



No peace, no security, no justice – no long-term impact

Saferworld contribution to the consultation on the EU Green Paper: *EU development policy in support of inclusive growth and sustainable development – Increasing the impact of EU development policy*

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Introduction

Saferworld welcomes the Green Paper on EU development policy and appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the associated consultation. The Green Paper revolves around the question of how to increase the impact of EU support for development. As an organisation with twenty years of experience in the fields of conflict prevention, security and justice, we have gathered considerable evidence to suggest that it is extremely difficult to achieve inclusive growth and sustainable development – and thus achieve long-term impact – without addressing conflict, insecurity, and weak rule of law in the communities, states and regions to which development support is provided.

Achieving greater long-term impact therefore requires not only improved value added and value for money in 'traditional' areas of development, but also much greater focus on and commitment to measures regarding the sustainability of the communities, societies and states where development happens. The Green Paper rightly identifies governance, security and fragility (among others) as key issues affecting the impact of EU development policy. The question is how best the EU can use its development tools and influence most effectively in order to build peace and prevent conflict and to promote and reinforce better governance, the rule of law and security for all.

This submission focuses on Section 2 of the Green Paper on 'High impact development policy'. It begins with a general discussion of the importance of conflict prevention, security and justice. It goes on to propose some overarching steps that could be taken to strengthen the EU's capacity and effectiveness in this field. It then responds in more detail to the consultation questions issued alongside the Green Paper, in particular regarding the following sections:

- 2.3 Promoting Governance
- 2.4 Security and Fragility
- 2.6 Policy Coherence for Development
- 2.7 Improving the impact of Budget Support

Conflict prevention, security and justice are crucial for long-term impact

Although they have become more prominent in recent years, conflict prevention and peacebuilding – and the related fields of governance, security and justice – still play a relatively minor role within development support, not only in terms of the volume of resources allocated but also in terms of the priority afforded to such matters by the major

multilateral and bilateral donor agencies. There are many reasons for this, but one is surely that it is considered difficult to measure the impact of such programmes, and consequently that many programmes appear to have expended significant resources without being able to demonstrate any obvious, 'concrete' impact to show for it.

Yet if it is hard to directly show the impact of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and governance work, the need for such programmes becomes abundantly clear when one looks at states which have failed to deal with conflict and weak governance. Of the 34 countries furthest away from achieving the Millennium Development Goals, 22 are in, or have just come out of, conflict. To achieve human development – even if this is defined narrowly in terms of poverty reduction – we must do better at preventing conflict and promoting lasting peace, and it would be right to focus aid efforts, in part, on addressing factors that lead to conflict. To reduce poverty, we must, if we can, tackle conflict. At the same time, the task of development is about promoting fulfilment of a broader range of human needs, rights and aspirations than simply the absence of poverty, including the right to be free of violence and injustice and the fear of them, and to enjoy a broad range of socio-economic, civil and political rights in freer, better governed societies.

Integrating conflict prevention, security and governance throughout development policy and practice

Although development goals such as the MDGs do not specifically refer to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, it is now widely recognised that they cannot be met without such programming. However, it is not enough simply to increase and improve programming specifically on these areas. They must not be perceived as the sphere of expertise and responsibility of peacebuilding and security institutions and organisations: all development programming can have an impact – positive or negative – on conflict and governance dynamics. It is thus essential that all development policies, programmes and activities are conflict-sensitive.

“Conflict-sensitive” development policies, strategies and practices are based on a thorough understanding of both the context and how the development changes proposed will interact with other prevailing dynamics, particularly with existing and potential conflicts. Conflict sensitivity has thus been identified as a very important approach to contribute to the prevention of conflict particularly in fragile states. If designed and implemented with conflict-sensitivity in mind development interventions can go beyond simply respecting the basic principle of ‘Do no harm’ and make a positive contribution to sustainable peace. Through the adoption of several documents¹, the EU has recognised the added value of these approaches and committed to adopt the necessary processes and measures to ensure its country strategies and programmes are conflict-sensitive and people-centred. In order to address the security & development challenges it faces in several contexts through the various means set out above, the EU needs to set up the appropriate mechanisms to ensure these approaches are mainstreamed across the institutions.

