding agencies/ government departments of other donors. Another factor that appeared to impact on its added value is that the Instrument was not widely enough known, not within the donor community but, according to online survey comments received, even not among all the ranks of the EU institutions and services.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Such as for peacebuilding in Kashmir (contract 334669; India).

<sup>147</sup> As per Title IV of the EU Financial Regulation and Article 190.1(a) and 190.2 of the Rules of Application.

<sup>148</sup> Though it should be noted that even under crisis procedures, some EU stakeholders perceive the DEVCO instruments still as too slow. Also, it was noted that there is a reluctance among DEVCO staff (esp. from the admin/finance departments) to apply crisis procedures because it goes against the principles of transparency and accountability. Interviews with EU officials (7 March and 7 April 2016).

<sup>149</sup> E.g., budget transfers above 15% require a formal amendment. Interview NGO representative, 13 May 2016.

<sup>150</sup> ADE et al (2011).

<sup>151</sup> ADE, COWI, ITAD, 2015, p. 57.

<sup>152</sup> Interviews held on 13 April 2016, 11 May 2016, 12 May 2016, 13 May 2016.

<sup>153</sup> Interview with NGO representatives and implementing partners in Brussels, 12 May 2016 and 13 May 2013.

<sup>154</sup> These findings do not claim to be comprehensive as there are various donors working through quick-response instruments. Not all could be researched in the context of this evaluation.

<sup>155</sup> Comments online survey: *"Lack of awareness means that the IfS is often not taken into consideration as a possible foreign policy tool at the very beginning of the planning process, thus hindering its ability to be*

The IfS CRC could act through the PAMF, a facility under Art. 3 of the IfS Regulation, which was allowed to adopt interventions in a timespan as short as two weeks. It has been helpful in the case of DRC, for example, where the EU provided communication material to four police battalions in Kinshasa at the time of the 2011 national elections within a short period. *“The termination of the PAMF-facility under the IcSP limits our options to react speedily today”*, as EUD staff told the mission team. This statement was confirmed by other EU staff and staff of implementing partners.<sup>156</sup> It was also useful to cover areas of engagement where the EU had no other means of funding. For example, during PAMF IV, allowances to support transitional justice (such as the Special Tribunal in Lebanon to investigate the assassination of the former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri) were funded through this facility.

The initial limited timeframe of 18-24 months was seen as a significant ‘inflexibility’ and deficiency that hampered effectiveness according to the IfS programme level evaluation of 2011.<sup>157</sup> This point was also noted in an IfS ‘staged evaluation’ covering multiple countries.<sup>158</sup> Yet, this has been recognized by the European Commission in 2011 and measures to rectify this were incorporated into the IcSP regulations. For this reason, this report does not revisit this point, which has also been documented widely. The evaluation team’s country visits confirm that the greater flexibility in timing posed by the IcSP was widely welcomed. The current 36 months timeframe for IcSP CRC allows interventions to respond more appropriately to (emerging) crisis with more chance also of showing results. Though for situations of protracted crisis it is still seen as a challenging short timeframe to contribute to change without establishing effective linkages with other and complementary interventions.

#### **EQ9 on impact: To what extent has the IfS Crisis Response Component had some impact overall on preserving peace and creating stability?**

*Drawing on the findings from the other EQs and JC, this EQ will look at the overall positive and negative changes produced by the IfS CRC, whether directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Due to the short-term character of the Instrument, the focus of the assessment will be on the intermediate outcomes and traces of immediate impact, which have been achieved by the IfS CRC.*

Based on cases of intermediate outcomes and traces of immediate impact, highlighted throughout this evaluation report, the evaluation team finds that the IfS CRC has supported the EU to function as a political actor and contributes to promote peace and stability in particular sectors as well as in geographical regions. There is also evidence from selected cases that the Instrument had the potential and ability to inform and influence global and regional political agenda’s addressing (emerging) crisis and (post)-crisis reconciliation and peacebuilding. – According to stakeholders’ and beneficiaries’ perceptions, the IfS CRC helped the EU to play an important role in international crisis response. From the findings it appears that the likelihood of scoring wider impact on peace and security, i.e. beyond the immediate sphere of influence of a project intervention, increased once the IfS CRC was embedded in a wider political and more comprehensive response of the EU. This was not always the case, which however is subject to the functioning of the EU’s external action and not attributable to the IfS CRC. Where the IfS CRC has been part of an EU comprehensive approach and used to address the more political dimensions of an EU engagement, such as during the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon, perceptions about the Instrument have been particularly positive. – More forward looking, findings throughout various parts of the evaluation suggests that impact can be enhanced if more attention is given to learning, monitoring and evaluation. Not least because of the rich and often unique information generated by IfS CRC interventions. The need for more effective learning

*deployed to its full potential later on.” And: “The EEAS (political desks) needs more guidance on how best to use the IfS/IcSP.”*

<sup>156</sup> Interviews in Brussels with EU staff, 19 May 2016, and with implementing partners, 13 May 2016.

<sup>157</sup> INCAS (2011)

<sup>158</sup> Conseil Santé (2013).

mechanisms and approaches was rated high by interviewees as it was seen as a way to further improve the EU's crisis response practice.

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC9.1 – Evidence of the EU as a political actor through the contribution of IfS interventions by sector and geographical region

*Summary judgement:* There is evidence that the IfS CRC supported the EU to function as a political actor in particular sectors as well as in geographical regions. Whether the Instrument could contribute to political change, peace and stability depended on the extent to which the interventions were embedded in a wider political engagement of the EU and whether the actors of the EU made use of the political entry points, i.e. contacts, networks, good-will, created by the IfS CRC interventions. When part of a comprehensive approach with clear linkages to other forms of EU (longer-term) engagement, the likelihood of the IfS CRC of being more political relevant increased.

To judge this criterion, it is useful to make a distinction between the IfS CRC's ability to support the EU's role as a political actor and the Instrument's ability to contribute to political change, peace and stability as part as the EU's wider political engagement.

82% of the online survey respondents, while acknowledging that this is difficult to assess, thought that the IfS CRC interventions' contributions to political stability was "mostly strong". Though several comments stressed that cooperation funding is not enough to stabilise a conflict situation and had to be linked to a political engagement. Though it appears from the evaluation that the IfS CRC interventions allowed the EU to support operationally a more political role and were recognized for that. In Yemen, for example, "notwithstanding the slower rate at which development cooperation could respond, the Delegation had made good use of more flexible instruments such as the IfS and EIDHR to meet short-term financing needs, to reinforce political engagement and to compensate for the longer time required to design development cooperation programmes."<sup>159</sup> The IfS CRC related evaluations in the Philippines (Mindano) and Indonesia (Aceh) also indicate how projects were critical components of an overall EU political engagement with largely positive effects.<sup>160</sup>

Similar findings come from the evaluation team's visits to Lebanon, DRC and Pakistan. In Lebanon, the IfS CRC interventions, as part of a more comprehensive approach to the Syrian refugee crisis, constructively addressed the (politically and socially) destabilising factors that were not able to be addressed by any other EU instrument during the crisis. In DRC, the IfS CRC, backed by the EU's Great Lakes Strategy, was used to act politically through its support to civil society in the East of DRC. Two IfS CRC interventions in Pakistan, responding to the 2010-floods and the response to the crisis in the KP/FATA provinces, were politically important for the EU as it wanted to be seen by the Government and the international community as responding rapidly.<sup>161</sup> The Instrument's political engagement could also be traced from a number of documents reviewed during the desk study, particularly those relating to dialogue and trust building.<sup>162</sup> For interventions in other domains, SSR/DDR and in relation to refugees and IDP's, this was less evident, however. IfS CRC interventions on livelihoods and economic recovery seem to be the least political from the review. These desk review findings correspond overall with those from the evaluation team's country visits.

