



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Activity: PAX - Protection of Civilians Programme (24-0000508)

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Key data

Activity basics

Type	Standard
Short name	PAX - Protection of Civilians Programme
Contract party	Stichting Vredesbeweging Pax Nederland (30031325)
ODA	Yes
Amount EUR	25000000
Start date	01-04-2024
End date	31-12-2031
Full name	PAX - Protection of Civilians Programme (2024-2031)
Summary	The programme (part of the DSH-SBK Contributing to Peaceful and Safe Societies 2024-2031) aims to achieve more proactive and inclusive protection and reduced civilian harm through working with civilians, authorities, and institutions—individually and together, from the grassroots level to the international—by raising awareness, implementing practical policy changes, and developing shared approaches to common people-centred security concerns. The theory of change pursues four interconnected outcomes: insight, influence, capability, and solidarity. The programme combines country work in South Sudan, Iraq, Burkina Faso, Yemen with international policy influencing and learning with the aim that (inter)national policy and practice become more reflective of civilians’ experiences and priorities, and conflict-affected communities can better hold powerholders to account for delivering people-centred security.

Activity details

Date of receipt of proposal	21-12-2023
Proposal’s reference number	
Budget holder	DSH (8141DSH)
Limit access	No
Related activity	

Accounting data

SAP application number	
Funds center	DSH Legitimate stability central grant (1704U03010003)

Policy data

Aid modality	Other program-based aid
Technical assistance	Less than 10 % of the activity budget
Beneficiary location	Worldwide
Division of budget	
Burkina Faso	13.5 %
Iraq	25 %
Yemen	3.5 %
South Sudan	18 %
Undefined	40 %
Total	100 %
CRS code	15220 Civilian peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution
Policy Keywords	
Refugees & host communities	No
Policy Markers	
Biodiversity	Not targeted
Climate change: adaptation	Not targeted
Climate change: mitigation	Not targeted
Desertification	Not targeted
Equality between men & women	Significant
Good Governance / participation	Principal
Human rights	Principal
Explain your choices	Strengthening the relationship between people and communities and the governments responsible for their protection are at the core of this programme. These issues are both principally related to Good governance and inclusive participation, as well as Human Rights/ human security. The programme will significantly address equality between men and women by integrating and addressing gender aspects of Protection of Civilians.

Policy Appraisal

Policy relevance

Security and Rule of Law

Security and Rule of Law (SRoL) is one of the spearheads of Dutch development cooperation implemented by DSH/VR. It is an important building block for achieving the main goals of the Dutch development cooperation policy, as outlined in the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation's policy document "Do what the we do best" (2022). These main goals are: addressing the root causes of poverty, terrorism, irregular migration and climate change, and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In line with SDG 16, the overarching objective of the Dutch SRoL policy as laid down in its Theory of Change (SRoL ToC, 2023) is to contribute to peaceful, just and inclusive societies by empowering people and groups to work towards these goals themselves. Three themes are identified in the ToC as a focus for SRoL activities contributing to SDG16 : (1) security for people, (2) rule of law and people-centered justice, and (3) Peacebuilding and inclusive governance. The perspectives and needs of people, as well as their empowerment and resilience, stand front and centre in the SRoL programming approach. In this, the Netherlands works throughout the conflict cycle – before, during and after violent conflict – and in situations of long-term fragility, utilizing an adaptive, conflict-sensitive and locally-led approach.

Contributing to Peaceful and Safe Societies 2024-2031 Grant Policy Framework

The Contributing to Peaceful and Safe Societies grant policy framework 2024-2031 (CPSS) was published in november 2023. CPSS activities address one of two SRoL ToC policy sub-themes: (1.i) security for persons and communities, or (3.ii) peacebuilding and conflict mediation. The activities consist of two components, linked together by integrating a learning loop: 1) evidence-based policy influencing targeted at relevant stakeholders at the local, national, regional, and international level; and 2) country-level adaptive, locally led programming.

Because CPSS is funded out of the centrally DSH/VR managed SRoL budget, the outcomes of the proposed activities should transcend country-level outcomes and have a broader scope of application (i.e., they should also be applicable in other countries). The results of the proposed country-level adaptive, locally led programming should expressly be used to enhance the evidence base of effective policy and programming (i.e., knowledge and experience related to the relevant policy theme and working methods in fragile and conflict-affected states), thus strengthening the learning loop as a basis for effective policy influencing and more effective programming. The design of the grant programme has taken into account lessons learned about working in fragile and conflict-affected states, and enhancing SRoL impact in these complex contexts,[1] and contains several **innovative** elements relative to previous SRoL grant programmes:

- Emphasis on providing **prolonged** support to organisations that **specialise in the relevant policy themes**, relying on the knowledge and expertise of the organisations in question (**outcome-level orientation**);
- Emphasis on efforts that revolve around learning and intermediate adaptations (**adaptive programming**);
- Emphasis on **locally led** activities, both in terms of design and execution;
- Emphasis on strengthening policy influencing based on insights derived from the implementation of country-level activities (**learning loop between policy and programme outcomes**);
- Emphasis on outcomes that transcend the country level (**departure from country-level orientation**);
- Emphasis on results that are within the applicants' span of control (**modesty and realism**).

