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# Stocktaking and scoping of the Peacebuilding Partnership

*FINAL*

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## Acronyms

AAP	Annual Action Plan
AIDCO	Europeaid
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CfP	Call for Proposal
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CPN	Conflict Prevention Network
CPP	Conflict Prevention Partnership
CRT	Crisis Response Team
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DG RELEX	Directorate General External Relations
EC	European Community
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EDF	European Development Fund
EEIG	European Economic Interest Grouping
EGT	European Group on Training
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EIP	European Institute for Peace
ESDC	European Security and Defence College
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EUNIDA	European Network of Implementing Development Agencies
FR	Financial Regulation
HQ	Headquarters
IfP	Initiative for Peacebuilding
IfS	Instrument for Stability
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MS	Member State
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NSA	Non State Actor
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAD	Peacebuilding Assistance Database
PBP	Peacebuilding Partnership
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PCNA	Post Conflict Needs Assessment
RCRPO	Regional Crisis Response Planning Officer
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
UN	United Nations
WB	World Bank

## Executive Summary

This study provides a stocktaking and scoping on the future strategic direction of the Peacebuilding Partnership (PBP). Established in the context of the European Commission's Instrument for Stability (IfS), the PBP has the broad objective of strengthening international and regional capacity to analyse, prevent and respond to violent conflict and disasters, as well as to improve post-conflict and post-disaster recovery.

The three main PBP priorities are:

- Peace-building partnership support – funding to support capacity building of civil society actors and enhanced dialogue between civil society actors and policy makers at the European-level and in the field.
- Cooperation with international and/or regional organisations.
- Strengthening the European Union's (EU) contribution to international civilian stabilisation missions through training of EU experts.

Through consultation with stakeholders and experts, and a review of relevant documentation, the study draws lessons from the implementation of the PBP to date and provides recommendations on its future direction, *focusing primarily on the elements of the partnership relating to support and dialogue with non-state actors (NSAs)*. Some attention is, however, also given to the other elements of the partnership within the main body of the report.

### **The background and context of EC peacebuilding policies and engagement with NSAs**

The PBP is just one of the EC's tools in relation to an overall strategic approach to peacebuilding that encompasses both 'long-term' approaches – supporting the adaptation and targeting EU instruments to address the causes of conflict – and 'short-term' approaches - improving the EU's capacity to react quickly to conflict risks - as well as cooperation with international partners.

Engagement between NSAs and EC on peacebuilding issues is not new and has taken place within a number of settings and in relation to a spectrum of issues over the past fifteen years. Initiatives include the first Conflict Prevention Network established in 1997 and the ensuing Conflict Prevention Partnership and Initiative for Peacebuilding. The establishment of PBP has sought to enhance and formalise the relationship through the provision of capacity building support (funding) and a more structured dialogue process.

### **Results of the partnership to date**

In 2008 the PBP launched two calls for proposals (CfPs). One to support to capacity building of civil society organisations in relation to operational and institutional capacity and their contribution to early warning systems and field-based political analysis; and one specifically for the organisation of round tables. In addition the EC initiated a dialogue process through a series of consultation meetings with NSAs and established a web portal as a channel of communication.

Since none of the projects identified for support under the CfPs have been fully implemented it is impossible to draw any well informed conclusions on their likely impact and contribution to the

strategic objectives of the PBP. However a number of observations can be made (specifically in relation to the outcome of the CfP for capacity building support).

The projects selected (12 of 126 submitted) appear broadly consistent with the strategic objectives and priority areas of the PBP and a couple may prove particularly valuable due to their efforts to 'move the field forward' and be of benefit to the peacebuilding sector as a whole (e.g. through the field testing of new approaches). However, a number of issues have emerged with regard to the management of the call:

First, the majority of the projects are country specific (as opposed to enhancing the understanding of thematic and transversal issues) with activities aimed predominantly at building the capacities of local actors. Although not undeserving in themselves, their potential to build international and regional capacity and be of value to the peacebuilding sector as a whole is open to question. Related concerns were also raised during consultations regarding the diffuse and piecemeal nature of the projects, the absence of critical mass and concomitant potential for demonstrable impact beyond the scope of the project itself.

Second, it is unclear how far these locally focused projects are consistent and complimentary to other country-based EC funded activities and strategic approaches. Interviews with EC Delegations suggest that whilst they might fit with the EC's overall approach in a country, in some cases they failed to 'add another dimension' whilst in others they were surplus to requirement. This was probably inevitable since there were only limited possibilities for involving EC Delegations during the selection of projects, not least due to the current human resource constraints within the Commission unit managing the call (RELEX A/2). It does suggest however that in future such activities should be supported from the level of the Delegation. Similarly, in future more could be done at an HQ level ensure closer coordination and synergies between the PBP and the global calls of EIDHR in relation to supporting the peaceful conciliation of group interests.

Third, a number of the smaller EU based peacebuilding organisations, many in need of support themselves, were disappointed not to receive funding and this placed a strain on their relations with the EC. The grant beneficiaries were on the whole large well resourced NGOs based in EU capitals with some specialism in peacebuilding.

These issues are attributable to a number of factors. Research to date suggests that as a tool for funding capacity building, the EC CfP mechanism is a rather blunt and rigid instrument that is neither particularly conducive to supporting strong policy steer in the selection of projects and beneficiaries, nor to supporting smaller, less well resourced organisations for their own capacity building needs. Furthermore, more could be done in future to calibrate the CfP application form and evaluation grid to the identification of high quality peacebuilding projects.

Against this background, it is evident that the CfP guidelines were too broadly conceived. They were insufficiently targeted in terms of the level and scope of activities and set the floor and ceiling for the grants very wide, opening the door a large volume and broad range of proposals. The lack of human resource to manage the CfPs process within RELEX A/2 certainly did not help in this respect.

At the same time, many of the proposals lacked quality and some contained administrative errors. In some cases this was no doubt due to of a lack of experience in writing EC proposals.

However in others, it was a result of a certain level of complacency that the funds were loosely 'earmarked' for certain actors and an expectation that the CfP would support core funding. It seems that the Commission did attempt to provide clarification on this issue, however confusion persisted.

The research process also revealed wider issues surrounding the PBP. These include an evident lack of clarity and common understanding around the strategic focus and concepts underpinning the PBP. On the part of NGOs and the European Parliament this stems from different perspectives regarding the genesis of the NSA elements of the partnership and what it is expected to deliver, and to organisations' differing interpretations of peacebuilding as a concept. On the side of the Commission, an analysis of key documentation suggests a level of inconsistency and lack of coherence in relation to the strategic aims and overall approach – notably in relation to the balance of focus between support for short term crisis response capacities and the longer-term peacebuilding and conflict prevention perspective.

On the other hand, the dialogue element of the PBP has proved less challenging than the CfPs and is viewed by most stakeholders as both relevant and useful. Indeed, efforts have been made during consultations to define a more systematic and strategic approach to dialogue and stakeholders agree that more needs to be done in this direction as the partnership evolves. Staffing constraints in the Commission will however continue to make managing a sustained and meaningful dialogue challenging.

### **The future strategic direction of support to NSAs via the PBP**

The majority of stakeholders consulted stated a preference for the PBP to adopt a broad conceptual understanding of peacebuilding to allow for capacity building support in relation to a wide range of thematic areas, covering both short-term crisis management as well as longer-term peacebuilding and conflict prevention. This is also in line with the approach inherent within the IfS Strategy paper and the PBP Annual Action Programme for 2009.

Although there is a reluctance in some quarters to limit or list priority areas of focus under PBP CfPs - since this may risk excluding certain interventions or actor – due to the pitfalls associated with insufficient targeting in the previous CfP, it would seem to make sense in practical terms to narrow down the thematic areas, type of activities and level of support.

In this respect the EC could give preference to thematic or transversal areas of focus that demonstrate a clear complementarity and synergy with other EC supported activities and policy priorities (e.g. other areas of support under IfS Article 3 and 4 as well as broader policy priorities, such as engagement in fragile states), with due attention also given to the priorities of other relevant actors (e.g. the EU Member States and United Nations). Moreover, thematic or transversal focus is also of particular relevance given the comparatively limited budget for NSA support under the PBP as opposed to under other funding mechanisms, for example the EIDHR. PBP funding could thus more effectively be concentrated on adding value to existing in-country support under other instruments by targeting for example regional, multi-country and cross-sector activities, than diluting impact by distributing a small amount of disparate country-specific grants.

In terms of the type of activity, the study points to providing support to organisations (or consortia of organisations) working with local partners and networks across a range of geographical contexts in relation to thematic or transversal issues, who not only support their partners but also

generate learning from practice and support the development of an evidence base of what works and what doesn't. This would in some cases involve supporting organisations to develop and deepen their *existing* areas of work and institutional capacities, pilot new projects and extract learning that can be fed back to the Commission (and beyond).

Regarding the level of support, a consensus of opinion suggests geographically focused support aimed exclusively at building capacities of local organisations at a country or sub-regional level should be decentralised to the level of the EC Delegation. However, although valuable, these activities should not, as things stand, be a priority of the PBP as they are unlikely to have the most strategic impact. Furthermore, decentralisation of a CfP process would be difficult to achieve in practice given the capacity constraints faced by EC Delegations. Nonetheless, it should not be ruled out for the future, since the appointment of Regional Crisis Response Planning Officers, may present an additional capacity to take on this type of task. Support via global CfPs should focus on projects in relation to thematic/ transversal issues that could span a range of geographical locations.

In relation to dialogue, suggestions revolve around instituting a three pronged approach, involving consultations in relation to strategic documents (such as Annual Action Plans); consultations around priorities and policy issues in relation to thematic peacebuilding issues; and geographically focused consultations in relation to specific crises and responses. Furthermore, dialogue should take place both at the EU level and at the level of Delegations (where possible), should engage the broadest range of actors, become more structured in terms of institutional mechanisms, and involve expert facilitation and appropriate venues. However, this is an ambitious undertaking and, given the current staffing constraints in relation to the PBP, it may be recommended to outsource the strategic management of the dialogue to another party (e.g. a network).

### **Operational and financial implementation of the Partnership**

From consultations with relevant Commission services and a review of the main financing tools available to the EC, it appears that the most appropriate tool for the implementation of the NSA elements of the PBP are grants awarded through Calls for Proposals via Centralised Management. (Direct granting procedures are not possible in the case of support to NSAs under the PBP, but can be used to support international organisations having reached the requested audit level).

Centralised management can be either by *direct centralised management*, directly operated by EC Services (at Headquarters or delegated to an EC Delegation), or by *indirect centralised management* whereby the management is entrusted to a public or private body that has reached the so-called '6 pillars', chosen in an objective and transparent manner, and involving a 'Delegation Agreement' outlining the scope of the delegated tasks (i.e. the scope of Commission involvement). Indirect Centralised Management can result in a 'Call for Expression of Interests' among the EU Member States or their agencies and the Delegation Agreement signed with MS or MS Agency or with a consortium of various MS or MS Agencies.

Framework contracts, used mainly for the provision of services e.g. the organisation of conferences or workshops and studies etc., may be relevant to the PBP in general, but are not used to support NGOs. On the other hand, framework partnership agreements, established as a long-term cooperation mechanism between the EC and grant beneficiaries (operating on a

similar principle to framework contracts), can be used to support NGOs but are burdensome to establish and most appropriate for missions involving rapidly mobilised short-term interventions (e.g. humanitarian response).

Following a thorough examination of their potential use, it is clear that neither operating grants, nor core funding are appropriate for the NSA elements of the PBP. Both are administratively burdensome and come with their own clear disadvantages for the beneficiary organisation.

The study suggests an approach for the financial and administrative implementation of the PBP contained within the recommendations is modular in approach in the sense that the suggested elements can be implemented separately or in an integrated way, and can be implemented at once or gradually.

### **Key recommendations**

- The definition (or understanding) of peacebuilding adopted by the PBP should be as wide as possible in order to allow for inclusion of capacity building support in relation to both short-term (crisis management) and long-term (structural) approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.
- In order to ensure sufficient targeting of future CfPs, preference could be given to capacity building support in relation to thematic or transversal issue areas that demonstrate a clear complementarity or synergy with other EC supported activities and policy priorities (as identified by the EC). With due attention also given to the priorities of other relevant actors, including EU member states and the UN.
- Support should be given to projects undertaken by organisations that work across a range of geographical contexts (in relation to thematic or transversal issues) that not only support the capacity building of local partners but also generate learning of benefit to the peacebuilding sector as a whole and can be fed back to the Commission.
- The PBP should provide opportunities to support individual organisations as well as to consortia.
- Predominantly country-focused local-level capacity building activities should not currently be a priority of the PBP.
- A three pronged approach to dialogue should be taken with consultations: in relation to strategic documents and programming (including future CfPs); around priorities and policy issues in relation to thematic issues; and on Geographic or crisis specific issues.
- Dialogue and consultations should ideally take place in Brussels, in Member States and where possible at the Delegation level and engage the broadest range of actors.
- RELEX A/2 should consider funding a network to undertake the strategic management of the dialogue and to provide a repository of best practice and evidence base for peacebuilding policy and practice.

- As a first step, the EC should launch an open call for proposals through a Direct Centralised Management procedure for the funding of a network to manage the dialogue.
- A global call for proposals should then be launched, preferably by a third party, for funding further capacity building support preferably through Indirect Centralised Management. The proposed and recommended alternative would be to transfer the management to a Member State Agency, or (better) to a Consortium of Member State Agencies, such as EUNIDA.
- The potential for launching future local and regional calls for proposals should be explored with the Delegations. This is subject to sufficient resources and budget, so not for immediate implementation, but to be thought of in the future.
- While various EC framework contracts exist, it is not certain that they respond to the exact needs of the PBP. To create a specific one will probably be difficult and take a quite long time. It seems to be preferable to create a framework partnership agreement.
- The creation of a framework partnership agreement is not an option for the time being due to human resources and budgetary constraints. However, it could be envisaged once the CfPs' management has been transferred to a third body (which means year 2 or 3, if we consider the current year as year 1), and could probably be envisaged through this third body.
- Adapt the evaluation grids to the exact needs and specificity of the PBP outlined in this report should be done.
- The rationale for the operational modalities of the PBP should be more clearly communicated with partners, particularly around the use of CfP and the limitations around operating grants and core funding, in order to assuage any misunderstanding and confusion with respect to the nature of support available.
- As a priority, and in order to implement the recommendations above, more human resource should be dedicated to the strategic and administrative management of the PBP within RELEX A/2.

# 1. Introduction and context

## 1.1 Objectives and structure of the Study

This study was commissioned by the Crisis response and Peacebuilding Unit (A/2) in DG RELEX of the European Commission (EC) in order to assist in the stocktaking and scoping on the general strategic direction of the Crisis Preparedness Component under Article 4.3 of the Instrument of Stability (IfS), known as the Peacebuilding Partnership (PBP), and provide recommendations on the way forward. Although the partners under the PBP include international and regional organisations and Member States' agencies, the primary focus of the study is on elements of the partnership relating to support to and dialogue with non-state actors (NSAs). Some attention will however be given to support to the other actors within the partnership in order to present the key issues highlighted during the course of the research and in the context of considering ways of increasing the synergies between the different actors and the operational and financial implementation of the PBP.<sup>1</sup>

The study fulfils the intention, outlined within the Crisis Preparedness 2009 Annual Action Programme (AAP), of a 'period of reflection' in the partnership with NSAs in order to enhance the management of – and fine-tune the precise outputs sought from – capacity building support. In essence, the study provides an opportunity to take stock of experience to date in order to inform and bring greater clarity to the future strategic direction and operational modalities of the partnership with NSAs. The timing of the study is in part a response to emerging challenges in the implementation of the partnership which should be addressed prior to moving forward with a future funding round for NSAs (currently planned to be initiated either towards the end of 2009 or early in 2010 under the 2010 AAP). These include: limited human resources presently available within Unit A/2 of DG RELEX for the management of the PBP, burdensome and time consuming administrative procedures relating to the use of calls for proposals (CfP) for the awarding of grants to NSAs, and the need to create greater clarity and focus around the key concepts underpinning the partnership – notably peacebuilding and capacity building – as well as the strategic direction and targeting of support.

The specific objectives of the study contained within the TOR are to:

- Draw lessons from the current implementation of the PBP and its first results;
- Consult and collate the views of relevant stakeholders on the general strategic direction of the partnership;
- Draft recommendations which could be used as guidance on the strategic direction of the PBP, having regard to the constraints imposed by the Financial Regulation of the European Commission i.e. with respect to funding mechanisms.