According to the evaluation team's visit to Pakistan, openings created through the IfS CRC, such as political contacts made in the context of the Instrument's support to the India-Pakistan Peace and Security Dialogue project, were not sufficiently exploited by the EUD compared to other EU countries, including the UK, France, Germany and Spain.<sup>163</sup> Yet, in another IfS CRC funded

<sup>159</sup> ADE, COWI, ITAD (2015, p. 50).

<sup>160</sup> Contracts 254405 (Philippines) and 242516 (Indonesia).

<sup>161</sup> Contracts 260109 and 249232 (Pakistan).

<sup>162</sup> Contracts 242516 (Indonesia), 299602 (Georgia), 299273 (Nagorno Karabakh), 315364 (Myanmar) and financing decision 23333 (final country report South Sudan).

<sup>163</sup> Interviews with stakeholders in Islamabad, April/May 2016.

project on peacebuilding in Kashmir there was some political engagement for HoDs in India and Pakistan. In the DRC, the engagement in SSR (through the IfS CRC interventions in support of the police reform and military justice) was not accompanied by a (strong) political dialogue of the EUD.<sup>164</sup>

There is also an issue with the Instrument's ability to work around the host government, as it did not require an engagement or an approval which remained a key added value yet had to be managed. In Nigeria, government officials were visited during visits of the EU to IfS CRC interventions and gave some political backing to the projects, but this was very different than actively engaging with the Government to address the political dimensions of a crisis situation, which for the most appeared not to have happened. In Pakistan, getting government buy-in and ownership has been a challenge for IfS interventions in support of counter-terrorism and law enforcement, both very political processes. A more formal agreement or a MoU with the Government could have facilitated a stronger and locally driven process of engagement yet they would have required the expending of EU political energy to obtain.

The combination of EDF and IfS CRC funding in relation to military justice and the national police in DRC, both politically sensitive sub-sectors, was positively commented on earlier in this report. Dedicated (political) projects, not directly linked to complementary EU external action instruments, can have their merits, witness to the below mentioned support to the trial of former president of Chad, Hissène Habré. But to address complex country situations of instability and protracted crisis, such as the evaluation team's visit to Nigeria illustrates, more linkages with other EU activities were needed to make interventions effective in the longer term.

The question of sustainable, or lasting, impact of IfS CRC interventions has also been discussed in thematic evaluations because certain IfS CRC projects were not necessarily followed-up or linked so the issue is not new.<sup>165</sup> Much research on peace and stability and the previous EC thematic evaluation on conflict prevention and peacebuilding as well as other multi-donor evaluations<sup>166</sup> have noted that the chance of individual interventions making a decisive contribution is highly limited and subject to significant methodological difficulties. The evaluation also notes this. Therefore the Instrument's ability to contribute to political change, peace and stability was largely related to the EU's overall engagement in a particular context. If not linked to the implementation of a wider strategic EU approach, its effects on wider political dynamics were limited yet this does not mean that IfS CRC interventions themselves did not have merit.

#### Judgement Criteria

##### **JC9.2 – The contribution of IfS interventions has an influence on the global agenda on situations of crisis or emerging crisis**

*Summary judgement: For most cases, it is impossible to confirm that all IfS CRC interventions had an influence on the global agenda to combat crisis. But the evaluation team found evidence in five targeted and relatively low-cost interventions from Pakistan, Pakistan/India, DRC, Lebanon and Chad that the IfS CRC had the potential and ability to inform and influence global and regional political agenda's addressing (emerging) crisis and (post)-crisis reconciliation and peacebuilding.*

Five examples are highlighted under this JC to provide evidence.<sup>167</sup> Interesting enough, these were instances with a relatively small financial volume but realising, in some instances results and effects that reach far beyond national borders.

A PAMF intervention in Pakistan supported the production of a Post-Crisis Needs Assessment

<sup>164</sup> Steered by the EUD in Kinshasa, the EU followed a political non-proactive approach to avoid provoking political unrest and negative reactions by the Government of DRC. A formal political dialogue according to Art. 8 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement does not exist.

<sup>165</sup> ADE (2011b).

<sup>166</sup> Smith (2004), Bennet et al (2010) and ADE (2011).

<sup>167</sup> Contracts 241306 (Pakistan), 334669 and 334669 (India), 308518 (DRC), 269689 (Lebanon - PAMF), 317723 (Senegal - PAMF).

(PCNA). It had a significant influence on the donor community and national authorities in terms of its response to the crisis in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. While implemented in 2010 it is still a major point of reference for the international donor community and authorities in planning, implementing and evaluating their activities. For a relatively low cost engagement its impact has been far-reaching.

The IfS CRC supported also the India-Pakistan Regional Dialogue on Peace and Security and the Kashmir Peacebuilding Dialogue. It was about creating an environment of normalisation and contact across the Line of Control and succeeded in doing this. Its chance of impacting overall political dynamics was limited, yet it has allowed confidence building to take place at a scale that would not have occurred without it. This ability to bridge across borders has been widely noted as an important added value of the IfS CRC by the EUDs, implementing partners and beneficiaries. The Peacebuilding in Kashmir Project has allowed an investment at scale in a largely forgotten conflict prone and politically sensitive region between Pakistan and India that no other donor was interested, or politically able, to fund at scale.

In DRC, the IfS CRC support to military justice and transitional justice was based on a UNSC resolution of 2010 calling for the fight against impunity in the East of DRC. Through MONUSCO (and UNDP) the intervention supports mobile courts (until today) as well as the joint work of international and national judicial experts to create knowledge and develop national expertise on crimes falling under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The UNDP/MONUSCO project model and experience has global relevance, as it is the first-ever programme of this kind. Reviews were undertaken by the UN to draw out lessons for other areas in Africa, notably CAR and South Sudan but also for other parts of the world, where similar approaches in support of human rights might be followed in the future.

Through a relatively small contribution<sup>168</sup> the IfS CRC provided support for the UN Special Tribunal investigating former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri's assassination and honoured commitments made by the International Community to Lebanon that are important for wider stabilisation in the country and the region. Stakeholders met during the evaluation team's visit to Lebanon commented highly on the importance of EU support in these areas.

From 2013 to 2015, and building on previous efforts by the EU, an IfS CRC project provided logistical support to the Extraordinary African Chamber in Senegal for the trial of the former president of Chad, Hissène Habré, on war crimes and crimes against humanity. He was convicted in May 2016. This has been a landmark for international justice because it was the first time in the world that the court of one African country, supported by the African Union, has prosecuted a former leader of another African country on human rights charges according to international legal standards.