Learning and innovation are central elements in the activities undertaken under the grant programme. Partners are to use the grant to: (i) further develop their methods for addressing security for persons and communities, or peacebuilding and conflict mediation; (ii) further develop their methods for implementing a learning loop both within and between policy influencing and programming activities at the country level (adaptive programming); and (iii) continue to foster locally led development in their work (programming and policy influencing).

DSH/VR has contracted a learning partner[1] to support the Ministry in its own monitoring, evaluation and learning objectives at the grant programme level by drawing lessons from each of the activities undertaken under the Grant Programme. The learning partner will harness the insights gained from the MEL efforts conducted as part of the programmes by implementing organizations themselves, and will facilitate a regular series of learning events that focus on bringing the implementing organisations and relevant stakeholders within the Ministry together to jointly exchange insights and experiences. The MEL section of this assessment further elaborates on agreements.

In total ten applications were selected: three contributing to theme 1.i (CIVIC, PAX, Nonviolent Peaceforce), four contributing to theme 3.ii peacebuilding (GPPAC, PeaceDirect, Search for Common Ground, Mensen met een Missie) and two contributing to theme 3.ii mediation (Berghof Foundation and DAG). During the assessment of CPSS applications a thorough process was followed scoring applications on 12 criteria. This activity of PAX, the subject of this BEMO, was awarded a grant following the result of the tender assessment phase. This BEMO will formalize this assessment and will also draw on the assessment texts.

Theme 1.i: security for people and communities

This activity of PAX was submitted under theme 1.i, security for people and communities. CPSS activities under this theme aim to contribute to programmes that support efforts by persons and communities to break violent conflict cycles and thereby reduce the levels of violence and fear of violence. These programmes include: community security programmes, including efforts to enhance the interface between demand for, and supply of, security (through, for example, strengthening protection of civilians policy and practice); and, programmes aimed at strengthening personal and community conflict management behaviour and mechanisms (through, for example, unarmed civilian protection). For both types of programmes, the Netherlands is committed to gender-responsive and inclusive security mechanisms, mental health and psychosocial support, and the promotion of nonviolent conflict resolution pathways and infrastructures

Assessment

The proposal of PAX aligns with the SRoL policy and in particular theme 1.i. The activities also supports the Dutch Protection of Civilians (PoC) policy commitment. This commitment follows from article 90 of the Dutch Constitution and is reflected in Dutch foreign policy as a whole. PoC lies at the interface of human rights and security, as indicated in the 2012 policy memorandum 'Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict', the Integrated International Security Strategy and the 2013 letter to parliament on human rights, 'Justice and Respect for All'. Among other points, the PoC policy memorandum addresses the Netherlands' priorities in these areas: conflict prevention, joint action with partners, the integrated approach, gender and ensuring sufficient capacity in missions. The Netherlands has embedded PoC in the assessment framework for constitutionally mandated letters to parliament on the deployment of military units abroad, the so-called 'article 100 letters'. The Netherlands has identified PoC as a policy priority within its UN Peacekeeping interventions and has endorsed the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians.

Rationale

One quarter of the world's population live in fragile or conflict-affected situations (FCAS) and conflict rates are rising globally. With interlinked tensions caused by factors like increasing capabilities of non-state actors, large-scale displacement, high-intensity urban conflict, and climate change-related resource scarcity, conflicts will likely grow in number and intensity. Security providers responsible for meeting these challenges at various levels lack sufficient norms, policies, and practices for delivering adequate and civilian-centred protection. PAX's approach is to work on these complex, interconnected problems at all levels because it is the only way to influence policy and behaviour that meaningfully improve outcomes for civilians in conflict. Appropriate responses to the many reverberating effects for persons and communities requires sustained, inclusive approaches, and constant learning and adaptation.

Given conflict's changing nature, the impact to which PAX will contribute is that civilians living in FCAS are better protected against conflict's immediate harmful effects and can engage with and shape institutions that facilitate people-centred security in the longer term. The strategic programme objective is:

- *"To achieve more proactive and inclusive protection and reduced civilian harm through working with civilians, authorities, and institutions—individually and together, from the grassroots level to the international—by raising awareness, implementing practical policy changes, and developing shared approaches to common people-centred security concerns."*

The PoC programme works uniquely at the grassroots level and nationally in FCAS (Iraq, South Sudan, Burkina Faso, Yemen), strategically connecting these to the international level. PAX and partners work as advocates, practitioners, and convenors to ensure that international policy becomes people-centred, and that conflict-affected communities can better hold powerholders accountable. Below is a summary of our four main desired outcomes and their corresponding approach.

Intervention strategies

The anticipated long-term outcomes of this programme are (1) to achieve more representative, accountable, capable, and responsive (in)formal institutions that are empowered to improve PoC (agency) and (2) better, well-evidenced and more people-centred policies and behaviours are displayed by powerholders at all levels (action).

Foster mutually-supportive partnerships between affected civilians, their communities, partner organisations in focus countries and (inter)national institutions (solidarity);

- Build an evidence base on PoC themes based on the experiences and perceptions of civilians living in conflict (insight);
- Leverage partnerships and evidence to affect (inter)national security policymaking, operationalisation, and implementation (influence); and
- Contribute to improving the capacities of security institutions, authorities, and civil society to both supply and demand effective, inclusive protection (capability).