The research process for the study involved a number of stages: an inception phase to further define the focus, scope and implementation modalities of the study with relevant Commission staff; a research phase for the review of background documentation relating to the PBP; a consultation phase consisting of bi-lateral meetings with stakeholders; and a final phase for

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<sup>1</sup> Attention is not however given overall balance of activities with the different partners.

processing data, discussing findings, reporting, and finalising recommendations. The report draws on over forty interviews with Commission Officials, Member State representatives, NGO staff members, representatives from the European Parliament, and relevant experts. A full list of individuals consulted is enclosed at Annex 2.

It should be noted that the findings of the study in terms of lessons learned from the partnership with NSAs is constrained by the absence of experience to date of the implementation of concrete capacity building activities supported by the PBP. Therefore judgements relating to the results of the CfP in terms of (potential) impact are based on assumption rather than concrete evidence. Furthermore, limitations in terms of refining the future strategy of the partnership are inherent in the reliance on qualitative information from a rather narrow set of largely Brussels-based key stakeholders each bringing their own perspectives and set of professional interests. The study has sought to overcome this weakness as far as possible given the time available by also drawing on relevant recent studies and evaluations, including those exploring the concept of peacebuilding and capacity building support to NSAs.

The report is organised in five sections as follows:

- *Section one* provides an overview of the background, objective and implementation approach of the PBP and places it within the context of the EU's broader policy framework and accompanying discourse in relation to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
- *Section two* focuses on relations with NSAs under the PBP and is divided into three parts:
  - Part one provides background and an overview of activities in the partnership to date;
  - Part two assesses and draws lessons from the first results of the partnership;
  - Part three focuses on the strategic direction of support to NSAs and dialogue, considering the scope of support in terms of conceptual focus, activities and targeting, as well as the potential to create synergies and linkages between different actors.
- *Section three* provides an overview of support to civilian crisis management capabilities and cooperation with international and regional organisations under the PBP, and a discussion of issues going forward.
- *Section four* examines the operational and financial implementation of the PBP and considers approaches to ensure that it is optimal both in terms of serving the strategic objectives of the partnership and improving manageability.
- *Section five* outlines key recommendations on the strategic direction and operational modalities of the PBP in relation to NSAs.

## **1.2 Background and context of the PBP**

### *1.2.1 The objectives and implementation approach of the PBP (with a focus on support to NSAs)*

The PBP was established under Article 4.3 of the IfS (launched in 2007) and aims to:

*“provide support for long-term measures aimed at building and strengthening the capacity of international, regional and sub-regional organisations, state and non-state actors in relation to their efforts in: promoting early warning, confidence-building, mediation and reconciliation, and addressing emerging inter-community tensions; and improving post-conflict and post-disaster recovery”.*<sup>2</sup>

The **Strategy Paper for the IfS** approved in August 2007 identifies the PBP as a key implementation approach for one of the three overall objectives for long-term actions:

*“the strengthening of the international capacity and the regional capacity to anticipate, analyse, prevent and respond to the threat to stability and human development posed by violent conflict and natural disasters, as well as to improve post-conflict and post-disaster recovery”.*<sup>3</sup>

Against this background (and the 2007-2008 Indicative Programme for the IfS<sup>4</sup>), two **AAPs** for 2007 and for 2008 identify (with minor changes and/or adaptations from one AAP to the other) what can be considered as the three main ‘priorities’ of the PBP:

- a) Peace-building Partnership Support - grant funding to develop the capacity of civil society actors to anticipate and respond to crisis, and to improve the dialogue between civil society actors and policy makers at field and at European-level (the primary focus of this study);
- b) co-operation with international and/or regional organisations on early-warning, post-conflict and post-disaster needs assessment;
- c) strengthening the EU’s contribution to international civilian stabilisation missions through training of EU experts.

The **2009-2011 Indicative Programme** foresees the continuation of the these three strands of support and the **AAP for 2009**, approved by the EC on 30 June 2009, also aims at continuing the work initiated under the AAPs for 2007 and 2008.

More specifically the **2007 – 2011 Strategy Paper for the IfS** identifies a number of specific objectives and areas of support relevant to NSAs (under priority a) above) outlined in the table below.

**Table 1: 2007-2011 Strategy Paper. Specific objectives and priority areas of support for NSAs**

2007-2011 Strategy Paper – NSAs	
IfS Strategy – PBP Specific Objectives	IfS Strategy – PBP Priority Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to build the capacity of non-state actors and regional and sub-regional organisations engaged in the prevention of violent conflict, post-conflict political stabilization and early recovery after a natural disaster;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening of capacity of non-state actors in the fields of mediation, ‘track-two’ diplomacy and reconciliation, and building effective bridges between non-state actors and formal diplomatic initiatives.</li> <li>• Developing the operational capacity of the Commission’s implementing partners in the field of crisis response and early</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006

<sup>3</sup> European Commission, The Instrument for Stability Strategy Paper 2007-2001 p.16

<sup>4</sup> The 2007-2008 Indicative Programme focuses (inter alia) on building capacity in the international system, including regional organisations (ROs) and non-state actors (NSAs)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to strengthen capacities for providing early warning of potential crisis situations;</li> <li>• to ensure access to a well-trained body of experts with relevant skills in the fields listed under Article 3(2) of the Instrument for Stability.</li> </ul>	<p>recovery, the establishment of networks and building the capacity of civil society organisations to contribute to EU policy formulation and operational practice on crisis response and conflict prevention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification and sharing of best operational practice in the use of development assistance to address the root causes of conflict.</li> </ul>
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In terms of the **implementation approach**, the Strategy Paper sees the NSA element of the PBP as consisting of:

- A broad-based network of specialised European NGOs with expertise in early warning, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and post-conflict and post-disaster recovery.... (as) an important interlocutor with the Commission in policy development and the identification of expertise;
- development of policy-oriented research (in particular field based research) aimed at early warning of potential crises, the identification of their root causes and the provision of real-time analysis;
- financial support to build capacity amongst non-state actors, regional and sub-regional organisations and networks with operational or policy experience in the above fields and;
- arrangements with specialised NGOs allowing the Community to mobilise rapid support for peace-building and early recovery assistance in crisis situations.

The above 'elements' of the PBP were also outlined in a letter from RELEX Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner to the Chairman of the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy of 7 June 2006.

### *1.2.2 The Instrument for Stability and Peacebuilding Partnership in the context of EC peacebuilding policies and concepts*

The IfS was created as part of the reform of Community external financing instruments in 2006/7 to provide the European Union 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 (under Article 3) and to develop international capacity for peacebuilding - within the framework of the PBP under Article 4.3. The IfS is however just one of a range of strategic tools and approaches at the disposal of the EC (and the EU more broadly) in relation to peacebuilding. Therefore, in reviewing the strategic focus of the PBP, it is helpful to understand where it fits into broader context of the EU's emerging policy approaches and operational toolbox for preventing conflict and building peace.

There is no one single definition of peacebuilding within the EC<sup>5</sup>, however the 2001 Communication on Conflict Prevention<sup>6</sup> is considered by many practitioners as providing the

<sup>5</sup> Peacebuilding is an evolving concept and subject to many different interpretations both within and beyond the EC.

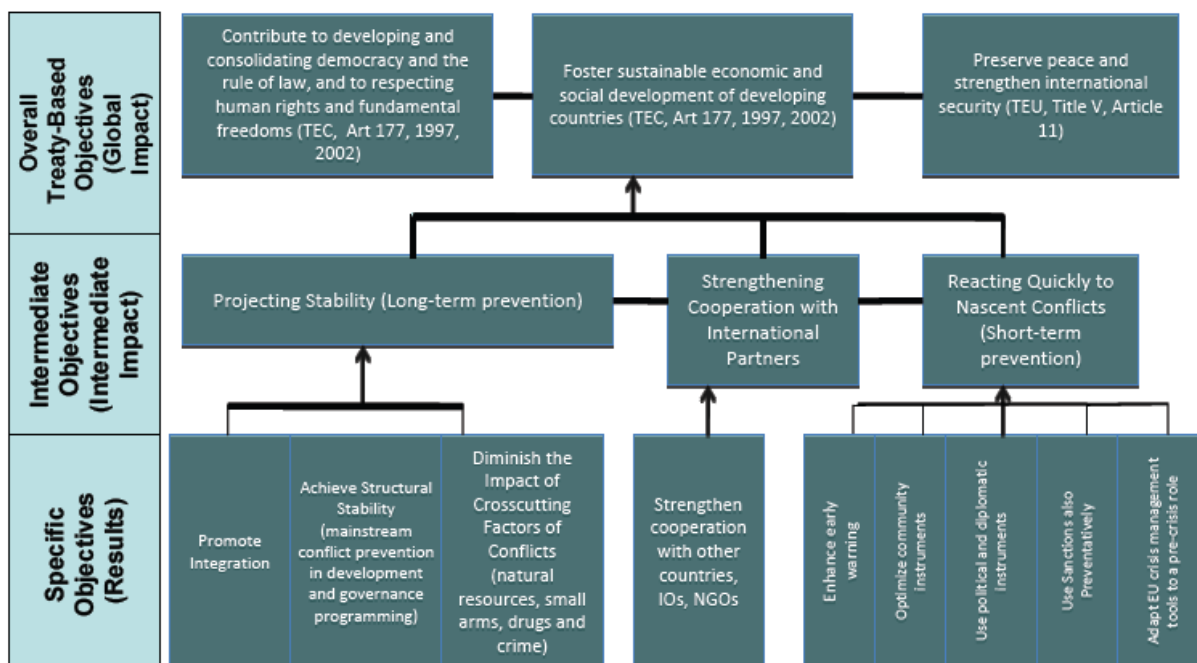
<sup>6</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention, COM (2001) 211 final

ongoing strategic framework and intervention logic for the EC's approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.<sup>7</sup> The policy identifies three main objectives:

- 1) To adapt long-term EU instruments to address the root causes of conflict;
- 2) to improve the EU's capacity to react quickly to address conflict risks or seize opportunities for prevention and;
- 3) to promote co-operation with international partners.

This approach encompasses a broad 'multi-sectoral' range of activities and can be viewed as promoting both 'long-term' approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention (under objective 1) and 'short-term' approaches peacebuilding (under objective 2) as explained below. The following diagram provides greater detail on this intervention logic.

**Fig. 1: EC intervention logic for peacebuilding and conflict prevention**



Source: Gourlay, C, EC-UN Cooperation in Peacebuilding, UNIDIR, 2009 (forthcoming)

Long-term approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention relate to promoting the notion of 'structural stability' which can be equated with addressing the root causes of conflict (involving broad institutional and societal transformation). Intervention approaches include mainstreaming conflict sensitivity into development cooperation and trade policy, and addressing specific cross cutting risk factors associated with conflict (eg. natural resource management, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW)) as well as promoting regional cooperation and greater

<sup>7</sup> For example, the 2001 Communication on Conflict Prevention provides the intervention logic underpinning the ongoing thematic evaluation of EC support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. EuropeAid, Thematic Evaluation of EC support to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding. Preliminary Scoping and Mapping. EVA 2007/main-pol+strat LOT5, 2009

attention to relevant thematic issues such as justice and security sector reform (SSR). This in turn requires greater attention to conflict in Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) and trade agreements and dedicated policy and programming approaches for addressing cross cutting risk factors and thematic issues. A wide range of instruments are relevant to this approach including development cooperation, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), political dialogue and trade agreements.

On the other hand, short-term peacebuilding relates to 'reacting quickly to nascent conflicts' and immediate measures to prevent violence from (re)- erupting and to contribute to stability in the immediate post-crisis phase. It involves building and adapting practices and capacities to enable rapid and targeted interventions, for example, through early warning, mediation, political dialogue and sanctions (i.e. many of those activities outlined in article 3 of the IfS). Short-term peacebuilding efforts have required EC funding to become more flexible and rapid (under the IfS) as well as the greater use of Council instruments (including CFSP/ ESDP). They are increasingly viewed as synonymous with the term 'crisis management'.

For some, the objective of short-term peacebuilding is 'negative peace' – the absence of armed conflict – and can be viewed as a 'minimalist' approach. Whilst the aim of long-term peacebuilding is 'positive peace' – a process of social change and structural transformation towards a socio-political and economic system capable of fostering justice and ensuring a self-sustained peace - or a 'maximalist' approach. Many believe that negative peace is required before positive peace, and that short-term peacebuilding efforts should build the foundation for longer-term peacebuilding efforts focused on positive peace.

In reality there is a strong element of overlap between short-term and longer-term peacebuilding approaches both in terms of the activities - a Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process for example will have both short-term (crisis response) and longer-term peacebuilding objectives - and the timing of interventions.

In the EU context the *longer-term* approach to peacebuilding and conflict prevention has faced a number of internal and external challenges since 2001. According to Gourlay, mustering political will for an agenda that is intangible and therefore may have less political revenue is intrinsically challenging and the post 9/11 security environment has ensured that the EU political attention is focused primarily on developing capacity for short-term crisis management response and counter-terrorism. In reflecting on the implementation of the conflict prevention agenda in 2006, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner concede that "the long term approach.. is frequently knocked off course by the imperatives of short-term crisis management".<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, explicit conflict prevention objectives were excluded from EC external instruments (other than the IfS) in 2006 subsequent to positions taken by EU member states who saw their inclusion as overstepping the Commission's area of competence.<sup>9</sup> Fundamentally,

*"while the conflict prevention agenda drew attention to a number of thematic policy areas that are situated within the development-security nexus and has promoted funding flexibility through two new, but limited, budget lines dedicated to short-term crisis response, it failed to*

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<sup>8</sup> Ferrero-Waldner, Benita (2006). 'Conflict Prevention – looking to the future' Speech/06/513, Conflict Prevention Partnership Dialogue on 'Five Years after Göteborg', Brussels, 12 September 2006 cit. Gourlay, , C, EC-UN Cooperation in Peacebuilding, UNIDIR, 2009 p. 31 (forthcoming)

<sup>9</sup> Gourlay, C, EC-UN Cooperation in Peacebuilding, UNIDIR, 2009 p. 29 (forthcoming)

*provide a policy framework to rally political will and leadership among the EU member states, or to mainstream conflict prevention in EC development assistance.”<sup>10</sup>*

Depending on how the focus of the PBP under Article 4.3 is interpreted and support targeted – i.e. whether it is directed solely on building capacities for crisis response or, alternatively, is also aimed at supporting capacity for longer-term preventative actions and mainstreaming – it is evident that it could be perceived as either reinforcing this shift or, potentially, as a catalytic instrument that not only supports short-term peacebuilding efforts but also supports a longer-term perspective. Any review of the strategic focus of the PBP needs to be understood within this context.

From a reading of the 2007-2011 Strategic Plan for IfS it seems apparent that the intention of the PBP is indeed to build capacities for both long-term and short-term approaches to peacebuilding, although it is not entirely clear where the balance lies and there is some incoherence in terms of the approach (discussed further in section 2.2.3 below).

## **2. PBP support to Non State Actors**

### **2.1 Background and overview activities to date**

#### *2.1.1 A short history of EC/ NSA interaction on peacebuilding and conflict prevention*

Dialogue and engagement between the EC and NSAs on issues of peacebuilding and conflict prevention is not a recent phenomenon and has taken place within a number of settings and in relation to a spectrum of thematic issues and geographic areas since the late 1990's.

In 1997 the first **Conflict Prevention Network (CPN)** of European institutes and non-governmental organisations was launched on the initiative of the then Director General of DG1A (now RELEX). Financially supported by the EC and hosted by the German political foundation, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), the network was designed to develop a pool of expertise and a framework for analysis-based policy advice in the field of conflict prevention. The network produced a series of influential, publically available yearbooks and papers examining different aspects of (predominantly) EU policy and practice in relation to conflict prevention, whilst at the same time providing bespoke consultancies to the Commission (both to RELEX and DG Development) including conflict analysis tools for desk officers and a draft practical handbook.

Recognising the value of the CPN in promoting the conflict prevention agenda within the EU and providing NSAs with an entry point for providing targeted advice and analysis, members of the NGO network the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)<sup>11</sup>, with support from Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), pushed for a follow up to the CPN when the project finished in 2001/2. In 2005, following lengthy delays, what was regarded by many as the ‘follow up’ was established (via a tender process) in the form of the one year ‘pilot project’ – **the Conflict Prevention Partnership (CPP)**; a cooperative effort by the International Crisis Group (ICG), International Alert (IA), the European Policy Centre (EPC) and the European Peacebuilding

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> EPLO was founded in 2000 by a group of NGOs focusing on peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Its founding members included ISIS, Saferworld, Search for Common Ground, International Alert and the Quaker Council for European Affairs.

Liaison Office (EPLO) to help improve the European Union's conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding capacities. Another follow up project entitled the **Initiative for Peacebuilding (IfP)**, with similar aims but an expanded and altered constellation of actors, was established in 2007 in the context of preparatory action and will run until 2010. Although funded under the EIDHR the IfP is now considered by the Commission as a key component of the PBP and is discussed further in section 2.2.5 below.

