



MULTI-COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL FINAL EVALUATION

Building Peace from the Inside: Supporting Insider Mediation for Sustainable Transformation of Conflict

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Carried out by: Bodhi Global Analysis

Table of Contents

Abbreviations

5

1

1. Executive Summary	7
I.a Programme Background	7
I.b Evaluation Purpose and Use	7
I.c Methodology	8
I.e Key Findings and Conclusions	9
2. Background Information	11
II.a Introduction	11
II.b Programme Overview	12
3. Methodology	14
III.a Evaluation Objectives	14
III.b Data Collection and Analysis	14
III.c Limitations	18
4. Literature Review	20
IV.a State of Insider Mediation	20
IV.b Best Practices	21
5. Programme Country Context Assessments	32
V. a Burundi	32
V. b Niger	34
V.c Zimbabwe	36
6. Findings	38
VI.a Mapping	38
VI.b Selection Criteria	41
VI.c Capacity Building	45
VI.d Practice (types of conflicts and approaches)	54
VI.e Networks	58
VI.f Institutionalisation of IMs	62
VI.g Programme Management	66
7. Conclusions	72

VII.a Mapping	72
VII.b Selection of Mediators	72
VII.c Capacity-building	72
VII.d Practice	72
VII.e Networks	72
VII.f Institutionalisation	73
VII.g Programme Management	73
7. Recommendations	74
8. Appendices	80

Abbreviations

CENAP	Centre d’Alerte et de Prévention des Conflits
EU	European Union
I4P	Infrastructures for peace
IDI	In depth interview
IPLG	Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance at Africa University

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HACP	Haute Autorité à la Consolidation de la Paix
IMs	Insider Mediators
IPLG	Institute of Peace Leadership and Governance
KII	Key Informant Interview
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MR	Médiateur de la République
NPRC	National Peace and Reconciliation Commission
SFCC	Search For Common Ground
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1. Executive Summary

I.a Programme Background

According to the Global Peace Index, Niger, Burundi and Zimbabwe have similar levels of peacefulness scores, being ranked 137th, 129th and 133rd on the 2021 GPI respectively.¹ While facing different types of conflicts, from interpersonal to larger political conflicts, local and national mediation structures in all these countries are engaged in peacebuilding and conflict transformation efforts to address root causes of instability, insecurity and crises deeply rooted in political history. These three countries fulfil contextual prerequisites for the development of insider mediation. Both Burundi and Niger rank low on the Human Development Index,² and have conflict-affected areas that are largely inaccessible, providing opportunities for informal mediators to compensate for the lack of capacities and resources of the state. In Zimbabwe, the state suffers from a lack of legitimacy, which has enabled civil society organisations engaged in national dialogue efforts to flourish. The insider mediation context in these three countries varies significantly, with identified insider mediators mostly working at Track 3 level in Burundi and Niger and at Track 1.5/2 in Zimbabwe, but they also share some similarities, including exclusion of youth, and need for capacity building and networking opportunities. In Niger and Burundi, exclusion of women in mediation initiatives is also a shared characteristic. In addition, these three countries represent conflict contexts that are of strategic priority to the EU and are considered hard-to-reach for EU actors, due to political or other constraints.³

In this context, in January 2020 Search for Common Ground (Search) and its consortium partners - International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace), Berghof Foundation Operations GmbH (Berghof), and Centre d'Alerte et de Prévention des Conflits (CENAP), and Institute of Peace Leadership and Governance (IPLG) started implementing the programme "Building Peace from the Inside: Supporting Insider Mediation for Sustainable Transformation of Conflict", funded by the European Commission. The programme has been implemented across three countries, Burundi, Niger and Zimbabwe, and aimed at contributing to national efforts for peace and stability in these countries through training

¹ Institute for Economics & Peace (2021). *Global Peace Index 2021: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*. Sydney, p.10. Available at: [GPI-2021-web-1.pdf \(visionofhumanity.org\)](#)

² UNDP (2020). Latest Human Development Index Ranking. Available at: <https://hdr.undp.org/en/content/latest-human-development-index-ranking>

³ Provided documentation: Proposal Narrative_Insider Mediators FINAL, p.3.

and supporting insider mediators, in the continuity of the European Union's approach to insider mediation support.

I.b Evaluation Purpose and Use

In December 2021, Bodhi Global Analysis was contracted by Search to undertake a final evaluation of Search, and its consortium's Insider Mediation for Sustainable Peace Transformation of Conflict programme in Burundi, Niger and Zimbabwe. The purpose of this mixed-methods evaluation was to:

- Evaluate the programme's relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and coherence taking into account the specific contexts;
- Contribute to the existing literature and EU/UNDP guidelines on IMs;
- Formulate recommendations for the EU on how to successfully engage with IMs based on lessons learned and results from the programme's implementation in the three target countries, as well as draw from the collective experience of the partners beyond the programme geographies.

I.e Key Findings and Conclusions

I.e.i Mapping

The programme produced country-specific mapping. The mapping exercise was an invaluable activity, and was used throughout the programme period. The mapping contributed to ensuring a component of conflict sensitivity and relevance to context, while facilitating subsequent activities (e.g., engagement strategy and IM selection). In particular, this exercise facilitated the recognition of context-specific definitions of mediation, with an approach rooted in contextual realities and socio-cultural sensitivities. This was reflected in the findings from the survey as all surveyed IMs in Niger and Burundi completely agreed or somewhat agreed that the activities were designed with their community's needs in mind. Future practitioners would do well to adopt the integrated localised and participatory mapping and identification process.

I.e.ii Selection of Mediators

A total of 244 IMs were selected in the three countries, 80 in Niger (23 women), 120 in Burundi (50 women and 14 of the 120 are national-level mediators) and 44 in Zimbabwe (25 women) respectively. IM selection was aligned with best practice; through an inclusive and participatory approach, the programme successfully mobilised mediators with high potential to affect change. The partners in the three countries hit the target of 30 percent

women's participation set at the beginning of the programme. However, cultural barriers served as an obstacle to broader women's inclusion in Niger and to youth participation in all three countries. Ultimately, this phase of the programme allowed the consortium partners to identify three overarching selection criteria, namely: skills and experience, diversity, and community acceptance.

I.e.iii Capacity-Building

Capacity building activities were conducted with 219 IMs, 79 members of the police forces in Burundi received training and 515 community members on the Ombudsman request. Additionally, the Institution of the Ombudsman in Burundi received training, upon request. Capacity building participants found the component valuable, and believe it contributed to an improved ability to conduct mediation activities. That said, IMs believe they would benefit from further capacity building, both expanding new themes and increasing complexity of existing efforts (i.e., progressive capacity building).

Providing specific capacity building workshops to key external stakeholders, such as government officials, or inviting them to attend the training session for the IMs, in an observer capacity, was found to be a good practice that facilitates experience and skills sharing, and fosters collaboration building between IMs and external actors. Other lessons learned regarding the capacity-building component of this programme include the need to ensure diversity in the group of participants to the training, the need for a continuous training programme, for thematic and profile-specific sessions, and for the development of a unified basic mediation training structure across the consortium partners.

I.e.iv Practice

IMs were successfully mobilised and directly contributed to positive peace outcomes through various approaches. Specifically, IMs identified and worked on the mediation of 45 conflict cases in Niger and 4 in Burundi. These mediation sessions were supported by 25 solidarity activities in Niger and 16 sensitisation activities in Burundi. These, in turn, directly resulted in both conflict mitigation and conflict resolution in Burundi and Niger. These supporting activities were designed specifically to adapt to the local contexts and needs in these two countries and proved to be beneficial for social cohesion. Although the partners have limited ability to monitor the medium to long term impact of these programme activities, the IMs are best positioned to follow-up on the sustainability of their action on an informal basis, as they remain in close contact with their communities and the parties in conflict.

I.e.v Networks

Networking efforts illustrate signs of progress; however, capitalising on established networks requires further effort. That is, the programme was successful in establishing peer networks, with IMs proactively engaging these networks. However, IMs did not find these networking efforts sufficient, expressed a need for more formal space for experience sharing between IMs, both at the national and supranational (cross-countries) levels. Moreover, the programme faced challenges in connecting local mediators to supra-national actors and a key lesson learned was that including members of existing mediation structures, both formal and informal, among selected IMs at the onset of the programme, and inviting other stakeholders to the IMs' activities, are good practices to bridge the gap between grassroots and higher level actors.

I.e.vi Institutionalisation

The programme has been successful in building relationships with relevant institutions, with local, regional and national authorities in Niger, and Burundi, actively integrating with IM activities. That is, local authorities and regional authorities actively participate in IM activities, and national authorities follow these activities and play an advisory role. In Niger, specifically, the relevant authorities, namely the Médiateur de la République and Haute Autorité à la Consolidation de la Paix, are actively advocating for legal recognition to be given to the IMs. Both in Burundi and Niger, IMs still lack full institutional acceptance or de jure recognition which highlights the fragility of the newly established links with institutions and highlights the need for reflection on what the best approaches to sustainability are, in each context.

I.e.vii Programme Management

The programme was relevant to targeted communities, and advanced implementing partners/donor priorities. While the consortium faced challenges in the early stages of the programme with implementation management and processes, these challenges have been addressed, well-placing the consortium for a second phase. However, establishing joint M&E systems proved challenging due to differences in context, types of activities, and stakeholders. Specifically, aligning the logical framework to the programme logic, and with implementation processes, requires further work for Phase II.

2. Background Information

II.a Introduction

Despite the change of leadership in 2020 the situation in Burundi continues to be characterised by poor governance, human rights violations, and weakened rule of law and justice system.⁴ Socio-political divisions, exacerbated by the effects of the 2015 crisis, are an ongoing challenge in Burundi.⁵ Land ownership issues remain a key driver of conflict, between neighbours, and between landowners and the state.⁶ While local actors are often better placed to mediate tensions and find potential solutions at the local and national levels they lack a platform to coordinate their efforts and increase their effectiveness. In addition, women and youth remain largely excluded from mediation processes, lacking the skills and platform to engage in conflict transformation efforts, although efforts have been made to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions.⁷ High rates of youth unemployment also constitute a driver of instability in the country, with Burundian youth lacking development opportunities, in turn increasing their vulnerability to political manipulation, and fuelling the issue of “youth league” militia forces.⁸

In Niger, the security situation remains volatile, especially in the Diffa, Tahoua, and Tillabéri regions, with increased attacks from non-state armed groups.⁹ Located within the Sahel region, Niger is also impacted by the instability in neighbouring states such as Mali and Burkina Faso. Societal tensions along ethno-religious lines also stifle social cohesion in the communities, and add to the complexity of the ongoing armed conflict, with militant formed militias targeting specific groups and communalising their fight.¹⁰ The influx of refugees from Nigeria, and internal displacements caused by the Boko Haram crisis, have put additional pressure on already scarce resources. In addition, the health state of emergency declared on March 27, 2020 put additional pressure on the economy and civilians’ livelihoods.¹¹ Youth are particularly vulnerable to social marginalisation, exclusion,

⁴ BTI (2022) . BTI 2022 Country Report-Burundi, pp.12-14. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/BDI#pos5>

⁵ Ibid, p.29.

⁶ IOM (March 11, 2021). Burundi Crisis Response Plan 2021. Available at: <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/burundi-crisis-response-plan-2021/year/2021>

⁷ BTI (2022) . BTI 2022 Country Report-Burundi, p.25. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/BDI#pos5>.

⁸ Ibid, p.3 and 26.

⁹ International Crisis Group (February 2022). Latest Updates - Niger. Available at: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/march-alerts-and-february-trends-0#niger>

¹⁰ ACLED (June, 17, 2021). Sahel 2021: Communal Wars, Broken Ceasefires, and Shifting Frontlines. Available at: <https://acleddata.com/2021/06/17/sahel-2021-communal-wars-broken-ceasefires-and-shifting-frontlines/>

¹¹ BTI (2022) . BTI 2022 Country Report-Niger, p.4 and 7. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/NER>

and radicalisation. Women and girls are also among the most marginalised community members and systematically excluded from decision-making processes, constrained by conservative traditional structures.¹² In addition, in this context, informal methods of conflict resolution are weakened as the role of traditional leaders is threatened by community militias and armed groups' leaders. However, as Niger is the least developed country in the world, as per the latest Human Development Index ranking¹³, and the administrative capacity of the state is limited beyond Niamey,¹⁴ IMs can play a key role in compensating for the state's lack of capacity and resources to reach more rural areas, and fill the gap created by the absence of a functioning legal system.

Suffering from mismanagement and corruption, Zimbabwe is facing deep-rooted political, social, and economic challenges. The current crisis is largely rooted in the transition process following the forced resignation of President Robert Mugabe in November 2017. The crackdown on protests accompanying the 2018 elections highlighted the divisions and tensions in Zimbabwe. Since then, activists continue to be abducted and tortured, without arrest of perpetrators. While the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) established in 2013 aimed to provide an institutional framework for social dialogue on justice, reconciliation, and peaceful conflict resolution, ongoing abuses by security forces have undermined its credibility and the population's trust in its efficacy. Ideas about how a national dialogue should be set up differ as the government wants the NPRC to coordinate the dialogue process, while other actors such as the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) have also tried to mediate between different actors by initiating a separate national dialogue process with the participation of women and youth.

II.b Programme Overview

In January 2020 Search for Common Ground (Search), and its consortium partners - International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace), Berghof Foundation Operations gGmbH (Berghof), and Centre d'Alerte et de Prévention des Conflits (CENAP), and Institute of Peace Leadership and Governance (IPLG)¹⁵ commenced its 'Building Peace from the Inside: Supporting Insider Mediation for Sustainable Transformation of Conflict' programme, a 28-month¹⁶ endeavour funded by the European Commission. The programme has been

¹² BTI (2022) . BTI 2022 Country Report-Niger, p.13. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/NER>

¹³ UNDP (2020). Latest Human Development Index Ranking. Available at: <https://hdr.undp.org/en/content/latest-human-development-index-ranking>

¹⁴ BTI (2022) . BTI 2022 Country Report-Niger, p.13. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/NER>

¹⁵ While not originally part of the consortium, IPLG joined later as a partner in July 2021.

implemented across three countries: Burundi, Niger and Zimbabwe. In particular, the programme targeted key actors at the local, national, and regional levels in those countries, including state and non-state actors, and semi-formal mediation structures, with the overall objective of contributing to national efforts for peace and stability in target countries. Below are the objectives of the programme, with the associated expected results and the activities that were planned and implemented to achieve them:

Table 1: Objectives, results and activities of the programme¹⁷

Specific Objectives	SO1 Strengthen local and national capacities for conflict transformation by leveraging insider mediation capacities and processes within existing or potential national peace infrastructures.		SO2 Support the EU in consolidating and further strengthening its approach to and operationalisation of insider mediation support.	
Expected Results	ER 1.1 Insider mediators have enhanced conflict transformation capacity by increasing knowledge and skills in conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation.	ER 1.2: Insider mediators in target countries are provided with enhanced opportunities and mechanisms for conflict transformation and mediation processes.	ER 2.1: Insider mediators are provided with opportunities to effectively connect with other insider mediators on a local and national level.	ER 2.2: Insider mediators receive increased support from peers across borders and other actors involved in EU-supported peace processes.
Corresponding Activities	Activity 1: Mapping of insider mediation processes, actors, challenges, and support (all countries) Activity 2: Capacity-development and structural support	Activity 3: Opportunities to apply insider mediators' skills and knowledge	Activity 4: Connect insider mediators on a local and national level	Activity 5: Strategic networking and cross-border activities

¹⁶ The project was originally intended to be 24-month long, but was prolonged for 4 additional months.

¹⁷ Provided Documentation: Revised Logframe

3. Methodology

III.a Evaluation Objectives

Bodhi Global Analysis was contracted by SFCG in December 2021 to undertake an evaluation of SFCG, and its consortium’s Insider Mediation for Sustainable Peace Transformation of Conflict programme in Burundi, Niger and Zimbabwe. The purpose of this mixed-methods evaluation was to:

- Evaluate the programme’s relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and coherence taking into account the specific contexts;
- Contribute to the existing literature and EU/UNDP guidelines on IMs;
- Formulate recommendations for the EU on how to successfully engage with IMs based on lessons learned and results from the programme’s implementation in the three target countries, as well as draw from the collective experience of the partners beyond the programme geographies.

III.b Data Collection and Analysis

This mixed-methods evaluation was structured along the consortium’s evaluation questions (EQs), which were also used by the consortium to track progress in the programme’s logframe. Each evaluation question has corresponding sub-questions and indicators, logically arranged to ensure all elements of the evaluation objectives were addressed.