Challenges to achieving conflict sensitivity across the EU must be overcome: awareness needs to be raised across the EU, and at all levels, on the rationale, benefits and practical implications of applying conflict sensitivity in the work of the EU; European projects, strategies and programmes should systematically integrate conflict sensitive approaches and be screened according to them. It should also incentivise the adoption of conflict sensitive practices by staff – rewarding them through recognition of conflict prevention skills within performance management processes.

¹ EU programme for the prevention of violent conflict (2001), the Council Conclusions on security and development (2007), Council Conclusions on an EU response to situations of Fragility (2007).

All development interventions, especially in fragile and conflict-prone countries, should be 'conflict-sensitive' in terms of being based on a comprehensive context analysis which identifies priorities for achieving peaceful development and human security in the long term, as well as articulating how programmes can have the minimum negative impacts on conflict dynamics. A meaningful context analysis should be participatory to ensure it includes the diverse perspectives of communities who are the ultimate beneficiaries of development, security, justice, and who are the most vulnerable when there is a failure to uphold the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law.

It should be emphasised that the need for conflict sensitivity is not limited only to those countries that are currently recognised as 'conflict-affected', or even 'fragile'. For aid to make an ethical and an effective contribution to the well being of those it purports to help, those delivering it must understand how it relates to the political and conflict context in which it takes place, adjusting their policies, practices and strategies to make the minimum negative and maximum positive contribution to peace. This is why the EU needs to continue to pursue a conflict-sensitive approach across all its relief, development, security and political co-operation with developing countries. This point is not just relevant to societies in conflict, but also to those which are overtly stable, but whose conflict dynamics need to be more pre-emptively identified and addressed (such as Uganda and Bangladesh) before they unleash conflicts which unsettle and unravel traditional development approaches (as happened recently in Kenya and Kyrgyzstan and, before that, in Rwanda and Côte D'Ivoire).

Consultation responses: 2.3 Promoting Governance

6. How can the EU adapt its approach, instruments and indicators in support of governance reforms in developing countries/regions?

- **Understand conflict and governance dynamics as part of country strategy development.** Long-term development impact depends on conflict prevention, and this in turn depends on better governance. As part of the process of EU country strategy development, the EU should be analyzing politics and governance systematically within a full analysis of conflict causes, dynamics and actors. This should enable the EU to understand which governance issues need to be addressed in order to work in support of sustainable peace. It can then give these due emphasis within its diplomacy, strategies and financial allocations.
- **Promote healthy state-society relations.** The EU should focus more effort in building sound state-society relations when supporting governance reforms. It should also consider more systematically the role of civil society in achieving governance change. This can be done by enhancing support to and including civil society organisations in reform processes, both at strategic, technical levels and in political dialogues. Relating guidance and recommendations contained in the *EC Handbook on Promoting Good Governance in EC Development and Cooperation, Analysing and addressing governance in sector operations* should be promoted across all EU institutions responsible for elaborating strategies and programmes.
- **Defend the space for donors and civil society to work on governance issues.** In many countries there is growing resistance to donor and civil society interventions which engage with governance problems and the power interests that often underlie them. The EU needs to be politically robust in asserting the relevance of such work and in supporting and defending those who demand better governance.
- **Ensure a combined commitment to governance.** The EU also needs to build consensus among other donor partners and international institutions to ensure that governance issues are not neglected by some donors, diminishing the leverage of others.