Advocacy and engagement with the Commission by NSAs on both thematic and geographic issues has also been undertaken by EPLO and its various members through, for example, the publication and presentation of the joint International Alert/ Saferworld Presidency Papers which outlined priority issues and key recommendations for the Council and Commission, usually covering the period of two EU Presidencies. At the same time **at a Delegation level** organisations such as Saferworld initiated capacity building support and networking with NSAs in order to facilitate their engagement with the EU on policies and programming, including the preparation of Country Strategy Papers.

### *2.1.2 Activities to date in the PBP*

Since the PBP was established two calls for proposals for NSAs have been launched (in the first half of 2008) covering the 2007 and 2008 AAPs and the majority of contracts for beneficiaries have been signed. This section provides an overview of the focus of the CfP in order to highlight clearly the areas of intended support as background for an analysis of the results of the call.

1) CfP - support to the capacity building of civil society organisations.

Specific objectives:

- To strengthen the institutional and operational capacity of civil society actors, regional and sub-regional organisations and networks, specialised in the areas covered by Article 3 of the IfS, with a preliminary focus on civil society actors specialised in mediation, the delivery of assistance in fragile states, and in post-crisis early recovery.
- To strengthen the contribution of non-state actors to the prevention of crisis through early warning systems and the providing of field-based political analysis.
- To strengthen the EU institutions' ability to anticipate and respond to situations of crisis through developing a partnership with, and between, specialised civil society actors at policy and operational level.

Specific priorities:

- Measures to strengthen the operational capacity of civil society organizations, regional and sub-regional organisations and networks, specialised in areas covered by Article 3 in the Instrument for Stability. In a preliminary phase, particular focus will be given to those organisations addressing state fragility, conflict, emerging inter-community tensions, early recovery from crisis, development of capacity for informal ('track II and III') mediation, and conflict-sensitive development.
- Conflict early-warning systems and field-based political analysis on conflict prevention.

The total financial envelope for the call was €8,500,000 for grants from €50,000 to €1,500,000.

**Table 2: Specific Lots for support in the 2008 NSA call for proposals**

Lot	Envisaged areas of support
1. Improving cooperation between relevant civil society organisations themselves	<p>Support to networks</p> <p>Capacity for engagement in EU policy debates; strategic and operational planning; best practice and operational structure</p> <p>Strengthening North-South and South-South links for early-warning, analysis and advocacy (particularly at international level)</p> <p>Support to partnerships for a broad spectrum of activities (assessment, best practice, rosters etc.)</p>
2. Enhancing relations between CSOs and relevant international, and regional and sub-regional organisations and networks	<p>Capacity to engage in advocacy and policy advice to EU (and other international actors)</p> <p>Support preparation of policy papers and international advocacy</p> <p>Promotion of policy relevant field based research and analysis</p>
3. Strengthening the knowledge base and know-how of relevant civil society organisations in specific areas to develop their operational capacity	<p>Measures to strengthen operation capacity of civil society organisations specialised in areas covered by Article 3 of the IfS with focus areas covered under the specific priority. Including, via codification of best practice; elaboration of needs assessment methodologies and evaluation capacity; organisation of training for enhanced operational capacity; development of stand-by arrangements for crisis response.</p> <p>Could be carried out by networks.</p>
4. Enhancing conflict early warning-systems and field based political analysis on conflict prevention	<p>Support to a civil society CP network (including with strong links with South)</p> <p>Analysis (in relation to geographic and thematic issues), policy recommendations, input into decision making processes in external relations field (international advocacy)</p>

2) CfP - organisation of Round Tables

The specific objectives of this call were to:

- Strengthen the dialogue with the civil society sector, by funding Round Tables, which would allow civil society actors to proactively take the initiative in providing policy advice to the EU institutions on issues relevant to the implementation of the EU's crisis response, the aim being to harness the policy expertise available within the civil society sector, beyond the utilisation of civil society actors as implementers of EU policy;
- Strengthen the EU institutions' ability to anticipate and respond to situations of crisis through developing a partnership with, and between, specialised civil society actors at policy level.

A financial envelope of €525,000 was made available for grants up to €40,000 aimed at facilitating relevant civil society organisations' ability to propose the provision of policy advice to the EU institutions on issues relating to conflict prevention, crisis management and peace-building.

In addition to the calls for proposals, RELEX A/2 has initiated a dialogue process with civil society organisations through a series of consultations meetings (in February, June and October 2008, and March 2009) and the use of the PBP web portal as a channel of communication with the civil society sector.

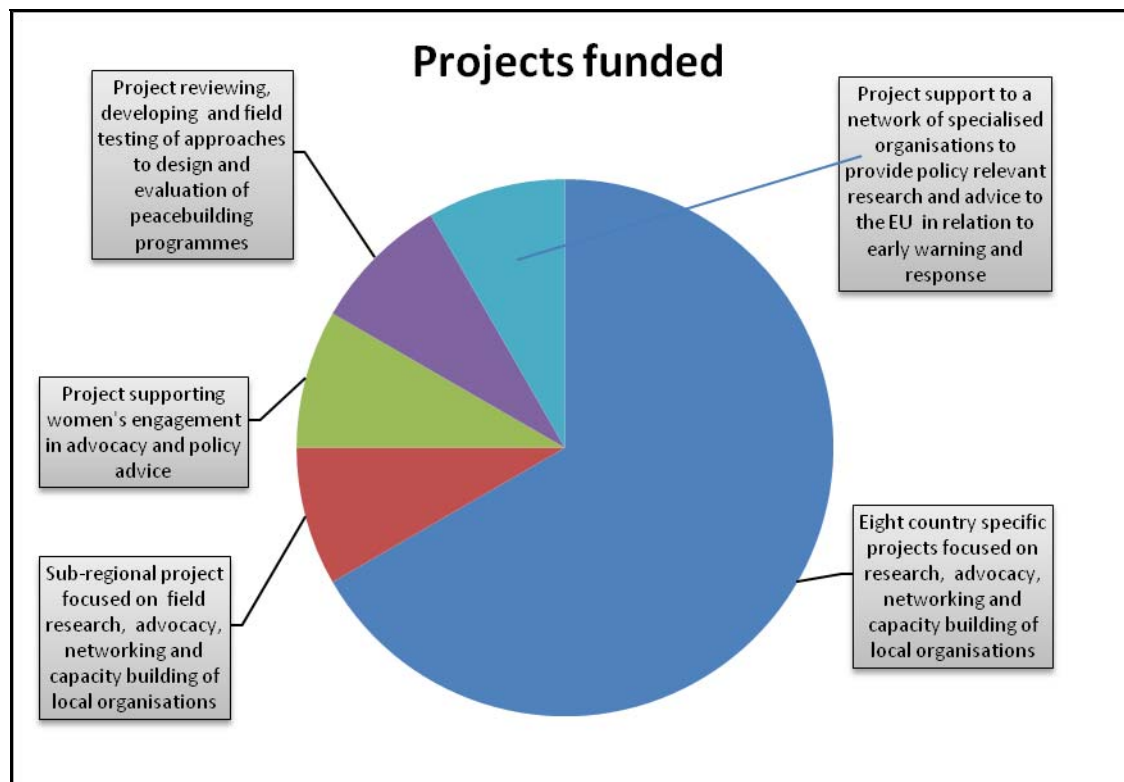
## **2.2 Results of the partnership to date**

This section examines the results of the partnership to date and considers the lessons and implications for the future. It focuses on the outcome of the 2008 restricted call for proposals for support to the capacity building of civil society organisations, the dialogue elements of the partnership and the IfP, as well as wider issues raised during the stakeholder consultations.

### *2.2.1 The results of the call for proposal*

After the submission of a large volume of proposals (126), twelve were selected for funding. The majority of grant recipients are located in the EU Member States and are receiving between €485,000 and €750,000 for activities with partners in the European neighbourhood, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. A breakdown of these projects by activity type is provided in figure 1 below.

**Fig 2: Breakdown of projects funded by the PBP NSA CfP**



All of the projects have yet to be fully implemented and given that only the project summaries have been reviewed it is impossible to draw any *well informed* conclusions on their likely impact and contribution to the strategic objectives of the NSA elements of the PBP. However, a number of observations can be made.

The projects funded are broadly consistent with the strategic objectives and priority areas of the PBP (outlined in section 1.2.1) and there are a couple of projects that may prove particularly valuable due to their efforts to ‘move the field forward’ and benefit the peacebuilding sector as a whole. These include a project exclusively focused on reviewing, developing and field testing (with local partners) approaches to improving the design and measuring impact of peacebuilding activities; as well as a project supporting a network of specialised organisations to provide locally derived policy relevant research and advice on early warning and response to assist EU, member states and other key organisations.

Yet, at the same time there are a number of areas of perceived weakness.

The majority of actions are country specific with activities predominantly aimed at building the peacebuilding capacities of *locally* based civil society. Of course, a focus on local actors is not an unworthy objective in itself and a number of the projects, particularly those focusing on field based analysis, also integrate an element of international advocacy (including towards the EU). However, as they are conceived their **potential to contribute to the overall objective of building *international and regional* capacity, to enhance operational practice, and to be of**

**value to the peacebuilding sector as a whole is questionable.** Most of the intended policy advocacy is country specific (as opposed to enhancing understanding of thematic or transversal issues). Few projects aim to test new approaches, codify and disseminate best practice or explicitly link with the relevant initiatives of regional organisations (eg. regional conflict early warning systems etc.); and many are based on formulaic and traditional capacity building approaches (i.e. training workshops) rather than more innovative approaches. Concerns were also raised during consultations with Commission officials<sup>12</sup> regarding the **diffuse and piecemeal nature of projects**, the absence of critical mass and concomitant potential for a demonstrable impact.

Of these locally focused projects **it is also unclear to what extent they are consistent and complementary to other country-based EC funded activities and strategic approaches**, including EC country strategy papers and programmes under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), European Development Fund (EDF) and EIDHR. Interviews with EC Delegation based Commission Officials managing the contracts of two of the eight country focused projects (in Sri Lanka and Kosovo) noted that the projects fitted well with the EC's overall approach to the issues in country. However, in the case of Sri Lanka the project was very similar to activities already being programmed and funded by the Delegation under the EIDHR, and did not present an opportunity to "add another dimension"<sup>13</sup> or complementary activity. While in Kosovo, the project was viewed as broadly complementary to other activities but probably surplus to requirement since, in Kosovo, there is "an abundance of money"<sup>14</sup> for civil society capacity building in all areas (although, interestingly, the official noted that in Croatia civil society capacity building projects of this kind would have been welcomed). Since the call was global with limited possibilities for exchange of views with EC Delegations in the evaluation process, any coherence and complementarity of projects with other activities is likely to have been more by accident than by design. This suggests in future activities that are predominantly locally focused should be supported from the level of the Delegation rather than under a global call (as discussed in section 2.3.1 below).

Similarly, there has been **overlap between some of the activities eligible for support under the PBP and those eligible under the 2008 global call of EIDHR** – aimed at "strengthening the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reform, in supporting the peaceful conciliation of group interests and in consolidating political participation and representation".<sup>15</sup> One could therefore assume that some of the support available under the PBP call for proposals did not necessarily fill a gap in terms of available EC funding.<sup>16</sup> This overlap between EIDHR and PBP support was probably inevitable and to a certain extent unavoidable, particularly given the lack of human resource available under the PBP to ensure better coordination between the instruments through consultation between the relevant services and directorates within the Commission. However, more could be done in future to ensure better coherence and complementarity.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the grant beneficiaries were predominantly large well resourced development or humanitarian NGOs with some specialism in peacebuilding, conflict sensitive

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<sup>12</sup> Meeting with Commission Official, RELEX A/2, Brussels, June 2009

<sup>13</sup> Telephone interview with Commission Official in EC Delegation, Sri Lanka, June 2009

<sup>14</sup> Telephone interview with Commission Official in EC Delegation Kosovo, June 2009

<sup>15</sup> EIDHR Guidelines for Applicants, Budget line 19.04.01 Reference: EuropeAid/127237/C/ACT/Multi

<sup>16</sup> Although a Commission Official working on EIDHR did note that more finance for this type of activity is always welcome – whatever its source.

development or democracy and human rights. A number of **the smaller, more focused peacebuilding organisations who viewed the call as an opportunity for EC support their activities and capacity, were “surprised and disappointed” not to be beneficiaries of the funding.** Although most of these organisations are aware of the challenges and limitations inherent in the CfP process, including the focus of the proposal evaluation process on ‘activities’ as opposed to organisations and the inevitable bias towards those actors with a solid resource base (as discussed below), the outcome undoubtedly placed a certain amount of strain on their relations with the EC.

The disappointment on the part of peacebuilding NGOs can to some extent be explained by the challenges these organisations face in relation to funding. Peacebuilding NGOs tend not to have access to large swathes of development funding nor do they generally have a large enough membership or individual supporter based for a meaningful voluntary income. Many hoped the PBP would help to fill a funding gap in relation to the EC, particularly for activities implemented over a longer-term time horizon.<sup>17</sup> As one (non NGO) commentator noted “it is hard for organisations to engage in a meaningful ‘partnership’ with the EC when they are constantly struggling for survival”<sup>18</sup>

### *2.2.2 Factors contributing to the results of the CfP*

From discussions with stakeholders and an analysis of the guidelines for applicants, grant application form, the evaluation grid and relevant research, it appears that a combination of factors contributed to these areas of perceived weakness:

As a funding tool, **the EC calls for proposals mechanism is a rather blunt and rigid instrument.** It is not, for example, conducive to allowing strong policy steer through focused and strategic targeting of resources nor to supporting smaller, less well resourced organisations for their own capacity building needs. Research undertaken for the EC on capacity building support programmes for NSAs under the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF shows that:<sup>19</sup>

First, in the absence of a clear strategy, “the calls for proposals approach results in the dissipation of isolated, poorly coordinated initiatives and/ or an excessive concentration on certain themes (notably training) to the detriment of other lesser known tools”.<sup>20</sup>

Second, a CfP tends to “prioritise organisations which are solidly established and/ or have strong experience in the drafting of proposals...to the detriment of organisations deprived of such support and experience, despite the relevance of the organisations and projects presented”.<sup>21</sup>

Third, a CfP focuses on activity-based interventions through partnerships and tends to favour projects where the grant beneficiary is involved in building the capacity of ‘others’ rather than capacity building for the beneficiary organisation itself.

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<sup>17</sup> Peacebuilding and prevention of violent conflict is not a priority of any the new instruments for external cooperation established for the period 2007-2013, except the Instrument for Stability which, which has channelled at least 20% of crisis response funds (under article 3) through civil society actors. Such crisis response operations only allow funding for a maximum of 18 months.

<sup>18</sup> Interview ECDPM, Brussels, June, 2009

<sup>19</sup> Floridi, M and Sanz-Corella,B (2009) Capitalisation Study on Capacity Building Support Programmes for Non State Actors under the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF, Working Document for the Resitution Seminar of 1-3 April 2009, IBF, March

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p 61

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p 61

Other research also suggests that the CfP system “is not adapted to support the sustainability of actions”.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, in terms of the CfP evaluation process, there are questions as to how well **calibrated the CfP application form and evaluation grid are to the specific needs of identifying interventions of a high quality from a peacebuilding perspective** (although the extent to which this affected the outcome is difficult to ascertain). Under the financial regulation, the CfP is required to use the EuropeAid application form and evaluation grid. There were efforts by RELEX A/2 to adapt the application form for the PBP CfP within the bounds of what is permitted, however more could probably be done in future to incorporate features important to peacebuilding projects. This would require more emphasis in relation to the justification and explanation of project’s ‘theory of change’ in relation to the intended impact on wider peacebuilding goals; as well as requests for evidence of baseline analysis in the form of conflict assessment necessary to ensure conflict sensitivity.<sup>23</sup> Likewise for the evaluation grid.

At the same time **it is challenging to source CfP evaluators with solid experience in evaluating peacebuilding proposals**. Commission services are constrained to accepting the best offers from three companies via a framework contract and officials note that there is a very limited pool of experts with experience in both the evaluation of EC proposals *and* thematic peacebuilding expertise.

These findings raise an important question as to whether the project based CfP is the most appropriate approach for supporting the peacebuilding capacity building of NSAs. However, as highlighted in section 4.2, the alternatives for the EC are extremely limited, can be challenging to implement, and also come with their own disadvantages and therefore the CfP will have to remain the main tool for funding NSAs.