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC9.3 – Evidence of learning and exploring new approaches across the different areas of IfS intervention

*Summary judgement: Findings from interviews, the desk review and the online survey highlight that the implementation of the IfS CRC portfolio was accompanied by learning measures and evaluations at project and portfolio level. But given the young nature of the Instrument and the limited (human) resources attributed to this domain of work, there is room for improvement. The need for effective learning mechanisms was rated high. Those that exist were very welcome, but more needs to be done, according to the information collected by the evaluation team, to make learning and exchange more systematic and effective.*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning was investigated through the online survey. 54% of the respondents answered that interventions were "sometimes monitored and/or evaluated" against 43% judging that this was "regularly" done. 20% of the respondents "fully agreed" that the overall impact of the IfS CRC could have been enhanced through an improved system of learning, 41% "agreed" and 37% "somewhat agreed". Improved systems and approaches for monitoring and learning were needed for enhancing the FPI's ability to accompany projects better and learn from

<sup>168</sup> This was funded under the PAMF IV (contract 269689) with an amount of EUR 1 m.

their implementation. Better approaches were also needed to encourage learning on the side of implementers, to inform a qualitative better exchange about the interventions and how the Instrument has been used between FPI and the implementers.<sup>169</sup> Though calls were made in the online survey to make such approaches not too “heavy” as staffing levels are overstretched.

Opportunities created by FPI to exchange about lessons, new experiences and innovations cross-FPI were rated very highly but were not considered enough. The annual Brussels-based IfS Seminar was mentioned as particularly useful during various interviews at HQ as well as in EUDs.<sup>170</sup> The practice of inviting staff from other services to join during one day of the FPI learning week is welcome, though this was not considered enough to create a better understanding of the Instrument throughout the EU services and hierarchies. More should be done in this regard as information about the Instrument is still not fully present among all EU colleagues (highlighted also earlier under EQ3). Additional regional exchanges were evenly rated as a highly useful practice.<sup>171</sup> Other more structural and more regularly used mechanisms to share information did not exist, except for regular informal exchanges on the work floor and during meetings at HQ and EUD. So far, well recognising that this was institutionally not within the realm of FPI, no use has been made of the DG DEV’s web-site Capacity4dev (<http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/>) which has a dedicated sharing and learning mandate and work spaces (public as well as restricted) to exchange information and documents among peers.

In search for improving approaches to monitoring and evaluation of IfS CRC interventions, FPI.2 has invested in its own learning on how to improve monitoring and evaluation during the period covered by this evaluation which the evaluation team thinks has been very relevant.<sup>172</sup> The use of the ROM was tested and replaced by “Real staged evaluations” as it was not considered adequate to the nature and length of the IfS CRC interventions.

A system of learning can be linked to the use of Theories of Change (ToC) and the testing of assumptions formulated as part of these ToC. They have been used during the evaluation period but not systematically, as discussed under JC2.2. Guidance on what a ToC is, as opposed to a logical framework, and what it should be used for has not been provided so far. A more in-depth thinking about the logic of an intervention, the questioning of assumptions and associated learning and the reformulation of the engagement can help to enhance the effectiveness and impact of an intervention.<sup>173</sup> A more thorough reflection about the assumptions can also trigger processes of exchange about how the intervention can be linked more effectively to other interventions funded by the EU, other international partners or the government during or after the termination of the project.

Under the guidance of FPI.2, several external country evaluations, a series of evaluations led by the implementing partners, one Instrument review plus two multi-country staged evaluations were undertaken to provide inputs to the initial stages and the real-time evaluation for IfS actions. This was welcome but “external evaluations should be more systematic”, as one respondent to the online survey mentioned which the evaluation team shares. The evaluation team’s assessment whether more could be done is not conclusive as a full assessment of funds spent on various forms of monitoring and evaluation during the period 2007-2013 could not be done. Taking FPI’s spending on evaluations for IcSP actions as a point of departure, some 0.7%, the efforts made, the figure does not compare unfavourably to data mentioned in a 2010 OECD study, which found

<sup>169</sup> For example: “ensuring there are feed-back loops”; “staff dealing with IfS CRC have no previous experience in crisis”; “to better tailor action to the needs”; “facilitate the exchange of best practice” and “use peer mechanisms”.

<sup>170</sup> Interviews with EU officials, 7 April 2016, 11 May 2016; though it should focus on concrete learning and exchange among FPI colleagues in smaller groups/settings, and not for profiling the work of non-IfS colleagues in the region (which apparently has been the case).

<sup>171</sup> Interview with EU official, 7 April 2016.

<sup>172</sup> O’Gorman, 2015.

<sup>173</sup> For example, those knowledgeable about the Justice and Security Sector in Pakistan were highly sceptical when interviewed during the country visit about how much change can be achieved by training and called for more systematic analysis and a ToC to underpin such projects in the future.



that expenses for evaluation in development amount to 0.47% of the total ODA budget on average.<sup>174</sup> Though a recent survey conducted by KPMG found that a majority of respondents (56%) estimated the proportion of total programme budgets spent on monitoring and evaluation to be between 2 and 5%.<sup>175</sup> According to the former director of the Dutch IOB (Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), a norm of expending 1 to 2% of the total budget to external evaluations should be considered reasonable.<sup>176</sup>

Guidance to project implementers about how to do the evaluation of their intervention (if a budget has been defined for their project) and what the basic requirements are for conducting a useful project evaluation is also needed according to the evaluation team's findings.<sup>177</sup> Such guidance has not been provided during the implementation period of the IfS CRC, which was noted during the desk review. The quality of the documents varied considerably and, where done well, mainly focused on the immediate outputs of the intervention without reflecting on the contribution this intervention has made to (political) outcomes and processes. The current steps to improve the existing monitoring and evaluation system have been noted above.

### Judgement Criteria

#### JC9.4 – External and internal perceptions of the EU as a key player in situations of crisis or emerging crisis

*Summary judgement: The EU is recognised by beneficiaries and stakeholders (within and outside the EU) as one of several important international players to address crisis and protracted crisis. These stakeholders and beneficiaries overall recognised the relevance of the IfS CRC in helping the EU to play this role though its potential is not fully exploited due to the absence of clear political leadership and guidance in selected contexts. Where the IfS CRC has been part of an EU comprehensive approach and used to address the more political dimensions of an engagement, such as in Lebanon, perceptions about the Instrument have been particularly positive. In other instances, such as Pakistan, the EU has been recognised as a relevant partner to address crisis through its funding, but not as a 'key player' in the sense of playing a determining political and operational role.*

According to the online survey, 18% of the respondents said that the EU is "highly recognised" by stakeholders and beneficiaries as a critical and visible actor in addressing (emerging) crisis. 57% responded that the EU is "recognised" and 25% thought that the EU is "somewhat recognised". Above all, it is recognised as a politically neutral and impartial actor, not representing the interests of individual EU member states and therefore as one donor among many. Witness to our field mission findings from DRC and Nigeria, but also witness to other evaluations and studies (see references under JC9.1), it is evident that a lack of EU political vision and a clear strategy to translate this into operational terms can make it difficult to implement a more comprehensive approach to crisis and protracted crisis.