- **Promote governance through ALL activities and prevent attempts to sideline governance work.** A common tactic in societies where governance is of concern is to regulate aid activities so that only aid that is in line with the government's political agenda is authorised. As stated in a number of in-house guidance documents², the EU should, where necessary, encourage all aid agencies to support better governance *throughout (golden thread)* their approaches, so that individual agencies working on protection, human rights and governance cannot be isolated by governments and removed from the context. Agencies can do this by adopting a holistic 'durable solution' approach incorporating protection, advocacy, and capacity building with communities to demand better governance alongside practical working to support relief and development. The EU should also require its partners to work in a way that supports the development of better links between more empowered communities and more responsive and accountable governments.
- **Make support for governance-related activities more accessible.** The EU should also redouble its efforts to make its resources more accessible to local actors and to develop instruments that are able to offer longer term support to effective programmes to help local civil society thrive and grow. Larger trust funds and cumbersome applications procedures exclude many local actors. Instruments and applications procedures that attract a diverse array of smaller partners allow the EU to strengthen a broader range of local voices and leave individual local CSOs less exposed.
- **Support change at the right level.** To be relevant, change must be supported at the right level: for example, if conflict will stem from governance problems at national level, it can be important to develop strategies and support programmes that clearly articulate how 'piloting' and sub-national approaches will 'add up' to national change.

7. *How and to what extent should the EU integrate more incentives for reform into its aid allocation process, for both country and thematic programmes?*

- **Incentivise change and back progressive elements.** The EU must be consistent, principled and strategic in offering real dividends to those who move towards democracy, good governance, equality and human rights – withholding its friendship from those governments that do not share these values in favour of working with progressive elements in their states, such as free media, human rights advocates and leaders and officials who champion change.
- **Make planning more inclusive.** In order to adopt such an approach effectively it will be necessary, as noted above, for the EU to base all of its interventions on a thorough conflict analysis, and to promote the participation of all parts of society, including women and marginalised groups, in both EU, national and local development planning.
- **More conflict-sensitive, scenario-based country strategies.** The EU can incentivise governance reform by developing more conflict-sensitive scenario-based country strategies that offer more alignment and national ownership where: (1) governance deficits are being addressed, and human rights abuses and international humanitarian law violations by the state ended; (2) there is evidence that development planning has been participatory, inclusive, equitable, conflict sensitive and responsive to the needs of the poor and marginalised within the resources available; and (3) where it is clear over time that resources are reaching communities in a equitable way and that any issues of corruption, nepotism and political patronage

² Draft *EC Handbook on Promoting Good Governance in EC Development and Cooperation*, European Commission, Aidco, 2004. *Analysing and addressing Governance in sector operations*, Reference doc. No.4, European Commission, Aidco, Nov 2008.

are being addressed. Point (3) can be monitored through the involvement of the public and civil society in planning and monitoring the delivery of development.

- **Alternatives to alignment with state structures.** Where these criteria are not being met, the EU should deliver more aid through non-governmental actors, but in a way that supports the better links between the public and government and builds domestic capacity to demand better governance.
- **Aid disbursement could be conditional on multi-stakeholder dialogue.** The EU should consider conditioning aid to a meaningful multi-stakeholder dialogue in the aid allocation and implementation processes. The active participation of civil society organisations in these processes should then be a prerequisite of any allocation of aid, through any modality (project based, sector based or general budget support).

Consultation responses: 2.4 Security and Fragility

9. How should the EU tackle the nexus between security and development, especially in fragile and conflict-prone countries, and put greater emphasis on democratic governance, human rights, the rule of law, justice and reform of the security sector, when programming development interventions?

The EU should indeed tackle the nexus between security and development by putting greater emphasis on development interventions that improve, amongst other things, the effectiveness, responsiveness and transparency of security services and that improve access to justice. It is welcome to see a focus on these issues within EU discussion of development not only because of the widely recognised link between security and development but also because it is important that the EU prioritises the security of people in developing countries, rather than the security interests of particular regimes, their national borders and/or the geopolitical interests of EU member states. The following points explore these issues in more depth, providing recommendations for the approach the EU should take:

- **Revive and adopt the Fragility & Conflict Action Plan.** Following the 2001 *Programme for the prevention of violent conflict*, the EU had recognised the necessity to respond more strategically to the challenges posed by situations of conflict and fragility. It made encouraging and very positive steps in adopting *Council Conclusions on security and development* (2007) and *Council conclusions on an EU response to situations of fragility* (2007). However, with the past year and on-going developments of the European External Action Service (EEAS), the actual implementation of the commitments contained in these documents, which was to be agreed in the *EU Fragility & Conflict Action Plan* is still lacking. The EU should ensure that this Action Plan is revived and adopted by the responsible bodies inside the EEAS and takes into account the elements of this submission.
- **Recognise security and access to justice as basic entitlements** and treat them as basic services alongside, for instance, health and education. Security and access to justice for poor people are development goals in their own right. They are also key requirements for a peaceful, democratic society and sustained social and economic development. And they are critical for the creation of a stable environment within which human rights and the rule of law are respected and where communities can address grievances and manage social and political change through peaceful means. Efforts to support and promote the reform and development of security and justice policies, institutions and practices are therefore key elements of international assistance to developing countries, including those that have been affected by or are at risk of violent conflict, fragility and insecurity.

- **Take a 'Human Security' approach.** Over the past decade or so, the EU has gradually adopted the concept of 'human security' in its support for security and justice programming. A commitment to human security implies that security and justice strategies and programmes should proactively seek to take into account and address citizen's needs and concerns, as primary recipients of security and justice provision. There is both a moral and a practical case for putting people at the heart of security interventions. Aid works best when it meets people's real needs, is locally owned and planned and implemented with the full and meaningful participation of those that it affects. Aid that aims to promote poor people's security is no different – to be effective, and support broader development gains, 'security interventions' need to be based on the needs of local populations rather than predetermined ideas of what activities will help promote security, however well intentioned.
- **Base programmes on careful understanding of the context.** This must be the hallmark of effective assistance to the development of states to ensure they provide security and justice in accordance with the rights and needs of their citizens. The challenges to equitable security and justice provision vary greatly from society to society, within countries as well as between them. Programmes that follow a template, rather than developing the right approach for the institutions and culture of the beneficiary country, are unlikely to succeed. Related to this, donors should always look at what already exists – including the 'informal' security and justice mechanisms that communities often use in the absence of state provision – to see what can be built on and supported. The OECD DAC 'Handbook on Security System Reform' provides detailed guidance for donors looking to support effective and sustainable SSR programming and the EU should use this guidance as the basis for its approach.
- **Be more political where necessary.** It is, in some but not all contexts, viable to work with security and justice institutions, supporting them to develop and grow to provide effective, responsive, democratic and accountable security and justice. Although all development is political, however, promoting responsive and accountable security and equal access to justice often touches on the very way states exercise their monopoly on the use of force, as well as on sensitive issues such as national security and sovereignty. Some governments may be actively opposed to measures they see as weakening their grip on power. Thus the feasibility of such work depends on the context and is crucially dependent on sustained political will among leaders and institutions to achieve progress. Because of this, it is vital that programmes working to build the capacity of the state to provide security and justice:
 - Are based on detailed understanding of the political and governance context and the track record of past engagement
 - Have clear objectives and working methods agreed from the outset
 - Are regularly reviewed against benchmarks for progress and feasibility throughout implementation
 - Are preceded and accompanied by regular and high-level political dialogue with partner governments (thus ensuring good coordination and coherence between the EU's development and diplomatic programmes will be essential)
 - Consider carefully how well-equipped potential partners are to understand the political context of their security and justice work, and undertake work that is sensitive and that may involve challenging governance practices of the state on sensitive themes in the public interest.
- **Promote public demand for security and justice.** In all contexts, there needs to be a balance between work with the institutions of the state and work to encourage the public to demand better performance from the state. Many security and justice reform programmes work with the state without realising that any improvements made are only sustainable if underpinned by public demand for effective, accountable and responsive institutions. Public participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of security and justice mechanisms is a particularly important element of

ensuring development interventions effectively address the security and development of people in fragile and conflict-prone countries. Supporting the emergence of civil society in specific sectors and in the policy-making process as a whole contributes to strengthening and broadening local ownership and to increasing the responsiveness of EU decision-making to the context in which it is operating.³ Neglecting to take such an approach can result in missed opportunities and unintended (negative) consequences. Encouraging and empowering communities to critically assess the way they are provided with security and justice services (and advocate for improved delivery) could be considered supporting the 'demand' for such services.