Joint assesment form Q10 concludes: The working method and its benefits, lessons learned and relevance to the proposed objectives and outcomes is excellently described and sufficiently covers all requested elements. PAX convincingly shows how their institutional working method is fit for working in FCAS and that they already have done so in the past. PAX shows combining working on the ground with communities with working on policy influencing on national and international levels. As for how they will strengthen this in the future, PAX shows that they will do this iteratively throughout the process.

Throughout the supportive documents the working method is excellently substantiated, and shows coherence with the proposal. PAX convincingly shows in their showcases that they have successfully applied their institutional working method in former

programs. In their vision PAX shows how they will use their institutional working method in their proposed program, but don't discuss how they plan to develop and improve this in the future. PAX makes a logical connection between PAX experience with their institutional working methods with how they plan to apply this in the proposed program, but their vision on the future is missing besides having an "iterative" approach no further ideas are developed.

Joint assesment form Q1 concludes: The analysis describes all the elements of the problem analysis and statement logically related to the policy theme security for persons and communities. It is clear what policy influencing wants to accomplish based on insights gained at the country level. PAX makes a thorough analysis of both the general problem that they want to tackle and the more specific problems in the 4 different contexts where they want to work. They also make a logical connection between these problems and their objective.

The analysis of the problem logically results in the chosen objective is very logical and well explained. A deeper reflection on the limitations of the influence of PAX is missing, because the actions described are specific in nature and show built-in reflection on influence the realism is assessed as present (see outcome "influence"). PAX convincingly argues that their objective is realistic and within their sphere of influence.

Joint assesment form Q2 concludes: The proposed programme is very well designed and coherent across the various expected elements. PAX makes a logical and clear connection between the objective and the foreseen results/outcomes. These outcomes are realistic and most of them also within the sphere of influence of PAX.

PAX gives a decent overview of the assumptions underlying their intervention. However, they forget to go into their own role in the ToC and the assumption that they are the right organization to be involved and are the organization that can make the most of a difference. Also, the assumptions as written in the ToC are difficult to test. Assumptions regarding the relevance of the work of PAX and its partners in terms of the need felt by targeted populations to work on these issues and improve them, and the acceptance of PAX and partners to consequently work on these issues are not referred to.

Contextual analysis

Joint assesment form Q1B concludes: The problem definition is very complete. The applicant mentions relevant actors and stakeholders throughout their proposal. However, they often write 'EU, AU and other actors' or 'and other relevant member states', without going into specifics. Limitations faced by relevant actors are limitedly addressed.

Joint assesment form Q4A concludes: PAX provides a thorough overview of the operational contexts where the activities will take place, going over the relevant situation, history and actors. PAX also makes a strong connection between these contexts and their proposed activities. They however don't present an analysis of relevant psychosocial dimensions, only some mention of being trauma informed, making the element of MHPSS missing. In the analysis and throughout the proposal the power and political-economic analysis is not made explicit. Therefore this criterium is assessed as decent.

Added value

The Dutch government supports security for people and communities efforts with the objective of contributing towards peaceful, just and inclusive societies, as is captured in the Security and Rule of Law (SRoL) policy and programming. The Netherlands' added value is to focus on adaptive and locally-led development, a key objective of the Grant Policy document. In addition, the Netherlands' profile on and objective on (international) human rights, justice and accountability, as well as conflict prevention, peacebuilding and mediation, adds value to the Security and Rule of Law field.

PAX contributes to this approach by ensuring that interventions are people-centered, built around the needs of civilians and communities themselves. The PoC programme works uniquely at the grassroots level and nationally in FCAS, strategically connecting these to the international level. PAX and partners work as advocates, practitioners, and convenors to ensure that international policy becomes people-centred, and that conflict-affected communities can better hold powerholders accountable. PAX also engages with like-minded organizations whose work is directly affected by or intersects with peacekeeping and protection of civilians, including other DSH PoC partners CIVIC and NP.

Lessons learned

Key lessons learned that PAX will take forward in the next stage of programming on national-level policy influencing include the following:

- Meaningful policies on PoC and accountability to civilians is context-specific, but requires frequent, sustained, and inclusive community engagement, as well as honest two-way dialogue between authorities and civil society about needs, capacities, priorities, and limitations.
- Once trust is established with security institutions, it is possible to generate openness to (and even demand for) civil society to provide technical expertise and unique perspectives to mainstream people-centred security concepts and to build capacity to deliver more effective protection.

Key lessons learned that PAX will take forward in the next stage of CHM programming include:

- Reliable and accurate data is necessary but not sufficient for catalysing substantial policy change. Policy influencing also requires careful relationship management, risk sharing, timely engagements, acknowledgement of available resources, and sustained efforts to share lessons learned and best practices.
- Centring civilian voices and realities at the highest levels of international policymaking can be deeply powerful but requires unique access and credibility with a wide range of stakeholders. On the other hand, research findings and community engagement outcomes also need to be actively utilised and made operational for advocacy and action in order to not be wastefully extractive.