Where the EU promotes a comprehensive approach, such as in Lebanon, the IfS CRC was perceived by stakeholders as a welcome instrument to complete the mechanisms of EU external action. Throughout the material collected, it appears that implementing partners and other stakeholders appreciated the IfS CRC for its flexibility but also for its relatively quick response, compared to other EU instruments. It is also valued for its ability to venture into (new) political domains where others did not want to work or cannot go, such as the financing of dialogue for peace between India and Pakistan, to take risks and to test innovative approaches, such as the Instrument's support for the fight against impunity in Eastern DRC. In Nigeria, the EU was one of the first and largest donors supporting peacebuilding in the Jos Plateau, funded partially through

<sup>174</sup> OECD, 2010, 'Better Aid: Evaluation in Development Agencies', OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation, OECD Publishing, Paris.

<sup>175</sup> KPMG (2014).

<sup>176</sup> Afscheid van de Ruben-norm? 15 October 2014. <http://hetnieuwe.viceversaonline.nl/dossier/afscheid-van-de-ruben-norm/>.

<sup>177</sup> Interview in Brussels with EU staff, 20 May 2016, and group interview with implementing partners, 11 May 2016.

the IfS CRC and leading to a positive perception of beneficiaries about the EU.

It appears from the findings that beneficiaries did not see any problems with the scale of funding but rather with the length of engagement and – if no linkages were found for a continued funding through other sources – the limited ability of the EU to engage in meaningful projects longer term. The visibility of the EU vis-à-vis UN organisations in crisis and protracted crisis is less, according to the online survey respondents, which the evaluation team also revealed from its country visits and the analysis of IfS CRC projects. To act politically on behalf of the EU in situations of crisis and protracted crisis, the IfS CRC (and its IcSP CRC follow-up) made important steps but there is still a way to go before its follow-up Instrument, the IcSP, will be fully recognised and established within the EU institutions as a means to translate strategy into operations, as was commented in the online survey and during interviews.<sup>178</sup>

## 5 Conclusions

---

The evaluation team has identified eight clusters of conclusions drawn from the findings documented under the nine EQs.

### **Conclusion I: The relevance of the IfS CRC for EU external action was generally high**

*The IfS CRC has been a very useful Instrument in supporting the EU to act in situations of (emerging) crisis and protracted crisis as stated in the Treaty of the European Union but the Instrument's political potential has not been fully exploited.*

#### ***This conclusion is mainly based on EQ1:***

- The relevance of IfS CRC projects was usually strong and promoted the policy objectives of the EU's external action. (JC1.1 and JC1.2)
- The IfS CRC was also relevant to straddle the security-humanitarian-development nexus, which no other EU instrument for external action could address in the same way, and demonstrated potential to engage in politically meaningful interventions in the domains of confidence building and mediation, SSR and refugees/IDPs and SSR. (JC1.2)
- Of lesser relevance to promote the political objectives of the EU were IfS CRC engagements in the domain of livelihoods and economic recovery. They were overall more of a development-oriented nature with less attention given to the political dimensions of crisis and conflict. (JC2.4, JC8.1, and JC9.1)
- A common understanding of crisis and thereby identifying what is politically relevant to address is not easy in the absence of a conflict analysis shared amongst HQ and the EUDs and among EUD actors. The evaluation team has come across several situations where this was not the case (JC1.3)
- Where interventions were embedded in a wider and well-coordinated political engagement of the EU and where the actors of the EU, including EUDs, made strategic use of the political openings created by the IfS CRC interventions, the political relevance of the Instrument increased. The latter was rather more the exception than the rule, but this was beyond the sphere of influence of the Instrument itself. (JC1.1 and JC1.3)

---

<sup>178</sup> Interviews with EU officials, 7 March 2016, 27 May 2016.



## **Conclusion II – IfS CRC effectiveness and sustainability increased when linked to complementary EU, international partner or country initiatives**

*Given the limitations of the Instrument (short timeframe, comparatively little funding per project) the ability of the IfS CRC interventions to reach out and become effective beyond its immediate sphere of influence to promote stability increased once it was embedded or linked to a wider EU comprehensive or political approach to address the crisis. Both, smaller as well as bigger projects showed to be useful for this purpose. The same applied for the sustainability of results where the likelihood of outcomes to be maintained and carried on after the termination of the IfS CRC increased when the intervention could be combined with complementary funding or follow-up funding provided through other EU instruments, the funding of other donors or the national government.*

***This conclusion draws mainly on EQ2 and EQ4:***

- The IfS CRC project results were overall in line with their stated objectives and have made an effective contribution to stabilisation and conflict transformation. Where such projects were smartly linked to other EU interventions or support provided by other development partners or the national government, their effectiveness could be enhanced and effects could be created reaching beyond the immediate sphere of influence of the project. (JC2.3)
- Interventions pushed by EU HQ, in particular EEAS, top-down into the operations of the EUD and FPI at country level that were not sufficiently based on a well-informed country and context assessment ran a higher risk of failure. This is compared to the interventions that could build on a thorough preparation at country level and were undertaken in exchange with services at HQ level. (JC2.1, JC2.3 and JC2.4)
- A small number of interventions were found to have dissatisfying or highly questionable results. This was on average one out of nine, which reflects overall well on the Instrument. (JC2.3)
- The volume of funding did not determine the effectiveness of interventions. For work to be politically effective, small or tiny projects were shown to be at least as equally important as interventions with larger funding volumes. (JC2.3 and JC9.2)
- Interventions formulated with the involvement of local stakeholders enhanced the likelihood of effectiveness and sustainability particularly when they enjoyed EU political engagement. In certain contexts, the involvement of the national government delayed the preparatory process but was indispensable to ensure a successful implementation and follow-up of the IfS CRC intervention. (JC2.3)
- Concerns about sustainability so that IfS CRC interventions could deliver effective outcomes and pave the way for the maintenance of results were promoted from the beginning of projects. There is also evidence that stakeholders and beneficiaries were able to capitalise on IfS CRC projects resulting in further outcomes after the termination of the intervention. (JC4.1 and JC4.2)
- IfS CRC interventions were overall more sustainable if linked to, or embedded in an approach that could mobilise follow-up funding (through EU instruments or other international donors) or that can ensure that the national government takes over after the IfS CRC terminates. If used as a gap-filler, without connections to its context, IfS CRC interventions scored low on sustainability. (JC4.1)

## **Conclusion III – Overall, the IfS CRC portfolio was efficiently implemented and well coordinated, but it was constrained by insufficient human resources**

*FPI has managed to build the IfS CRC into a well-functioning EU external action instrument since its creation in 2007. The allocation of resources per intervention was considered mostly adequate and the majority of interventions appeared to have met their project results despite some delays caused by partner capacity constraints, country context and EU administrative procedures. EU visibility was mostly adequate.*