III.b.i Evaluation Criteria

Table 2: Evaluation questions and data sources - OECD criteria

Evaluation Question	Data source				
	Programme Documentation	Consortium partners	Donor Staff	External Stakeholders	Beneficiaries
1. Relevance					
To what extent was the overall strategy of the programme relevant for the context of insider mediation in the three countries?					
To what extent was the overall strategy of the					

programme relevant to the needs and priorities of boundary partners?					
To what extent was the intervention logic/overall strategy relevant in pursuing the programme's mission?					
2. Coherence					
To what extent did the programme work with and complement the efforts of other peacebuilding actors and relevant government and international institutions (including the EU)?					
To what extent did the programme synergise its activities and strategies with other mediation programmes, and programmes funded by the EU?					
To what extent did the programme activities and results complement and contribute to other peacebuilding programmes implemented by consortium members in the three countries?					
3. Effectiveness					
Are the key actors from the target countries and local authorities strengthened in their capacity for conflict transformation?					
Were capacities within local and national peace infrastructures strengthened through the contribution of IMs?					
What progress has the programme made towards progress markers and expected outcomes?					
4. Efficiency					
To what extent have the programme's strategies and activities been sufficient for meeting expected outcomes?					
How did the programme adapt to changes in the context and emerging challenges during programme implementation?					
To what extent do the programme partners have the sufficient capacities to achieve the programme outcomes?					
What areas of capacity strengthening are needed to elevate programme implementation?					
5. Impact					

What are the intended and unintended effects of the programme?					
Do the IMs have a better understanding of existing platforms for peace and stability?					
Are the IMs able to actively engage with these other avenues?					
6. Sustainability					
Will the key actors of the programme be able to continue to work together to contribute to national efforts for peace and stability in target countries?					
Will the IMs be able to continue their work after the programme ends?					
7. Cross-Cutting					
To what extent has the programme integrated gender and youth considerations into the programme's strategy? Plus how effective has this been?					
To what extent does the programme adhere to the principles of Do No Harm and employ conflict sensitivity while implementing and adapting the programme strategies?					
To what extent was the programme effective and responsive in managing risks that were anticipated and/or encountered during programme implementation (i.e. security, regional tensions, political space management, etc.)?					

Additionally, in order to address key learning objectives, the evaluation team also created a second evaluation matrix (see Table 5, in Annexes), which follows the structure of the programme design, and is reflected in the structure of this report. More precisely, this report is structured along the six main programme activities. The six activities include: (1) Mapping, (2) Selection Criteria, (3) Capacity Building, (4) Practice, (5) Networks and (6) Institutionalisation. Under each section named after these activities, the following points are discussed:

- **Assets:** What structures or resources have been put in place?
- **Results and Impact:** What have been the results and impacts of this activity?
- **Challenges:** What challenges were faced and what measures were taken to

overcome them?

- **Opportunities:** What opportunities have been identified, how have they been integrated and how can they be further exploited?
- **Lessons Learned:** What are the best practices and lessons learned ?
- **Women and youth:** considerations are integrated throughout.

In addition, a '**Programme Management**' section relates to processes within the consortium.

III.b.ii Data Collection

Using a mixed methods approach, the evaluation drew on data collected through:

In-depth document review: 93 documents, including contracts, donor reports, activity outputs and reports, budgets, results frameworks, reflection meeting notes, etc.

39 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and In Depth Interviews (IDIs) with programme staff, primary beneficiaries and stakeholders

11 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with primary and secondary beneficiaries, and stakeholders

Quantitative survey with 96 primary beneficiaries

The data collection in the field in Niger was conducted by Bodhi's M&E lead, supplemented by a translator. In Burundi, fieldwork was conducted by Bodhi's M&E specialist, also accompanied by a translator. KIIs regarding implementation in Zimbabwe were conducted entirely remotely by Bodhi's team members.

In-depth document review - Search provided programme documents (listed in Table 6, in Annexes), which were reviewed by the evaluation team. Evidence from the documents were entered into a desk review matrix against the study EQs. These documents included baseline tools and the corresponding report, MEL data collection instruments, activity reports, monitoring outputs, etc. The findings from the desk review also informed the development of the evaluation matrix and data collection instruments.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with stakeholders and primary beneficiaries - KIIs were conducted in English and French with key stakeholders identified with input from the consortium partners. Discussion guides were developed based on the desk review, and

were approved by the consortium partners following an iterative review process. Core discussion guides were tailored to stakeholder type and specific respondents.

KIIs were conducted with 28 stakeholders (see table 7 in Annex), including:

Consortium partner's staff (Search, Interpeace, CENAP, Berghof and IPLG): 11 KIIs

Primary beneficiaries (IMs): 13 KIIs (7 in Burundi, 1 in Niger and 5 in Zimbabwe)

Local partners (representatives of national institutions: the Office of the Ombudsman in Burundi, the Haute Autorité à la Consolidation de la Paix (HACP) and Médiateur de la République (MR) in Niger): 3 KIIs

External stakeholders: 1 KII with staff from a relevant intervention in Niger.

In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) with stakeholders - IDIs were conducted in English and French with programme staff working at the technical level and secondary beneficiaries (i.e., those benefiting from IM activities) identified with input from the consortium partners. Similar to KIIs, discussion guides for IDIs were developed based on the desk review, and were approved by the consortium partners following an iterative review process. Core discussion guides were tailored to stakeholder type and specific respondents.

IDIs were conducted with 11 stakeholders (see table 8 in Annex), including:

Consortium partner's technical staff: 7 IDIs

Secondary beneficiaries: 4 IDIs in Burundi with representatives of provincial authorities and national institutions

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with participants - A total of 11 FGDs were conducted across 2 locations; Kayanza in Burundi, and Niamey, Niger. The FGDs' aim was to assess participants' and stakeholders' perspectives on the programme's relevance, impact and sustainability. FGD participants were chosen from target profiles (i.e., respondent types) using convenience sampling. FGDs were conducted with the following respondent types:

Primary beneficiaries (i.e.,IMs) :

In Burundi: IMs in Kayanza (mixed gender)

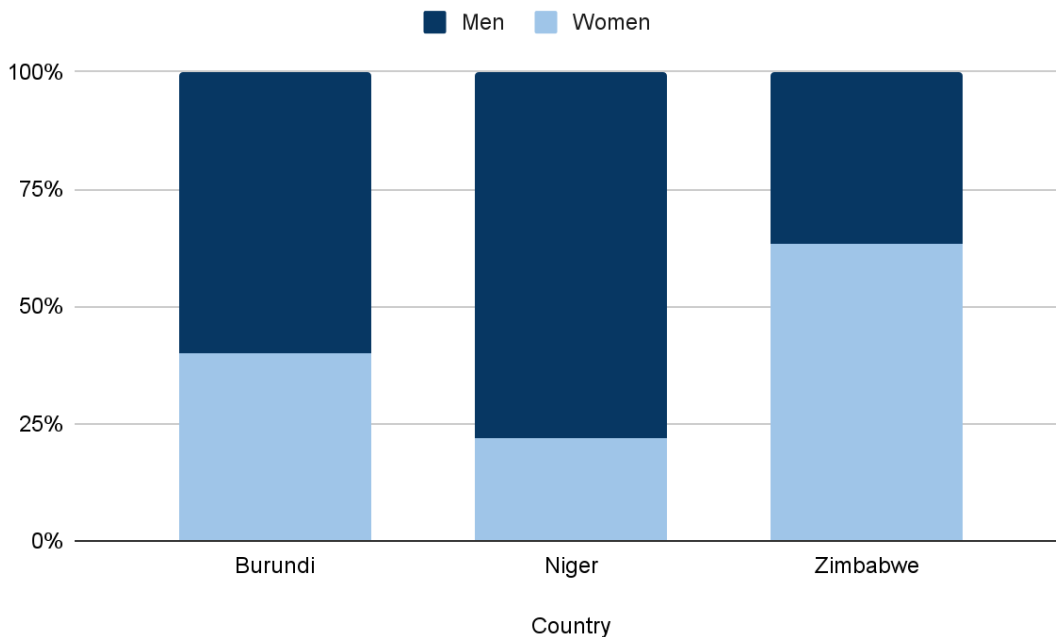
In Niger: IMs in Abala/Tébaram, and IMs in N'guigmi/Toumour

Secondary beneficiaries (i.e., those benefiting from IM activities):

In Burundi: 3 groups of civilians (1 group of original land owners, 1 group of women stakeholders in a social conflict, and 1 group of men stakeholders in a social conflict).

In Niger: 2 groups of civilians (one in Abala/Tébaram and one in N'guigmi/Toumour), 2 group of mayors/chef (one in Abala/Tébaram and one in N'guigmi/Toumour), and 1 group of MR delegates (Abala/Tébaram).

Quantitative Survey with Insider Mediators - The evaluation team implemented a quantitative survey (implemented using remote mobile data collection) with IMs of the 3 countries. The survey was distributed to all IMs via Whatsapp groups for Niger and Burundi, and via email for Zimbabwe. A total of 96 IMs filled the survey (39 percent of women and 61 percent of men):



III.b.viii Data Analysis

These data sources were analysed against the evaluation matrix, which served as this report's analytical framework. That is, analysis was structured to address the evaluation questions and sub-questions. The evaluation team conducted qualitative analysis, mapping key themes and content onto a findings, conclusions and recommendations matrix. The team also produced descriptive statistics of the quantitative data. Data analysis utilised triangulation throughout, to verify consistency of findings across different respondent types.

III.b.ix Ethical considerations

Measures were taken to adhere to 'Do No Harm' principles to ensure the safety of the participants. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and that they may end participation at any time. They were encouraged to ask any questions that they may have about the study before giving consent. They were informed that they may skip any questions that they did not feel comfortable answering.

III.c Limitations

Recall bias - After an extended period, some respondents' recall of IM activities may have faded. Informants may have had difficulty accurately recalling programme changes and innovations, since the evaluation covered a multi-year period.

Response bias - Informants may have formed their responses based on personal motivation rather than the most accurate information. Certain respondents may be incentivised to offer positive responses because they benefit from IM support.

Data gaps - Key informants from early stages of the programme were not accessible, as were key stakeholders (e.g., EU delegations in all countries), which could have limited the depth of information available. This is the case for police officers (including provincial commissioners), and administrative officials who benefited from training on mediation techniques in Gitega and Bujumbura who could not be interviewed due to authorizations procedures.

Inability to conduct fieldwork in Zimbabwe - Due to Covid-19 related travel restrictions, the evaluation team was unable to travel to Zimbabwe to conduct face to face data collection. The evaluation team mitigated this challenge through conducting data collection remotely.

4. Literature Review

IV.a State of Insider Mediation

As a concept, 'Insider Mediation' can be traced back to Wehr and Lederach's research on the Esquipulas peace process in Central America, which challenged the then mainstream conceptualisation of mediation that roots the mediator's effectiveness in externality, neutrality and impartiality (i.e., the 'outsider neutral').¹⁸ Wehr and Lederach observed the existence of a mediator role that emerges from within the conflict situation, which they deem the 'insider partial'. The 'insider partial' derives authority from its centrality to the conflict, through occupying the position as a knowledgeable and trusted community member."¹⁹ Wehr and Lederach's early definition was echoed in the contemporary version proposed by the UN Development Programme's guide 'Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence' (2020), which defines insider mediator(s) as:

"an individual or group of individuals who derive their legitimacy, credibility and influence from a sociocultural and/or religious – and, indeed, personal - 'closeness' to the parties of the conflict, endowing them with strong bonds of trust that help foster the necessary attitudinal changes amongst key protagonists which, over time, prevent conflict and contribute to sustaining peace. IMs are driven by personal conviction and dedication to the cause and have a vested interest in the outcome."²⁰

While in 2013, Roepstorff and Bernhard called insider mediation in peace processes "an untapped resource", the actual and potential role of Insider Mediators (IMs) in peacemaking is now better understood.²¹ As argued by Wehr and Lederach, IMs, far from being antagonists to the outsider mediators, intervene in a complementary way to supplement external mediation efforts.²² The notion of complementarity between insider mediation processes and more traditional mediation has become widely integrated by the international community, driven by the increasing prominence of the 'local turn' in peacebuilding. This turn reflects a developing body of mediation literature, which

¹⁸ Wehr, Paul and Lederach., John Paul, (1991). Mediating Conflict in Central America, *Journal of Peace Research* 28(1), p.86.

¹⁹ Wehr, Paul and Lederach., John Paul, (1991). Mediating Conflict in Central America, *Journal of Peace Research* 28(1), p.87.

²⁰ UNDP (2020). Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence.

²¹ Roepstorff, Kristina and Bernhard, Anna (2013). Insider Mediation in Peace Processes: An Untapped Resource? *Sicherheit Und Frieden (S+F) / Security and Peace* 31(3).

²² Svensson, Isak and Lindgren, Mathilda (2013). "Peace from the Inside: Exploring the Role of the Insider-Partial Mediator. *International Interactions* 39(5).

recognises the importance of maximising local ownership of conflict transformation processes.

Reflecting this developing understanding of the importance of local processes, international actors increasingly emphasise their role in supporting peacebuilding and conflict resolution at local levels. To that end, engagement with IMs is now included as part of the mediation toolkit of international stakeholders such as the EU. For example, the Peace Mediation Guidelines that accompany the new Concept on EU Peace Mediation recognises the importance of multi-track coordination and inclusion, emphasising that “through their local connections and credibility, [IMs] can enhance the reach of EU mediation support in contexts where external mediation is more difficult.”²³ This guidance therefore recommends that a mapping of local peace actors should be undertaken during the conflict analysis, which should include IMs.²⁴ Under this guidance, engagement with IMs has become a precondition for successful mediation endeavours, with guidelines stating that:

“The EU can be considered successful when it builds support for a peace process, enhances process design and strengthens dialogue infrastructures, advises and capacitates mediators, empowers insider mediators and promotes the inclusion of marginalised groups.”²⁵

The literature on Insider Mediation continues to broaden, thus further pushing reflection on the scope of IMs’ capacity to solve various types of conflict. For example, in a recent article, Mohammed Ibrahim Shire explores the idea that clan elders in Somalia can act as valuable IMs to help overcome the stalemate between Al-Shabaab and the Federal Government of Somalia.²⁶ The role of IMs in urban peacebuilding is also being explored.²⁷ For example, in the context of the master planning processes for the ‘urban redevelopment’ of the neighbourhoods Basateen al-Razi and Qaboun in Damascus, Syria, Merve Kania highlighted that collaboration and in-/direct support for ‘insider mediators’ stand out²⁸. She further argues that IMs are promising actors to support as part of

²³ ISPD (2020). Peace Mediation Guidelines, European Union - External Action.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Shire, Mohammed Ibrahim (2021). Dialoguing and negotiating with Al-Shabaab: the role of clan elders as insider-partial mediators, *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 15(1), pp. 1-22.

²⁷ Wennmann, A. / Jütersonke, O. (Eds.) (2019). *Urban Safety and Peacebuilding: New Perspectives on Sustaining Peace in the City*. London: Routledge.

pragmatic ‘hybrid approaches’ to conflict resolution and that therefore:

“the facilitation of exchange mechanisms for things such as peer-learning among ‘insider mediators’ and an open invitation to include them in the formal mediation processes facilitated by the international community should be explored and integrated with the top-down political pressure mechanisms the US and EU enact.”²⁹

IV.b Best Practices

An increased interest in the potential of IMs has contributed to increased and multiplied efforts to engage with them at different levels, and through different strategies. Several studies led by leading international organisations explore opportunities to strengthen collaboration and complementarity between international organisations and actors involved in insider mediation processes. The UN Development Programme’s guide “Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence” (2020) is a comprehensive guide for developing IM engagement strategies. While it calls for continuous updates and development, this guide constitutes a useful point of reference for practitioners which builds on lessons learned and good practises developed through various programmes. Other organisations such as the OSCE also contribute to this body of knowledge on mediation-support structures by observations from interventions, including in Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. Continuing the EU’s support for insider mediation, this Building Peace from the Inside programme further contributes to guidance on local mediation. In particular, this programme offers insight on how insider mediation can work in hard-to-reach strategic priority areas to the EU. It incorporates lessons learned from the joint UNDP and EU programme “Building and Consolidating National Capacities for Conflict Prevention”, and further identifies conflict transformation strategies that work across different conflict contexts by strengthening regional collaboration and disseminating best practices and lessons learned across countries.

IV.b.i Context Requirements for Supporting Local Mediation

IM’s engagement and legitimacy are highly influenced by conflict context, and therefore must be considered when determining programmatic support to insider mediation. The OSCE IM guidance states that:

²⁸ Kania, Merve (2021). Forging Peace in Damascus: On International Aid, Localized Elite Bargaining, and Insider Mediators, *Journal of Illicit Economies and Development*, 2(2).