Durability

Joint assesment form Q2B concludes: Considerations of sustainability are substantiated in terms of results (short and long term) having a lasting effect as the actions and indicators proposed show an ambition that results are integrated into the actions and processes of the target groups. Sustainability is mentioned a few times and PAX shows with o.a. their long-term outcomes of agency and action how they want to be their results to be sustainable and embedded in local communities.

Gender and inclusivity

PAX aims to understand and contribute to transforming power relations that drive conflict and violence, such as unequal gender roles, relations, and norms. PAX takes a participatory approach to understanding individuals' and communities' potential exposure to conflict and enhancing the power they have to affect the protection environment. People-centred security requires understanding the differences in experiences and priorities between different genders, ages, ethnicities, livelihoods, etc. Further, people have multiple, layered identities and experiences of oppression that may compound and intensify each other, and which are structural rather than individual.

A focus on gender instead of women highlights the relational and systemic aspect of institutional discrimination, oppression, and violence, and also reflects the important and gendered effects of conflict on men and boys. The current PAX gender policy¹ focuses on two key elements: 1) understanding and addressing harmful gender norms and masculinities as drivers of conflict, and 2) ensuring women's meaningful (political) participation, especially in contexts where they play a leading role in nonviolent action and grassroots peace and security movements. PAX's approach focuses practically on inclusion on multiple levels:

- Employing HR policies and staffing practices to recruit and maintain individuals with di-verse backgrounds, genders, ages, and experiences who bring distinct perspectives.
- Programming gender-sensitively as a minimum, with an aim to take a gender-trans-formative approach where possible, through explicit approaches to inclusion and diversity, with a focus on women and youth, in programme activities by design to generate disaggregated data, enhance claim-making capacity of underrepresented groups, and improve accessibility to decision making structures.
- Building partnerships with diverse organizations and experts, ensuring those closest to the communities in which the programme works are non-sectarian and represent a range of groups in society, and that diverse perspectives are also engaged within national governments and international institutions.

Joint assesment form Q6 concludes: The programme is based on an inclusive method and design, all these elements are described. PAX shows that inclusivity is of paramount importance in their proposed program. Their interventions are build upon the idea that local voices and community driven solutions are and should be the foundation of all their work. The analysis of the position of women and young people, their barriers and specific challenges are, although named, not addressed in detail throughout the proposal warranting a lower score.

The showcases show an inclusive approach and its effects. In the showcases PAX convincingly shows how they included local voices in every part of their programming. Gender and youth issues are touched upon in passing, but not deliberated on. The vision on inclusivity and gender approaches is strong. The connection between experiences, vision and proposed programming is strong, although the "how" of a more gender-specific approach is not elaborated on in the proposal and showcases.

Climate change

Specific attention to the impact of climate change on human security will feature in both research and international advocacy. PAX describes that with interlinked tensions caused by factors like increasing capabilities of non-state actors, large-scale displacement, high-intensity urban conflict, and climate change-related resource scarcity, conflicts will likely grow in number and intensity. For instance, climate change and broken environmental governance capacities are critical throughlines and conflict drivers in all four focus countries. While issues like water scarcity and flooding have different contextualised effects (like in Yemen or the Sahel), these dynamics have profound impacts on human security conditions and will inform topical advocacy efforts nationally and internationally. Climate change is mentioned in relation to security and resources in the country context analysis of the proposal.

Coordination, harmonisation and alignment

PAX is accustomed to coordinating with a wide range of actors in SRoL countries to make its work impactful, inclusive, and conflict-sensitive. Together with partners, PAX coordinates with civil society, and security and governance actors at local and

national levels. This is to ensure the programmes complement each other's work, can hold each other to account, and work towards sustainable solutions collectively. Built into the structure of the programme is the facilitation of a global community of practice and interest on PoC, through efforts like the annual PoC Conference as well as other more specific public and expert events on the sidelines of international policy-making fora; operational coordination with likeminded organizations; and actively engaging with peers across DSH's SRoL framework through the proposed learning trajectory.

PAX's PoC work is also intrinsically linked to policy-influencing efforts at the international level, including with the MFA; relevant regional and multilateral institutions as well as their ancillary missions and commands; and bilateral countries interested in championing principles of people-centred security and protection of civilians. Understanding each of these actors' interests, strategies and programmes helps the programme to tailor its own to fill in gaps, push for more radical change where possible, and contribute to reinforcing sustainable outcomes at a system level.

Joint assesment form Q4B concludes: This element of national and international development strategies and programmes is very well explained by PAX. For every separate context/country they write about 'alignment and coordination' with other actors and programs. However, there is no mentioning of other (I)NGOs other than PAX working on these issues. International alignment (and prevention of overlap of activities), or teaming up on policy influencing is not addressed.

Digitalisation

Digitalization is not part of the proposal, and was not part of the tender procedures.

Additional remarks (if applicable)

Conflict-sensitivity (Joint assesment form Q5):

Excellent conflict-sensitive design of the programmes and explicitly addressed in each country context and the risk framework, although psychosocial dimensions are mentioned but not explicitly addressed. PAX doesn't go into possible unintended contributions to conflict in the proposal, however in their risk-analyses PAX gives a clear overview of how they plan to 'do no harm'. PAX emphasizes that they will continually update their conflict analysis using information from the ground.