*FPI appeared to have an adequate and efficient set-up for coordination and made good use of formal as well as informal coordination mechanisms within the EU institutions to secure the initiation of interventions and their implementation. The extent to which the EU took a coordinating role, or active role in coordinating activities at the field level varied from case to case and depended on its physical presence on the ground and the political priority given to a crisis.*

*Differences were noted between the preparatory phase of IfS CRC interventions and their implementation. The EU has not allocated enough human and administrative resources at field level, in particular, which caused delays and impacted negatively on the coordination, accompaniment, monitoring and evaluation of interventions.*

***This conclusion draws mainly on EQ3 and EQ6:***

- The overall programme budgets for IfS CRC interventions were largely adequate for the purpose of the respective interventions during the evaluation period. (JC3.4)
- In general, FPI staff have efficiently managed the IfS CRC portfolio within the resources available and managed any delays. It appears that sufficient attention has been given to cost efficiency throughout the interventions with the exception of a few outliers. (JC3.2 and JC3.3)
- In many cases the IfS CRC interventions encountered delays and lasted 24 months (an issue subsequently addressed by the IcSP) or continued through a follow-up project. Delays can affect the achievement of results and did in some cases. However, looking at results overall, the majority of interventions seem to have met their project results. (JC3.2)
- EU visibility was generally good but requires more attention when working with UN organisations. (JC3.5)
- Coordination mechanisms within the EU, formal as well as informal, were used efficiently. Coordination tended to be stronger during the initiation and design phase of an IfS CRC intervention compared with the implementation phase. The ability to accompany the implementation and monitor results throughout the project cycle suffered in particular from insufficient staff available at field level. (JC3.1 and JC6.1)
- In terms of coordination with EU member states and other donors, field mission visits suggest that where the EU was able to engage more actively in coordination, especially making use of the IfS CRC strategically, the EU could better promote its political objectives and make its crisis response interventions more effective. (JC6.2)
- Given the broad remit of the Instrument, the complexities and political sensitivities of the (conflict) environments in which the IfS operated, EUDs and FPI depended on well-trained, knowledgeable and experienced staff (often working rather individually in difficult country contexts) to make interventions meaningful. This was generally good across the portfolio, but appeared to be challenging in some of the cases reviewed. (JC3.1)
- The EU's budget for crisis response increased due to growing international instability and crisis during the IfS CRC implementation period, but FPI's human resources to manage the portfolio did not grow which should be a management issue of concern. The EU's number of human resources to manage crisis response interventions in the field compared unfavourably to other international partners, i.e. the USA, Germany, UK and the Netherlands. (JC3.1)

**Conclusion IV – Cross-cutting issues need more attention**

*Cross-cutting issues on, human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance were not clearly enough addressed and mainstreamed throughout the IfS CRC portfolio. However, attention has been paid to gender and informal conflict sensitivity was overall adequate. Though there appears to be room for improvement by working more through conflict analysis with a view to promote a more shared conflict sensitivity and institutional memory on the conflicts.*

***This conclusion draws mainly on EQ5:***

- Gender has been promoted showing a growing level of mainstreaming throughout the portfolio over the evaluation period, by paying attention to women and women's issues, but evidence that it has resulted in supporting peacebuilding, rights based approaches or empowerment appears weaker. (JC5.1 and JC5.2)
- Attention to human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance was given where opportunities arose but there is little evidence of the Instrument having promoted these cross-cutting issues more proactively. (JC5.1, 5.2 and JC5.3)
- Conflict sensitivity, which should be considered part of FPI's "DNA", was well noted as being considered relevant throughout the IfS CRC portfolio. Informal conflict sensitivity throughout the preparation and implementation of IfS CRC was judged adequate but the use of more systematic or formal approaches, such as the conduct of conflict analysis, was weak in most instances. (JC3.5 and JC5.2)

**Conclusion V – Incidents of consistency of interventions increased with political guidance and conflict analysis**

*Consistency of interventions within the IfS CRC portfolio and vis-à-vis other EU external action interventions was sought when IfS CRC projects were prepared and designed. There is evidence that this has led to projects being well linked to other interventions, also creating synergetic effects and/or leveraging change. Against these findings, one can conclude that consistency and comprehensiveness was promoted and achieved, but more could have been done. There is evidence that, in the absence of a shared conflict analysis and clear political guidance, the Instrument's interventions became implemented rather on their own, missing opportunities to create change beyond the immediate sphere of influence of the project. The evaluation team concludes, that frequency of consistency increased if a political and/or strategic guidance founded in a shared analysis of the conflict and the country was available and used.*

***This conclusion draws mainly on EQ7:***

- IfS CRC interventions generally aimed at consistency with each other within a country portfolio to the extent this was possible and made sense. This was particularly the case during the initiation and design of the interventions. Cases from the field show also that efforts were made to strive for comprehensive action, for example by building on previous interventions and/or complementing on-going projects. (JC7.1)
- Concerning the Instrument's consistency with other EU external action's interventions in a country, different messages emerge from the findings:
  - Consistency was promoted from the onset of an intervention's conception, with other EU interventions and with those of other international partners in line with the EU's external action policy. (JC7.2)
  - Though for countries where there was insufficient shared understanding about the conflict and no clear political guidance on how to deal with the conflict, which the evaluation team witnessed in three out of four countries visited, the IfS CRC interventions became orphaned. The same message comes from several external reports evaluating EU external action. (JC7.2)
- Comments received during interviews as well as the online survey highlight that EU stakeholders were more familiar with using the term 'coherence' instead of 'consistency' when evaluating the internal or external coherence of an intervention.

**Conclusion VI – Overall, the Instrument compared well with those of other EU member states and international donors and is of high added value to EU external action**

*The IfS CRC was of high added value to EU external action as it was the fastest and most flexible non-humanitarian crisis response Instrument, which the EU had at its disposal. It also compared well with the crisis response instruments of other EU member states (in as far as they had such instruments) and to other international donors. Another added value was the ability of the IfS CRC to bridge between security, humanitarian and development interventions, which no other EU Instrument could.*

*A clear added value was the IfS CRC's flexibility, for example the non-programmable nature of the Instrument, or the broad thematic scope, and its relative speed. A limited number of other EU member states (e.g., UK and Germany) and international donors (e.g., USA, Norway, Canada, Switzerland) could deliver faster for pre-designated crisis areas (e.g. disaster response) but the amounts were usually more limited. In terms of speed this compared unfavourably against the IfS CRC, yet the Instrument had a wider thematic scope which could provide substantial amounts of funding within relatively short timeframes.*

*There is also evidence that the IfS CRC could fill gaps which EU member states and other international donors could not address. – With the end of the IfS, recourse to use the PAMF, a facility within the IfS CRC, which allowed a quicker response to different (political) crisis situations with a funding up to EUR 2 million, was discontinued. This is a loss in the opinion of the evaluators.*