According to the recent evaluation of EC aid delivery through CSOs “the usefulness of CfP highly depends on how it has been conceived: the objectives that should be reached (ie. results); the sectors/ selection criteria that have been identified; the minima and maxima budgets for requests”.<sup>24</sup> Against this background, there is recognition within RELEX A/2 that **the CfP guidelines were too broadly conceived**. While these guidelines were deliberately non prescriptive in order to map the scope of potential proposals, their wide-range was perhaps also a reflection of the lack of prior experience in the management of CfP and limited staff resources available within the RELEX A/2. The PBP guidelines were insufficiently targeted in terms of the level (geographic vs. regional/ global) and scope of activities, and set the floor and ceiling for the grants were very wide (€50,000 to €750,000).<sup>25</sup> This opened the door to a large volume and wide range of proposals in terms of the levels of funding requested and variety of projects and placed a heavy administrative burden on the already stretched staff within RELEX A/2. For some

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<sup>22</sup> Evaluation of EC aid delivery through Civil society organisations, Final Report; December 2008, PARTICIP GmbH p.42

<sup>23</sup> Theories of change describe the assumed or hoped causal relationship between the activity (or policy) and its (intended) effects on larger peacemaking goals and are particularly important for explaining the relationship between the specific and overall objective of a project. Too often theories of change in peacebuilding programmes are implicit, unexamined and untested (see OECD DAC, 2008). A conflict analysis is central to programme design (including identification of indicators), informing the theory of change and ensuring the conflict sensitivity of the project (ie. that it aims to maximise its positive contribution to peacebuilding and do no harm).

<sup>24</sup> Evaluation of EC aid delivery through Civil society organisations, Final Report; December 2008, PARTICIP GmbH p.42

<sup>25</sup> The €50,000 floor was set at the request of civil society actors who had concerns regarding the potential absorption capacity of smaller organisations.

applicants the guidelines appeared 'confused' with insufficient distinction between Lots 1-3 and a lack of clarity as to whether there was a breakdown by Lot in financial terms (which there wasn't). Indeed, given this confusion and the additional workload the Lots created it is difficult to see what value they actually added.

At the same time **many of the proposals lacked quality and some contained administrative errors**. This was due in part to the lack of familiarity of some NSAs with EC proposal writing. However, in the case of a number of peacebuilding organisations, it was also the result of a certain level of complacency that the funds were in some way loosely 'earmarked' for them and expectations that the CfP would support core funding. This belief probably stemmed from a genuine misunderstanding on the part of the Commission and by NGOs regarding the limits of what can be funded through a CfP. The 2007-2008 indicative programme does state under project area 1- Peace-building Partnership - that "Operating grants may be awarded in some cases" and that "the Commission will seek to strengthen the capacity of its partner organisations (non-state actors, regional and sub-regional organisations and networks) through providing grant funding (including limited core funding)"<sup>26</sup>. The issue was discussed in the PbP consultation meeting of February 2008, where the Commission clarified that funding would have to be via 'action grants' rather than operating grants, however confusion appears to have persisted.

### 2.2.3 *Wider issues around the focus of the PBP revealed by stakeholder consultations*

There are also wider issues surrounding the PBP revealed during the research process and discussions with stakeholders. There is evidently a **lack of clarity and common understanding around the strategic focus and concepts underpinning the PBP**, both on the side of the Commission and key NGO stakeholders. On the part of NGOs and the Parliament, this stems from different understanding and perspectives regarding the genesis of the NSA elements of the PBP and what it is expected to deliver, and to the organisations' differing interpretations of peacebuilding as a concept (often in line with their own mandates). From consultations it appears there are broadly three camps:

1) Those who regard the PBP as having its roots in the calls for a Civil Peace Service or European Civil Peace Corps to build (European) civilian capacities for crisis response aimed reacting quickly to nascent conflicts and addressing the 'immediate' causes<sup>27</sup> (for example dialogue and reconciliation work). These organisations tend to advocate that capacity building support under article 4.3 should create the conditions for more effective implementation of direct crisis response activities under Article 3 (for example through training of civilians). They also argue that Article 3 should involve greater engagement of civil society actors, for example for small, targeted and timely interventions at the 'grass roots level' in response to violent escalations (for example through a separate Facility).

2) Those who consider the PBP as a natural evolution of the original Conflict Prevention Network idea and therefore should focus not only on building capacities for short-term crisis response, but should build capacities for *longer-term peacebuilding* through providing a catalytic tool for the mainstreaming the issues across the various Commission instruments (and beyond) through

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<sup>26</sup> The IfS – Multi-annual Indicative Programme 2007-2008

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted however, that organisations subscribing to this view do not view these actions as necessarily short term as such.

initiatives similar to the IfP and by building up a repository of best-practices, operational approaches and evidence base of what works and what doesn't.

3) Those who see the PBP as the outcome of earlier calls for a Peacebuilding Agency (as a counterpart to the European Defence Agency) to address issues of cross-pillar coherence in peacebuilding. In this sense they believe that what was initially conceived of as a structural approach to cross-pillar working became a budget line and the PBP as therefore a rather poor compromise between what was hoped might be achieved via constitutional debates on the future of Europe and what has been achieved in the framework of the current financial perspective.

A lack of clarity in terms of the strategic aims of the PBP is also evident in the **Commission documentation** relating to the PBP (the Indicative Programmes, Annual Action Plans etc.). These reveal a certain level of inconsistency and lack of coherence in relation to the approach outlined previously, relating to capacity-building for both short-term and long-term peace-building. Particularly obvious but unproblematic is the discrepancy between the rather narrow set of priorities and activities as set out in Article 4.3<sup>28</sup> and the broader objectives, activities and priorities set out in the IfS Strategy and Indicative Programmes – presumably attributable to the interpretation by the Commission of the activities described under Art. 4.3 as indicative rather than prescriptive.

More problematic however is the inconsistency *within* the IfS Strategy Papers with regards to the scope and focus of support. The overarching priority in relation to NSAs - priority 3 (PBP) of the IfS Strategy - is entitled "Building capacity for effective *crisis response*" and is clearly aimed at the immediate pre-crisis and post-crisis phases and suggests support for *short-term peacebuilding* activities (see section 1.2.2 above for a description of short-term peacebuilding). However underneath this priority, the overall objective and specific objectives (outlined in table 1 above) suggest broader range of activities to include 'conflict prevention', equated by the EC to a *longer-term approach* to peacebuilding and include priority areas for support such as the "identification and sharing of best operational practice in the use of development assistance to address the root causes of conflict" and policy-orientated research aimed "at ... the identification of root causes".<sup>29</sup> This lack of clarity in key documentation will not help in terms of producing a well targeted and coherent CfP.

#### 2.2.4 Results of the dialogue

The endeavours by the European Commission to engage NSAs in dialogue has proved less challenging than the CfP process and have been viewed by stakeholders as both relevant and useful. Although, to date, dialogue has had an inward focus around the management and strategic direction of the PBP itself, it is beginning to evolve to encompass dialogue in relation to specific geographic locations. Examples include a recent round-table on Bosnia and a forthcoming discussion in relation to Nagorno Karabakh.

Efforts have been made during consultations with NSAs to define a more systematic and strategic approach to the dialogue (notably during the meeting of June 2008) and stakeholders on all sides agree that more needs to be done in this direction, including bringing in lessons

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<sup>28</sup> promoting early warning, confidence building measures, mediation and reconciliation, addressing emerging inter-community tensions, and improving post-conflict and post-disaster recovery.

<sup>29</sup> European Commission, The Instrument for Stability Strategy Paper, 2007-2001 p. 17

around successful civil society dialogue from elsewhere in the Commission (explored further in section 2.3.2 below).

Staffing constraints within RELEX A/2 in relation to the PBP, alongside the time spent by staff in managing the CfP, do however limit the human resources and energy that can be dedicated to managing the dialogue and to ensuring that it is sustained and has a meaningful impact. Given this situation it may be necessary to outsource the strategic management of the dialogue to another party working in close collaboration with the Commission (again explored further in section 2.3.2 below).

Some actors have expressed a concern that the PBP may limit the nodes of engagement between the Commission and NSAs on peacebuilding issues, particularly given the often fruitful interactions between NGOs and Commission officials working across the Commission on both thematic and geographic issues (including in DG Dev). It is therefore important that the PBP is not seen as the exclusive avenue for dialogue.<sup>30</sup>

### *2.2.5 Lessons emerging from the Initiative for Peacebuilding*

The IfP, established in September 2007, is viewed as an important component of the PBP and takes the form of a consortium of civil society organisations. It aims to increase, develop and pull together international knowledge and expertise in the field of conflict prevention in order to ensure that all actors, including the EU institutions, can access strong and independent analysis to better facilitate informed and more evidence-based policy decisions across six priority areas.<sup>31</sup>

It contributes to building and strengthening understanding, collaboration, networks and capacity building amongst both consortium NSA partners and local partners as well as facilitating dialogue between partner NSA's and the European Commission (including delegations), Member States and local governments in conflict-affected countries. Consultations with Commission Officials (in both DG Development and DG RELEX) suggest that they have found the products of the IfP relevant to their work and see it as useful in helping different actors interact on the issues.

A number of lessons emerging from the IfP have been identified that could be helpful in terms of support for future projects and initiatives of this kind and for the dialogue within the PBP more generally:<sup>32</sup>

- Dialogue within the EC should be initiated at the very early stages of this type of project. Indeed as proved the case in the IfP mediation cluster and even more so in the IfP gender cluster, this early and regular dialogue between NSAs and the EC ensures engagement from EC staff, feasible, well targeted and useful recommendations from the NSAs and generally effective collaboration.
- Expectations on all sides should be managed, particularly so that EC officials do not view the PBP as simply service contracts, but as grants with specific objectives and commitments.
- There is a need for more understanding by the EC regarding the huge challenges and costs for the lead organisation of a large consortium based project.

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<sup>30</sup> Interview Saferworld, Brussels, Brussels, June 2009

<sup>31</sup> Priority areas under the IfS are: environment, natural resources, energy and conflict, security and conflict, external support for dialogue and mediation for conflict prevention and resolution; democratisation, human rights, justice and reconciliation; trade and economic development; and gender in conflict prevention/ peacebuilding.

<sup>32</sup> Written submission to the study from International Alert, July 2009

- It is important to involve a wide network of interlocutors beyond the EC (ie. Council, Parliament, UN, World Bank etc.)
- The EC should work to ensure that EC Delegations are aware of the project and PBP more generally. In some cases a lack of engagement from delegation staff has been problematic.

The IfP project is due to end in 2010. A recently funded consortium project led by International Alert on early warning is quite distinct (but complementary) and therefore there is room to support activities of a similar nature to the IfP in the future.

#### *2.2.6 Lessons and implications from the current implementation of the PBP and the first results*

This analysis of the current implementation of the NSA elements of the PBP reveal some important lessons and implications that need to be considered in relation to the future strategic direction of the partnership as well as the operational modalities for implementation. These will not however come as a great surprise to both the Commission and key stakeholders:

Given the lack of human resources available for the management of the PBP, RELEX A/2 urgently needs to **identify a mechanism that will lighten the administrative load** in relation to channelling financial support to NSAs. This will enhance the ability of officials to act as a key driver in the partnership and to focus more on the substantive and strategic issues (including dialogue in relation to these); as well as engaging with officials across the Commission, Council and Member States to ensure maximum reach of the benefits and to enhance synergies.

Within the constraints imposed by the CfP mechanism, funding available via the PBP needs to be better targeted in order to ensure support that reflects the core objectives of the PBP and adds value to existing activities (both within and beyond the PBP and Commission) through the enhancement of synergies and a catalytic effect. In this respect the Commission needs to **better prioritise and define the areas of support** and reflect these in the approach taken next funding round and in better targeted and focused CfP guidelines. In particular the objectives, concepts, level and types of activities supported in relation to the PBP need to be clarified, particularly in relation to the conceptual understanding of peacebuilding and the focus of capacity-building support (for who? and for what? and at what level?)

The **rationale for the operational modalities (eg. CfP) – and to a lesser extent strategic focus – of the PBP should be more clearly communicated to key partners** in order to assuage any misunderstanding and confusion that has developed with respect to the nature of support available.

These issues are addressed in the following section.

### **2.3 The future strategic direction of support to NSAs via the PBP**

#### *2.3.1 Defining peacebuilding, the scope of issues and activities and level of support*

The majority of stakeholders consulted have stated a preference for the PBP to adopt a definition (or understanding) of peacebuilding that is as wide as possible, in order to allow for inclusion of support in relation to both to short-term crisis management and to longer-term peacebuilding and conflict prevention. They do not however propose opening up a never ending debate on the issue. A broad definition of this kind is in line with the IfS Strategy Paper and Indicative

Programmes as well as the AAP for 2009 that consider the PBP as an instrument for enhancing capacity for both crisis management and longer-term preventative approaches highlighting a particular need to focus on the latter.<sup>33</sup>

As noted above, a working EU or EC **definition of peacebuilding** does not currently exist. The ongoing evaluation of EC support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding<sup>34</sup> has adopted the broad definition used by the OECD DAC and it is proposed that, for the sake of consistency, the PBP also adopt this definition where necessary.

**Box 1: A definition of Peacebuilding**

**Peacebuilding:** “Actions and policies “aimed at preventing the outbreak, the recurrence or continuation of armed conflict”, encompassing, “a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programmes and mechanisms”, including “short and long term measures tailored to addressing the particular needs of societies sliding into conflict or emerging from it. Includes long-term support to, and establishment of, viable political and socio-economic and cultural institutions capable of addressing the proximate and root causes of conflicts, as well as other initiatives aimed at creating the necessary conditions for sustained peace and stability.”

*Source: OECD-DAC, Guidance on evaluating conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, Working draft for application period, 2008*

In terms of the scope of issues covered by the NSA elements of the PBP these would therefore include support for capacities in relation to both short-term crisis management interventions as well as in relation to longer-term conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

A table of activities related to this definition of peacebuilding is contained at Annex 3 and highlights the interrelated areas of intervention that are required to promote sustainable peace. The following box proposes a number of thematic and transversal issue areas related to both crisis management and the longer-term preventative approach to peacebuilding.

<sup>33</sup> The 2009 AAP envisages an “increased focus on long-term conflict prevention and peacebuilding issues – rather than on pure crisis management”.

<sup>34</sup> EuropeAid, Thematic Evaluation of EC support to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding. Preliminary Scoping and Mapping. EVA 2007/main-pol+strat LOT5, 2009

## **Box 2: Thematic and transversal issue areas and approaches**

### *Longer-term approaches to peacebuilding*

Longer-term approaches promote the notion of 'structural stability' and are equated with addressing the root causes of conflict (involving broad institutional and societal transformation). They are relevant at all stages of conflict and require a long-term perspective.

Specific issues and actions supported by the PBP could include:

Actions aimed at increasing capacities for addressing cross-cutting risk factors, root causes of conflict and a focus on certain thematic issues, particularly via the actions of other instruments via a mainstreaming approach (eg. DCI, EDF, EIDHR and Member states policies and programmes). The IfS is an example of this type of action.

Longer-term approaches also include supporting the promotion of conflict-sensitive development (for example efforts to enhance and draw lessons from practice) to enhance the contribution of development cooperation to address the causes of conflict; and effort to promote the inclusion of peacebuilding approaches within strategic frameworks (e.g. country strategy papers etc.).

Relevant thematic issues include: Justice and security sector reform, community policing, addressing SALW, armed violence reduction, media and conflict, management of natural resources, gender and conflict, climate change, youth, organised crime, human rights and peacebuilding etc.

### *Short-term crisis management activities*

These involve short-term measures to prevent violence from re-erupting and contribute to stability in the immediate post-crisis phase.

Specific upstream capacities supported by the PBP could include:

Capacities for early warning, assessment and planning; SSR and DDR, support to political processes (including elections); mediation, dialogue and reconciliation work (track-two diplomacy); confidence building measures; protection and monitoring; transitional justice; development of conflict management capacity; return and reintegration of refugees; provision of basic services; restoration of core government functions and public administration, economic

Some see little merit in restricting or even listing the priority issues for the PBP since this may risk excluding certain types of intervention or actor, may never be exhaustive, and because peacebuilding requires a "multi-dimensional approach involving a range of activities and actors".<sup>35</sup>

However, in order to avoid the pitfalls associated with the previous CfP in terms of it being too broad and insufficiently targeted, it makes sense in practical terms to narrow down the potential thematic areas, type of activities envisaged and level of support (thematic vs. country specific) within future CfPs.

In terms of future areas of focus a preference could be given to thematic or transversal areas of focus that demonstrate a **clear complementarity and synergy with other EC supported activities and policy priorities** (for example in relation to support to International and regional organisations, other areas of support under Article 3 and Article 4 of the IfS and policy priorities such as engagement in fragile states and development and security). Due attention could also be

<sup>35</sup> Discussion with International Alert, Brussels, June 2009

given to the priorities of other relevant actors including EU Member States and the United Nations.