The showcases do not explicitly address conflict sensitivity, although they do reflect the practice and results of working conflict sensitive. This seeming practice is not made explicit enough. The vision of PAX shows a clear vision on conflict sensitivity. PAX provides a comprehensive overview of their vision on conflict sensitivity, but doesn't go into their plans to develop this further in the future. Although they do put a lot of importance on iterative learning loops, which will ensure learning and developing in the future. There is a logical connection between experiences, approach, lessons and proposed future application of the elements of conflict sensitivity, however conflict sensitivity is not explicitly addressed in a coherent way leading to the assessment of a decent substantiation with a few shortcomings.

Locally-led sustainable development (Joint assesment form Q7):

There is a decent approach to partnerships on equal footing. While PAX has a lot of attention for inclusivity, their ideas on equal partnership are less concrete and specific in their program proposal. Reciprocal accountability mechanisms are not explained, nor the exact nature of the partnerships PAX intends to use or set up. The approach of further localization has good elements though, but these are missing. Risk sharing is very well addressed in the risk analysis and strategy. The budget also shows a decrease in expenditure by local partners and local activities, not supporting an investment in local partnerships.

PAX provides a decent substantiation. One of the showcases (Iraq) clearly states the equal partnership approach used by PAX in terms of content and what the different parties brought to the table. Not in terms of power. PAX shows that they work together with local partners, but doesn't go into detail on how they make sure these partnerships are equal. There is a vision of the roles and developments proposed in the partnership approach. They write that they will transfer power and leadership to partners, not just additional responsibilities. PAX also adds concrete actions they will take to develop this further and increase the role for partners in design and leadership. It is left in the middle what these approaches exactly mean in terms of goals and ambitions of a power-shift and ownership. There is a logical connection made between the showcase, vision and proposed approach, although PAX could have made clearer the specific role definitions, agreements and approach to change in all documents as well as how they have applied equal partnerships in the past.

Adaptive programming (Joint assessment Q3A):

The MEL system is presented in an excellent way. The applicant shows a clear MEL strategy on all the 3 elements including also a 4th, planning. They also go into adaptation, using the ToC to continuously update their pathways of change when new learnings demand so. They also take into account this adaptivity for partners, making sure they too have enough space and opportunities to be adaptive.

Learning loop (Joint assessment Q8):

This approach of the applicant is excellent. The idea of a learning loop is at the center of the applicants proposed programme and ToC. They plan to make adjustments not just when the context changes but also if learned lessons recommend to change something in the program or start/stop certain parts of the program, showing how the locally led approach is adaptive and reinforcing to overall strategy.

Results

Security and Rule of Law

To contribute to building of just, peaceful and inclusive societies, SRoL efforts should strengthen the social contract, which entails a trust and responsibility-based relationship between people and authorities (5) and among communities (6). Authorities have to fulfil the justice and security needs of people (7), including those of marginalised groups. This requires not just 'political will' but also institutional capability (8). Moreover, people and communities need to be included in policy and decision making (2), as service delivery is not sufficient to strengthen the social contract. To strengthen the effectiveness of SRoL efforts, international and local partners need to work coherently across levels and programmes (3) and in a conflict-sensitive manner (4). The MFA, for its part, should use insights from their local engagements and diplomatic work to inform (Dutch) SRoL policies and their implementation (1).

Learning questions

What have we learned from this activity for this policy theme?

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

1. What strategies of cooperation (e.g., frameworks for diplomatic engagement, programming modalities, and partnerships) are likely capable of realising the SRoL outcomes, while (not) dealing with different types of de facto authorities?

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

2. To what extent does a Dutch investment in locally-led sustainable development (LLSD) lead to better SRoL outcomes – and what are concrete and feasible ways to do it?

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

3. How can the Netherlands best support strengthening the link between achieved local level SRoL results, and intended national level and institutional SRoL outcomes?

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

Indicators

Local actors are meaningfully engaged in the process of designing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing SRoL policies and programmes

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

Trust in formal and informal institutions improved

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

Collaboration amongst actors across divides improved

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

1. Security for people and communities

Human security is security as experienced by people, including individual safety, protection from threats, and empowerment. The state has a duty to provide security to people and it should be held accountable in this role.

Learning questions

What have we learned from this activity for this result area?

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

Indicators

8.1. Formal and informal institutions strengthened to better prevent conflict, provide security and justice and sustain social cohesion by working in a more inclusive, responsive, accountable and professional manner

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

9.1. People and communities strengthened their mechanisms to prevent the outbreak, continuation, escalation and recurrence of violent conflict

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

11.1. # of people (SAMDD) trained in the field of SRoL

Measurements:

Description how the activity contributes to the result area, Security for people and communities

Measurements: The SRoL indicators and learning questions will be further developed during the inception phase.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring

□ Specify what reporting information is required for this activity, based on the activity analysis decision tree (see Help). The programme will be monitored and accounted for on the basis of the agreed upon Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy and by means of an IATI dataset. Specific agreements on this will be made in a start-up meeting with PAX. Agreements will be made on the content of reporting and on specific indicators that are to be included within the IATI dataset. Security concerns and potential consequences for IATI reporting will also be discussed and relevant agreements will be made. MEL is a strategic part of programming and provides the evidence and insights needed to apply an adaptive, locally led programming approach (implementing a learning loop) and achieve the outcomes presented in the programme proposal. Based on the start-up meeting, adjustments and additions are potentially required to the initial MEL strategy provided PAX's application. This will be incorporated in the baseline study and report that PAX will submit. The deadline for this baseline study and report will be agreed upon jointly with PAX and the learning partner.