***This conclusion is mainly based on EQ8 and EQ3:***

- IfS CRC was able to fund activities which other EU member states and international donors were not able to fill. For example, due to a lack of funding available, other policy priorities or no funding at an appropriate scale. (JC8.1)
- Implementing partners also highly valued the combination of broad thematic remit and comparatively substantial amounts of funding. In this regard, the IfS CRC compared particularly well with other EU member states and international donors. (JC8.2)
- The IfS CRC's added value compared with other non-humanitarian EU external action instruments was its speed and flexibility, for example its non-programmable nature, the broad thematic scope or the ability to select and work with partners without competitive procedures. (JC8.2 and JC3.3)
- Other advantages mentioned were: useful as 'venture capital' to explore new areas and to test innovative approaches; in situations where EU is known as a politically neutral actors where others cannot show their flag (JC8.2)
- Funding decisions and the design of IfS CRC interventions could be done very rapidly but due to several factors (administrative requirements, lacking experience of the implementing partner in working with the IfS CRC, or limited availability of FPI staff at field level, proper application of accountability aspects of Financial Regulation) the actual start of the implementation got often delayed losing precious time. (JC3.3)
- A few other international donors (a few EU member states as well as other international actors) had the ability to contract in particular crisis areas or sectors (e.g. disaster response) faster but mostly with less funding compared with what the IfS CRC could deliver. In the opinion of implementing partners interviewed for this evaluation, this perceived 'disadvantage' of the IfS CRC was compensated for by the above mentioned positive aspects, i.e. flexibility, more funding volume, broader thematic scope, ability to fill gaps not addressed by others within a relatively short time. (JC8.2)
- The discontinuation of the PAMF reduces the EU's ability to act speedily and to react flexibly. The amount of EUR 2 million per contract was comparatively small (in relation to other IfS CRC funding) but still big enough to respond meaningfully where very specific (political) responses were required (JC3.3 and JC8.2).

## **Conclusion VII – Learning, monitoring and evaluation could have been more focused on**

*Over the evaluation period, FPI gave increasing attention to learning about the IfS CRC and to improving the monitoring and evaluation of interventions. Important strides were made but there remains room for further improvements on a number of aspects related to learning and evaluation, not least because of the wealth of relevant and pertinent knowledge generated by the IfS CRC interventions.*

***This conclusion is mainly based on EQ9, EQ2 and EQ6:***

- The implementation of the IfS CRC provides unique insight into conflict and unstable contexts. During the implementation of the Instrument, important investments were made in relation to learning, monitoring and evaluation resulting in important innovations. But given the EU's increased need to act effectively on crisis response, the evaluation team concludes that more could be done to draw on the rich evidence base created through the IfS CRC portfolio. (JC9.3)
- Important reviews were conducted, learning opportunities for staff were created (through training workshops) and the ROM monitoring approach was tested, and replaced by "Real staged evaluations" for not responding adequately to the nature of the IfS CRC interventions. (JC9.3)
- Investments into learning helped to create important lessons about the Instrument and how individual interventions could be improved. These contributed also to the creation of the IcSP and, with regard to monitoring, led to the conceptualisation of a new approach focusing on outcomes instead of outputs, informed by current thinking about Theories of Change (ToC). (JC9.3 and JC2.2)
- Important Instrument-wide reviews were conducted but more could have been done to get better insights on particular country practices or sector experiences. There is also room for improving the practice of project-related evaluations. (JC2.2 and JC6.3)
- The IfS CRC, and the follow-up IcSP, has potential to generate very important learning for crisis response relevant for all-European external action. Mechanisms and opportunities to promote sharing beyond FPI have been little used so far. (JC9.3)

## **Conclusion VIII – The IfS CRC portfolio helped to preserve peace and create stability**

*A strong attribution of the IfS CRC outputs and its outcomes to impact in a wide range of crisis situations was difficult to establish based on the findings from this evaluation. But it is safe to say that the IfS CRC did make some relevant contributions to reducing crises which were on the global agenda for shaping stability (see JC9.2 for examples) within the parameters given to the Instrument, the scope of its operations and considering the extent to which it was used politically within EU external action.*

***This conclusion is mainly based on EQ9:***

- The IfS CRC portfolio did help to translate the EU's ambitions of becoming a political actor into operations and has become more recognised for that. It also helped to promote the EU's values about preserving peace and supporting stability in very different regional contexts in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. When embedded in a wider political and comprehensive response to crisis, the effects of the Instrument were enhanced. (JC9.1)
- Evidence is available that in some instances the IfS CRC interventions was able to generate outcomes, which influenced the wider global and regional agenda's addressing peace and stability. (JC9.2)
- The EU is recognised as an important international player, alongside other international donors, to address crisis situations according to perceptions collected from EU-internal as well as EU-external sources. In certain situations, the EU was even a key player. In situations where EU-political leadership and guidance was unclear, the likelihood of the IfS CRC assisting in playing this key role decreased. (JC9.4)

- To act politically on behalf of the EU in situations of crisis and protracted crisis, the IfS CRC has made important steps but there is still a way to go before it is fully recognised and established within the EU institutions as a means to translate strategy into operations. As such, its potential has not yet been fully exploited. (JC9.1 and JC9.4)

## 6 Recommendations

---

To improve current *and* future action financed under the IcSP, the evaluation team has grouped the recommendations into seven clusters. These are:

### **Cluster I – Continue to stress the political nature of the Instrument**

*This recommendation builds mainly on Conclusion I and VIII.*

- (1.1) Use the Instrument more explicitly in considerations of the political engagement of the EU in a given crisis context instead of seeing it as a gap-filler, only, and inform EUDs in particular to work with the Instrument as a tool to promote the political goals of the EU as they relate to peace and stability. => **Action FPI, EEAS and EUDs**
- (1.2) Use the Instrument not only as a tool to address particular topical issues of conflict and crisis in a vertical manner but to use it more proactively to straddle the divides embedded in the security-humanitarian-development nexus when aiming to work comprehensively across EU services. The latter should also address the bridging between CSDP missions, SSR and complementary developmental actions. => **Action FPI in collaboration with EEAS, ECHO, DG DEVCO and DG NEAR**
- (1.3) Where the Instrument, in the absence of alternatives, has to be used for activities on economic recovery and livelihoods, pay more attention to promoting the political goals of the EU external action as they relate to stability and peace. => **Action FPI**

### **Cluster II – Enhance effectiveness and sustainability through shared country assessments and conflict analyses**

*This recommendation builds mainly on Conclusion II.*

- (2.1) Inform interventions through a better understanding of the political context, conflict-related changes in country and in the sector of engagement. To the extent possible, EUD and FPI staff should undertake or draw on regular political economy studies and conflict assessments for this purpose, either through rapid assessments or more thorough studies completed by themselves or others. => **Action EUDs and FPI**
- (2.2) Avoid interventions which arise solely done because of EU political pressures to act and which are not informed by lessons learnt, do not make use of country-specific assessments or studies (to the extent available) and are not built on a thorough exchange about the type of crisis response needed between HQ and EUDs. => **Action EEAS, EUDs, FPI**
- (2.3) While recognising the flexibility of the IfS to plan and implement interventions without the involvement of national government, seek agreement from influential national stakeholders to enhance the likelihood of effectiveness and sustainability when it is necessary, particularly for the security sector. In certain political and institutional contexts recognise that working with adequate buy-in from the national government authorities for certain types but not all crisis response actions is essential. => **Action EUDs and FPI**