It might also be useful to consider areas where NSAs have a particular added value in terms of peacebuilding. Although it should be noted that without the EC acquiring a solid evidence base in this regard this would not represent robust enough criteria for focusing support. Providing such an evidence base is out with the scope of this study, however the findings of recent research on the issue by Thania Paffenholz and others on the issue may be instructive.<sup>36</sup>

In terms of the type of capacity building activity, a recurring theme throughout the study has been whether the PBP should be supporting activities designed to build the capacities of actors on the ground to engage more effectively in peacebuilding (e.g. through training, enhancing their operational capacity etc.); or supporting activities that aim to build the capacity of the Commission (and other international and regional actors) to respond effectively and address the causes of conflict through policies and programmes (e.g. through funding policy relevant and field based analysis, early warning and identification of best practice) thus 'moving the field forward'.

The answer is that *these are not incompatible objectives*, so long as support to activities on the ground is designed in such a way that it generates lessons, analytical capacity (where appropriate), identifies best operational practice, enables the development of new approaches, an evidence base of what works and what doesn't, and is of benefit to the peacebuilding sector as a whole. A singular focus on local-level training-type activities by organisations that are not necessarily at the vanguard of the field are unlikely to achieve these results. On the other hand, **support to organisations (or groups of organisations) working with local partners and networks across a range of geographical contexts in relation to thematic or transversal issues**, who not only support the capacity of their partners but also generate learning from practice, will.

In this sense, supporting capacities does not necessarily meaning only supporting capacity building 'activities' (e.g. training etc.). **It can also mean supporting organisations (and their field-based partners) to develop and deepen their existing areas of work and institutional capacities**, pilot new projects, and extract learning (through reflection and research) that can be fed back to the Commission (and beyond). Both directly, with interested Commission Units and EC Delegations, as well as through dialogue related to the PBP. Capacity therefore is built by doing, supporting, mentoring and sharing learning from practice.

Most organisations have stated a preference for 'core funding' for these types of activities. However, as will be discussed below, core funding does not 'officially' exist in EC guidance and tends only to be used in very exceptional circumstances with limitations and drawbacks to its use.

Some commentators have cautioned against support that focuses on creating consortia, highlighting the associated high internal transaction costs, burden of costs and administration on the lead organisation, and question the extent to which they actually do create synergies and productive collaboration between partners, and are concerned that they might compromise the

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<sup>36</sup> See Paffenholz, T, Summary of Results for a Comparative Research Project: Civil Society and Peacebuilding, The Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, The Graduate Institute, Geneva, 2009; and Civil Society and Peacebuilding Processes, The Peacebuilding Initiative (HPCR and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office) <http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/index.cfm?pageId=1754>

independence and flexibility of an organisation.<sup>37</sup> Nonetheless, experiences from the IfP are generally positive and in future support to NSAs should provide opportunities to **support both individual organisations (or small groups of organisations) as well as to larger consortia.**

Regarding the level of support, the consultations revealed a general consensus of opinion (particularly from the officials in Delegations interviewed) that geographically focused support aimed exclusively at **building local capacities of local organisations at a country or sub-regional level should be decentralised to the level of the Delegation** (either country or regional level) via regional or local CfPs – unless part of a broader activity addressing thematic issues (of the type described above). This is because the Delegations are best placed to ensure full coherence and complementarity with other EC support (including article under Article 3); and to identify where the PBP can ‘add value’ or bring an additional dimension to existing activities and country level strategic approaches to peacebuilding. Delegation involvement would also help to ensure their ‘buy in’.

This view is backed up by the recent evaluation of aid delivery through civil society organisations which states that:

*“the system (HQ management of budget lines) did not have .. mechanisms to ensure that projects were complementary to geographical instruments. Not surprisingly, the devolution of budget lines (eg. EIDHR) has been perceived in the field as a very positive development by EC Delegation staff. CfP guidelines are now generally designed within Delegations. This creates opportunities to enhance coherence with the overall country strategy and to take into account local civil society needs and dynamics”<sup>38</sup>*

Locally focused capacity building activities are seen as particularly valuable in terms of supporting local organisations’ ability to work on conflict, network, and to engage constructively with policy and programme debates at a country and sub-regional level - with state actors, the EC Delegations (for example in relation to programming processes) and other international actors (eg. via, multi-donor fora). Some Commission Officials interviewed in RELEX saw a locally focused approach as relevant since as it could help reinforce the understanding of peacebuilding issues at the level of Delegations.<sup>39</sup> However, **as things stand support to this type of exclusively locally focused activity should not be a priority of the PBP** for two main reasons:

First, this type of predominantly country specific local activity is an area where the PBP is currently unlikely to have most strategic impact and added value. Particularly since a number of other avenues of support for this type of activity already exist (as outlined in box 3 below), for example under EIDHR and support to NSAs under EDF- even if they are not as yet being fully exploited and can be difficult to implement.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Interview International Crisis Group, Brussels, June 2009

<sup>38</sup> Evaluation of EC aid delivery through Civil society organisations, Final Report; December 2008, PARTICIP GmbH p.28

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Commission Official, EIDHR, DG RELEX, Brussels, June 2009

<sup>40</sup> Short term capacity building support for civil society organisations has also been supported under Article 3 (crisis response) of the IfS.

Second, given the capacity constraints faced by EC Delegations, particularly in fragile situations, and the small volumes of finance available via the PBP, decentralisation of a CfP for local activities would currently be difficult to achieve in practice and would have limited impact.

It is worth noting however that the recent appointment of Regional Crisis Response Planning Officers (RCRPOs) in regional Delegations could however present additional capacity at the regional level in future. In a medium to long-term perspective, and given sufficient finance and resource available via the PBP, it would be possible to envisage RCRPOs taking on the management of regional CfPs, as well as playing a role in enhancing the focus of existing avenues of support onto peacebuilding priorities.<sup>41</sup>

**Box 3: Existing local avenues of EC support to NSAs in the area of peacebuilding**

**Geographic instruments:** In Colombia a Peace Laboratories programme has represented the main EC intervention in the 2001-2006 country programme. It supports local CSOs to mobilise citizens for building regions of peace and development while encouraging continuous state-civil society dialogue. This model of peace-building has been successfully mainstreamed in national development plans.

**The non-focal sectors - EDF:** These are often used to programme capacity building support to CSOs. In Ethiopia the EU – Ethiopia Civil Society Fund aims to provide support to NSAs in the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

**Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development budget line (decentralised to Delegations):** In Nepal for example, capacity building support for NSAs in the area of peacebuilding is a priority of the 2009 CfP.

**EIDHR micro-grants budget line:** EIDHR can provide opportunities for local capacity building support for peacebuilding organisations, for example in the areas of peaceful conciliation of group interests. In Kosovo the 2009 CfP under EIDHR included supporting the role of civil society in

### 2.3.2 Dialogue

Interviews with civil society stakeholders suggested that they welcomed the opportunities for dialogue presented by the PBP and saw it as important for the democratic accountability of the EU decision-making process and for enhancing the effectiveness of policies and programming. However it was also felt that more could be done to achieve a “systematic and better organised consultation process”<sup>42</sup> that is “structured, evolving, meaningful and strategic”<sup>43</sup>. Suggestions generally have revolved around a three pronged approach to dialogue encompassing:

**1) Consultations in relation to strategic documents**, such as the IP, AAP, and preparation of CfP. The purpose would be to discuss in detail the priorities as well as the specific activities for peacebuilding not only of the IfS and PBP but also the peacebuilding components of other relevant programming documents – for example support under EIDHR, Neighbourhood Policy and development cooperation more generally (including country strategy papers). Here key

<sup>41</sup> A study that examines how NSA facilities at the delegation level can be better targeted at peacebuilding issues may be helpful here.

<sup>42</sup> Interview Non-violent Peace Force, Brussels, June 2009

<sup>43</sup> Interview Interpeace/ CMI, Brussels, June 2009

relevant documents should be circulated well in advance. It should be noted, however, that this is an ambitious objective.

**2) Consultations around priorities and policy issues in relation to thematic peacebuilding issues.** These could include discussion around particular areas of policy development or action plans following Council Conclusions as well as lessons on thematic issues emerging from organisations' own work and key evidence based policy relevant research (eg. that funded under the PBP or IfP).

**3) Geographic focused consultations** in relation to specific crises and responses. These have been viewed as particularly important for bringing together key actors in order to help better identify appropriate responses and follow up activities in relation to specific countries or regions. Where consultations occur at the Brussels level they need to be timed to allow adequate preparation and pre-consultation at the country level.

It was strongly suggested that **consultation should take place in Brussels, in Member States and at the Delegation level.** Delegations consulted indicated that they would welcome some form of financial support to fund consultation processes and also for ad hoc relevant studies (in fact currently available). It was considered that RCRPOs in regional EC Delegations might find consultations at the regional and also country level helpful in terms of highlighting key conflict trends and identifying appropriate responses, and that they could play an outreach function in this regard.<sup>44</sup>

It has also been underlined that, where appropriate, consultations should engage the broadest range of actors, including field-level participants where consultations are in the EU, and other PBP partner groups (eg. Member States and International and Regional organisations). They should be more structured in terms of institutional mechanisms – for example with Commission officials involved in thematic clusters in a similar approach to the IfP – and involve expert facilitation and appropriate venues. It would be useful to reflect on experience gained via other Commission dialogue processes (e.g. those facilitated by ECDPM).

Clearly the dialogue element of the PBP is an ambitious undertaking that requires considerable human resource and expertise on the side of the Commission to manage. As highlighted above, with the current staffing constraints, **it may be recommended to outsource the strategic management of the dialogue to another party** working in close collaboration with the Commission (eg. a network of NGOs perhaps bringing in the expertise of an organisation with a track record in managing dialogue with the EC) – at least at the level of HQ – where functioning networks and organisations able to take on this role already exist. The party involved would be able to build a repository of analysis and best-practice and help desk (or support) function to organisations wishing to engage and enter dialogue with the EU, including those that have been funded with this purpose in mind by the PBP, and take over the web portal maximising its utility.

There are however constraints and challenges in relation to this approach that need to be taken into consideration. Given that the funding is generally time-limited there would need to be a very clear strategy in place to ensure the sustainability of the network. It would be important, should this function be taken on by an established network, that it were able to reach out as widely as possible, beyond its own membership base, to avoid the impression of a monopolistic position;

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<sup>44</sup> Group consultation Crisis Response Planning Officers, European Commission, RELEX A/2, Brussels, June 2009

and that it could reconcile the mandate as set by its membership with that of running a broader network for dialogue. It would be need to be seen as legitimate and representative. There would need to be a mechanism to ensure the full engagement of the Commission in the dialogue process beyond simply the goodwill of the officials involved. Finally, support would need to be flexible enough to allow the organisation to react to dialogue needs in relation to different crises.

**In the medium/ long term, if sufficient finance and human resource capacity is available to the PBP it would be possible to envisage support to regional/ local level networks for dialogue** managed by RCRPOs. It should be noted however that research has highlighted the dangers of donors attempting to *create* national representative networks of NSAs to facilitate policy and programme dialogue – seen by some as a structuring process.<sup>45</sup> Better would be to support the dynamics in place through support where possible to local level existing endogenous networking efforts and processes of association between organisations.

Consolidated recommendations on the strategic direction of the partnership and operational and financial management are provided in section 5.

### **3. Support to international and regional organisations and crisis response capabilities**

This section focuses on the two other ‘priorities’ of the PBP relating to support to international and regional organisations and the EU’s contribution to international civilian stabilisation missions. It highlights activities supported to date and key issues arising.

#### **3.1 Support to strengthen the EU’s capability to contribute to international civilian stabilisation missions.**

##### *3.1.1 An overview of support to date in strengthening civilian capabilities<sup>46</sup>*

Following the European Councils in Feira in June 2000 and Göteborg in June 2001 - the EU undertook to contribute to the strengthening of civilian capabilities to support stabilization efforts in countries emerging from a situation of political crisis (ie. to support short-term peacebuilding objectives). It established concrete capability targets in four priority areas – police, rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection. Since then a further area – monitoring – has been added to the list. The capabilities thus generated were intended to contribute to both EU-led operations and operations led by another multilateral actor, such as the UN or the OSCE. Indeed, over the past few years demand for EU civilian crisis management has been constantly on the rise and activities have been steadily increasing in terms of number, scale, scope and complexity.

The Feira Council envisaged the need for a pool of civilian experts capable of undertaking civil administration missions in the context of crisis-management operations, and if necessary, being deployed at very short notice. The European Security and Defence Policy requires the European

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<sup>45</sup> Floridi, M and Sanz-Corella, B (2009) Capitalisation Study on Capacity Building Support Programmes for Non State Actors under the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF, Working Document for the Restitution Seminar of 1-3 April 2009, IBF, March, p 15

<sup>46</sup> This overview draws heavily on the Crisis Preparedness 2009 Annual Action Programme relating to the “Strategy Paper 2007-2011” and the Indicative Programme 2009-2011” for the IFS.

Union to develop civilian and military capacities for international crisis management, thus helping to maintain peace and international security.

Under the 2007 Annual Action Programme of the PBP (under the IfS), the Commission financed the completion year of a number of civilian training activities whose objectives included: i) building consensus around a European training standard for deployment in international missions, compatible with UN, World Bank and OSCE requirements; and ii) the completion of the remaining training for Member States' experts identified for participation in EU Crisis Response Teams (CRTs). This grant was awarded: to the European Group on Training (EGT) for a project on "Training for Civilian Crisis Management and Stabilization Missions" for a total amount of €0.8 million. Under the 2007 and 2008 Annual Action Programmes, the European Commission awarded two grants to relevant EU Member State's agencies for the "Delivery of training for police experts in civilian missions", for an overall amount of €1.3 million. These projects aimed to train approximately 1200 Member States' police experts to participate in international missions and to assure inter-operability with UN/OSCE. Under the 2009 Annual Action Programme, further training of police experts is envisaged.

The 2007 Annual Action Programme noted that the mid-term evaluation of the relevant civilian training activities financed by the Commission had found that **relatively few of the trained experts have taken part in EU missions**. As a result, the Commission is currently preparing to evaluate the effectiveness of the previously financed activities – including assessing the gap between the training itself and deployment, to take stock of relevant previous and current training efforts, and to draw up lessons learned. It is envisaged that the results of the assessment, together with the views expressed by Member States within the framework of the Instrument for Stability Management Committee, will inform the Commission's direction with regard to the future funding of civilian training activities. This stocktaking study ought not to pre-empt the outcome of the evaluation and therefore this section concentrates on presenting the key issues and opinions arising during stakeholder consultations that may help to inform future support within the context of the future findings of the evaluation.

### *3.1.2 Key issues and opinions presented during stakeholder consultations*

Concerns have been raised by members of the EGT that no decision has been made on the continued financial support of the activities after September 2009. They recognise that there has been a deployment issue "due to the generally very weak institutional link between training providers and those responsible for the recruitment and deployment of personnel in ESDP missions and Community activities at the Community and EU level".<sup>47</sup> However, they believe the solution is not to discontinue activities altogether, particularly since considerable number of Member States have no pertinent civilian training capacities, but rather transform the EGT. They have put forward a number of ideas on the future of such support with respect to institutional frameworks that can support standard setting and implementation, with an emphasis on a comprehensive Rule of Law approach (rather than an emphasis on police training) and enhanced coordination with the Council.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ensuring EU-level training for civilian crisis management peace-building and post conflict reconstruction, attachment to letter from MEPs to Benita Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the EGT of 24 April 2009

<sup>48</sup> Interview, International Alert, Brussels, June 2009

In particular the EGT is advocating the establishment of a **European Training Institute for Civilian Crisis Management**, Peacebuilding and Post-conflict reconstruction which could function as the secretariat of an official network of all relevant national training providers nominated by Member States. According to a letter from MEPs to Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the EGT of 24 April 2009 “it should not duplicate training efforts at European institutional level, such as the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), but function as the supporting and nurturing fabric linking existing national governmental as well as non-governmental training institutions together”.<sup>49</sup>

Others have made similar suggestions in the form of an **European Institute for Peace (EIP)** similar to the notion of a Peacebuilding Agency (see section 2.2.3 above) **and a Training Inspectorate**.<sup>50</sup> This would allow the EU to offer mission-relevant training for deploying personnel and diplomatic mediators; support deployed personnel by providing “reach-back” support; ensure training in all EU states meets similar standards; improve information exchange and develop field-relevant post-conflict reconstruction/ state-building doctrine. It would be a “hub and spoke” system that would provide core training; share information; analyse best practices and back-up peacemaking through a network of professional mediators etc.

The proponents of the EIP recognise that the ESDC may provide part of the answer, but that it is not sufficient to provide training or coordinate training in EU countries and that, anchored in a military culture, it will struggle to become – or at least be seen to be – a first-choice provider of training for civilians.

These types of recommendation for the future of training support need to be reflected upon in the light of the forthcoming evaluation. As such they have not been considered an integral element of this study and have not been incorporated in the context of the operational and financial implementation of the partnership discussed in section 4 below.