Combined annual progress report + annual plan and budget

Due to the adaptive programming approach and check-ins throughout the year allowing for regular updates on progress towards achieving the agreed upon (intermediate) results, the function and timing of the annual report differs from traditional programming. Emphasis of the annual report lies on explicitly linking progress achieved as well as evidence, insight and knowledge gained to subsequent programming and policy influencing. For this reason the annual progress report is to directly feed into the annual plan and budget as part of a combined reporting cycle. The cycle will look as follows:

- A draft version of the annual progress report (see below for details) will be submitted together with a draft version of the annual plan and budget (see below for details) no later than the 15th of October. The draft documents will be discussed with the MFA during the regular check-in meeting that is scheduled to take place in October/November.
- Taking into account the outcomes of this discussion, the annual progress report, as well as the finalized annual plan and budget, will be finalised and submitted no later than the 20th of January.
- Accompanying the submission of the finalized annual progress report and the finalized annual plan and budget, a preliminary annual financial report will be submitted no later than the 20th of January.
- A finalized version of the annual financial report, accompanied by an audit report will be submitted no later than the 30th of June.

The **annual progress report** firstly summarises adaptations made to the annual plan. It describes what the changes were, why they were initiated, how this was done and what the results were. Second, stories of change focused on results achieved backed up by evidence including data collected via the indicators relevant to the programme are to be included. Over the years these stories can be elaborated upon, based on the latest developments. Third, the progress report includes a presentation of results on agreed upon annual indicators related to the MFA results framework (in a table). Results on multi-annual indicators and lessons learned on the MFA SRoL learning questions can be included when applicable, but should at least be included in the report on year 3 (2026), year 5 (2028) and in the final report (2031). Specific agreements will be made on the MFA SRoL indicators and learning questions during the start-up conversation and might be adapted further once the joint learning agenda has been set by the MFA learning partner.

Building on the quarterly check-in meetings (see below) and the progress report, the **annual plan** and budget focuses on the application of the learning loop and planned policy influencing. The plan describes which agendas and policies, and which main events and arenas will be targeted. This is related to the thematic outcomes and outputs, and the foreseen pathways of change. It is explained how lessons learned from the previous year have been taken into account and will be applied in implementation in the upcoming year.

The **annual budget** will contain an overview of the PAX's estimated revenue (e.g. the grant, the grant recipient's own contribution, funds provided by third parties and interest accrued) and expenditure, where relevant to the subsidised activities. The annual budget will have the same structure as the budget submitted with the grant application. As a rule, the budget should balance. An explanation only has to be provided for budget items that differ from the original budget.

A draft version of the combined report (annual progress + annual plan and budget) will be submitted no later than the 15th of September. You will discuss the draft report with the MFA. Taking into account the outcomes of this discussion, you will finalize the report and submit this no later than the 1st of November.

The final narrative report will include a progress report on the cumulative results achieved, lessons learned, and reflection on learning questions in period 2024 – 2031.

Learning sessions and quarterly check-ins

Following an adaptive programming approach there will be regular quarterly check-in meetings between PAX and the MFA. Focus will be on changes and opportunities related to the programme, foreseen adaptations and it can also be a moment to share intermediate results. Notes of these check-in meetings will feed into the conduct of the required external mid-term review and end

evaluation of the activity (see below for further detail). Precise dates will be set each year, but the quarterly check-in cycle will follow this structure:

- ☐ January/February: Regular check-in.
- ☐ April/May: Check-in during the annual joint learning session organized and facilitated by the MFA learning partner.
- ☐ July/August: Regular check-in.
- ☐ October/November: Check-in on the basis of the draft annual progress report. Based on this check-in, adjustments can be made to the annual progress report which is to be submitted no later than the 20th of January of the subsequent year.

Other accountability requirements

Other accountability requirements include an annual financial report against the submitted annual budget and an annual audit opinion at activity level and a report of findings.

The **annual financial report** must include (an aggregate overview) of all the grant recipient's estimated and actual revenue and expenditure, where relevant to the activities being subsidised, and an overview of prepayments made by the Minister.

The final financial report will accompany the final narrative report.

IATI

Specific agreements on IATI reporting will be made during the start-up meeting, which will also be used to reflect on any security concerns regarding IATI and potential adjustments to standard practice that are required.

PAX will publish the annual progress narrative reports to be submitted for this activity as an International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) dataset in accordance with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' IATI Publication Guidelines.