- (2.4) FPI should ensure through its established practice of coordination and collaboration with partners that enough attention is given to questions of follow-up and sustainability of the interventions supported through the Instrument. => **Action FPI and EEAS (SECPOL2), DG DEVCO, ECHO, DG NEAR, EUDs (political and development cooperation sections)**
- (2.5) Possible political pressures to prioritise interventions with a larger funding volume so that an enlarged IcSP portfolio can be addressed with comparatively less human resources should be resisted. The benefit of working through small or smaller projects in politically sensitive situations (which can be analysed through good assessments) should not be underestimated. => **Action EU authorities, EEAS, FPI**
- (2.6) To remain a politically effective and relevant Instrument for EU external action, the FPI should make great effort to maintain staff well versed in conflict sensitive approaches and with good sector knowledge of the design, implementation and monitoring of peace and stability interventions at HQ and field level. The EU's enhanced attention towards new policy priorities, such as the SSR and the migration crisis should be reflected in considerations about staffing. => **Action FPI**
- (2.7) Through staff development measures, FPI should further promote conflict analysis, how to straddle the security-humanitarian-development nexus and how to connect crisis response on security, migration, humanitarian action and peacebuilding/dialogue in a "politically savvy" manner to promote the peace and stability goals of EU external action. => **Action FPI, in cooperation with EUDs, EEAS (SECPOL2), DEVCO, NEAR and ECHO**

**Cluster III – Recognise that efficiency and good coordination depends also on sufficient human resources**

*This recommendation builds mainly on Conclusion III.*

- (3.1) EU authorities should recognise the specificities of FPI's services and allocate sufficient and experienced human resources to plan, coordinate and implement the use of this Instrument. The difficult country and security contexts in which the Instrument is implemented should be recognised as well. Decision-makers in the EU should recognise that the comparative large number of small-scale projects demand more time to administer and support than big projects. => **Action EU authorities**
- (3.2) EUDs and FPI should pay attention to ensure that staff for the crisis response interventions can devote sufficient time to attend to the post-initiation phase of an intervention so that projects can be properly supported and monitored. => **Action EUDs and FPI**
- (3.3) Sufficient administrative resources and time should be made available to enable FPI HQ to undertake, or participate in (joint EU) missions that have implications for identifying, monitoring and evaluating projects. In addition, FPI staff should be invited by other services to join relevant missions. => **Action EU Authorities**
- (3.4) Ensure that sufficient FPI country knowledge remains available at HQs and at field level so that interventions can be properly identified, prioritised, formulated, accompanied and monitored. => **Action FPI**

#### **Cluster IV – Pay more attention to cross-cutting issues and visibility**

*This recommendation builds mainly on Conclusion IV.*

- (4.1) Context and conflict assessments should pay more specific attention to cross-cutting issues to identify where and to what extent these can be promoted during the design, implementation and monitoring of the interventions. These assessments should ask in particular, how the respective cross-cutting issues could potentially enhance the quality of the intervention and promote their objectives more thoroughly. => **Action FPI and EEAS (SECPOL2)**
- (4.2) Terms of references for evaluations, implemented under the lead of FPI HQ, EUDs or the implementing partner, should include standard questions about cross-cutting issues as a default. => **Action FPI and implementing partners**
- (4.3) Briefings and guidance to FPI staff should focus more attention on cross-cutting issues. Templates for the design and formulation of interventions should include standard questions about the respective cross-cutting issues, plus separate briefing sheets and guidance notes to explain why and how the respective cross-cutting issues should be addressed. => **Action FPI**
- (4.4) While the preparation and implementation of the IfS CRC portfolio displayed an adequate conflict sensitivity at the informal level, include the topic more specifically in project preparation templates and guidance notes requiring an explanation as to how conflict sensitivity is being achieved. => **Action FPI**
- (4.5) To avoid that an enhanced attention to cross-cutting issues becomes a box-ticking exercise, pay enhanced attention to these issues during learning, knowledge exchange and monitoring activities. The collection and/or compilation of baseline information in projects should be promoted and could allow for a more efficient monitoring and learning about cross-cutting issues. => **Action FPI**
- (4.6) Guidance on gender should be sharpened in the project-preparation templates so that issues of gender are understood beyond giving attention to women issues, such as women and health, or women and sanitation. Issues of gender, including their implications for girls, boys and men, and issues of empowerment, such as the enabling of women to raise their voice and participate in decision-making should be more sensitised in the briefing on gender. => **Action FPI**
- (4.7) Briefings on conflict sensitivity should address the extent to which EU visibility can be given in a particular context including the option of no or very limited visibility. Better EU guidance on how to work on visibility in fragile and conflict-affected countries should be provided (e.g., through formulating a 'visibility plan' for interventions in politically sensitive areas). => **Action FPI, DG DEVCO, EEAS (SECPOL2)**

#### **Cluster V – Exploit opportunities for working in a more consistent manner**

*This recommendation builds mainly on Conclusion V.*

- (5.1) FPI should provide better guidance to FPI staff as well as to EUDs to promote consistency and coherence of IcSP interventions with other EU external actions as standard principle in line with the TEU, while underling the possible use of the Instrument independently from other forms of EU engagement. => **Action FPI**
- (5.2) FPI should counter a more limited understanding of the Instrument among EUDs and other EU services, that see it as an Instrument to be used autonomously from other EU external actions, or as an Instrument that is only used to fill gaps, by emphasising the need to consider linkages to other EU political interventions. => **Action FPI**



- (5.3) FPI should clarify towards staff and stakeholders that it uses the term 'consistency' instead of 'coherence' for its evaluations in line with the IcSP regulations. => **Action FPI**

**Cluster VI – Further enhance the Instrument's value added:**

*This recommendation builds mainly on Conclusion VI.*

- (6.1) FPI should assess past experience in working through the PAMF and how alternative measures introduced after its termination helped to compensate for this loss to see what has been successful and what gaps remain. => **Action FPI**
- (6.2) FPI should undertake a detailed study to compare the speed and scope of IcSP interventions with those of other international donors while taking into account the human resources, institutional and operational arrangements and procedures which are deployed to intervene effectively in a speedy manner. This study should inform options for creating, or re-creating mechanisms and other ways of working that could be used very rapidly for (politically) urgent actions. FPI should take the findings of this up with the Secretary-General of the Commission's office and the financial authorities if this requires a new interpretation of the Financial Regulation (or requires renegotiation in the next Financial Perspectives) => **Action EU authorities, EEAS and FPI**
- (6.3) FPI should encourage staff to consider the IcSP also as a tool for innovation and for engagement in new domains (evidently depending on context analysis). Lessons drawn from such engagements and the added value created through such innovations should be captured and fed back into FPI so that institutional memory can be created for other possible similar areas of work. => **Action FPI and implementing partners**