What is worth noting however, is that **these structures would need in some way to be linked to the network supported to manage the dialogue under the PBP outlined in section 2.3.2** above in order to enhance the synergies and complementarities support to NSAs under the PBP.

## **3.2 support to international and regional organisations**

### *3.2.1 Overview of support to international and regional organisations to date*<sup>51</sup>

Under the specific objective of building close operational links between the EU and relevant UN agencies and programmes, the World Bank and other multilateral and regional organisations, the EC has supported a number of activities to date. Under the AAPs for 2007 and 2008 four direct grants were awarded: one to the African Union through an Administrative Arrangement with JRC on “Scientific and Technical Support to the African Union’s Continental Early-Warning System (CEWS)” for a total amount of about €1 million, and three with the UNDP on post-conflict and post-disaster needs assessment, and on natural resources and conflict, for a total amount of about €2.5 million.

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<sup>49</sup> Letter from MEPs to Benita Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the EGT of 24 April 2009

<sup>50</sup> Korski, D and Herrberg, A, Building a European Institute for Peace: A Discussion Note, European Council on Foreign Relations and Crisis Management Initiative (undated)

<sup>51</sup> This overview draws heavily on the Crisis Preparedness 2009 Annual Action Programme relating to the “Strategy Paper 2007-2011” and the Indicative Programme 2009-2011” for the IFS.

Under the 2009 AAP the Commission notably envisages - under the 2009 Annual Action Programme - to support: i) the UN's Peace-building Support Office's (PBSO) efforts to build, in selected post-conflict countries, government capacity for aid management in order to foster ownership of peacebuilding and early recovery. Such support will notably contribute to the establishment of a Peacebuilding Assistance Database (PAD), aimed at enhancing information management for better resource mobilization in such post-conflict countries; ii) the UN Mediation Support Unit, including its standing capacity to rapidly deploy natural resources expertise in post-conflict mediation situations.

In addition, the development of global professional and technical networks for early warning among relevant international, regional and sub-regional organisations (such as the African Union, the League of the Arab States, etc.) are considered as one further potentially fruitful area of co-operation and capacity-building. In this regard, further activities with the African Union would aim to build on the support (under the 2007 AAP) to the AU's Continental Early Warning System, its Situation Room and certain sub-regional organisations who are developing complementary systems. In addition, support to the post-Accra International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State Building between fragile states and development partners, and the monitoring project on implementation of the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations, managed by the OECD-DAC Secretariat, will reinforce peace-building cooperation on an international level.

### *3.2.2 Key issues and opinions presented during stakeholder consultations*

One area where the Commission is keen to make progress in this aspect of the PBP is to forge a more strategic and long-term approach to cooperation with the UN. This reflects a general ambition on the part of the EC to move away from a donor/ implementing agency relationship and towards a more proactive and partnership based relationship encompassing a strong policy dialogue.<sup>52</sup> It is recognised that in the past support has tended to be ad hoc and lacking strategic focus. During consultations a number of key issues and constraints were highlighted with respect to this ambition: First, it was suggested that the twelve month time horizon for planning and budgeting inherent in the AAP process and the inevitable delays in funding make sustained and strategic engagement in multi-stakeholder processes problematic. It was suggested a longer commitment to areas of support (eg. PCNAs), for example over three annual budgets, would enhance the cooperation and commitment from partners (the UN).<sup>53</sup> Second, limitations in terms of staff resource make it difficult to commit the time necessary to fully engage in policy dialogue and discussions. However, notwithstanding these constraints, it was generally viewed that there is a positive trend towards a more productive and strategic relationship with the UN.

The Commission is also keen to create synergies between support to the UN (and other international and regional organisations) under the PBP and other streams of funding under the IfS. Progress in this respect has been made, an example being where funding under Article 3 has made it possible to pilot the joint UN/WB/EC PCNA methodologies in response to emerging crises. In a similar manner, lessons that may emerge from funding under Article 3 in the area of natural resources and conflict could, in the future, be able to inform the guidance on natural resources and conflict being developed by the UN in the framework of the PBP. These linkages

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<sup>52</sup> Interview Commission Official, UN and International Organisations Unit, RELEX, Brussels, June 2009

<sup>53</sup> Interview Commission Official, RELEX A/2, Brussels, June 2009

are however ad hoc and more could be done to make them more formal and part of the internal structure of the IfS.<sup>54</sup>

## 4. Operational and financial implementation of the PBP

As highlighted above, a key objective of this study is to reflect on the operational and financial implementation of the PBP largely in relation to funding NSAs – within the constraints imposed by the Financial Regulation of the EC with respect to funding mechanisms - to ensure that it is optimal both in terms of serving the strategic objectives of the partnership and, given the current staff constraints, to make it more manageable.

This section will provide an overview of the main financing tools available to the PBP and consider how they can be optimally used for implementing the strategic approach outlined above. Given that the main form of support to beneficiaries is provided through Grants the first sub-section is dedicated to providing some basic reminders on the basic rules relating to grants. The box below provides a reminder of the main objectives of the PBP (under Article 4.3).

### Box 4: Article 4.3 of the Instrument for Stability

According to the Article 4-3 of the Instrument for Stability, the Peace Building Partnership (PBP) intends:

- “to provide support for **long-term measures** aimed at **building and strengthening the capacity** of **international, regional and sub-regional organisations, state and non-state actors** in relation to their efforts in:
  - Promoting **early warning**, confidence building, mediation and reconciliation, and addressing emerging inter-community tensions;
  - Improving **post-conflict and post-disaster recovery**
- Measures under this point shall include **know-how transfer**, the **exchange of information, risk/threat assessment, research and analysis, early warning system and training**.
- Measures may also include, where appropriate, **financial and technical assistance** for the implementation of these recommendations made by the **UN Peace Building Commission** falling within the objectives of Community cooperation policy”.

### 4.1 Grants – the main avenue for support

#### 4.1.1 What is a "Grant"?

According to the Article 108-1 of the Financial Regulation (FR):

*Grants are direct financial contributions, by way of donation, from the budget in order to finance:*

- *either an action intended to help achieve an objective forming part of a European Union policy,*
- *or the functioning of a body which pursues an aim of general European interest or has an objective forming part of a European Union policy.*

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

#### 4.1.2 *Reminder on some basic rules related to Grants*

The FR clearly and precisely defines the conditions, rules and principles under which a grant could be awarded (Articles 109 to 116). Without entering into detail, the most interesting points, in terms of this study, can be summarised as follows:

- Grant award procedure shall comply with the **principles of transparency, proportionality, sound financial management, equal treatment and non-discrimination, lack of conflicts of interests and respect of internationally accepted standards**,
- Grants may not be cumulative or awarded retrospectively,
- Grants **must involve co-financing**, save otherwise provided, which means mainly in cases of:
  - humanitarian aid,
  - assistance for refugees,
  - uprooted persons,
  - rehabilitation and mine disposal,
  - crisis situations within the meaning of Art 168-2 of the FR (for procurement),
  - protection of health and fundamental rights of people,
- Grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary,
- The action which may receive a grant must be clearly identified and detailed in the Grant Agreement,
- Grants are normally awarded through **CfPs**, with exception in the following cases:
  - purposes of humanitarian aid
  - other exceptional and duly substantiated emergencies
  - to bodies with a *de jure* or *de facto* monopoly
  - in specific cases of research and technology development
  - for an action with specific characteristics requiring a particular type of body (technical competencies, degree of specialisation, administrative power).

#### 4.1.3 *Who can receive a Grant?*

The eligibility of the grant beneficiaries is defined in the Guidelines designed for each CfP. There are no other limitations other than the ones mentioned above, taking into account that "**a grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary**".

## 4.2 **The main Financing Tools available for the PBP implementation**

Considering the specificity of the PBP, its potential beneficiaries, and the kinds of actions it intends to support, not all of the existing financial tools are adapted to its implementation. Among the most suitable are the following<sup>55</sup>:

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<sup>55</sup> It should be clear that the tools presented here do not constitute an "exhaustive" list of all the existing tools, but only a view of the ones which could be used within the PBP implementation, and the most detailed in this presentation are the most suitable / recommendable for this specific matter.

#### 4.2.1 Centralised Management

Centralised management is mainly applicable to grants awarded through the Calls for Proposals procedure (CfPs), that allows the participation of various types of organisation: **state (SA) and non-state (NSA) actors, international organisations, EU Member State Agencies, etc.**

CfPs can be “open” whereby any eligible organisation can apply; or “restricted”: where a limited list of eligible organisations is established, for example through a short-list resulting from the assessment of so-called "concept notes".

CfPs can be managed by the Headquarter (through a centralised call), or by any EC Delegation (through a local or regional call).

CfPs permit:

- Long-term assignments (up to 3 years)
- Participation of a wide range of organisations
- Total transparency and equity in the awarding selection process
- A response to the EU objectives (established through the guidelines for applicants)

However, from an operational perspective the CfPs also have drawbacks:

- It requires 6 to 9 months for implementation, depending if CfPs are opened or restricted
- It places an administrative burden on resources: drafting of guidelines, Quality Support Group (oQSG), ISC, publication, double evaluation, etc.

A CfP procedure normally leads to **direct centralised management**: whereby the management is directly operated by the EC services, at (Headquarter) HQ or delegated to an EC Delegation.

Under specific circumstances, there is the possibility to implement **indirect centralised management**. In this case the management is entrusted to a public or a private body that has reached the so-called “6 pillars” defined in Articles 56-1 of the FR (and 26 of the FR EDF)<sup>56</sup>. As usual, the choice of entity is made in an objective and transparent manner, in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and non-discrimination, and in agreement with the concerned State to which the national body belongs.

When the option of indirect centralised management is taken, the relevant financing decision / fiche of the Annual Action Plan (AAP) should briefly explain the reasons for choosing the national body. Where, exceptionally, the national body has not yet been selected, the fiche should state the objective criteria which will be used to choose the body complying with the 6 pillars, having in mind the objective and specific requirement of the action.

Once the national body is chosen, a “Delegation Agreement” needs to be signed. The Agreement is structured in line with other similar models of agreement (standard contribution agreement, financing agreement and standard grant contract). It is composed of the Special Conditions and a number of Annexes (description of the action and of the delegated tasks, General Conditions, Budget). It contains rules on responsibility, reporting, rules of origin and nationality, eligibility rules, rules on contracting, applicable procedures, etc. The scope of the delegation (tasks to be delegated, for instance) is decided on a case-by-case basis, and then consequently reflected in the Delegation Agreement. For instance, the Commission could decide

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<sup>56</sup> The 6 pillars are a level of operation quality officially recognized through audit, and covering the 6 following areas: procurement and grant procedures, internal control, accounting system, external audit, rules on public access to information and ex-post publication.

- to delegate all the management tasks, and only request regular reports,
- to be present at certain important steps of the budget-implementation process, as observer,
- to actively participate to some important steps of the budget-implementation process,
- to entrust all the budget-implementation tasks, except some specific ones, for which it wants to remain with full decision power and responsibility, such as final approval of the guidelines for the CfPs, or organisation of the selection committees, or awarding of grants, or signature of the grant contracts.

Concerning the procedures to be applied, there is a choice between the EC rules or that of the delegated body.

The Commission must inform the legislative authority annually of the cases where indirect centralised management has been chosen as a method of implementation and the bodies concerned, by providing commensurate justification of the use of such bodies (Art. 39-4 of the FR and 25-3 of the FR EDF).

Indirect centralised management could also result of a “Call for Expression of Interests” among the EU Member States (MS) or their Agencies, and the Delegation Agreement could be signed with one MS or one MS Agency or with a consortium of various MS or MS Agencies.

#### 4.2.2 *Joint Management*

Joint management is mainly applicable to grants awarded through the direct granting procedure to an **International Organisation** having reached the requested audit level (4 pillars). In this case, a “Contribution Agreement” should be signed with the selected International Organisation, and the procedures to be applied are the ones of the International Organisation.

This procedure permits:

- Short or long-term assignments
- Simplified selection process
- Work with a well-known and recognised organisation

But this procedure:

- Limits the access to “new” organisations
- Corresponds usually more to a specific interest of the selected organisation than to EU objectives (no guidelines, but direct submission of proposals by the eligible organisations)
- Risks to create a “circle” of “privileged beneficiaries”.

#### 4.2.3 *Framework Contracts*

These are contracts concluded **between one or more contracting authorities and one or more economic operators**. They are mainly reserved for providing services: e.g. the organisation of conferences or workshops, identification of specific actions, realisation of studies, etc.

Since they are for service providers, the framework contracts do not mobilise NGOs.

The framework contracts are:

- For short-term assignments

- Easy and quick to implement

However the framework contracts:

- Are limited in number of expert men/days, in implementation period, and often in budget
- Have a limited duration validity of the lists of selected organisations (usually 4 years)

The framework contract is a “ready to use” tool. A specific framework contract could be designed for specific purposes (for instance for the PBP), but it has first to be approved in its concept (to avoid any possible dual-purpose) and it is a long administrative process.

#### 4.2.4 Framework Partnership Agreements

A framework partnership agreement is established as a **long-term cooperation mechanism between the Community and the beneficiaries of grants**. It works on the same principle as the Framework Contract, but can be used for services and implementation of projects.

A framework partnership agreement can include **various types of organisations, inclusive of NGOs**. It may not exceed 4 years of validity.

The framework partnership agreement:

- Could be used for short and long-term assignments
- Is easy and quick to implement
- Has no specific budget limits

However the framework partnership agreement:

- Is a long process for its establishment: call for expression of interests - similar to a call for proposals process - and then a deep assessment for each of the participant's agreement on their capacity in management, accounting systems, procedures implementation competencies, internal control system, external audit, etc.
- No possibility to allow entry to “new” organisations during the validity period of the agreement, usually 4 years
- Limited to very specialised organisations

The framework partnership agreement could be interesting for some specific missions, requesting the quick mobilisation of a specific team to implement urgent measures and/or activities (and therefore may be most suited to actions under Art. 3).

#### 4.2.5 Other tools

Competitive negotiated procedure: only for contracts <200,000 €, and only if it is impossible to use the framework contract or if its use is unsuccessful. This procedure is not applicable to NGOs and not of great interest for PBP.

Pool fund: kind of “basket fund” constituted by the contribution of various donors to the same type of activities. The administration and management of the “pool fund” are entrusted to one of the participating donors. Could be interesting for working with MS Agencies, but only if the related MS are contributing to the “pool fund”. Not of real immediate interest for the PBP, mainly if there is the possibility to work on the basis of the Indirect Centralised Management, through a Delegation Agreement.

**Re-granting:** allows a grant beneficiary to award a financial support from the grant received from the EC to a third party, for **specific activities not constituting the primary aim of the action**, with a maximum budget of 100,000 €, from which each re-granted activity cannot exceed 10,000 €. The potential **re-grantable activities should already be well defined in the proposal**, and it should be "convincingly" **justified** (i) **the reason** for which the said activities will not be implemented directly by the recipient of the main grant, as well as (ii) **the choice** of the sub-grant potential beneficiaries. It seems that DG EuropeAid is currently requesting a modification of this specific regulation to increase the re-granting maximum budget to 1,000,000 €, and each re-granted activity to 100,000 €<sup>57</sup>. If this modification is approved, the re-granting could be of a certain interest for the PBP.

**Operating grant:** used for guaranteeing the functioning of a body which pursues an aim of general European interest or has an objective forming part of an EU policy. An operating grant is **annual** (so it can not exceed 12 months), it covers **only one financial year** (which means from 1<sup>st</sup> January till 31<sup>st</sup> December), the beneficiary may be awarded only one operating grant per financial year, if renewed shall be **gradually decreased**, and the number of renewals is usually limited. It requests specific management procedures<sup>58</sup>. It should be authorised by the Authorising Officer. Not recommended because (i) it addresses very specific beneficiaries (see above its pursued aim), (ii) it is annual, (iii) it generates a **very high workload** (high pressure on human resources), and (iv) it creates a high level of dependency of the beneficiaries, putting at risk their own sustainability.

**Core funding:** the core funding does not exist "officially" neither in the Financial Regulation nor in the Practical Guide. It covers all eligible costs for funding a specific set of coherent and complementary activities (the funding goes beyond the project itself – so it is beyond an operational grant - without covering the whole expenses of the beneficiary – which would be an operating grant). It should be exceptional and fully justified. It has been proposed in certain Guidelines by DG EuropeAid, for very specific actions related to the Thematic Budget Lines. Not recommended because, if "proposable", (i) it is for a very limited range of potential beneficiaries, able to clearly and convincingly justify why the requested financing would not be limited to the implementation of a simple project and at the same time not covering their whole expenses (if proposed in a Guideline, this should be clearly mentioned), (ii) it generates an **extremely high workload** (mainly on the human resources: the beneficiary remains with various sources of funding, so each expense has the possibility to be funded more than once, and the corresponding checking becomes a real burden, both for the beneficiary and for the donor), and (iii) it creates a high level of dependency for the beneficiary, putting at risk its own sustainability.