Evaluation

- ☐ Describe whether a final evaluation and/or a mid-term review has been planned. If yes, state:

Following the start of the activities, PAX will provide the MFA with 1) a baseline study and report in accordance with the IOB quality criteria, 2) an external mid-term review (MTR) in accordance with the IOB quality criteria, and 3) an external end evaluation in accordance with the IOB quality criteria.

These reports will build upon one another (they are not approached as three separate products). The baseline and the evaluations (MTR and end evaluation) will include relevant MFA SRoL indicators and learning questions, to be agreed upon during the start-up meeting. Insights gained during the programme duration from the MFA learning partner (see below) can be grounds for adjustment of evaluation plans to ensure alignment with the overall objectives and working methods of the Grant Policy Framework.

For each study (baseline, MTR and end evaluation), PAX will submit a draft ToR to the MFA, allowing the MFA to provide iPAXut before finalizing the ToR. The ToRs have to be approved by the MFA. The MFA will provide feedback on the draft reports. All final reports will be shared with the MFA learning partner as iPAXut for evaluation of the overarching Contributing to Peaceful and Safe Societies grant programme.

Baseline study

PAX will provide a baseline study and report ultimately in March 2025, in accordance with IOB quality criteria, which outline the reference values for the quantitative and qualitative outcome indicators that will be used. Relevant learning questions will be identified in report. The exact planning and timeline for the baseline study (including date of submission) will be discussed and agreed upon during the start-up meeting.

The baseline study and report will include 1) reflecting on issues discussed during start up meeting, 2) an operationalized and budgeted MEL-strategy and plan, 3) a refined results framework with qualitative and quantitative indicators including baselines, targets and methodological notes.

The deadline for the baseline study and report will be discussed with both PAX and the learning partner.

Mid-term review

PAX will provide an external mid-term review (MTR) in accordance with the IOB quality criteria. This MTR will be informed by baseline study and the ToR needs to be approved by MFA. The MTR will include reflection on relevant outcomes and learning questions. The deadline for the MTR is Q4 in 2028. Deadline in Q3 of 4 2028 to allow proper preparation for the learning partner evaluation scheduled in 2029.

Final evaluation

PAX will provide an external final evaluation (in March 2032) in accordance with the IOB quality criteria. This end evaluation will be in line with and informed by baseline and MTR and the ToR needs to be approved by the MFA. The end evaluation will include reflection on relevant outcomes and learning questions.

The deadline of the final evaluation will be March 2032 for the learning partner to allow proper implementation of the learning partner's overall final evaluation.

Learning

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will contract a learning partner beyond the scope of this grant framework to support the Ministry in its own monitoring, evaluation and learning objectives for this grant programme. The Ministry's MEL objectives will focus on learning at the overarching grant programme level by drawing lessons from each of the individual programmes awarded funding under the Grant Policy Framework.

The learning partner is expected to harness the insights gained from the regular MEL efforts conducted by you and the other organisations that have been awarded grants. For this reason, PAX is required to share MEL products related to the activities for

which the grant is intended with the MFA learning partner, as iPAXut for the meta-analyses that will be conducted by the MFA learning partner. Further details on this will be discussed and agreed upon during the start-up meeting.

The learning partner shall establish and facilitate a regular series of learning events that will focus on bringing the organisations that have been awarded grants together to jointly exchange insights and experiences. These learning events are expected to take place once a year in April/May in one of the SRoL focus countries. To participate in these learning events, PAX included a fixed budget of €30,000 per year to cover the related costs (i.e., time / staff capacity, travel and accommodation). By including this fixed budget in your application, PAX committed to participating in the regular learning events. Further details on this will be discussed and agreed upon during the start-up meeting.

The MFA learning partner will use the first six to nine months of their contract (starting 1 July 2024) to (i) identify the MFA's learning questions for the overarching grant programme in consultation with the organisations that have been awarded grant funding; (ii) develop a concrete plan for operationalising these questions and organising a series of learning events; (iii) coordinate with the organisations that have been awarded grant funding and determine which of their indicators align with the indicators in the Ministry's SRoL results framework; and (iv) identify which indicators within the Ministry's SRoL results framework can be monitored to help answer the Ministry's learning questions for the overarching grant programme.

In addition, the learning partner is expected to conduct a mid-term review (MTR) and a final evaluation of the Contributing to Peaceful and Safe Societies grant programme as a whole (building on the MTRs and final evaluations that will be conducted by the organisations that have been awarded grant funding), as well as other necessary MEL initiatives relevant to the Ministry.

Overall assessment

As concluded in joint assesment form Q3: The MEL system of the applicant is presented in an excellent way. The applicant shows a clear MEL strategie on all the 3 elements including also a 4th, planning. They also go into adaptation, using the ToC to continuously update their pathways of change when new learnings demand so. They also take into account this adaptivity for partners, making sure they too have enough space and opportunities to be adaptive. MEL is integrated in the budget to support to designed MEL plan.

Finance

Budget breakdown

- ☐ Include an overview of the activity budget, including overhead costs.

See attachment. The budget is structured along the mandatory budget model. See Sophia for the overview of the model budget, including the model budget by year, result, and country.