²⁹ Ibid.

“...in socio-political conflicts, insider mediation can be observed in some specific contexts and when some basic premises are met. [...] A general trait in such contexts is that people communicate indirectly and non-confrontationally in conflict, with face-saving (the need to maintain a good self-image by not admitting mistakes) being important.”³⁰

In particular, insider mediation is usually observed:

- in traditional, collectivist, and high-context societies or social groups,
- in contexts where the state and governance structures are too weak to deal effectively with conflict,
- in contexts of asymmetric armed conflicts, where both state and non-state armed actors may see an insider as the most trustable mediator.³¹

In order to assess the power dynamics and gender relations that shape and constrain options for engagement with IMs in these various contexts, UNDP GN recommends engaging in rigorous context analysis as the first step of an IM engagement strategy so that this strategy is “informed by a shared understanding of perspective, actors and dynamics.”³² Following this guidance, context-driven programming is paramount in order to avoid unintended negative consequences resulting from disconnection between programming and context appropriateness.

Country selection for this programme took into consideration the above-mentioned contextual prerequisites. The three countries chosen constitute conducive environments for insider mediation, with pre-existing formal and traditional mediation mechanisms, within a collectivist society. Moreover, both Burundi and Niger rank low on the Human Development Index,³³ and have conflict-affected areas that are largely inaccessible. Informal mediation led by traditional leaders and key community actors has played a key role in compensating for weak state and governance structures, unable to deal effectively with conflict. While a local mediation culture is less present in Zimbabwe, national dialogue efforts, led by the Church and a wide range of civil society actors, have been used as a means to address lack of state legitimacy and engage in conflict resolution.

IV.b.ii Selection of Insider Mediators

³⁰ OSCE (2016). OSCE Support to Insider Mediation. Strengthening mediation capacities, networking and complementarity, p.30.

³¹ Ibid.

³² UNDP (2020). Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence, p.56.

³³ UNDP (2020). Latest Human Development Index Ranking. Available at: <https://hdr.undp.org/en/content/latest-human-development-index-ranking>

Wehr and Lederach state that IMs should be selected "...for positive connections and attributes, *for what they are and do: they are close to, known by, with and for each side.*"³⁴ Within this theoretical framework, they identified personal trust as the primary selection criteria for IMs. A key characteristic of IMs is also their position as 'bridge builders' who "nurture shared connections, relationships, and influence horizontally and vertically with non-state, state and international actors across levels and Tracks 1 to 3."³⁵

The UNDP GN includes a useful list of key traits of mediators, which rather than a fixed set of exclusive selection criteria, can better be used as a means to clarify understanding of who IMs are:

- Trusted by one or more parties to the conflict;
- Respected by key stakeholders as a result of their role in society;
- Possess a deep sensitivity to cultural, religious and political differences;
- Serve as nodes or bridge builders, both horizontally and vertically;
- Cultural and normative closeness to the conflicting parties;
- Benefit from influence and authority with the conflicting parties, which gives them unparalleled access;
- Critical behind-the-scenes actors working alone, with other IMs or with international actors;
- Have relationships and reputations, built over time, that put them in a position to influence the conflicting parties;
- Personal closeness to the parties; and,
- High levels of commitment and dedication and strong personal resilience.³⁶

While these traits constitute a basis for identifying potential IMs, and were utilised by the programme during implementation, exact selection criteria depend on the context and must be collaboratively determined. To that end, the UNDP GN states that there is no universal understanding of what an IM is, as it may differ from one context to another and depends on people's perceptions and terminology. That is, "Insider Mediator' is an umbrella term which can be deconstructed and disaggregated. Therefore, practitioners should be open to using terms that IMs themselves feel comfortable with."³⁷ Similarly, there is no fixed definition of what IMs do, and how they 'mediate', as they do not necessarily, or

³⁴ Wehr, Paul and Lederach., John Paul, (1991). Mediating Conflict in Central America, *Journal of Peace Research* 28(1), p.88.

³⁵ OSCE (2016). OSCE support to Insider Mediation. Strengthening mediation capacities, networking and complementarity, p.32.

³⁶ UNDP (2020). Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence.

³⁷ Ibid.

solely, conduct formal, traditional mediation sessions, but rather engage in a wide range of activities to promote peace and peace-related initiatives.

In addition, this process of identification should be based on a consultative process, which includes all stakeholders affected by the issue selected to focus on. IMs derive authority from their legitimacy; therefore, consultations with stakeholders can be used to understand how an IM is assessed as legitimate within a given context.³⁸

In order to conduct the selection of IMs in a participatory and conflict sensitive manner, the programme included participatory identification as a mapping exercise component. Merging the mapping exercise and mediator identification process represents an improvement on best practice guidance. This exercise facilitated the recognition of context-specific definitions of mediation, with an approach rooted in contextual realities and socio-cultural sensitivities. Future practitioners would do well to adopt the integrated localised and participatory mapping and identification process.

For example, in Niger, the identification of mediators within each municipality was undertaken through working sessions with the local authority and traditional chief, as well as regional delegates of the Médiateur de la République (MR) and the HAPC.³⁹ These sessions facilitated identification of criteria for the selection of the most locally-relevant mediators, aligned with the following framework and examples: level of expertise: skills, experience, knowledge; diversity: gender, age, ethnicity; and, community perception: respect, impartiality, integrity.⁴⁰

In particular, the consultative process and ensuing selection criteria highlighted the value of mobilising a diverse selection of mediators, not only diverse in gender, age and ethnicity but also professionally (e.g., representatives of professional associations) or based on their general background. Diverse selection generates confidence and acceptance within the target populations, while facilitating skill sharing within the mediator network.⁴¹ For example, the mobilisation of legal professionals in Burundi improved mediators' awareness of their rights and those of the groups receiving mediation. The diversity of the IM groups also ensured a high-level of acceptability by conflicting parties. Through a consultative

³⁸ UNDP (2020). *Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence*, p.39.

³⁹ Provided documentation: Annex 2 Mapping report - Niger, p.7.

⁴⁰ Written response. Implementing partner. March 2022.

⁴¹ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report, p.4.

process in the phase of identification and analysis of a conflict, the IMs would appoint a lead mediator best suited to lead a particular case.⁴²

IV.b.iii Capacity Building

Following mediator selection, implementers must consider the most applicable and relevant support. While donors have a growing appetite for supporting IMs, the optimal ways in which support can be provided remains vague. For example, in the EU's peace mediation guidelines, it is only broadly stated that "the EU can provide financial support and capacity-building to insider mediators and can also work in a coordinating role with insider mediators in contexts where such approaches add most value."⁴³

Implementers must remain conscious of the fact that capacity building is one tool, or area of support. Over-reliance on capacity building can represent the false assumption that mediators do not have existing capacity, while failure to contextualise capacity building can result in the provision of sub-optimal assistance. UNDP guidance thus highlights the necessity "to ascertain the IMs' pre-existing knowledge of the issues highlighted so that any capacity-building programmes can be tailored accordingly."⁴⁴

Nonetheless, capacity building can be helpful if IMs have expressed a clear need to develop their understanding of a particular topic (eg. mediation, international norms around human rights, conflict analysis, natural resource-related negotiations, gender and masculinity, etc.). Even more important in high context societies, capacity building can provide invaluable opportunities for IMs to share insights and experiences amongst themselves.⁴⁵

UNDP identified other potential elements of an engagement strategy, including: mobilising political support, strategy design, joint analysis, scenario development, intra-group facilitation, logistical support, coaching and mentoring, security support, and media visibility.⁴⁶ Psychosocial support in the form of peer counselling and coaching is also highlighted in the EU mediation guidelines, which outline the increased vulnerability of IMs to a range of psychological and neurological influences during a mediation process.⁴⁷

⁴² KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, February 2022.

⁴³ ISPD (2020). Peace Mediation Guidelines, European Union - External Action.

⁴⁴ UNDP (2020). Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence, p.45.

⁴⁵ UNDP (2020). Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence, p.47.

⁴⁶ UNDP (2020). Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence, p.45.

⁴⁷ ISPD (2020). Peace Mediation Guidelines, European Union - External Action.

Ultimately, the choice of the strategy is determined by programmatic goals. For example, in the context of efforts to rely on insider mediation processes to achieve complementarity with, and strengthen, Track 1 interventions, the OSCE suggest that IMs should be given the opportunity to accompany high-level mediators in their work and learn from their techniques and approaches (i.e. 'shadowing'). In particular, guidance suggests that high-level international mediators could systematically coach IMs, who would in turn "function as sounding boards for external mediators to reflect on their mediation processes and to provide feedback, establish access to certain conflict stakeholders, and provide knowledge of the context."⁴⁸

The IM programme relied on a tailored capacity-building approach, with each partner independently developing the training modules to be provided to IMs in their respective country of implementation. This approach ensured the contextual relevance of the content. For example, a module on information management on social media, rumours and misinformation was developed for IMs in Niger as the issue of fake news was prevalent in conflict-affected communities, in the context of heightened security tensions.⁴⁹ In Zimbabwe, a facilitator from Mozambique was invited to talk of his mediation experience there, and Zimbabwean IMs found it highly relevant to hear from a peer from a neighbouring country.

UNDP also stressed that beyond the choice of the support mechanism for IMs, implementers would do well to ensure that supported mediators are actively engaged in programme strategy development and revision. IMs can serve as a wealth of contextual knowledge, and facilitate changes to the implementation strategy that respond to contextual realities. IMs should be encouraged to actively participate in this learning, by being provided with space for "experience-sharing and reflection."⁵⁰

The IM programme aligned with this best practice, by building time for exchange into the training sessions, in order to encourage experience sharing between IMs from different backgrounds. This proved to be particularly relevant and valuable for IMs in Zimbabwe, as the IM groups were composed of a wide range of actors, including representatives of the church, civil society, the government and the security sector. Some programmatic changes have also been made to reflect the needs and priorities expressed by IMs. For example, in Niger, upon request of the IMs, a refresher training was organised and local partners and

⁴⁸ OSCE (2016). OSCE support to Insider Mediation. Strengthening mediation capacities, networking and complementarity, p.12.

⁴⁹ Provided Documentation: Revised EEU047 Midterm report. p.5.

⁵⁰ UNDP (2020). Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence, p.49.

government administrators were invited to attend in order to further foster mutual understanding between IMs and these actors, and increase experience sharing.⁵¹

IV.b.iv Insider Mediation Practice

IMs' conflict transformation role(s) are influenced by the conflict type, phases and levels.⁵² Increased documentation of cases of conflicts addressed by IMs progressively uncovers the wide scope of IM action. These range from local family-based conflicts to national-level protracted armed conflicts, and disputes between displaced populations and host communities. These different types of cases can be used to identify best practices in specific scenarios, with appropriate and relevant engagement strategies and mediation approaches.

In Niger and Burundi, IMs were provided with opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge through direct mediation activities. Beyond contributing to solving conflicts, these activities also served a social cohesion building purpose, bringing divided communities and families back together. A key best practice of this programme was the development of supporting activities to complement the mediation and dialogue sessions, and further push the peacebuilding agenda. Rather than a common activity for all programme locations, these supporting activities were defined separately for each context and remained flexible, to allow the IMs to conduct activities best suited to addressing the needs of their communities.

In Burundi, IMs identified 'critical themes or entry points' during planning and coordination meetings, which served as the basis for designing activities to be undertaken in their communities as part of their action plans. These self-defined activities included not only mediation sessions, but also sensitisation sessions on different topics, including land conflict, the legalisation of consensual unions to prevent domestic conflicts, gender-based violence in households, and the labour code with local administration, employers and employee representatives. As Burundi is facing an issue of overburdened administrations due to a misuse of legal remedies by the population, awareness raising sessions are particularly effective in fostering behavioural change. They encourage citizens to rely on other forms of conflict resolution, and to trust mediation as a valuable alternative to legal

⁵¹ Provided Documentation: Q4 report template, p.5.

⁵² Mubashir, Mir, Engiellushe Morina and Luxshi Vimalarajah (2016). Tradition- & Faith-Oriented Insider Mediators (TFIMs) in Conflict Transformation: Potential, Constraints, & Opportunities for Collaborative Support, *Berghof Foundation and Finn Church Aid*, p. 5.

action, and ultimately to reduce the volume of complaints. In Niger, the programme promoted IMs' community engagement through mediation and dialogue sessions, and community solidarity activities. A variety of conflicts were resolved, including natural resource based conflicts between herders and farmers, between neighbours due to water passages flooding people's homes, youth-related conflicts, and inter-community conflicts.

In Niger, at the end of a successful mediation session, the mediators, conflicting parties and other key community actors organise a solidarity activity to represent and solidify the peace outcome and foster greater cohesion.⁵³ In a context of ethnic diversity and community and interethnic conflicts, fostering social cohesion and building peace are interrelated goals, hence the relevance of the solidarity activities to reinforce the mediation and conflict resolution process. These solidarity activities included rebuilding of a water point, construction of a collective outdoor space for youth, followed by cultural activities, such as dancing and traditional fighting games, dialogue on the importance of living together, followed by the sharing of a community meal, and community meeting and sharing of messages of peace. The successes and impact of these activities on the mediation process were shared among IMs and consortium members. As a result, IMs in Burundi decided to add cultural solidarity moments at the end of a successful mediation. International actors would do well to pilot solidarity activities in other contexts, to assess their efficacy for local conflict transformation activities; however, resources pose a constraint on mediators' ability to implement such activities.

In Zimbabwe, the strategy adopted to support mediation training was peer to peer engagement. Given the mediation context in Zimbabwe, where mediator engagement happens largely at the Track 1.5 level, the value of this activity lies in bridging the gaps between all the actors involved in different capacities in the National Dialogue. Despite the high number of actors involved in mediation activities, these initiatives lack coordination and peer to peer engagement would enable the establishment of a multi-sectoral platform to bring together leaders from various influential groups and provide them with a space for joint learning.

IV.b.v Insider Mediation Networks

Offering IMs opportunities to connect with peers from other regions or countries is a useful element of an engagement strategy to foster thriving communities of practice and facilitate joint learning.⁵⁴ Despite limitations due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions, this

⁵³ Provided Documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021, p.8.

programme aligned with best practice by offering networking opportunities and providing the space for mediators within and across countries to share their experiences and expertise through video exchanges. For example, in Burundi, a video was produced by CENAP to capture the experiences of the trainees, which could be accessed through a private YouTube channel.⁵⁵ Later, CENAP also produced a video briefly summarising the initiatives undertaken by IMs in the five provinces of programme implementation.⁵⁶ This video was used in experience sharing sessions to allow participants to better engage in the discussion on successes and challenges, and also to inspire them to continue their initiatives.

Videos were also used as a medium for cross-country experience sharing. To create meaningful exchanges between IMs from different countries, videos of mediators sharing their experiences and lessons learned were exchanged between Burundi, Niger and Zimbabwe. Three cycles of videos were produced to create an interactive exchange. The first cycle was an opportunity for mediators from Niger and Burundi to introduce themselves, share their experience in mediation, and ask mediators from the other country questions, with subsequent cycles offering opportunities for the IMs to answer the questions they were asked.⁵⁷ Despite programme delays in Zimbabwe, at the end of 2021, 5 IMs from Zimbabwe also shared their experiences in videos, which were transmitted to the IMs in Burundi and Niger. The video allowed mediators to connect, learn about the types of conflicts other mediators face in other countries and the types of solutions found. This allowed them to identify similarities and differences across borders and improve their mediation skills.

IV.b.vi Institutionalisation of Insider Mediators

The UNDP GN warns about the tendency to focus on institutionalisation as the best option for sustainability as 1) it may lessen the effectiveness of IMs efforts as formalisation “increase their visibility, limit the space for manoeuvring and may make them vulnerable to becoming instrumentalized and politicised.”⁵⁸ 2) it may rigidify their role as “bureaucratisation and professionalisation: in and of themselves they do not assure a higher quality of response in peacebuilding.”⁵⁹

⁵⁴ UNDP (2020). *Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence*, p.47.

⁵⁵ Provided Documentation: Interim Narrative report, p.5

⁵⁶ Provided Documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021, p.10.

⁵⁷ Provided Documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021, p.11.

⁵⁸ Mubashir, Mir, Engiellushe Morina and Luxshi Vimalarajah (2016). *Tradition- & Faith-Oriented Insider Mediators (TFIMs) in Conflict Transformation: Potential, Constraints, & Opportunities for Collaborative Support*, *Berghof Foundation and Finn Church Aid*, p. 12.