- **Aim for strategic complementarity with other donors.** The EU may find it politically challenging to support both the supply of security and justice by the state and public demand for security and justice, including independent journalism and advocacy on protection and human rights. Given the combination of its powerful influence, its multilateral status and its exemplary commitment to human rights, the EU's added value make it particularly suited within the donor community to the difficult but crucial role of championing communities' security and justice needs and civil society voices: the bottom-up approach to security and justice sector development. Therefore it should seek to establish strategic complementarity with other donors who share its commitment to better governance and human rights fulfilment, but who are already more focused on development of state capacity.

10. How could the EU better coordinate with development actions when programming security interventions?

The responses to Question 9 above emphasise the importance of putting people's needs and contextual understanding at the heart of security interventions, and therefore ensuring that security interventions (including CSDP) also meet development objectives. Beyond this, we would also stress that in order to achieve more coherence between security and development interventions, both must contribute more proactively to long-term conflict prevention strategies. Once again, the *Fragility & Conflict Action Plan* provides an appropriate framework to ensure a "whole of EU approach" can be articulated among the various EU instruments.

The impact of security interventions could be maximised, i.e. support long development and conflict prevention strategies more effectively, if they were designed and implemented more strategically. The EU should ensure that:

- **Security and other peacebuilding types of intervention become an integral part of the EU geographic external financial instruments.** The on-going challenge of integrating security and development interventions is also linked to the missed opportunity of including these areas of cooperation within the current financial instruments (except the Instrument for Stability). This should be overcome during the negotiations on the next financial perspectives by making sure security, justice and peacebuilding become key areas of cooperation alongside, health and education.
- **Appropriate mechanisms are in place to enhance coordination among EU security and development actors.** The EEAS has been set up to guarantee more coherence and consistency among the EU's external actions. The new service will then be critical to ensure security interventions take into account and reinforce longer term development strategies. One concrete measure will be to ensure that civilian crisis management bodies, and the Geographic and Thematic Directorates of the EEAS are all involved in the drafting of regional and country strategies, as well as the planning and implementation of CSDP operations and other security activities. Another concrete

³ *Improving the understanding and use of participatory approaches in security building programmes*, Initiative for Peacebuilding, December 2010.

measure will be to ensure that these different bodies all share the same strategy so that their respective interventions, within their own mandates, contribute to the same ultimate goal and are reinforcing of each other.

- **A common understanding of security & development interventions and strategies is shared across the EU institutions.** In order to better integrate security interventions with development strategies and programmes, it is fundamental to foster a shared understanding on issues relating to the design and implementation of security and development activities. Staff across the institutions need to understand better the rationale, added value and practical implication of relevant interventions. Training and other forms of awareness raising will be needed to enhance knowledge, change attitudes and practices across the institutions.

11. How can the EU best address the challenge of linking relief, rehabilitation and development in transition and recovery situations?

The EU has a number of instruments that can be used in crisis response situations. These fund a good deal of peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and governance work, and thus make an important contribution to longer-term stability and development. However, challenges arise because of the relatively short time-scales involved in such funding and the difficulties of transition into longer-term development programming. The following steps could help:

- **Allow country delegations greater influence over funding instruments.** The EU should ensure the maximum country/regional delegation involvement in selection of projects that are implemented in their area of responsibility, even in the case of proposals supported under financial instruments administered by EU Headquarters, in order to ensure their sensitivity to the conflict context.
- **Develop mechanisms to provide longer-term support for successful programmes under the Instrument for Stability.** Many worthwhile peacebuilding projects are supported by grants set up under the Instrument for Stability. They therefore have a limited duration, despite being first steps in critical longer term change processes. Such projects are unlikely to get follow-up funding, as the current call for proposals system cannot be geared towards ad-hoc continuation of grants set up under other EU funding arrangements. The EU requires a mechanism that enables it to find ways to continue support to successful IfS backed projects under other funding instruments, possibly by incorporating relevant issues, objectives and strategies into other calls for proposals.
- **Ensure adequate funding for rights and protection work as part of crisis response and transition.** Work on rights and protection issues needs to be factored in as an element of comprehensive assistance packages. Where authorities object to the pursuit of rights promotion, protection and victim assistance, the EU should ensure continued funding support for such efforts, finding ways to integrate them into bigger projects if need be, and ensuring they are backed by the donor community more broadly.
- **Plan development for maximum peacebuilding effect.** It may be appropriate to focus development work on locations where inequality and injustice present a high risk for future conflict: the poorest, most isolated and poorly serviced areas, and especially those among them that have previously spawned armed violence.
- **Demonstrate the importance of governance and conflict sensitivity in all programming by setting a good example.** Clear objectives, selection criteria, community participation, use of local labour and materials and accountability are the key features of an approach that can demonstrate a model for good governance and conflict sensitive development to government partners.

- **Make participation, transparency and accountability conditions of engagement.** Avoid embarking on development work with the Government where political commitment, objectives and decision making criteria are not clear from the outset and where participation, transparency and accountability to the public are not agreed aspects of the implementation process.
- **Increase the impact of EIDHR.** The EU should devote a greater proportion of its overall programming to human rights monitoring and advocacy, in particular by extending the scope of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. The EIDHR should prioritise human rights interventions that address potential root causes of future conflict. If possible, the size and length of grants should be increased in order to enhance partners' stability, and increase the feasibility of achieving longer term change.

Consultation responses: 2.6 Policy Coherence for Development

13. What practical and policy related measures could be taken in the EU to improve Policy Coherence for Development? How could progress and impact be best assessed?

In order to ensure policy coherence for development when it comes to security related issues, we think the EU should generally enhance its practices relating to conflict sensitivity, so that development strategies and programmes at the very least 'do no harm' and at best contribute to build long term peace. This can be achieved through the following steps:

- **Provide a checklist on conflict sensitivity.** Delegation staff should be able to access a checklist of conflict sensitivity issues for use when conducting field visits to projects under contracts that they manage. Partners should be encouraged and supported to document and share experiences and best practices regarding conflict sensitivity.
- **Build capacity for conflict-sensitive monitoring and evaluation.** Partners should be encouraged to develop greater capacity for conflict-sensitive monitoring and evaluation, perhaps through EU capacity development support. Monitoring and evaluation should not only be an exercise to fulfil donor requirements but also provide the basis for participatory discussion of progress, challenges and lessons learned between organisations' staff and partners. Partners should include beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation processes.
- **Build conflict sensitivity into EU evaluation procedures.** The EU should consider including questions regarding conflict prevention and conflict sensitivity in its evaluation criteria.⁴ Key issues to consider include:
 - a. Peacebuilding Relevance
 - b. Peacebuilding Effectiveness
 - c. Impact on Macro Peacebuilding
 - d. Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding
 - e. Participation and Ownership of National/Local Stakeholders
 - f. Coordination and Coherence with other Initiatives
 - g. Efficiency, Management and Governance
 - h. Linkages
 - i. Coverage
 - j. Consistency with Values

⁴ Such as, inter alia, OECD, *Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*. (OECD, 2008, working draft) or those used in Saferworld, 'Conflict-Sensitivity Assessment of EU programmes in Sri Lanka – Phase 2', October 2010.

Consultation responses: 2.7 Improving the impact of Budget Support

The consultation did not actually ask a specific question regarding budget support. However, Saferworld believes that the question of the appropriateness and effectiveness of budget support in poorly governed, fragile and conflict-affected states requires greater attention. We would therefore like to propose the following points:

- **Analyse the conflict sensitivity of budget support in fragile and conflict-affected states.** Budget support is currently the orthodoxy among development economists and institutions. It is also popular with governments in developing countries, for obvious reasons. However, there appears to be a considerable risk that budget support could actually fuel conflict and insecurity when provided to the governments of states with conflict and governance issues, even if they meet the necessary technical and economic criteria. In particular, the aid community needs to reflect more on the evidence of how the norms of harmonisation, alignment, ownership, managing for results and mutual accountability are working in practice in contexts like Uganda, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Somalia and DRC.
- **Incentivise genuine commitment to democracy and human rights.** Donors and aid institutions should encourage the use of influence and incentives to reward governments willing to demonstrate commitment to democratisation, human rights and conflict sensitive development. Incentives could be linked to more inclusive, accountable and conflict sensitive national and sub-national development planning and delivery. Precipitous alignment with governments who disregard these values risks fuelling conflict, aggravating violations of international humanitarian law and human rights and working against development. Donors should therefore condition prolonged support on evidence of inclusively developed, redistributive and peacebuilding, state-building and development strategies. Thus donors should make incentives clear for funding state budgets that follow participatory, decentralised planning processes. Such planning processes should include and be accompanied by civil society organisations, involve the public and respond to public needs. Donors should follow this up by ensuring over time that support goes to plans (e.g. PRSPs) which answer to the security, justice and service provision needs of the poor and marginalised, and which scrupulously avoid supporting militarisation, nepotism, corruption, oppression and exclusion.
- **Link the scale of budget support to the quality of governance.** Over time, donors should match the size of their contributions to national and/or sub-national budgets to evidence of the quality of planning processes, of resources reaching communities, and of the satisfaction of communities with government services. In addition, aid planning and delivery needs to be conflict-sensitive, to avoid fuelling or exacerbating divisions between different groups that could turn to violence.
- **Consider alternatives to budget support.** In contexts where the government is playing a negative role in conflict dynamics, is not planning in a participatory, accountable, conflict sensitive way, is wasting aid resources through corruption and/or failing to reach communities, donors should consider interim alternatives to alignment and ownership. As well as providing essential resources and services in contexts of emergency and underdevelopment, many relief and development agencies have an impressive bottom-up approach to empowerment and developing the relation between citizens and the state, and work towards sustainable outcomes and an exit strategy from the outset. When the government is playing a negative role in conflict dynamics, off-budget support to such actors should be an option and not automatically assumed to be a bad choice.
- **Strike the right balance between state capacity and support for civil society.** Donors and aid agencies need to strike a better balance between supporting the capacity of duty bearers and developing the plural voices of the public and civil society to demand better from their governments. To do this, aside from support to government institutions, donors and aid agencies need to focus much more clearly on increasing public

engagement with a responsive, accountable, democratic and effective state. Alongside the huge and fundamental need for education to be available in many of the most fragile contexts, this may include increasing work to strengthen independent media and access to information, capacity of communities to engage in participatory and conflict-sensitive development planning, and strengthening civil society organisations. Donors should seek to remove the obstacles many local organisations face in accessing resources to support independent advocacy and having to act as service providers for their partners. To do this, they need more officials on the ground, and to work less through large trust funds that local civil society organisations find difficult to access.

- **Plan from the start to phase out budget support in order not to undermine sustainability and governance.** Although off-budget support therefore has important merits in many contexts that should not be overlooked, aid should align quickly behind governments genuinely committed to pursuing democratisation, human rights fulfilment and conflict sensitive development. Off budget support has a tendency to undermine the social contract between citizens and the state, frustrating the sustainability of development interventions. As well as developing aid management structures that enable it to provide on-budget and off-budget support in more timely ways in rapidly changing contexts, the EU should target development and relief agencies for support that demonstrate their commitment to phasing out assistance as the relationship grows between communities and government service providers. Relief and development organisations should aim to help this relationship to grow by encouraging participatory and conflict-sensitive peace and development planning processes between communities and government authorities wherever possible.

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About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent, international NGO that works to prevent violent conflict and promote cooperative approaches to security. We believe everyone should be able to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives free from insecurity and armed violence.

Through our work in the Horn of Africa, South Asia and Central and Eastern Europe we aim to understand what causes violence by talking to the people it affects and then bringing together communities, governments, civil society and the international community to develop solutions. Using this experience, we also work with the UK, EU, UN and others to develop ways of supporting societies address conflict and insecurity.