The Dutch contribution (only contribution) to this programme consists of two components. (1) country-level adaptive, locally led programming which must make up between 60% and 75% of the total budget; and (2) evidence-based policy influencing, which must make up between 25% and 40% of the total budget. PAX has allocated 40% of the budget to evidence-based policy influencing, and 60% of the budget to country-level adaptive locally led programming.

- ☐ Is the budget arithmetically correct?

Yes

- ☐ Are the amounts/rates in the budget acceptable?

Yes

- ☐ Briefly explain the structure of the budget.

PAX submitted a budget in accordance with the mandatory budget model request in the tender documents. This includes:

- ☐ I. Direct staff costs, A. staff costs for non-local personnel, B. Staff costs for local personnel of applicant, C. Programme activity costs, including project management costs, D. External: consultants and advisers
- ☐ II. Other direct programme costs, A. Activity-related travel costs, B. Project office costs, C. Activity-related equipment and investment costs, D.1 External accountability activities (mid-term review, final evaluation and auditing), D.2 Programmatic Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (executing the learning loop of the Contributing to Peaceful and Safe Societies 2024-2031 grant programme), D.3 Costs to participate in the learning trajectory partner
- ☐ IV. Overheads / indirect costs applicant

The budget assessment of PAX reads: *"The budget is decent. It is quite international staff heavy in terms of costs, and heavy on Iraq expenditure in terms of budget towards country-specific activities. It does not become clear from the budget how for example the ambition of including local voices at international tables will be facilitated. It is also interesting to note that costs of local partners and activity costs decrease over the project implementation period. With regard to their locally led approach, they however plan to spend a lot more on non-local personal than on local personal, which is not in line with how they claim to work locally led."*

- ☐ Are overheads proportional to outputs? What is included? What is recharged?

Yes, overheads are proportional in accordance with requirements of the tender procedure. PAX has applied an indirect cost rate of 15% for PAX costs based on its current rate. The overhead/indirect costs consist mainly of salaries of supporting staff, office consumables, utilities, supplies. Indirect costs are calculated based on the actual indirect cost rate of the last financial year and as an estimate for the upcoming years.

- ☐ Is implementation conditional on the budget being amended in an inception phase? (Specify the requirements that the budget must satisfy and the date by which the budget must be amended)

No.

Earmarking

- ☐ Is the Dutch contribution to the programme earmarked (i.e. reserved for a specific purpose)? If so, specify the reasons why.

Yes, the Dutch contribution is earmarked for the project proposed under the Grant Policy Framework.

Prepayments

- ☐ Based on the prepayment decision tree (see Help), do the payments need to be entered as prepayments and why? In the case of a lump sum, assess this against the applicable criteria and give the reasons for your choice.

Prepayment of maximum 12 months. Prepayments under the Uniform Grant Framework (USK); For grants worth €25,000 or more, prepayment is linked to an updated liquidity forecast (valid for no more than 12 months) that should be submitted at fixed points in time, together with the annual report. Payment then will be made within six weeks.

- ☐ What is the maximum percentage that can be paid as prepayment, and why?

95% of the total budget can be paid as prepayment.

NB: This is a grant for 8 years, with a beneficiary with no own funding for activities. Using the 95% prepayment would mean that year 8 financial means would possibly only become available after closure of the activity, which would possibly have as an effect that activities in the final year can not be financed. This needs to be considered based on liquidity and expenditure of the running programme in determining the final (8th) year of implementation pre-payment.

- ☐ Which are the reporting obligations on the basis of which prepayments can be closed?

Narrative and financial reports, and an annual audit report including a report of findings.

Available resources

	Foreign currency	EUR
Implementing organisation's own contribution		-
Firm commitments by other donors (for each donor)		-
Dutch contribution		25.000.000,-
Total available resources		25.000.000,-
Budget needed		25.000.000,-
Still to be financed		0
Soft commitments by other donors (for each donor)		-
Uncovered balance		0

- ☐ Are there any non-financial contributions relevant to implementation of the activity, such as deployment of volunteers, availability of buildings, materials, etc.?

No.

- ☐ If there is an uncovered balance, how will this affect implementation of the activity (e.g. proportional reduction in outputs, omission of regions) and how will this affect the decision whether to fund this activity?

No.

Grant with a repayment obligation, loans, equity investment or guarantee

- ☐ Does the Dutch contribution take the form of a grant with a repayment obligation, a loan, an equity investment or a guarantee (either in whole or in part)? If yes, briefly set out the consequences for accounting and how correct processing in the financial records will be ensured.

No.

- ☐ Are there revolving funds? If yes, please explain what will happen to any residual funds, how closure will take place and which agreements should be made.

No.

Audit opinions

- ☐ Is an audit opinion required for the activity (see Help)? Briefly explain.

Yes, for activities totalling EUR 5 million or more, an audit opinion on the financial statements is mandatory. As the risk analysis shows medium to high risk an audit on the project expenditures will be included in the audit protocol, which will be finalized and discussed with PAX after the Grant Decision has been sent.

- ☐ Should the audit opinion be accompanied by an additional auditor's report (for example, on the risks set out above, or on monitoring that the organisation carries out on its prepayments to other organisations)?

Yes, the audit opinion should include a report of findings by the auditor. Specific requirements will be detailed in the audit protocol that will be shared with PAX before 1 July 2024.