One approach to promote sustainability without sacrificing IMs' autonomy is to link IMs with infrastructures for peace (I4Ps), which are defined as "a dynamic networking of skills, capacities, resources, tools and institutions that help build constructive social and political relationships and enhance sustainable resilience of societies against relapse into violence".⁶⁰ I4Ps can take many different forms and are characterised by varying levels of formality or institutionalisation. These I4Ps commit to "continuous learning that tests both practice and theory in order to innovate and adapt"; and, "have a vision and commitment to systemic change that requires cooperative and engaged relationships beyond their immediate offices, programmes or mandates."⁶¹ The work of IMs provides an opportunity to form, expand or consolidate I4Ps.

Whether as part of engagement with I4Ps or independent of them, other initiatives that can enhance sustainability range from encouraging peace budgeting to encouraging continued learning and reflection on the issue of sustainability. Concrete examples include the National Peace Council in Ghana that serves as the institutional centre for "insider mediation" and is responsible for developing a five-year strategy, or the design of a national peace architecture in Togo centred on the roles of insider mediators drawn from the civic and faith-based sectors.⁶² Another example is the signing of the Liliesleaf Declaration in 2013 by the participants of the AIMP (African Insider Mediators Platform) Consultative Conference convened at Liliesleaf in Rivonia, South Africa, which mandated the Secretariat of the AIMP to develop a detailed action plan around four pillars, namely: community of practice, training and capacity-building, direct support to mediation processes and partnership building.⁶³

While acknowledging the risks highlighted above, given the context of the countries of implementation, the consortium opted to strengthen the relationship with local and national institutions to various degrees. The approach to the IM programme's sustainability mainly relied on engagement/partnering with local and national institutions to ensure sustained support for IMs' work. In the context of Niger and Burundi, institutionalisation, in

⁵⁹ Lederach, John Paul (2012). The origins and evolution of infrastructures for peace, *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development Vol. 7, No. 3*.

⁶⁰ Giessman, Hans J. (2016). Embedded Peace. Infrastructures for Peace: Approaches and Lessons Learned, *UNDP/Berghof Foundation/Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*, p.10.

⁶¹ Lederach, John Paul (2012). The origins and evolution of infrastructures for peace, *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development Vol. 7, No. 3*.

⁶² A total of 37 local peace committees in Togo are active and relevant national institutional capabilities are being established. UNDP (2020). *Engaging with Insider Mediators - Sustaining peace in an age of turbulence*, p.70.

⁶³ AIMP-UNDP (2013). Liliesleaf Declaration. Available at: https://peaceinfrastructures.org/Home Documents/African Insider Mediators Platform Consultative Conference - Liliesleaf Declaration/AIMP-UNDP_LiliesleafDeclaration_2013.pdf

the sense of formalising the links between local, regional and national authorities and the IMs, is necessary not only to enhance the credibility and legitimacy of the IMs in their communities, but also to guarantee a source of continued technical and material support to the IMs after the end of the project. In Niger specifically, the programme's approach to institutionalisation included inclusion of the provincial level authorities, which ensured institutional buy-in and created opportunities for meaningful collaboration with authorities.⁶⁴ Given the context of heightened security tensions in Niger, institutionalisation, and close relationships with key stakeholders provided the added benefit of a security framework. In addition, in Zimbabwe, given the higher level of mediation efforts around National Dialogue Processes, building platforms between different mediation structures is highly relevant.

Including members of existing mediation institutions among selected IMs represented good practice, improved capacity, and further fostered national cultures of mediation. In Niger, members of the HACP's local structures, the peace committees, were selected to participate as IMs. In Burundi, each IM group included at least one IM who is part of the provincial authority, and a member of the Institution of the Ombudsman was also selected on the basis of the selection criteria. In addition, providing authorities with training and material support and inviting them to take part in IMs' activities also contributed to building a common commitment to mediation. For example, the Institution of the Ombudsman requested CENAP to train local leaders and mediators supervised by the institution in all 18 provinces. In Niger, Search provided material support to the HACP and its peace committee members, while also engaging with the MR through various workshops, and in Zimbabwe, upon request a training was delivered to a group of commissioners from the NPRC.

The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) is an independent commission constituted under the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act 2013 and the National Peace and Reconciliation Act Chapter 10:32 of 2018, with a mandate to ensure post-conflict justice, healing and reconciliation.

Amongst other functions, the NPRC is entrusted to "i.conciliate and mediate disputes among communities, organisations, groups and individuals".

In Niger, the HACP and Search organised a workshop that included IMs, and the MR to better coordinate on the role of mediation and of each institution. This workshop was

⁶⁴ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report. p.4.

followed by a joint evaluation mission within each of the communes, to understand the level of collaboration between different mediation actors (mayor- peace committee members - MR - chefferie and the IMs) and develop a way in which the IMs can work more formally and effectively with these different structures.

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In Niger, The MR and the HACP are key stakeholders at the local and national level:

The Médiateur de la République (MR) is an independent administrative institution in charge of institutional mediation. Every region has an appointed regional mediator and these delegates coordinate with the IMs for the organisation of the mediation session and community solidarity activities.

The HACP is a governmental institution, whose mission is to foster permanent dialogue between the different communities of the country and build mutual trust, tolerance and respect. It created a number of peace committees across Niger, with some members who were selected as IMs for this programme. The HACP also participates in the planning and monitoring of the activities implemented by the IMs.

Mayors and the chefferie are key local actors supporting the work of IMs:

Mayors are officially mandated to mediate conflicts in their areas of jurisdiction and are the head of the peace committees. As such, they participate in the solidarity activities organised by the IMs and co-sign the peace agreements.

The chefferie refers to traditional leaders who act as informal

The results of this mission were presented and further discussed at the national level as part of a capitalisation workshop. In Burundi, CENAP also invited Ombudsman mediators and other key stakeholders to the IM exchange sessions.

Established in 2010, the Institution of the Ombudsman is an entity that manages mediation processes between the civilian population and the state at the national level.

Under the Constitution of Burundi, its mandate stipulates: receiving complaints and conducting investigations concerning mismanagement and violations of citizens' rights committed by public officials, and making recommendations to the competent authorities.

It is also in charge of mediation between the administration and the citizens, and between the ministries and the Administration and plays the role of observer with regard to the functioning of public administration.

IV.b.vii Gender and Youth Aspects for Insider Mediators

Gender sensitivity is a key principle for engagement with IMs. Good practice for ensuring gender sensitivity involves considering gender in context analysis and in the co-development of the engagement strategy. Most importantly, IMs should be consulted on how best to advance the inclusion of women in the most sensitive, constructive and inclusive manner. Gender sensitivity was a crucial component of the programme, including a focus on ensuring a diverse and gender-balanced pool of mediators by setting a minimum of 30 percent of selected IMs to be women. Further efforts towards meaningful participation of women were made; for example, in Burundi, during the mapping exercise, specific engagements were made with female mediators to better understand their interests and needs relative to mediation. During capacity building, women were able to fully engage in the process, reportedly improving the training experience by bringing in their particular perspectives.⁶⁵

Practitioners are also exhibiting greater consideration of the potential of youth to promote peace. For example, Search for Common Ground developed guidelines for engaging youth as insider mediators to mediate within communities in which they have a large number of trusted contacts and insider knowledge. Engagement with youth starts with the identification of youths and youths groups through collaborative mapping at the community level. As for other types of IMs, youth IMs can be supported through various ways, although it is clear that they will have an increased need for capacity-support in all aspects of peace mediation and for opportunities to practice what they learn by initially supporting and shadowing mediation processes and eventually taking the lead. Search guidelines also highlight the importance of creating opportunities for collaboration between young IMs, CSOs, NGOs and government actors in order to enable youth IMs to participate in mediation efforts at different levels. The consortium made efforts to leverage its experience in youth-inclusive peacebuilding, but encountered challenges in fully realising capacities of young leaders in Burundi, Niger and Zimbabwe; lessons from these challenges can guide future programming targeting youth IMs.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Provided documentation: Interim Narrative report. p.32.

⁶⁶ See 'Mapping' for further details.

5. Programme Country Context Assessments

Below is a narrative of the context evolutions in Burundi, Niger and Zimbabwe over the time of the programme's implementation, including political developments, other developments and their consequences on the programme.

V. a Burundi

V.a.i Persistent Themes: Political Situation

Election Activity: In the context of Burundi's first competitive election since the civil war began in 1993, early 2020 saw intense political activity, with some incidents, including clashes between young activists of the CNDD-FDD, and those of the opposition party (National Freedom Council (CNL)).⁶⁷ Following the victory of the presidential party (CNDD-FDD) and election of Evariste Ndayishimiye in May 2020, with 69 percent of the vote, the main opposition party (CNL) filed a complaint for evidence of electoral fraud.⁶⁸ However, these appeals were rejected by the constitutional court.⁶⁹ The unexpected death of President Pierre Nkurunziza, on June 8 2020, created further instability. The newly elected president, Évariste Ndayishimiye, was immediately inaugurated.

Improvement of international relations: While the 2015 crisis had isolated Burundi from the international community and tensions with Rwanda intensified in 2019, the new government sought a rapprochement both with key Western players and its Rwandan neighbour. With the improved security situation in the country, international cooperation links were progressively reestablished. In July 2020 the Permanent Council of La Francophonie adopted a resolution repealing the suspension of all multilateral cooperation with Burundi, hence reintegrating Burundi as a member of La Francophonie again.⁷⁰ In April 2021, the United Nations Security Council removed Burundi from the periodic political agenda. Then, in November 2021, the US lifted sanctions, followed by the EU in 2022.⁷¹ Softening of relations with Rwanda occurred over this period, as well, representing a reversal to the degraded position following the 2015 attempted coup.⁷² Specifically, in 2020

⁶⁷ Provided Documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators 2020 Q1 Report. p.1.

⁶⁸ Aljazeera (May 28, 2020). Burundi opposition takes presidential election dispute to court. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/5/28/burundi-opposition-takes-presidential-election-dispute-to-court>

⁶⁹ Provided Documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators 2020 Q2 Report. p.1.

⁷⁰ Provided Documentation: Insider Mediators Q4 report, 2020, pp.1-2

⁷¹ Council of the EU (February 8, 2022). Burundi: EU lifts existing restrictions under Article 96 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement. Press Release. Available at: [Burundi: EU lifts existing restrictions under Article 96 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/pressroom/articles/EN_IPRES_22_0011.htm)

the Rwandan and Burundian Ministers of Foreign Affairs met at the border of Nembas-Gasenyi, hence demonstrating a desire to pave the way to a normalisation of bilateral relations between their countries.⁷³ The return of Burundian refugees repatriated from Rwanda also indicated renewed cooperation between the two countries.⁷⁴ The latest sign of strengthening relations is the visit in January 2021 of Burundi's Minister in charge of East Africa Community to Rwandan President Paul Kagame.⁷⁵

Insecurity and causes of conflict: Arbitrary arrests of political opposition continue, and the Imbonerakure, the ruling party's youth wing, is allegedly responsible for widespread human rights violations, including the kidnapping and arbitrary arrest of people associated with the opposition, as well as extra-judicial killings.^{76 77 78} Other sources of insecurity include attacks by armed groups, especially in provinces on the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁷⁹ Poverty, and food insecurity also remain challenges, contributing to competition for access to land and resources.⁸⁰ Land-related issues remain one of the main drivers of conflict, with a high number of complaints over private property overburdening courts.⁸¹ In addition, the return and reintegration of refugees puts increased pressure on already scarce resources and contributes to rising tensions and fragmentation of social cohesion at the community level.⁸²

V.a.ii Persistent Themes Regarding the Feasibility of the Initiative

Intense political activity before and after the elections created both difficulties and opportunities. Programme implementation began in the context of heightened political

⁷² Basabose, Jeans de Dieu (October 15, 2015). *Diplomatic tensions between Burundi and Rwanda: a call for peace*. PeaceInsight. Available at: <https://www.peaceinsight.org/en/articles/diplomatic-tensions-between-burundi-and-rwanda-a-call-for-peace/?location=burundi&theme=>

⁷³ Republic of Rwanda. Rwanda and Burundi Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meet to Normalise Relations. Available at: [Government of Rwanda: Rwanda and Burundi Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meet to Normalise Relations \(www.gov.rw\)](https://www.gov.rw/en/news/2021/04/15/rwanda-and-burundi-ministers-of-foreign-affairs-meet-to-normalise-relations)

⁷⁴ Tigist Kebede Feyissa (April 2021). Burundi-Rwanda Relations: The Road to Normalization. IPSS Policy Brief <https://ipss-addis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Policy-Brief-Burundi-Rwanda-Relations-22042021.pdf>

⁷⁵ The New Times (January 10, 2022). Burundi's Evariste Ndayishimiye sends message to President Kagame. Available at: [Burundi's Evariste Ndayishimiye sends message to President Kagame | The New Times | Rwanda](https://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/burundi-s-evariste-ndayishimiye-sends-message-to-president-kagame).

⁷⁶ United States Department of State - Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (2020) BURUNDI 2020 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT. Available at: BURUNDI 2020 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT (state.gov) , p.15.

⁷⁷ Crisis Watch (November 2021). Tracking Conflict Worldwide - Burundi. Available at: https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/database?location%5B%5D=3&date_range=latest&from_month=01&from_year=2021&to_month=01&to_year=2021

⁷⁸ Human Rights Watch (February 8, 2022). Burundi's Vicious Crackdown Never Ended. Available at: [Burundi's Vicious Crackdown Never Ended | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/02/08/burundi-s-vicious-crackdown-never-ended)

⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch. Burundi Events of 2021. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/burundi>

⁸⁰ BTI (2022) . BTI 2022 Country Report-Burundi, pp.26. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/BDI#pos5>

⁸¹ BTI (2022) . BTI 2022 Country Report-Burundi, pp.23. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/BDI#pos5>

⁸² IOM (March 11, 2021). Burundi Crisis Response Plan. Available at: <https://www.crisisresponse.iom.int/response/burundi-crisis-response-plan-2021>

tensions around the general elections, which compelled the programme team to adapt the planning of some activities to mitigate possible election-related violence, such as the training of police officers.⁸³ However, the pre-election period also highlighted the relevance of the programme's strategy as it was observed that provincial authorities reached by CENAP were using mediation techniques to address political issues.⁸⁴ In addition, the promise of the new president in his inaugural speech to revive the role of the Abashingantahe (traditional mediators established at the hill level) in solving community disputes, established a favourable context for the programme.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, after the elections, some difficulties were met in integrating some of the new elected officials in the programme activities, and they did not join the first training session as it was originally planned, which put additional pressure on the programme team to increase awareness raising efforts with the new municipal administrators in the programme intervention zones and convince them of the value of community mediation.⁸⁶

COVID-19 restrictions did not create major difficulties for the implementation. Due to the suspension of activities around the electoral period, Interpeace and CENAP were originally less impacted at the beginning of the programme by the preventive measures imposed by the government against Covid-19 and focused on the mapping component during this period. However, they progressively had to adapt: consultation meetings were temporarily suspended in order to limit the risks of propagation of the COVID 19, and preventive measures were implemented to be followed during fieldwork.⁸⁷

Increased insecurity related to attacks in public spaces in 2021 including in some of the programme's intervention locations raised some concerns for the CENAP team towards the end of the programme.⁸⁸ Developments were closely monitored and there were no direct consequences on the implementation of the activities, nor on the security of programme participants.

V. b Niger

V.a.i Persistent Themes: Political Situation

⁸³ Provided Documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - Q1 report, 2020, p.3.

⁸⁴ Provided Documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - Q2 Report, 2020, p.4.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Provided Documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - Q3 Report, 2020, p.7.

⁸⁷ Provided Documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - Q2 Report, 2020, p.4.

⁸⁸ Provided Documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021, p.1.

Highly volatile security situation: In 2020, the security situation in Niger deteriorated with continuous terrorist attacks closely connected to the wider crisis in the Sahel region, and conflicts in neighbouring Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Burkina Faso and Mali. Attacks were carried out by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs) in areas around Lake Chad and the Liptako Gourma region (Apex of borders of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger), with increased incursions by Boko Haram in the eastern Diffa region and transit of NSAGs in the western Tillaberi region.⁸⁹ Increased NSAGs attacks against civilians in villages drove displacement, which impacted programming. Humanitarian workers were also targeted by frequent attacks as well as abductions. In 2021, insecurity further intensified with an increase of attacks in the Liptako Gourma area, including one of the country's worst attacks from NSAGs.⁹⁰

Election Activity: Tensions escalated ahead of February 2021's presidential elections, anticipated to be the first transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another since its independence from France in 1960. In particular, ethnic tensions surfaced during the election campaign with opposition figures seizing on Bazoum's origins from Niger's ethnic Arab minority in the run up to polling to undermine his position.⁹¹ The post election period was also marked by increased tension, with pro-opposition protests, sometimes violent, mass arrests and internet shutdown following the announcement of the provisional results of the 21 February presidential election runoff. The opposition contested the CENI's announcement of Bazoum, the ruling party's candidate and a former minister of the interior as the winner with 55.75 percent of the vote, and claimed electoral fraud. On March 31, 2021 a military unit from within Niger's ethnically fractured military attempted a coup in Niamey days before the inauguration of the new president Mohamed Bazoum, which was quickly repelled by presidential guards.⁹² While the election process was relatively fair and free, and was perceived to be a positive step towards more democratic governance, controversies and protests indicate that political divisions remain a source of concern.⁹³

Economic slowdown: Long-term emergency, lack of resources and tight security measures

⁸⁹ Provided Documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - Q1 report, 2020, p.1-2.