**Cluster VII – Put more emphasis on learning, monitoring and evaluation**

*This recommendation builds mainly on Conclusion VII.*

- (7.1) FPI should provide guidance to implementing partners for evaluations commissioned under the respective project budget. This guidance should point at the internationally recommended practice on how to do evaluations in situations of crisis and fragility, point at the need to take account of cross-cutting issues and visibility, and make solid reference to FPI's new approach in working through a ToC per intervention and working through outcome indicators. => **Action FPI**
- (7.2) FPI should verify how its spending on regional, country and sector evaluations commissioned under the FPI HQ evaluation budget compares to the OECD average spending on evaluations and the good practice of other leading international partners. More real-time/quick evaluations that focus on course corrections to improve effectiveness and impact in projects should be considered. => **Action EU authorities and FPI**
- (7.3) FPI should strengthen its system of training and content-exchange to enhance learning among FPI staff, to promote learning across EU services and with stakeholders on crisis response in other donor institutions and individual experts (e.g., drafting briefing sheets; establishing a learning repository; research on emerging topics; extending the annual FPI workshop; regional FPI learning/exchange seminars). => **Action FPI**
- (7.4) FPI should share lessons learnt on crisis response interventions more systematically across EU services and thereby position itself as a learning hub for straddling the security-humanitarian-development divide. The use of DG DEV's Capacity4dev web-site and dissemination functions, which is an established dissemination tool within the EC, should be discussed as one of the options to enhance sharing and learning. => **Action FPI and DG DEVCO**

- (7.5) FPI should make a dedicated budget available to make these changes meaningful and set up a dedicated service at HQ, sufficiently staffed to lead and guide these innovations. In order to have appropriate critical distance from individual units as recommended by international best practice and able to spread IcSP learning wider in FPI, across EU services and with relevant stakeholders outside the EU institutions, an expertise placed at an appropriate level within FPI to execute this mandate is recommended. => **Action EU authorities and FPI**

## 7 Overall assessment

---

Given the current institutional and operational set-up of the EU's external action and efforts made by the EU to be more present internationally in addressing (emerging) crises and protracted crises in line with Title V and Article 21 of the Treaty on the European Union, the IfS CRC showed itself to be a very useful Instrument to underpin the ambitions of the EU and helped translate EU policy objectives into its global operations. Within the parameters given, FPI acted flexibly and pragmatically and built an effective provision of expertise within a relatively short time-span. The capacity and processes created around the IfS CRC, has allowed the EU to respond with substantial funding to crises and emerging crises in a very flexible and relatively fast manner. Also to act flexibly across sectors and to work with a diverse group of partners selected by the EU.

An important element of the Instrument is that it can focus on peace and stability in a way that no other EU Instruments are able to, including addressing issues such as peace-building, mediation, SSR (with an emphasis on the 'R' of reform), IDPs and refugees. Given its broad scope (considered by stakeholders as a significant asset as the evaluation revealed) the IfS CRC has shown an ability to promote the political dimensions and values of the EU, which other Instruments cannot address in the same way. In addition, it is the fastest non-humanitarian EU crisis response tool at the EU's disposal as it is not subject to tendering requirements and has global reach. It is also non-programmable which is highly valued within the EU system. However, the obligation to follow other aspects of the EU Financial Regulation often relating to contracting can result in implementing partners not receiving funds within a shorter timespan, which – according to implementing organisations – is the less the case when working with a few other international donors. The discontinuation of the PAMF with the end of the IfS meant that the EU relinquished a standing annual financing mechanism to react more quickly, or to fill (small) funding gaps up to EUR 2 million which could not be addressed through other sources. This reduces the EU's ability and scope to act (politically) fast in particular cases, which should be an issue of concern.

Conceived as a means to promote the political ambitions of the EU in relation to stability and peace, the implementation of the IfS CRC, as part of the overall IfS, demonstrated an ability to operate in a politically relevant manner. In order to realise its political potential the IfS CRC could would have required more attention within the EU system throughout the implementation cycle. This is not to put the blame on FPI or the Instrument, but rather on the challenges of the EU's external assistance system and the insufficient strategic and political guidance and political engagement, which is provided for countries and regions.

Overall IfS CRC interventions have had a useful impact in certain areas and countries analysed in this evaluation, yet the IfS CRC itself (as acknowledged in the way its own regulation is written) cannot bring peace or deliver stability. Overall, the IfS CRC has made a very useful and at times unique contribution to the EU's overall engagement. Indeed, the likelihood of the IfS CRC interventions realised impact increased when used as part of a well-informed and EU-wide (political and strategic) engagement in particular sectors or countries, commonly described as a comprehensive or integrated approach. This is ideally based on solid country assessments and conflict analyses, a practice that should be further improved while making use of FPI's expertise as well as other relevant EU services. Being able to straddle the security-humanitarian-development

nexus, the Instrument was impactful when responding to crisis vertically per sector, or area, and when deployed horizontally as an instrument to establish connections between different areas, or sectors of engagement where other EU instruments have limitations to act.

The Instrument's impact could have been higher if it was better bolstered by political engagement throughout the lifecycle of interventions, in particular at the level of EUDs, and more upfront in considerations on how to fit the Instrument into the overall longer-term EU crisis response, as mentioned above. The political role that the IfS could have played, should have therefore been promoted more. Its impact also could have been higher if its potential as a learning hub, as a cross-EU service knowledge facilitator, and as an operational testing ground for the EU's growing need to respond to crisis were to be acknowledged. In addition, the need to work through big as well as a variety of small or smaller projects in order to remain politically relevant, often demanding a significant amount of work, and human resources, should have been understood better.

Issues that should be addressed with more vigour within FPI are the attention to cross-cutting issues, maintaining a good balance of experience and sector knowledge at HQ and field level, connecting more systematically with other EU services and initiatives funded by other international and national partners (in support of an EU-wide comprehensive approach) and improving its approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning. There is also a need to clarify better, when and how to use it vis-à-vis other EU Instruments or mechanisms addressing crisis and protracted crisis. The Instrument's comparative advantage appeared to be lying more in the political domain and less on the developmental side, which appeared to be the case somewhat too often in relation to projects addressing resilience, livelihoods and economic recovery.

FPI's human resources required for making these improvements to the IfS CRC and for exploring the full potential of the Instrument were not enough given the ambition of the Instrument. Considering the pressures to further reduce staff numbers, this should be of concern given the need of the EU to intervene effectively operationally and politically in a growing number of crisis situations around the world.

Evidence from the country visits shows that it is an asset that the IfS CRC could make in selected cases a contribution to longer-term transformational change in line with the EU's external action objectives, rather than being merely a tool for pursuing a short-term containment approach to peace and stability. This should remain a relevant consideration for the IcSP as the successor to IfS.

This report evaluated the IfS CRC based on interventions performed in four principal sectors of the IfS CRC, i.e. SSR/DDR; IDPs and refugees; dialogue, mediation, confidence building; and economic recovery, integration, livelihoods and reconstruction and rehabilitation. Drawing on the evaluation findings and documented along the evaluation questions, the conclusions, the recommendations and the overall assessment above, the evaluation concludes that: Given the challenges of the EU external assistance system, the IfS CRC portfolio – notwithstanding some areas requiring improvements as spelled out above – was a valuable investment for the EU and used very well in support of the EU's response to crisis and in line with the Instrument's mandate to promote peace and stability as part of the EU's external action.

## **Annexes (see volume II)**

---