### **4.3 How can the different suitable tools be optimally used for providing support to NSAs through the PBP?**

Taking into account the main constraints identified above, in particular those related to human resources availability, there are various possibilities to involve the civil society organisations

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<sup>57</sup> The dossier is under preparation, and will be submitted before the end of the current year. At this stage, it is impossible to assess either the delay for getting a final decision on the issue, or if the proposal will be accepted or not.

<sup>58</sup> For instance, as the grant is covering the whole expenses of the beneficiary body, it should be checked if other sources of funding are not duplicating this financing, which imposes a systematic verification of all expenses, in an exhaustive way. Another constraint is to start the funding at the very beginning of the year, which obliges to establish and respect a very strict calendar to the corresponding call for proposals, which is most of the time extremely difficult, considering that the EC budget should be first approved, and then the Annual Action Plan also approved, before being allowed to launch a call for proposals.

(NSA), within a wider and more complete and general scheme, considering a maximum complementarity between the actions and activities entrusted to the different actors / stakeholders. This section provides some suggestions that are “modular”, in the sense that the different components:

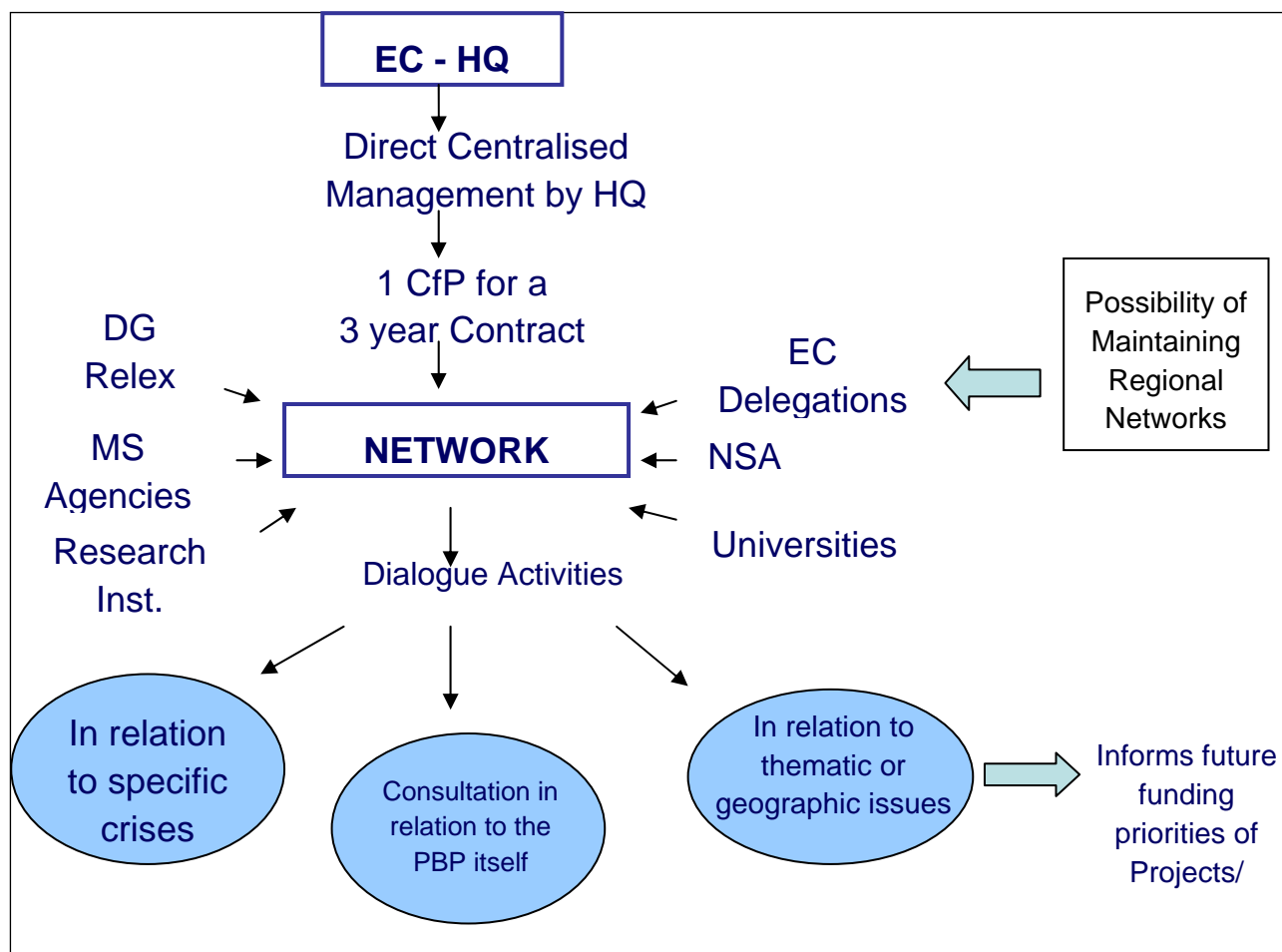
- can be implemented separately or in an integrated way,
- can be implemented at once or gradually, both in matter of time or geographically.

#### *4.3.1 support to another party (network or organisation) for the strategic management of dialogue*

This relates to the suggested option in relation to the management of the dialogue outlined in section 2.3.2 above. In practical terms, a network:

- could permit the participation of a limited or wider range of stakeholders / participants / actors, responding to identified needs and constraints, and each participant could have a determined role or status (active permanent participant, special participant for specific thematic or geographical area, simple observer, external analyst, advisor, etc)
- could be implemented at a central level only, or also be linked to “sub-networks” (which could be supported at the level of regional EC Delegations), this second option giving a full opportunity to local and regional NGOs to be involved.
- could gather and exchange information, including managing a PBP web portal and manage the dialogue as described in section 2.3.2 above

**Fig. 3 – Support to another party (network) for strategic management of the dialogue**



For the implementation of such a network, it could be envisaged to go through a Direct Centralised Management procedure. This would mean preparing CfPs, then selecting the organisation that submits the proposal offering the best response to the defined objectives (according to the criteria briefly suggested above), and then to sign a 3-year grant contract with this organisation.

Depending on the quality of results expected from the network and the level of specialisation requested, it could reasonably be thought that a small number of organisations would be able to submit proposals (probably no more than 10 to 12 if the guidelines are sufficiently precise), so an opened call would be the best option. It would then be possible to support the network within approximately 6 months, including the design and drafting of the guidelines, as well as the signature of contract.

With regard to support to regional networks this should be done in the future (at least one year after the main network). (i) in order to give time to the Regional Officers, recently appointed, to organise themselves and better know the region and the potential existing regional NSAs which could possibly integrate into the regional network, and (ii) consolidate the main network before implementing regional ones, to avoid duplications and relieve some of the workload. This could be done for some or all concerned regions, gradually or at once, linked or not to the main network. It is recommended to implement these regional networks gradually, starting with the

most difficult regions, and not linking them to the main network, in order to simplify the management and follow-up. The regional networks could be established directly by the EC Delegations, through a regional CfP.

#### 4.3.2 *Funding of NSA (or SA) through Centralised Management procedure*

This procedure could be suitable for supporting capacity building and could be:

- “Direct”: already experienced by DG Relex, it constitutes a heavy administrative burden, requesting a quite **high level of human resources commitment**
- “Indirect”, discharging DG Relex of the corresponding workload of CfPs, just requiring the administration relating to a “Call for Expression of Interests”, and the signature of a Delegation Agreement (DA), valid for 3 years
- The exact terms of a potential DA could be “tailor made” in order to DG Relex to maintain the exact level of involvement and monitoring it requests, through the Specific Conditions of the DA
- The objectives of the CfPs could be definite according to the priorities identified through the dialogue activities.

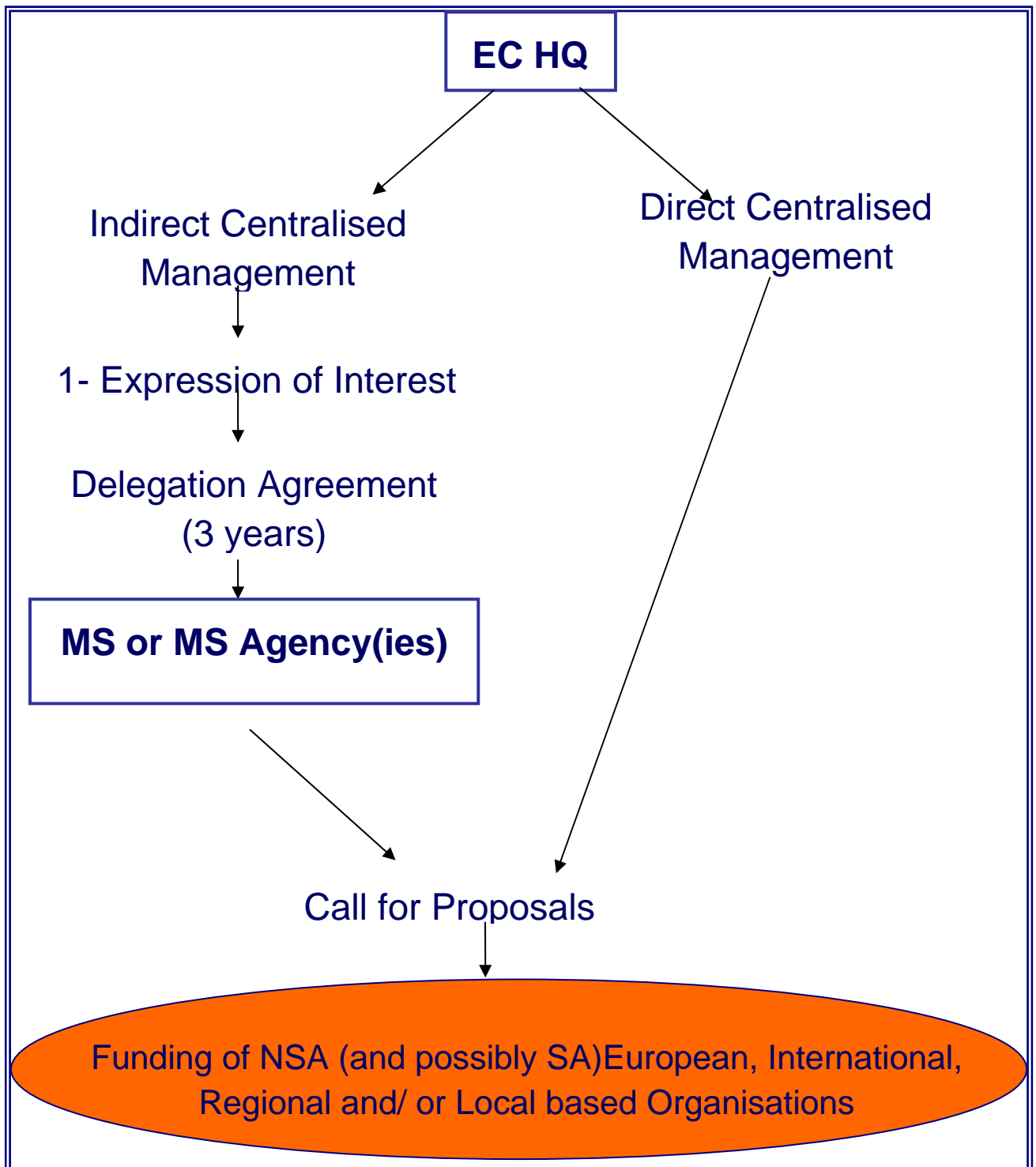
The two alternatives (**direct or indirect centralised management**) have the **same outcome for the final beneficiaries** of grants: they are required to participate to a Call for Proposals in order to be selected before to be awarded a grant.

The main difference between the two alternatives is that in the case of the direct centralised management, the Services of the Commission are directly involved in all the steps of the management for each new CfP; while in the case of indirect centralised management, the HQ could be only involved in the process of selection and DA signature, which could be done for 3 years.

Whatever the option chosen (direct or indirect), the rules to be applied to the CfPs and guidelines (status of eligibility of the potential applicants, their nationality, scope of eligible action and places of implementation, duration of the action, budget, contracts conditions, etc.) are exactly the same, so the grant beneficiaries are not “penalised” by the choice.

Indirect centralised management can only entrust public or private bodies having reached the 6 pillars, so it is usually limited to the HQ Services of the Commission. However, the CfPs launched by the chosen body can be global ones. Finally, all organisations have the potential to apply for grants, and through a fair balance of the different proposed systems it is possible to focus on geographical or thematic issues, depending of priorities, urgencies, interests or specific policies.

Fig 4 Funding through the centralised management procedure



#### 4.3.3 *Funding of NSAs (or SAs) through Direct Centralised Management sub-delegation to EC Delegations*

This procedure could be applied for supporting to country (or sub-regional) level capacity building activities aimed local organisations and networks. As indicated above in this the RCRPOs in regional EC Delegations could be involved in regional calls. Importantly, the capacity of the EC Delegations to undertake this type of activity should be assessed – and some may be more interested than others. This option is not recommended on the short term, because of human resources and budgetary constraints: human resources in EC Delegations for organising local and/or regional calls for proposals are scarce, and the currently available PBP budget is too low to warrant transferring funds to EC Delegations..

#### 4.3.4 *Other possible way of funding NSA (and SA)*

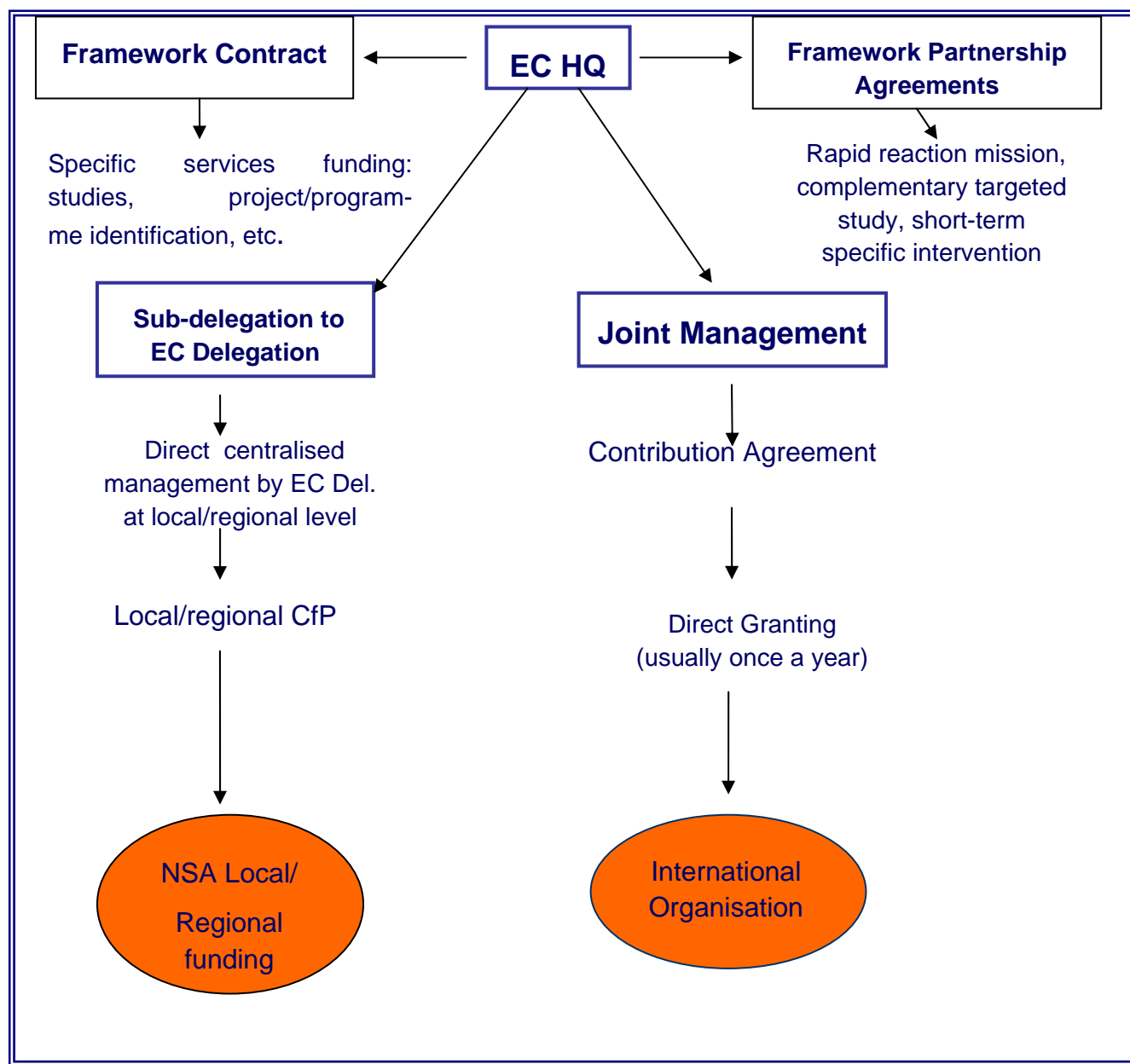
The other financial tools and procedures already described or mentioned could be applied for funding SA and / or NSA. Among the most suitable for the PBP are the following:

Joint management: procedure already used by DG Relex, it is recommended to maintain it, as it allows the funding of International Organisations through Direct Granting. Its use is limited to the Headquarter, but it is not very binding, as it does not require a high level of human resources, nor complicated implementation process.