⁹⁰ Human Rights Watch (August 11, 2021). Niger: Surging Atrocities by Armed Islamist Groups. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/08/11/niger-surging-atrocities-armed-islamist-groups>

⁹¹ Olayinka Ajala (April 2, 2021). Botched coup in Niger points to deep fissures in the country, *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/botched-coup-in-niger-points-to-deep-fissures-in-the-country-158330>

⁹² Aljazeera (March 31, 2021). Niger: Attack on presidential palace an 'attempted coup'. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/31/heavy-gunfire-heard-near-nigers-presidency>

⁹³ USIP (March 12, 2021). Despite Post-Election Violence, Niger Achieves Democratic Breakthrough. Available at: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/03/despite-post-election-violence-niger-achieves-democratic-breakthrough>.

have been putting significant pressure on civilians, reducing their socio-economic prospects and negatively impacting their resilience in the face of environmental shocks. There was a reduction in per capita income in 2020, increasing the proportion of the population living below the 1.90USD/day poverty line by 1.3 percent (about 400,000 more people).⁹⁴ This vulnerability is further reinforced by weak government service delivery, in particular in the health and education sectors.

V.a.ii Persistent Themes Regarding the Feasibility of the Initiative

The **poor security environment**, characterised by both **intercommunal, intracommunal** and ongoing regional **insurgencies** has hampered the work of the Search programme team in Niger, although the context has provided a setting for applying Insider Mediation in a meaningful way. In addition, the state of emergency, curfews and restrictions on movement hindered the work of IMs, as they were not able to reach zones beyond their own communities. The space for dialogue has gone through waves of retraction as **socio-economic situations deteriorate** and tensions between groups become exacerbated. Furthermore, **attacks on humanitarian workers**, including abductions and vehicle theft, in tandem with the poor security conditions outlined above, has often prevented the programme team from directly conducting activities, instead relying on local community mobilisers or the MR's regional mediators.⁹⁵ This also sometimes led to lower reporting quality. Overall, security threats negatively impacted visibility efforts, limited movements of Search teams and put increased pressure on key staff members (operation and security manager, programme manager) to develop risk mitigation strategies and coordinate with relevant stakeholders in order to ensure both the continuity of activities and the safety of programme staff.

Electoral violence and an **attempted coup** is indicative of the contribution of political grievances to violence in Niger. While posing a risk of political instability and tensions, local, legislative and presidential elections have also created the opportunity to develop and practise elements of the mediation training, and for the IMs to deal with the different conflicts that arose before and after the elections.

Covid-19 restrictions have also played a role in limiting the activities of the programme team, creating initial difficulties during the mapping process. While the restrictions were

⁹⁴ The World Bank (July 26, 2021). Niger Economic Update: Health and Security Crises Threaten Lives and Livelihoods. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/07/26/niger-economic-update-health-and-security-crises-threaten-lives-and-livelihoods>

⁹⁵ Provided Documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021, p.1.

eased in Q3 of 2020, continued international travel restrictions have potentially stalled progress that could be made in regard to regional workshops and activities. For example, the regional workshop on the prevention and management of conflicts in the Liptako Gourma region was postponed several times and only took place in June 2021.

V.c Zimbabwe

V.c.i Persistent Themes: Political Situation

Government Repression: The Covid pandemic, and the crippling economic crisis that accompanied it, has placed additional strain on Zimbabwe's polarised political system. In response to increasing civil unrest, the Mnangagwa administration responded with a crackdown on protests and targeted arrests and alleged abductions of activists and opposition leaders. In Q2 of 2021, interparty violence was observed between MDC and ZANU-PF activists. In December 2021, a group of ZANU-PF youths assaulted members of a 'Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition' (CiCZ) as they stormed their annual general meeting.⁹⁶

Opposition Crisis: The primary opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) suffering from its own fractionalisation and infighting, has been largely unable to respond to the government's intensifying strategy of repression throughout the past two years. The need to re-elect representatives from MDC Alliance strongholds has been hampered by the postponement of by-elections after a breakaway of the MDC-T faction as well as the deaths of several MDC MPs [See election activity below].

Election Activity: President Mnangagwa authorised a ban on all electoral activity as a way of containing the Covid-19 pandemic, although this activity, as well as the imposition of a curfew in 2020, has been criticised as thinly veiled repressionist tactics. By-elections are now due to be held in March 2022, with the general election on course for 2023. Internal ZANU-PF elections have also been stifled by factionalism and electoral fraud, with several reports alleging voter intimidation.⁹⁷ The persistent trends of voter intimidation as well as other disruptive activities (MDC leaders have gone as far as accusing the incumbent ZANU-PF party of sponsoring surrogate political parties in an attempt to confuse the electorate).⁹⁸

⁹⁶ NewsDay Zimbabwe (December 16, 2021). Zanu PF Youths raid CiZC AGM, Attack Participants. Available at: [Zanu PF youths raid CiZC AGM, attack participants - NewsDay Zimbabwe](#)

⁹⁷ AllAfrica (December 29, 2021). Zimbabwe: Violence Erupts As Aspiring Zanu-PF Chairman 'Smuggles' Ballot Boxes. Available at: [Zimbabwe: Violence Erupts As Aspiring Zanu-PF Chairman 'Smuggles' Ballot Boxes - allAfrica.com](#)

⁹⁸ AllAfrica (October 1, 2021)., Zimbabwe: 'Zanu-PF Open to Dialogue'. Available at: [Zimbabwe: 'Zanu-PF Open to Dialogue' - allAfrica.com](#)

V.c.ii Persistent Themes Regarding the Feasibility of the Initiative

Government repression is the most consistent theme emerging over the past two years. Although this is yet to impact the initiative directly, the banning of Human Rights NGOs from operating in some parts of the country presents organisations with obstacles to operating in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the imposition of sanctions by the US and UK and the assets freeze against a state-owned company by the EU could antagonise the government and the degree to which they are willing to cooperate with western/European organisations. The attack on the CiCZ AGM in Q4 2021 is especially concerning as it marks a direct attack on dialogue advocacy campaigns.⁹⁹ The disjointment and infighting of the opposition also makes it difficult to develop a coherent stakeholder map, causing engagement and exclusion with political actors to become a highly politicised process.

That being said, the government's policy of repression has acted as a catalyst for prioritising dialogue platforms. **Civil society organisations have proactively developed initiatives to launch dialogue platforms**, and, more recently, the Zanu-PF has suggested they would be open to dialogue through the Political Actors Dialogue platform.¹⁰⁰ To that point, there could be hope that the program could find widespread support for developing inside mediation mechanisms in a more favourable political environment.

The Covid 19 pandemic has caused the greatest degree of operational challenges to the programme. The inability of the Berghof team to visit Zimbabwe necessitated a shift in the character of the programme. Once the Berghof Foundation identified IPLG as a suitable partner, internal and external approval procedures meant that the partner was not able to start implementation until the summer of 2021. The cumbersome task of trust building likely meant the team could not be as agile to respond to the developing political environment on the ground.

⁹⁹ NewsDay Zimbabwe (December 16, 2021). Zanu PF Youths raid CiCZ AGM, Attack Participants. Available at: [Zanu PF youths raid CiCZ AGM, attack participants - NewsDay Zimbabwe](#)

¹⁰⁰ AllAfrica (October 1, 2021)., Zimbabwe: 'Zanu-PF Open to Dialogue'. Available at: [Zimbabwe: 'Zanu-PF Open to Dialogue' - allAfrica.com](#)

6. Findings

VI.a Mapping

The mapping exercise was conducted to identify existing initiatives seeking to address conflict in the target countries, with the aim of avoiding duplication of effort. It also sought to identify thematic areas of interest to local NGOs, so that the programme would not work on the same issues. In addition, the mapping set out to identify existing skills to facilitate the identification of actors to involve in programme activities, including training.¹⁰¹ The mapping also aimed to identify the specific needs of youth and women.¹⁰² Ultimately, from the mediators identified through the mapping, a group of selected mediators were listed in a roster for the EU.

VI.a.i Mapping - Assets

The programme produced country-specific mapping. Mapping was undertaken in each of the three focus countries. In Burundi, Interpeace/CENAP mapped mediation efforts in Burundi by building on the information gathered during a national forum, held in December 2019. In addition, CENAP organised six consultation meetings at the community level. These meetings included a total of 127 participants (48 in Giteranyi, 17 in Rutana, 25 in Gitega, 38 in Kirundo, 31 in Rumonge and 21 in Kayanza) and resulted in a provisional list of local challenges and needs, the selection criteria for IMs, and a mapping of actors and initiatives at the provincial level.¹⁰³

In Niger, Search connected with key stakeholders, such as the HACP, the MR, traditional chiefs, and women's and youth associations when undertaking the mapping exercise.¹⁰⁴ The mapping exercise was conducted through 28 remote Key Informant Interviews, and 12 Focus Group Discussions with a range of key stakeholders in N'guigmi, Toumour, Tébaram and Abala, including the regional mediators, members of peace committees already in place, leaders of CSOs, traditional chiefs, influential community leaders, and members of groups or association of young men and women (Leader of the Fada and Palais).¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

¹⁰² KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote, January 2022.

¹⁰³ Provided documentation: Annex IV Interim Narrative Report, p.13.

¹⁰⁴ Provided documentation: Annex IV Interim Narrative Report, p.15.

¹⁰⁵ Provided documentation; Annex 2 Mapping report - Niger.pdf, p.11.

In Zimbabwe, the mapping was carried out by an external consultant, through a literature review and interviews with stakeholders, including academics, researchers in the fields of governance, security, and human rights, peacebuilding practitioners, journalists, members of the clergy, civil society representatives, a former politician, a war veteran, a cultural heritage expert, and a youth activist.¹⁰⁶ A National Dialogue Actors Power Map was produced for a better visualisation of the roles and influence of national actors involved in the National Dialogue.

VI.a.ii Mapping - Results and Impact

Mapping was extensively utilised across programme implementation stages. The mapping exercise and further consultations with the consortium and the EU also served to identify IPLG as the most suitable local partner. According to one key informant in Zimbabwe, the mapping also enabled the consortium to identify gaps in existing mediation initiatives. This made it possible to avoid duplication of activities undertaken by other programmes.¹⁰⁷ Another key informant highlighted the fact that the mapping exercise enabled Berghof staff to get an understanding of the context in Zimbabwe, despite not being able to travel there due to COVID-19 restrictions.¹⁰⁸ In addition, the mapping exercise was used to identify the most relevant individuals to serve as IMs.¹⁰⁹

In Burundi, the mapping exercise was the basis for identification of IMs and getting the local and provincial administration involved.¹¹⁰ The exercise enabled CENAP to show the administration what types of initiatives are being implemented in their areas.¹¹¹ The mapping exercise found that there were already numerous activities taking place to address political, land, and marriage related conflicts in Burundi.¹¹² It also showed the consortium that there are a lot of resources being allocated to mediation efforts, but that there is a lack of coordination between actors, with many of them being unaware of what others are doing in the same field.¹¹³

¹⁰⁶ Provided documentation: Annex IV Interim Narrative Report, p.19.

¹⁰⁷ KII. Implementing partner Berghof Foundation. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁰⁸ KII. Implementing partner Berghof Foundation. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁰⁹ KII. Implementing partner Berghof Foundation. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹¹⁰ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Burundi], February 2022.

¹¹¹ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Burundi], February 2022.

¹¹² KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

¹¹³ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Burundi], February 2022.

In Niger, the mapping enabled Search to establish a list of potential individuals to select as IMs, and to conduct necessary checks prior to finalising the selection, including meeting them in order to verify their capacity to undertake mediation activities. A key finding of the mapping exercise was the existence of formal mediation structures at the regional level, but not at the communal level, where some individuals such as traditional chiefs, and youth leaders intervene informally to alleviate tensions.¹¹⁴ Women and youth expressed a strong interest in being involved in mediation initiatives at the community level during the mapping, although cultural bias about their participation in decision-making was raised as a key challenge.¹¹⁵ The mapping exercise also served as a basis for developing strategic links with the MR and the HACP.

The mapping was a key tool to ensuring the relevance of the programme. All those surveyed IMs in Niger and Burundi were overall very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the programme, and 100 percent completely agreed or somewhat agreed that the activities were designed with their community's needs in mind. This highlights the effectiveness of the mapping exercise in identifying gaps at the local level and developing context-sensitive activities.

VI.a.iii Mapping - Challenges

COVID restrictions and changes in the security situation in each of the three countries resulted in delays in completing the mapping exercise. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the consultant undertaking the mapping exercise for Zimbabwe had to conduct the exercise remotely.¹¹⁶ COVID-19 restrictions also resulted in delays in the mapping exercise in Niger and Burundi. In Niger, the mapping was slowed down by restrictions imposed at the beginning of March 2020, and was eventually finalised in July 2020.¹¹⁷ Moreover, in Burundi, the consultations for the mapping exercise had to be temporarily put on hold between April and June 2020, due to the increased risk of instability during the election period. Four out of five provincial authorities, with whom contact had been established, were replaced due to the elections. In addition, the death of the outgoing President, Pierre Nkurunziza, resulted in the creation of new offices, following the swearing in of the new President.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Provided Documentation: Annex 2 Mapping report - Niger. p.8

¹¹⁵ Provided Documentation: Annex 2 Mapping report - Niger. p.18

¹¹⁶ Bere, D. (2020). *Building Peace from the Inside: A Study on the Potential Opportunities and Strategies for Insider Mediation in Zimbabwe*. p.8.

¹¹⁷ Provided documentation: Annex IV Interim Narrative Report, p.15.

¹¹⁸ Provided documentation: Annex IV Interim Narrative Report, p.15.

Initial challenges of engagement with authorities in Burundi. Key implementing partner staff respondents reported that in Burundi, the team faced some challenges to ensure institutional buy-in for the programme in a context of weakened relationships between the government and NGOs following the political crisis. For example, some provinces were reluctant to allow programme implementation, and CENAP had to select another province.¹¹⁹

VI.a.iv Mapping - Opportunities

Disseminate the mapping exercise and IM lists. Sharing the mapping and IM lists developed with relevant stakeholders in the community of practice (this refers to other practitioners, organisations and donors) could raise awareness about existing mediation initiatives and facilitate networking.

VI.a.v Mapping - Lessons Learned

The consortium struggled to recruit young people as IMs. As a result, implementing staff feel that there is a need to have more of a youth focus in future mapping exercises, identifying student leadership groups and young professionals clubs, for example.¹²⁰

Accessible and interactive mapping for increased understanding. During their midterm workshop, the consortium partners stated that continuously updating the mapping of actors helps IMs understand how they fit into existing structures. It was therefore suggested that a visualisation of the mapping, with peace actors, and a description of their role at the community level, would be a useful tool that would help clarify the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder within the local mediation contexts, and foster a better understanding of who does what legally and institutionally.¹²¹

VI.b Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for Niger and Burundi were finalised in July/August 2020 (see Table A), and the criteria for Zimbabwe were determined in August 2021.

¹¹⁹ KII. Implementing partner, CENAP. Remote [Burundi]. February 2022.

¹²⁰ Learning Workshop. Remote, February 2022.

¹²¹ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report (1), p.13

In Niger, Search staff met with community members to explain the selection criteria. This included the requirement that the selected group of IMs should include members of a national or local institution (e.g., local government authority representative). One IM was then selected from within each structure, to ensure there was balanced representation of all structures within the community.¹²²

In Burundi, IMs were identified through the mapping exercise, discussed in the preceding section. Those selected were already part of existing initiatives, groups and institutions involved in conflict mediation, such as CSOs and mixed security committees (Comités Mixtes de Sécurité - CMS). CENAP did not seek to create an IM role, but rather to bring together existing actors in the field of conflict mediation, to better equip them to fulfil their existing roles.¹²³ Local authorities were involved in the selection process to ensure that those chosen were the most trusted in their communities.¹²⁴

The integrated localised and participatory mapping and mediator identification process represents an improvement on best practice guidance, which presents several advantages:

- Recognition of context-specific definitions of mediation;
- Identification of the most relevant individuals to fill gaps in the existing local mediation ecosystem;
- Ensuring respect of socio-cultural sensitivities, in turn guaranteeing a high-level of acceptance of the IMs and the programme by local communities.¹²⁵

Table A: Selection criteria by country¹²⁶

Burundi	Niger	Zimbabwe¹²⁷
Ability to maintain confidentiality Accepted in the community and by the parties in conflict Burundian national Good listener Impartiality Incorruptibility	Ability to inform and sensitise communities Ability to lead public debates Ability to listen Ability to make decisions Ability to manage conflicts while respecting the principle of neutrality	Acknowledgment of cultural diversity Active involvement in peacebuilding work Availability Background of having participated in mediation before at either community or national

¹²² KII. Local authorities. Niamey, Niger. January 2022.

¹²³ KII. CENAP. Remote [Burundi]. February 2022.

¹²⁴ KII. Implementing partner Interpeace. Remote [Burundi]. February 2022.

¹²⁵ Provided documentation: Revised EEU047 Midterm report. p.5. and KIIs. Implementing partners, Berghof and CENAP. [Zimbabwe and Burundi]. January-February 2022.

¹²⁶ Provided documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - 2020 Q2 Report

¹²⁷ Provided Documentation: Selection Criteria - IMs Zimbabwe.

Knowledge of mediation Loyalty Truth Willing to work on a voluntary basis	Active in the field of mediation An acceptable level of schooling Availability Courageous and mobilising Discretion and respect for the community Respected by the community Willing to work on a voluntary basis	level Being from organisations in good-standing with the government Cross-cutting considerations included gender and geographical location. Mobilising/sensitisation skills Non-affiliation to a political party Respected by the community Understanding of the various conflict in the country Willingness to work voluntarily
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VI.b.i Selection - Assets

A total of 244 mediators were selected through a multi-stage and participatory process.

120 in Burundi (50 women and 70 men)¹²⁸

80 in Niger (23 women and 57 men)¹²⁹

44 in Zimbabwe (25 women and 19 men)¹³⁰

VI.b.ii Selection - Results and Impact

Selected IMs represent a diverse cross-section of demographic profiles found in the respective communities; women were particularly well represented in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, a wide range of relevant actors were selected as IMs, including representatives of the church, civil society, the government and the security sector. Several key informants felt that the selection process was ‘excellent’ or ‘optimal,’¹³¹ and IM respondents stated that the selection was “good” and ensured “fair representation of all stakeholders”.¹³² The

¹²⁸ Provided documentation: Interim Narrative report, p.17.

¹²⁹ Provided documentation: Annex A) Liste of IM, Niger

¹³⁰ Provided documentation: List of all IMs-Zimbabwe

¹³¹ KIIs. Implementing partner Berghof Foundation. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

¹³² KII. Insider Mediators. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

inclusion of actors who would not normally be invited, and the fact that representatives from Matabeleland, which is often marginalised, were included among the IMs, were highlighted as particularly positive.¹³³ In Zimbabwe, there were more female than male IMs.¹³⁴

In Niger, the target for women's inclusion was for 30 percent of IMs selected. Although this target was achieved, ongoing 'cultural issues' remain that affect the extent of women's inclusion in Niger. For example, the mapping exercise in Niger enabled the identification of several cultural barriers to women's inclusion in mediation, including cultural bias regarding women's participation in decision-making, and limits to their freedom of movement because of family obligations.¹³⁵ An implementing partner staff respondent further highlighted issues around the perceived capacity and appropriateness of women as mediators.¹³⁶ There were fewer challenges around women's inclusion in Burundi than there were in Niger. In Burundi, one key informant highlighted the fact that women made up at least 40 percent of all groups of IMs in the country. It was also noted that in some areas women played a greater role than men in leading IM groups, especially in Kirundo and Rumonge.¹³⁷ This difference between Niger and Burundi can be explained by different levels of achievement of contextual prerequisites. In Burundi, cultural preconditions regarding cultural acceptance of women mediators were already met, as following the Arusha Accords of 1993, official structures were established to uphold the principle of inclusion, such as the National Women's Forum (Forum National des Femmes), whose mandate includes the strengthening of women's potential for stability, peace, solidarity, reconciliation and community recovery.¹³⁸ Other initiatives, such as the UN Women supported - Women's Network for Peace and Dialogue have also participated in normalising the inclusion of women in mediation in Burundi.¹³⁹

Selected IMs are widely regarded as 'accepted', as perceived by the IMs themselves and reported by community members. Community members from N'guigmi and Toumour reported that there is 'mutual acceptance' between them and the IMs.¹⁴⁰ One respondent from the focus group discussion further clarified that the community and the

¹³³ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe]. February 2022.

¹³⁴ KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote, January 2022.

¹³⁵ Provided documentation: Annex 2 Mapping report - Niger. p.18.

¹³⁶ KII. Implementing partner. Search. Remote. February 2022.

¹³⁷ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

¹³⁸ Provided Documentation: Annex 1 Mapping Report Burundi. p.13.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ FGD. Community members. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

IMs work together, the IMs give advice to the community members and the latter also provide advice from their own experience. The community members explained that they realised that IMs are very important in the communities, as they bring peace. They report being satisfied with, and grateful for, the work they accomplish, particularly highlighting their efforts to reach remote areas.

Selected IMs were deemed to have appropriate qualities. Secondary beneficiaries in Kayanza, Burundi, stated that the people selected as IMs had the right qualities.¹⁴¹ Community respondents from N'guigmi and Toumour in Niger also felt that the IMs selected had the appropriate qualities to fulfil their roles.¹⁴² Due to the delayed start of the programme in Zimbabwe, it was not yet possible to have these types of discussions with secondary beneficiaries there.

VI.b.iii Selection - Challenges

Youth are underrepresented across the programme. In the three countries of implementation, youth are often perceived to be too immature to serve as IMs, and single people and/or people with no responsibilities in life are seen as unprepared.¹⁴³ In Niger, one implementing partner staff respondent stated that it would be difficult to have young mediators in the Niger context as culturally, younger people are considered immature.¹⁴⁴ In Zimbabwe youth inclusion was a particular challenge, as there are sensitivities around their involvement. Youth are seen as perpetrators of violence, especially in the run-up to elections. One implementing partner staff key informant stated that while there was a will to include them, this would have jeopardised the programme.¹⁴⁵ This was due to concerns that targeting youth would attract unwanted political attention from political parties, and the project would be seen as pushing a political agenda. In Burundi efforts on youth inclusion were more successful.¹⁴⁶ However, one implementing partner staff respondent highlighted the fact that anyone up to the age of 35 is considered a youth in Burundi, and that if unmarried, even at that age, an individual is considered a child and cannot speak in their community.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ FGD. Secondary beneficiaries. Kayanza, Burundi, January 2022.

¹⁴² FGD. Community members. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

¹⁴³ KIIs. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

¹⁴⁴ KIIs. Implementing partner Search. Tahoua, Niger, January 2022.

¹⁴⁵ KII. Implementing partner IPLG. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁴⁶ KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote, January 2022.

¹⁴⁷ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

In Zimbabwe, some gaps were identified in the selection, including a lack of engagement of high-level actors (political influencers, members of the electoral commission, etc.). While most respondents felt that the selection process in Zimbabwe was very good, one key informant stated that there is room for improvement, through the inclusion of representatives from the electoral commission to enable them to learn how to address election violence, which is a major challenge in Zimbabwe.¹⁴⁸ Greater representation of civil society actors and the NPRC was also proposed, given that the NPRC is one of the most relevant national institutions for peace in Zimbabwe. In addition, it was suggested that a commissioner should be selected as an IM, as they are largely responsible for decision-making. Having more political influencers among the IMs was also identified as a way to bridge the gap between grassroots and high-level actors.¹⁴⁹

Engagement dropped off for a selection of IMs. There was a natural drop-off of IMs. Reasons for this varied with some youth getting married, some moving away and others falling out of contact.¹⁵⁰ This challenge was also highlighted in the second quarterly report for 2021.¹⁵¹

VI.b.iv Selection - Opportunities

Phase II could further emphasise inclusivity. Specifically, one IM respondent suggested greater targeting of youth, and young women in particular, as they lack opportunities to become involved in programmes like the IM programme, and would be empowered by the experience.¹⁵²

Recruit mediators from displaced populations. Due to the conflict in Nigeria, programme communities are experiencing an influx of refugees and internally displaced persons, with one IM reporting that this is creating challenges to social cohesion.¹⁵³ Phase II could identify communities with growing displaced populations, and add displacement status as a selection criteria.

¹⁴⁸ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

¹⁴⁹ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

¹⁵⁰ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

¹⁵¹ Provided documentation: Q2 Report 2021.

¹⁵² KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁵³ KIIs. IMs. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

VI.b.v Selection - Lessons Learned

Selection benefits from a participatory approach. Community members reported being included in the IM selection process - determining qualities and identifying specific individuals.¹⁵⁴ Respondents who participated in this process emphasised its value, stating that a participatory approach contributes to IM acceptance.

Selection benefits from inclusivity. A diverse group of IMs, in terms of age, gender, profession and ethnicity leads to greater skills transfer between them, and greater acceptance of IMs by parties in conflict.¹⁵⁵ In addition, a diverse professional group facilitates skill sharing within the mediator network.¹⁵⁶ For example, the involvement of legal professionals in the group of IMs in Burundi improved mediators' awareness of their rights and those of the groups receiving mediation. A diverse group also allowed IMs to address a variety of conflicts, as when they identified a conflict to mediate, the IMs would appoint a lead mediator best suited to lead a particular case, based on their professional background and experience.¹⁵⁷

Three overarching selection criteria have been identified as a result of joint learning sessions between the consortium partners. At the beginning of the project, there was no harmonised approach to determining selection criteria among consortium members and while there was a value in consortium partners using their own approaches to IM selection, Search expected there to be more of a unified approach to decision-making on the selection criteria, which were largely defined once the IMs had already been selected.¹⁵⁸ Through discussing the different approaches across the three countries, the implementing partners identified three key overarching levels of selection under which all respective criteria fall, namely: skills and experience, diversity and community acceptance.

VI.c Capacity Building

VI.c.i Capacity-Building - Assets

The programme conducted a total of 21 training sessions with 244 IMs, and key stakeholders across programme phases. In Niger, the training of IMs was held in September 2020 in N'guigmi and Toumour in the Diffa region, and in October and

¹⁵⁴ FGD. Local authorities. Niamey, Niger. January 2022.

¹⁵⁵ Written response. Implementing partner Search. February 2022.

¹⁵⁶ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report, p.4.

¹⁵⁷ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, February 2022.

¹⁵⁸ KII. Implementing partner IP Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

November in Tébaram (Tahoua) and Abala (Tillabéri). The training lasted seven days in each commune with a total of 80 participants (20 in each commune).¹⁵⁹ This was a joint training program, including 21 members of peace committees. Across the four project locations, youth and women constituted the majority of the participants, with 12.5 percent of young men, 23.75 percent of young women, and 16.25 percent of women.¹⁶⁰ Mediation trainings were provided for actors operating at different levels, including at the community and national levels. This included sessions on negotiation, and conflict prevention and conflict management techniques. The training also integrated modules on EU mediation concepts and the Common Ground Approach. Search relied on the support of an external consultant to adapt the training modules on mediation to the local context to ensure cultural sensitivity. In addition, upon request of the IMs in a reflection session held in July 2021, a refresher training of 3 days was organised in Toumour, N'Guigmi, Tahoua and Tébaram, with 54 participants (40 men, 14 women), including not only IMs, but also local partners and government representatives who were invited to attend in order to foster experience sharing.¹⁶¹ This training covered mediation (types of ADR methods, 7 steps of mediation, qualities of a good mediator, limits of mediators), non-violent communication, and gender inclusion in conflict management.

In Burundi, IMs were trained in conflict analysis and mediation techniques in the provinces of Gitega, Rutana, Kirundo, Kayanza and Rumonge. Each training course lasted two days and consisted of three modules: Conflict Analysis; Communication and conflict; and Mediation Techniques.¹⁶² ¹⁶³ While women participated in the sessions, the majority of the participants were men (106, of which 49 were women). Additional training sessions in mediation techniques were held for community network members on conflict prevention and management from 20-30 October 2020 and from May to June 2021. These were supervised by the Institution of the Ombudsman and held in the provinces of Bururi, Rumonge, Makamba and Rutana for the south, Ngozi, Kayanza, Kirundo and Muyinga for the north¹⁶⁴, Gitega, Mwaro and Muramvya in the centre, and Cankuzo, Ruyigi and Karuzi in the East. Two, three day training sessions on mediation techniques were held for police officers, administrative officials and members of civil society in Gitega and Bujumbura, Burundi in the first quarter of 2021, with a total of 79 participants, of which 10 were women.¹⁶⁵ Training was also conducted for IMs at the national level in the third quarter of

¹⁵⁹ Provided documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - 2020 Q3 Report

¹⁶⁰ Provided documentation: Revised EEU047 Midterm report_, p.23.

¹⁶¹ Provided documentation: Q4 report template, p.5.

¹⁶² Provided documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - 2020 Q3 Report

¹⁶³ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators - 2020 Q4 report

¹⁶⁴ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators - 2020 Q4 report

2021.¹⁶⁶ Finally, two additional capacity-building sessions were held in the fourth quarter of 2021, including training on nonviolent communication on 7th October 2021, and a training on lobbying and advocacy on 22nd December 2021.¹⁶⁷

A five day capacity building workshop was held in Mutare, Zimbabwe in the third quarter of 2021, from 27 September to 1 October 2021, with 15 mid-level participants (9 women, 6 men) from civil society organisations in the peace and social justice field, the Church (including the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ)), and the government's National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC).¹⁶⁸ Subsequently, a second training was held from 01-05 November 2021, with another group of 14 participants (6 men and 8 women) from a wide range of organisations including the Office of the President, youth organisations, and church representatives. A third session specifically dedicated to members of the NPRC was held from 29-31 November 2021; but was interrupted as a participant tested positive for Covid-19, and was resumed online from 17-20 January 2022. Fifteen high level staff members from the NPRC (7 men and 8 women), including commissioners, and general managers attended. Across these three sessions, 3 young people were included, with the youngest one aged 21.¹⁶⁹ From February 28-March 4 2022, IPLG hosted a peer learning and capacity development workshop, supported by the Berghof Foundation. This workshop brought together 19 of the IMs in Zimbabwe. The participants were representatives of the church, the NPRC, and a number of CSOs.

VI.c.ii Capacity-Building - Results and Impact

IMs valued the capacity building component. Out of 96 surveyed IMs a total of 66 percent reported being “very satisfied” with the capacity building element. Surveyed IMs found ‘mediation techniques’ (module delivered in the three countries), ‘dialogue facilitation’ (module delivered in Zimbabwe), ‘dispute mapping’ (module delivered in Zimbabwe) and ‘cost of not talking’ (module delivered in Zimbabwe) as most valuable.

Figure 1: IM's satisfaction with capacity building

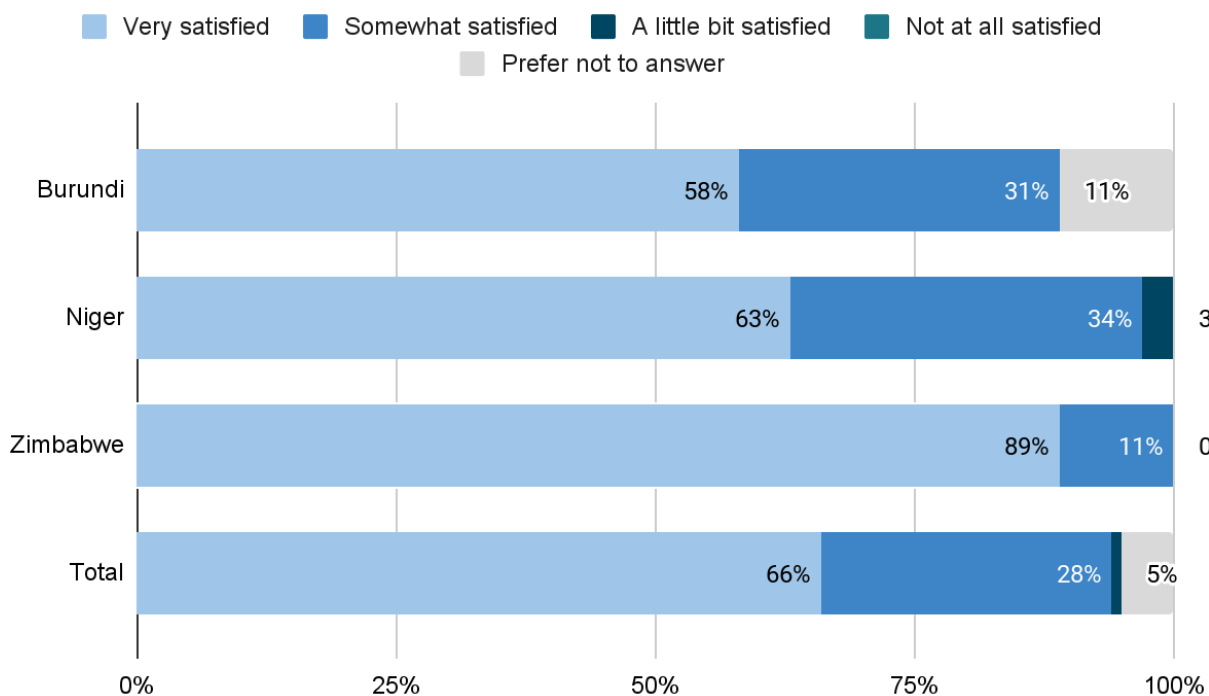
¹⁶⁵ Provided documentation: Quarterly report 1 - 2021

¹⁶⁶ Provided documentation: 2021 Q3 Report.