Framework Contract: because of its specificity, this tool is reserved to very **specific services**, as already used by DG Relex for organising Round Tables (dialogue) for instance, but could also be used for specific complementary studies and / or action identification. Could be used by Headquarter as well as by EC Delegations

Framework Partnership Agreements: interesting tool for rapid reaction missions, easy to use, it could be implemented, for instance, for starting a post-crisis process while waiting for a more sustainable intervention to be selected through calls for proposals. But its creation requests a quite long and delicate process, delaying its use by at least 1,5 year upon decision to establish it. May be more suitable for interventions under article 3.

**Fig 5 Other alternatives than centralized management procedure applicable for funding**



**4.3.5 Pulling it all together – a consolidated scheme**

The different possibilities of using the most recommended tools could be summarised in an integrated and complementary scheme. This scheme could be implemented gradually, in time and in space.

This global scheme shows that the involvement of the different partners of the PBP could be done at different level of implementation, for example as simple observer in a dialogue network up to direct action implementing partner. All the potential partners have the possibility to be involved, and the NSA can be involved at different levels.

The other financial and administrative tools already mentioned but not specifically recommended are not rejected, and – if requested by a specific situation – can be used also, in complementarity to the proposed scheme.

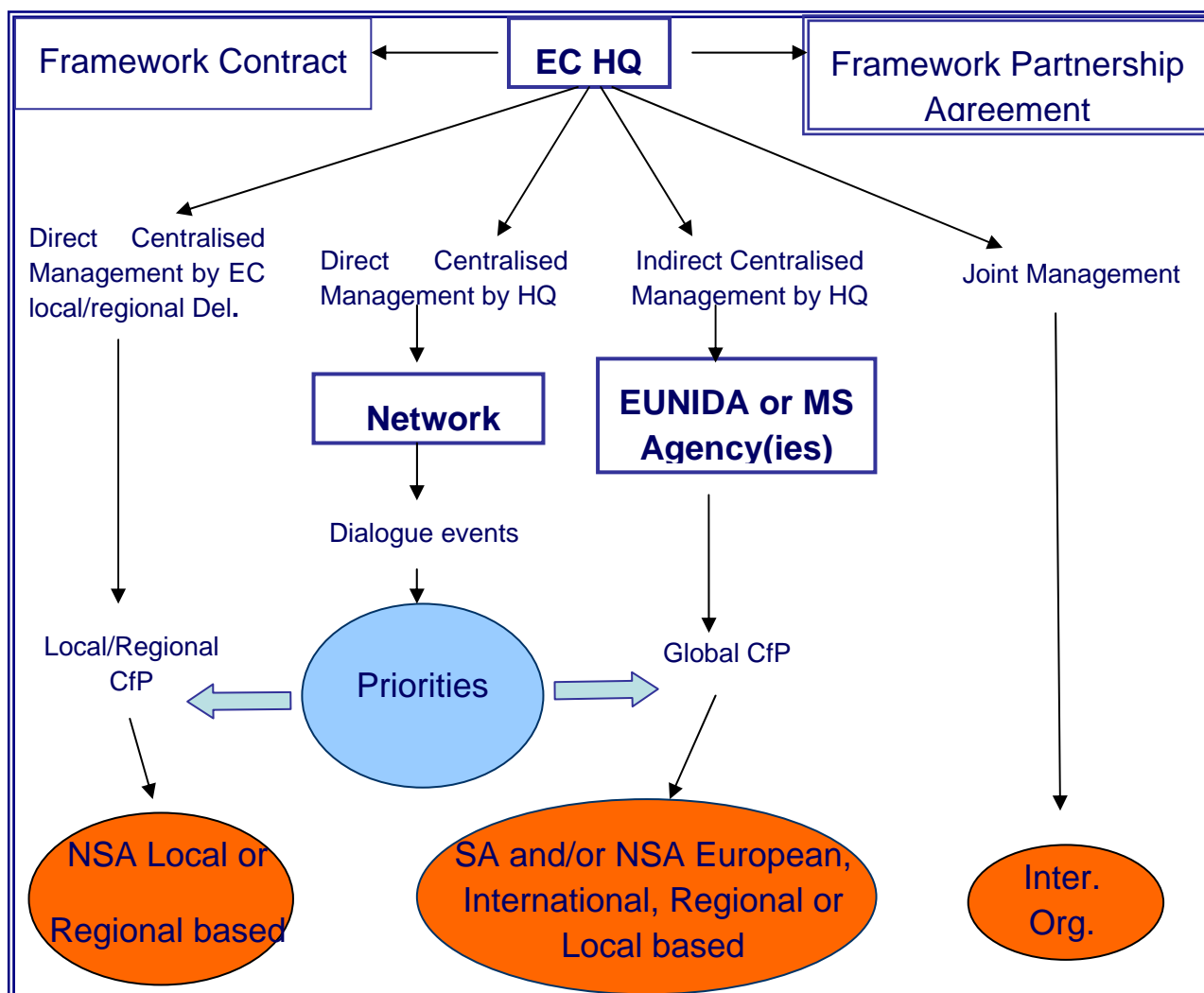
The proposed scheme takes into account:

- the different objectives of the PBP
- the involvement of the different stakeholders / actors
- the identified constraints (mainly represented by human resources constraints)

This consolidated scheme is showing the possible use of the different recommended tools for the PBP implementation. As already mentioned, each one has its own characteristics, objectives and constraints. Accordingly, all should not be applied from the very beginning (modularity in time: it is suggested to start as soon as possible with the network activation, then with the implementation of a Delegation Agreement for an Indirect Centralised Management of the global calls for proposals; modularity in time and space: the transfer of responsibilities to the EC Delegations for local/regional calls should be first explored before implementation, for instance).

It is also to be noted (as already indicated above) that some proposed alternatives are only suggested, not necessarily highly recommended (this is the case for the framework contract and for the framework partnership agreement).

**Fig 5 A consolidated scheme**



#### 4.3.6 Remark on EUNIDA

**EUNIDA** is the **European Network of Implementing Development Agencies**. EUNIDA is open to development organisations (i) based in a Member State of the European Union, (ii) governed by a non-for-profit status, and (iii) established with a public mandate to implement development cooperation programmes. Its current members are:

- Belgian Technical Cooperation
- Crown Agents for Overseas Government and Administrations Ltd
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH
- European Public Law Centre
- Agency for European Integration and Economic Development
- France Coopération Internationale
- Fundación Internacional y para Ibero América de Administración y Políticas Públicas
- Luxembourg Agency for Development Cooperation
- SNV Netherlands Development Organisation

The mission of EUNIDA is, on behalf of the EU Member States and the European Commission, to develop capacity in partner countries in order to enable them to achieve sustainable development strategies. By bringing together the collective experience and the expertise of its member agencies, EUNIDA has the administrative capacity **to carry out complex technical cooperation and post-conflict programmes**.

EUNIDA was set up in 2000 as a knowledge-sharing platform to bring together the know-how of EU Agencies and foster exchange of best practices in the field of technical cooperation. At a European Commission's request, it has been established as a non-for-profit European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), in June 2006.

EUNIDA has already signed contracts with the European Commission to implement projects in Haiti (governance), Lebanon (fragile settings, post crisis and governance) and Mali (migration). For each contract, a Consortium is created under the guidance of a lead agency, which takes legal responsibility for the successful implementation of the project.

Its current status does not allow it to sign a Delegation Agreement with the EC. But EUNIDA aims at elaborating common strategies to further cooperation with the European Commission in the context of its external assistance programmes. Within this framework, negotiations are currently on-going between the European Commission (negotiations led by AIDCO) and EUNIDA in view to modify its status. At this stage, it is not possible to have a precise calendar, but if a common agreement on such a modification is reached, this could be done in a relatively short delay. If a modified status is accepted, EUNIDA would probably be able to sign Delegation Agreements with the EC. In such a case, it would be possible to entrust it with the management of programmes aiming at funding SA and NSA through CfPs, under the indirect centralised management procedure. The main advantage would be to avoid the call for expression of interest among the MS or the MS Agencies, EUNIDA reaching then a monopolistic position. If resorting to a Consortium of MS Agencies, this would have a secondary advantage: different nationalities and professional experience experts could be involved in the proposals evaluation process, which could be organised, for instance, as a peer review<sup>59</sup>. Accordingly, a call for expression of interest should be quickly organised, with this specific objective. Considering the calendar, it is probably possible to envisage the call for expression of interest very early 2010 (preparing it from now), and then to transfer the coming CfP for NSA funding to the then selected third body with which a Delegation Agreement would be signed, still in 2010 (see Annex D). This possibility would be of great interest for the PBP.

## **5. Consolidated recommendations (focusing on NSAs)**

### **5.1 Recommendations on the strategic direction and conceptual issues**

- In line with the IfS Strategy Paper, Indicative Programmes and AAP for 2009, **the definition (or understanding) of peacebuilding adopted by the PBP should be as wide as possible** in order to allow for inclusion of capacity building support in relation to both short-term (crisis

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<sup>59</sup> Peer review is the process of subjecting a study or a proposal to the scrutiny of others who are in the same field. Peer review requires a community of experts in a given (and often narrowly defined) field, who are qualified and able to perform impartial review. This process encourages authors to meet the accepted standards of their discipline and prevents the dissemination of irrelevant findings, unwarranted claims, unacceptable interpretations, and personal views.

management) and long-term (structural) approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. The OECD DAC definition quoted on page 27 could be used.

- In order ensure sufficient targeting of future CfPs, **preference could be given to capacity building support in relation to thematic or transversal issues that demonstrate a clear complementarity or synergy with other EC supported activities and policy priorities** (as identified by the EC). With due attention also given to the priorities of other relevant actors, including EU member states and the UN.
- In terms of the type of capacity building activities, current support should be given to **projects undertaken by organisations that work across a range of geographical contexts (in relation to thematic or transversal issues) that not only support the capacity building of local partners but also generate learning** of benefit to the peacebuilding sector as a whole (ie. generating lessons, supporting analytical capacity, identifying best operational practice etc.) that can be fed back to the EC (and beyond).
- In this sense, the PBP can (and should) support organisations to develop and deepen their existing areas of work and that of their partners, and own institutional capacities, as well as to pilot and test new approaches.
- The PBP **should provide opportunities to support individual organisations as well as to consortia** (recognising the high transaction costs as well as the burden on the lead organisation associated with consortia).
- **Predominantly country-focused local-level capacity building activities should not currently be a priority of the PBP.** However, in the medium-long term and given sufficient financial resource and capacity, the PBP should consider the possibility of funding such activities via regional calls for proposals supported by RCRPOs.
- The PBP should **in the medium-long term consider the potential for RCRPOs to play a role in enhancing the focus of existing locally managed avenues of EC financial support to peacebuilding** activities.

## 5.2 Specific recommendations in relation to dialogue

- **Dialogue and consultations should ideally take place in Brussels, in Member States and where possible at the Delegation level and engage the broadest range of actors**, including field-based participants and other PBP partner groups, eg. UN and regional organisations.
- RELEX A/2 should **as a first step consider funding a network to undertake the strategic management of the dialogue and to provide a helpdesk and repository of best practice** working in close collaboration with the Commission and existing initiatives and bearing in mind the issues highlighted section 2.3.2.
- In the future, support could be provided to **networks at the regional level**, with the support of the RCRPO, that can engage in dialogue in the context of the PBP and link with the global network.

- **A three pronged approach to dialogue** should be taken, that takes on board best practice highlighted within this report, with:
  - Consultations in relation to strategic documents and programming (including future CfPs)
  - Consultation around priorities and policy issues in relation to thematic issues
  - Geographic or crisis specific consultations

### 5.3 Recommendations on the operational and financial issues

- As a first step, launch an **open call for proposals through a Direct Centralised Management procedure for the funding of a network** to manage the dialogue.
- A **global call for proposals should then be launched, preferably by a third party, for funding further capacity building support** preferably through Indirect Centralised Management (see below).
- **Regarding the NSA (and also SA) funding**, the proposed and recommended alternative would be to transfer the management to a Member State Agency, or (better) to a Consortium of Member State Agencies, such as EUNIDA.
- The **potential for launching future local and regional calls for proposals should be explored with the Delegations**. This is subject to sufficient resources and budget, so not for immediate implementation, but to be thought in the future. This is recommended in the long term.
- While various EC framework contracts exist, it is not certain that they respond to the exact needs of the PBP. To create a specific one would probably be difficult and take a quite long time. If required (and decided), it seems to be preferable to use the existing ones, as far as possible (and according to the needs of the PBP and possibilities offered by the existing EC framework contracts), and to **create a framework partnership agreement**.
- If creating a framework partnership agreement, this one would be designed for the specific needs and "ambitions" of the PBP, could involve NSAs, and could be mobilised for short and/or long term assignments. Because of the human resources and budgetary constraints, this is not an option for the time being. This could be envisaged once the CfPs' management has been transferred to a third body (which means year 2 or 3, if we consider the current year as year 1), and could probably be envisaged through this third body.
- Adjustment of the Guidelines and Application forms (which have been initially designed for development projects) being very limited, **adaptation of the evaluation grids** to the exact needs and specificity of the PBP outlined in this report should be done.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> However, it is recommended to adapt the evaluation grids to the exact objectives and needs of each call. Some of these adjustments are possible directly through an official endorsement by the Authorising Officer, and examples are provided in the attached annex C, some others will probably request a derogation to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. It is almost impossible to assess which kind of derogations will be needed, as they depend of specific issues which will appear when designing the guidelines - which means once priorities will have been defined, and these are probably different from one year/region/theme to another.

- The **rationale for the operational modalities of the PBP should be clearly communicated with partners**, particularly around the use of CfP and the limitations around operating grants and core funding, in order to assuage any misunderstanding and confusion with respect to the nature of support available.
- As a priority, **more human resource should be dedicated to the strategic and administrative management** of the PBP within RELEX A/2. The implementation of these recommendations is indeed contingent on sufficient resource being available.

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## Annex 3: Activities related to peacebuilding

<b>Activities related to peacebuilding</b>	
<p><b>Socio-economic foundations of peace</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Balanced physical reconstruction</li> <li>- Sound and equitable economic management</li> <li>- Equitable distribution of benefits from poverty reduction programmes</li> <li>- Promotion of gender equality</li> <li>- Equitable access to health care, education, social services and safety nets</li> <li>- Repatriation/reintegration of refugees and IDPs</li> <li>- Employment and social inclusion projects</li> <li>- Sustainable and transparent use of (and equitable access to) natural resources</li> <li>- Practical projects aimed at promoting contacts and understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>A Culture of justice, truth and reconciliation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dialogue among conflicting groups (elites)</li> <li>- Dialogue for change of attitudes/perceptions</li> <li>- Grassroots dialogue/negotiation</li> <li>- Relationship-building among conflicting groups</li> <li>- Enhancing dispute resolution systems</li> <li>- Prejudice reduction/diversity training</li> <li>- Trauma healing</li> <li>- Transitional justice processes/war crimes trials</li> <li>- Reparations</li> <li>- Future visioning</li> <li>- Capacity-building/conflict skills training</li> <li>- Peace education/conflict resolution education</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Democratisation/electoral processes</li> <li>- Civil society development</li> <li>- Freedoms of press, expression, etc.</li> <li>- Media development/conflict sensitisation</li> <li>- Improved access/power sharing</li> <li>- Participatory processes, transparency, government accountability</li> <li>- Rule of law/access to justice</li> <li>- Human rights monitoring, protection, development</li> <li>- Governance and anti-corruption programmes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Security and Access to Justice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- De-mining campaigns</li> <li>- Small arms and light weapons reduction</li> <li>- Demobilisation, disarmament and Rehabilitation (DDR) of (ex-)combatants, soldiers</li> <li>- Security sector reform (police, military, intelligence...)</li> <li>- Community policing</li> <li>- Peacekeeping</li> <li>- Nonviolent interposition/observers</li> <li>- Nonviolent accompaniment</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from the "Utstein palette" (Smith, 2004), p. 27-2