¹⁶⁷ Provided documentation: Q4 report template, pp.5-6.

¹⁶⁸ Provided documentation: 2021 Q3 Report.

¹⁶⁹ Youth here are considered as individuals between 15-24 years old, as per the UN definition.



The survey also highlighted IM's perception of empowerment to conduct mediation after the training, as 97 percent of surveyed IMs completely or somewhat agree with the statement "Training provided you with the knowledge necessary to make a positive impact in your community."

An IM respondent from Zimbabwe reported that before the training she was a magistrate, but didn't feel legitimate as a 'mediator,' as she didn't know the process for undertaking mediation. The IM respondent felt so strongly about the importance of the training that she wrote to NPRC headquarters in order to push for more NPRC members to be trained, highlighting the fact that it is dangerous to have untrained people going to the field to try and resolve conflicts. The NPRC immediately agreed to her request and about 15 members, including senior officials and commissioners were able to receive training.¹⁷⁰ Several implementing partner respondents cited this as an example of how training one individual can bring about institutional change.¹⁷¹

Another IM respondent from Zimbabwe described training as 'eye opening' and 'self-correcting,' stating that she learnt a lot that makes her a better mediator. One IM

¹⁷⁰ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁷¹ KIIs. Implementing partner IPLG. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

respondent also highlighted the fact that the training served as a means to bridge the wide gap between the national level mediators, who she described as belonging to the elite, and the grassroots level. This was due to the fact that groups attending the training sessions were mixed, with representatives from the NPRC and the Office of the President attending alongside those operating at the grassroots level.¹⁷² The IM respondent noted that while participants were initially hesitant to engage due to the presence of high-level actors, they soon realised that everybody was participating in the training for the same purpose - to learn.¹⁷³

One IM respondent from Zimbabwe stated that she found the fact that there were different trainers very valuable, including a facilitator from Mozambique who shared his Mozambican mediation experience.¹⁷⁴ Two IM respondents from Zimbabwe also identified the Cost of not Talking module, as particularly useful.¹⁷⁵ One of these respondents stated that the module introduced IMs to the importance of facilitating communication to reach an agreement between conflicting parties. She stated that this showed IMs that mediation is about building relationships, and ultimately about giving both parties the power to make their own decisions.¹⁷⁶ The role play element of the training and the module on consensus-based approaches were also identified as particularly useful.¹⁷⁷

An IM respondent from Burundi stated that the training enabled them to train other members of their community, through the Training of Trainers model. They were also able to hold workshops to analyse conflicts in their communities and identify ways to resolve them as the result of the training they received.¹⁷⁸ An implementing partner respondent highlighted the fact that after the training sessions, IMs in four of the five targeted provinces formed their own WhatsApp groups and coordinated activities themselves. Moreover, the fact that IMs have been conducting mediation without CENAP's support suggests that capacity has been built in a sustainable manner.¹⁷⁹ In addition, those who participated in the training sessions conducted in Burundi were satisfied and expressed a desire to share the knowledge gained with their family and friends and/or their organisation.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷² KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁷³ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁷⁴ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁷⁵ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁷⁶ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁷⁷ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁷⁸ KII. Insider Mediator. Burundi, January 2022.

¹⁷⁹ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi. January 2022.

In a focus group discussion with IMs in Niger, one respondent directly attributed success in mediating conflicts to the training, stating that thanks to the many training sessions they received, IMs were able to reconcile conflicting parties every time they attempted.¹⁸¹ Respondents from another group discussion highlighted the fact that although the training participants in Niger were already mediating issues in the community on a voluntary basis prior to the project, conducting activities “their own way”, thanks to the capacity-building component, they now know how to conduct a mediation session “properly” and “correctly”, “without any mistake”, and they report that their activities are better organised.¹⁸² However, one implementing partner staff respondent in Niger stated that the training sessions were insufficient, in particular due to their focus on local level conflicts. The respondent highlighted the fact that some IMs want to become national or international mediators and would therefore benefit from additional training opportunities.¹⁸³

Key stakeholders reported value in participating in the capacity building exercise. A local government official from Gitaga, Burundi, reported that the programme built the capacity of peace actors at the local and provincial levels, through training and meetings set up to share experiences. He provided an example of this improved capacity, stating that in Ryansoro Commune, IMs were able to resolve a conflict through dialogue between the Bashigantahe (traditional mediators) and local elected officials, who were in a dispute over whose responsibility it was to resolve conflicts in the area. Subsequently, community leaders from other communes experiencing similar disputes invited representatives from Ryansoro to share their experiences and to serve as an example of how such disputes can be resolved.¹⁸⁴

The inclusion of a member of the Bashigantahe in the training was also highlighted as a success by one implementing partner staff respondent. The respondent stated that the Bashigantahe’s traditional approach is arbitration, rather than mediation, and that the training enabled them to understand the key principles of mediation and apply them in practice, leading to the successful resolution of conflicts.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁰ Provided documentation: Submitted Insider Mediators - 2020 Q3 Report

¹⁸¹ FGD. Insider Mediators. N’goumi/Toumour. January 2022.

¹⁸² FGD. Insider Mediators. Abala / Tébaram. January 2022.

¹⁸³ KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote [Diffa, Niger]. January 2022.

¹⁸⁴ KII. Local Authorities. Gitaga, Burundi, January 2022.

¹⁸⁵ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

The fact that, in Burundi, the Institution of the Ombudsman requested CENAP to train their members in mediation, even though this was not undertaken within the budget for this programme,¹⁸⁶ suggests that the programme has created a desire for improvement within government institutions.

An implementing partner respondent from IPLG stated that the programme improved the Zimbabwean government's perception of the organisation, which had previously been somewhat negative due to it being church-owned.¹⁸⁷ ¹⁸⁸ An implementing partner respondent from CENAP also stated that the programme increased their visibility and legitimacy. The National Council for Social Dialogue asking CENAP to partner with them to organise a workshop of key stakeholders working on labour and conflict in work environments was cited as an example of this.¹⁸⁹

In Niger, MR delegates were invited to participate in the refresher training, as an opportunity for exchange and cooperation. While MR delegates did not directly receive specific separate training, following experience sharing between consortium partners, Search Niger decided to invite relevant stakeholders, including MR delegates, to the IM refresher training held at the end of 2021 in order to foster mutual understanding. During a focus group discussion with MR delegates who participated in this refresher training, they reported that they felt that the training did not sufficiently take into account previous experience and it was suggested that to avoid delegates being trained on issues they have received training on before, Search should ask MR to inform them about areas in which capacity development is required, and the level of training required in these areas.¹⁹⁰ This suggests a misunderstanding in the rationale for their attendance as they were originally invited as optional observers, which highlights the need for the implementing partner to explain and develop better the concept of inviting external partners to follow IM trainings. Nonetheless, the comments of the MR in the FGD reveal an existing need for further integrating MR delegates to capacity-building activities, taking into consideration their level of expertise.

VI.c.iii Capacity-Building - Challenges

¹⁸⁶ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

¹⁸⁷ KIIs. Implementing partner IPLG. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁸⁸ In a written response, one Berghof staff member expressed disagreement with this perception.

¹⁸⁹ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Burundi], February 2022.

¹⁹⁰ FGD. MR Delegates. Niamey, Niger. January 2022.

IMs identified gaps in the training modules, particularly around inclusion and sustainability. An IM respondent from Zimbabwe stated that the absence of a specific module on gender and gender inclusive mediation was a significant gap in the training. She stated that while gender issues were incorporated in the training content, they should have been emphasised more.¹⁹¹ Two other IM respondents from Zimbabwe, as well as implementing partner staff, also raised this issue.¹⁹² While IM respondents from Zimbabwe identified the case study element of the training as useful, one IM respondent from Zimbabwe felt that there should have been more discussion about the current situation in Mozambique in the case study element, rather than having examples in the training of situations that happened a long time ago. The respondent stated that it would have been beneficial to hear about how current conflict issues could be resolved through mediation.¹⁹³ One IM respondent from Zimbabwe also stated that there should have been a gender aspect to the case study module.¹⁹⁴

All IM respondents from a focus group discussion in Niger raised the need for including members of the displaced population to the training. They specified that communities of displaced people also have their own leadership figures who would benefit from training on mediation, so that both host communities and displaced people share the same level of knowledge.¹⁹⁵ This would be especially valuable for displaced populations from outside Niger, to account for cultural differences and facilitate mutual understanding.

In addition, out of 96 surveyed IMs, 30 percent did not agree at all or only agreed a little bit with the statement “Training sessions were sufficiently challenging”, indicating the need for higher-level training sessions.

Figure 2: IM's perception of capacity building being sufficient challenging

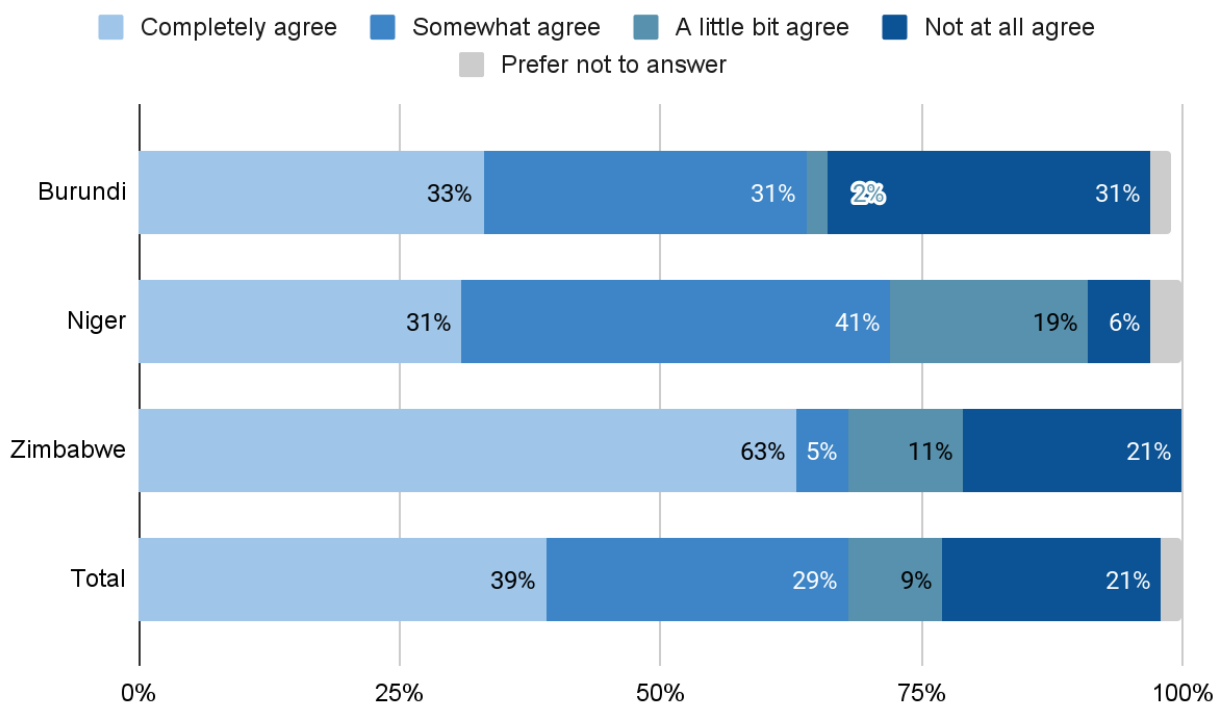
¹⁹¹ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], February 2022.

¹⁹² KIIs. Insider Mediators and implementing partner staff. Remote [Zimbabwe], January and February 2022.

¹⁹³ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

¹⁹⁴ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], February 2022.

¹⁹⁵ FGD. Insider Mediators. N'guigmi/Toumour. January 2022.



While valuable, IMs reported that capacity building was not sufficiently maintained throughout the life of the programme. The short duration of the training was highlighted as a short-coming by both IM and implementing partner respondents from Zimbabwe and by one IM respondent in Burundi. In the survey, 6 percent of IMs did not agree at all with the statement “The training sessions were sufficiently comprehensive (i.e., number of sessions)”, and 16 percent only agree a little, further reflecting this need for additional sessions. One IM respondent from Zimbabwe stated that given the importance of the course, it required two weeks. She felt she needed to continue learning and get more practical experience. However, this shortcoming in Zimbabwe can be in part explained by the late start of implementation which prevented the implementing partners from further addressing the needs of the IMs and adding more capacity-building sessions. An implementing partner respondent stated that the training needed to be redesigned in such a way as to better empower the participants, noting that five days of training is not enough to issue participants with a certificate of competence. The respondent felt that a short and unrecognised training, in the sense that it did not provide them with an official professional certification, does not give the IMs the credit they deserve, stating that a longer programme, of perhaps three months in duration, would enable participants to be given a more valuable certificate of competence.¹⁹⁶ However, such lengthy training would face

¹⁹⁶ KII. Implementing partner IPLG. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

feasibility issues as it would not necessarily fit the format of such a project with various activities and, due to time constraints, would not provide the mediators with as much opportunities for hands-on application of skills and knowledge. The short duration of the training for police officers in Burundi was also highlighted as a limiting factor in terms of bringing about sustainable change.¹⁹⁷

Obtaining the necessary security clearances presented a challenge. Clearance by state security agents presented an unforeseen challenge for the capacity building workshop held in Zimbabwe in the third quarter of 2021, as government departments were not involved. The state security department requested a list of names of both facilitators and participants to verify the nature of the gathering.¹⁹⁸ There were also challenges obtaining the necessary clearance for the training of police officers in Burundi. Moreover, this was initially not well perceived due to it being run by a CSO, although perceptions of the training subsequently improved.¹⁹⁹

The challenges in monitoring police practices made it difficult to determine whether training for police officers in Burundi resulted in a change in their approach to conflict resolution. A KII respondent explained that monitoring changes in the police's approach was limited for feasibility and sensitivity reasons, given the initial difficulties in integrating them in the programme and the authorisations required to reach police officers.²⁰⁰ In addition, the high turnover of police staff and the relocation of police officers to other locations negatively impacted the ability of the implementing partner to follow-up on the changes in their practices as a result of the training. Nonetheless, key informants from the implementing partner, highlighted a normalisation of the relationships between the police and the communities.²⁰¹

Disruptions due to COVID 19 and security issues. COVID restrictions led to the postponement of some training sessions in Burundi.²⁰² Due to a participant testing positive for COVID-19 the third training session in Zimbabwe was interrupted, and resumed remotely. In Niger, security issues resulted in training in Toumour being disrupted and halted for a day because of a military operation against Non-State Armed Groups (GANEs).²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

¹⁹⁸ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021.

¹⁹⁹ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

²⁰⁰ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

²⁰¹ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

²⁰² KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

VI.c.iv Capacity-Building - Opportunities

Greater inclusion of senior officials in training sessions could contribute to conflict resolution at the national level. One IM respondent from Zimbabwe expressed hope that more senior officials would receive training, given their role in peace processes at the national level²⁰⁴ A community leader in Burundi suggested that there should be greater representation of the army, police and local authorities in the training sessions. He noted that these actors are often involved in conflict resolution, but lack knowledge of mediation processes.²⁰⁵

Greater contextual adaptation of the training sessions would be beneficial. A respondent from IPLG in Zimbabwe suggested that holding training sessions tailored to specific groups, such as traditional leaders, would be beneficial. The respondent also felt that by being more context-specific the programme would enable entrenched conflicts to be addressed.²⁰⁶ The MR also expressed the need to receive more specific training, adapted to their level of experience, and based on their priorities, including Training of Trainers (ToT).²⁰⁷

Incorporating sessions on conflict prevention and peacebuilding would enable IMs to contribute to sustainable peace. One IM respondent from Zimbabwe stated that while they learned about mediation for the purpose of resolving conflicts, it would be beneficial to also have a session on peacebuilding, which would cover what to do after a conflict has been resolved. In particular, they identified reintegration of communities, and how to avoid a return to conflict as issues that should be covered.²⁰⁸ IM respondents in Niger also highlighted the need for training on reconciliation, as well as on conflict prevention.²⁰⁹ In addition, IMs in Burundi suggested that modules on advocacy and lobbying should be included in the training.²¹⁰

VI.c.v Capacity-Building - Lessons Learned

²⁰³ Provided documentation: Revised EEU047 Midterm report.p.23

²⁰⁴ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

²⁰⁵ KII. Community leader. Burundi, January 2022.

²⁰⁶ KII. Implementing partner IPLG. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁰⁷ FGD. Mediateur de la République. Abba/Tebaram, Niger. January 2022.

²⁰⁸ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁰⁹ FGD. Insider Mediators. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²¹⁰ FGD. Insider Mediators. Kayanza, Burundi, January 2022.

Opening up capacity building workshops to key external stakeholders, such as government officials facilitates experience and skills sharing, promotes buy-in for the project and fosters relationship building between IMs and external actors. In addition, involving representatives from key government institutions can mitigate the challenges posed by cumbersome security clearance procedures. The presence of a participant from the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission in the capacity building workshop held in Zimbabwe in the third quarter of 2021 was an advantage in terms of obtaining security clearance. Engaging 1-2 participants from within relevant government institutions in future trainings was identified as a way to avoid issues relating to security clearance in the future.²¹¹

A wider range of lessons learned on training were identified by the implementing partners in Niger and Burundi at the occasion of a midterm workshop. These include:

Ensuring diversity in the groups of mediators participating in the training sessions is key to facilitating skill and experience sharing between the IMs, and to foster mutual recognition. For example, including local officials and other mediation actors (including traditional chiefs and religious actors) makes them feel less threatened by the IMs.²¹²

There is a need for a continuous training programme.²¹³

Thematic- and profile-specific training sessions are good practices that increase the relevance of the sessions for the mediators. For example, a training focusing on legal codes would enable them to reach agreements anchored in a legal framework, rather than take the risk of generating illegal solutions. In addition, a dedicated training on youth and mediation would enhance the capacity of young mediators to implement activities.²¹⁴

Given the similarities between the form and content of the training sessions in the three countries of implementation, a unified basic mediation training structure across organisations could be developed. This could include common elements, such as mediation steps, connection to mediation practised by the EU and the UN, and clarification of the programme's international ties.²¹⁵

²¹¹ Provided documentation: 2021 Q3 Report.

²¹² Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report, p.13.

²¹³ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report, p.13.

²¹⁴ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report, p.13.

²¹⁵ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report, p.13.

VI.d Practice (types of conflicts and approaches)

VI.d.i Practice - Assets

IMs engaged in 32 documented mediation activities in Niger and Burundi. IMs in Burundi also report resolving both land-related and social conflicts independently.²¹⁶ In Zimbabwe, unlike in Burundi and Niger, there was the expectation that IMs would use the skills and knowledge they had gained, but there was never an intention to organise specific activities.²¹⁷

25 Community Solidarity activities were undertaken in Niger. Community Solidarity Activities are designed to be used in combination with local mediation sessions to contribute to:

- Increasing the visibility and recognition of the IMs by the community;
- Raising awareness on mediation as an effective tools of conflict resolution;
- Celebrating the resolution of conflicts;
- Solidifying improved relationships between the (previously) conflicting parties;
- Further transforming the perceptions of each other by discovering each other's talents, values and qualities as these activities provided an opportunity for different social and ethnic groups in the communities to come together and connect despite their differences; and,
- Building social cohesion.²¹⁸

These benefits were felt in the communities as community respondents reported in a focus group discussion that it brings people together to work together (e.g., to clean the health centre), and people discuss and joke.²¹⁹ Respondents did not explicitly discuss the anticipated benefits raised in the preceding list.

Solidarity activities included various construction programmes bringing together parties in conflict. Examples include the construction of a wall around a public garden by camel herders and farmers in the villages of Djannalewa and Bonégra, and construction of a drinking trough by community members from Bir Hilal and Klakmané, who were in conflict with each other. Women and youth in conflict with each other over a waterpoint in Abala constructed two separate entrances for the waterpoint. In addition, a warehouse was

²¹⁶ KIIs. Insider Mediators. Burundi, January 2022.

²¹⁷ KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

²¹⁸ Provided documentation: Revised EEU047 Midterm report. p.6.

²¹⁹ FGD. Community members. Abala/Tebaram, Niger. January 2022.

constructed at an NGO distribution point in Toumour by members of the host community and IDPs who were in conflict with each other over the distribution of resources. In Tébaram, farmers and herders, who were in conflict over animals destroying farmland on their way to a pond, worked together to create road access to the pond, demarcating a route for the animals.²²⁰ Friendly wrestling and football competitions were also held.²²¹

IMs undertook awareness raising activities (i.e., sensitisation) in Burundi. These included raising awareness about land conflicts among communities in Gitega,²²² and other sessions on various issues including on gender-based violence (GBV) in households in Kayanza and Rumonge, and on the labour code with the local administration, employers, and employee representatives in Kirundo.²²³ In some instances, the awareness raising sessions had a direct and immediate impact on the communities. For example, in the 33 couples, whose unions were not yet legally registered, went to legalise their marriage with the civil officer in Buyengero commune, after a session on the legalisation of consensual unions to prevent domestic conflicts, led by the provincial IMs in Rumonge.²²⁴

VI.a.ii Practice - Results and Impact

IM activities directly contributed to both conflict mitigation and conflict resolution in Burundi and Niger. In Niger, MR Regional Delegates assist IMs to resolve conflicts. A respondent from the Médiateur de la République stated that in areas where there are IMs, the number of conflicts resolved by Regional Delegates has increased substantially. Prior to the collaboration between the Médiateur de la République and the IM programme, Regional Delegates were reportedly resolving one conflict every three months. However, they were resolving 4-5 conflicts, and sometimes 6-7, in a three month period after they started working with the IMs.²²⁵ Respondents from N'guigmi and Toumour stated that during an effort to reconcile communities, they also convinced a community in Toumour that refused to send their children to school, to allow their children to get an education.²²⁶ This is an example of a positive unintended outcome of the IM programme.²²⁷

²²⁰ Provided documentation: 2021 Q2 Report, pp.12-13.

²²¹ Provided documentation: Interim Narrative Report, p.21.

²²² KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Burundi], February 2022.

²²³ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021, p.5-6.

²²⁴ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021, p.6.

²²⁵ KII. Médiateur de la République. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²²⁶ FGD. Local authorities. Niamey, Niger, January 2022

²²⁷ FGD. Local authorities. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

In Zimbabwe, although no specific activities to apply newly acquired skills and knowledge were planned, the trained IMs reported using what they learned in the training in their work, ultimately improving positive outcomes of their mediation endeavours. For example, one IM respondent reported that they had been applying the concept of conflict transformation to their work on victim support²²⁸, and another IMS mentioned that when working with different actors in the communities (including chiefs, traditional leaders, etc), what they learnt during the training helped them to interact better with these actors and to remain neutral.²²⁹

Peace outcomes were strengthened by solidarity activities. Implementing partner staff in Niger, along with IMs and beneficiaries, reported the value of solidarity activities as a symbolic close to the conflict. Respondents reported several types of activities, including repairing a well, building a wall or cleaning a health centre; these activities provide a reason for people to work together and build cohesion through providing a space to have informal dialogue.²³⁰ There is evidence to suggest that further solidarity activities are being independently undertaken by conflict-affected communities; specifically, one FGD group discussed how previous parties in conflict (herders) were beginning to help the farmers during planting seasons. Solidarity activities were then also introduced to Burundi, where according to one implementing partner staff respondent, the introduction of solidarity activities improved outcomes.²³¹

VI.d.iii Practice - Challenges

IMs reported challenges receiving adequate and timely material support. In Niger, IMs reported lack of phone credit and means of transportation as obstacles to fulfilling their roles. They also noted that the lack of material support and remuneration results in IMs dropping out of the programme.²³² IMs in Burundi also highlighted the lack of remuneration as a challenge.²³³ Out of 77 surveyed IMs from Niger and Burundi, only 22 percent completely agree with the statement “the programme provided a sufficient amount of resource support.”

Figure 3: IM's perception of sufficient level of resource support

²²⁸ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], February 2022.

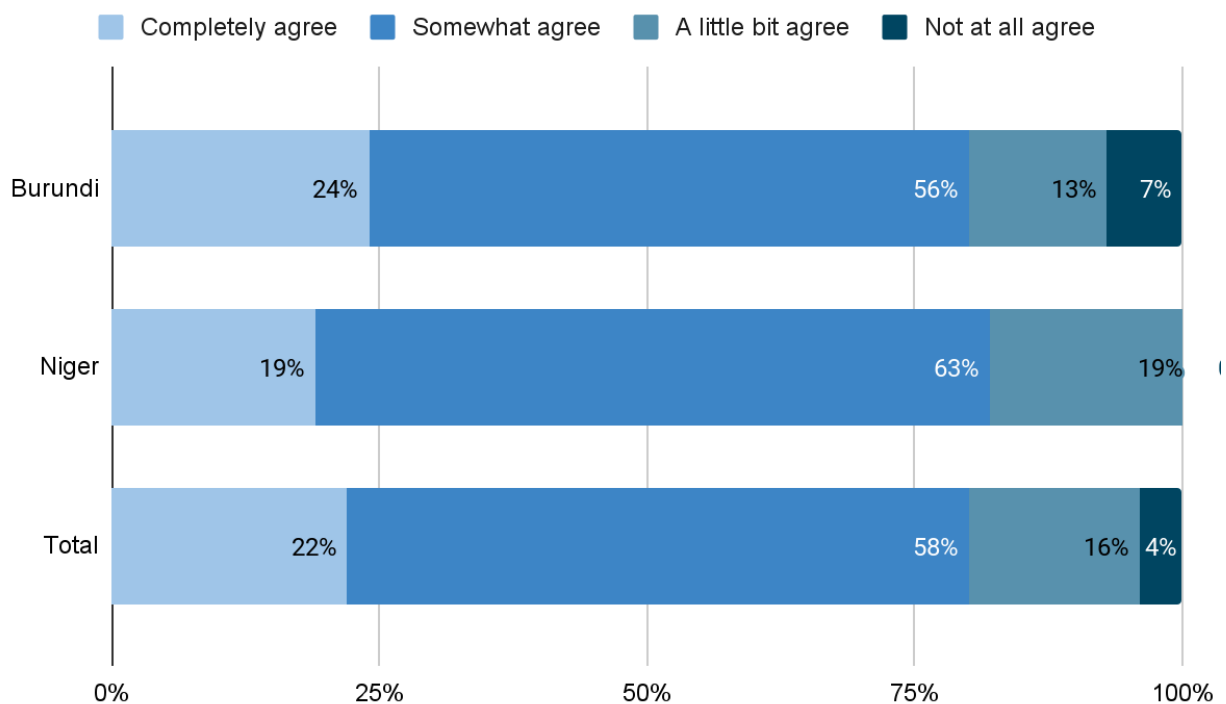
²²⁹ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], February 2022.

²³⁰ FGD. Community members. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²³¹ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²³² FGDs. Insider Mediators. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²³³ FGDs. Insider Mediators. Kayanza, Burundi, January 2022.



IMs, particularly in Niger, faced notable security challenges, which impeded activities. Insecurity prevented IMs from reaching some villages in Abala, Tillaberi, Tebarem and Tahoua. A number of activities also had to be cancelled in Toumour due to insecurity.²³⁴

Limited evidence of the long-term durability of peace outcomes. IMs in Niger highlighted the need for follow-up after mediation has taken place, to verify whether conflicts remain permanently resolved. This issue was particularly relevant for conflicts that were mediated by IMs who do not live in the specific village or community. In these instances, the IMs have limited ability to travel to the conflict site, and therefore are less connected with developments.

VI.d.iv Practice - Opportunities

Undertake or increase the number of women-only solidarity activities. Given the cultural barriers to women’s participation and inclusion in conflict resolution in Niger,

²³⁴ KIIs and FGDs. Insider Mediators and implementing partner staff. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

women-only solidarity activities could be introduced or scaled up. This would enable women from communities in conflict to connect, without stigmatisation or repercussions.

VI.d.v Practice - Lessons Learned

Adapt solidarity activity design. One implementing partner staff respondent stated that there is a need to revise and adapt the solidarity activities to the needs of the population through more lasting, material means to resolve conflicts. These should move beyond signing an agreement (e.g., building a joint well, if water access was at the centre of the conflict).²³⁵

VI.e Networks

VI.e.i Networks - Assets

The programme established country-level and supranational-level peer networks of IMs. In Burundi, CENAP started a Reflection Group, which brought together people they had trained from different institutions. The group was designed to function at the national level, promoting mediation in various workplaces.²³⁶ However, those in the group can also participate in local-level activities, such as experience sharing activities, and to build capacity at the grassroots level.²³⁷ A peer network of IMs across countries has also been established through a virtual exchange of experience, to overcome the impossibility to organise a face to face meeting event due to COVID-19 restrictions on both gatherings and travel.

35 videos were produced (15 in Niger, 15 in Burundi and 5 in Zimbabwe) for a virtual exchange of experience between IMs in the three countries of implementation. Three cycles of short videos (3-4 minutes long), with translations, were produced to create an interactive exchange between the IMs. In the first cycle, mediators from Niger and Burundi introduced themselves, shared their experience in mediation, focusing on the challenges they faced and then asked questions to mediators from the other country on the practice of mediation there. The second cycle of videos consisted of mediators from Niger

²³⁵ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²³⁶ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

²³⁷ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Burundi], February 2022.

answering questions posed to them by Burundian mediators in their videos. At the end of 2021, 10 new videos were produced and shared between Niger and Burundi for a 3rd cycle. In addition, 5 videos with IMs from Zimbabwe were produced and shared through whatsapp groups to the IMs in Niger and Burundi.²³⁸

VI.e.ii Networks - Results and Impact

IMs proactively engage their peer networks, although the extent varies by country.

89 percent of survey respondents in Burundi and 97 percent of survey respondents in Niger stated that collaboration with other mediators at the local level has been ‘very much’ or ‘somewhat’ enhanced as a result of the programme. Moreover, 96 percent of survey respondents in Burundi and 100 percent of survey respondents in Niger felt that opportunities to collaborate with existing actors and institutions promoting peace and stability ‘very much’ or ‘somewhat’ increased since joining the programme. IMs in Burundi established WhatsApp groups to communicate with each other, and seemed generally satisfied with the networks established through the training they attended.²³⁹ IMs in Zimbabwe and Niger also established WhatsApp groups to exchange experiences and ideas with peers in their own respective countries.²⁴⁰

In Zimbabwe, although the training happened late in the course of the project implementation, there is evidence of concrete collaboration through the network created through the training. One IM respondent reported that following the training, two local mediators who participated in the training reached out to the NPRC to refer conflicts happening in their area, including a conflict over diamonds and a conflict between villagers and a foreign investing company over crops, and issues of eviction by the company, and asked the NPRC to handle the mediation of the cases, if the conflicting parties would allow it.²⁴¹

In Burundi, CENAP has sought to establish links between IMs at the local and national levels. IMs have reached out to others when engaging in peace efforts. For example, IMs in Kayanza reported visiting a commune where there was a long running conflict within the VSLA group. During mediation, they reached out to the organisation that was financially supporting the group to help resolve the dispute, and were successful in

²³⁸ Provided documentation: Q4 report template, p.16.

²³⁹ KIIs. Insider Mediators. Burundi, January 2022.

²⁴⁰ KIIs and FGDs. Insider Mediators. Niger and Remote [Zimbabwe], January and February 2022.

²⁴¹ KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe], January 2022.

ending the conflict. IMs also report reaching out to the Institution of the Ombudsman, the police, and other NGOs, when trying to resolve conflicts.²⁴² CENAP also brought IMs to Bujumbura on two occasions to share experiences with those working on conflict resolution within ministries and other government bodies.²⁴³ CENAP also made and shared videos, about what they and the IMs do, with top government officials with the aim of creating a connection between officials at the national and provincial levels, and the IMs.²⁴⁴ In addition, three experience-sharing workshops were organised in the provinces of Gitega, Rumonge, and Rutana at the end of 2021, including 56 insider mediators (33 men, 23 women).²⁴⁵ During these sessions, IMs were able to share their achievements and to discuss challenges and lessons learned.

In Niger, IMs collaborate well at the local level, and some efforts have been made to foster **collaboration** at a national level. Search and HACP co-organised a joint reflection and learning workshop from 14-16 July 2021 uniting IMs from different project locations, and other relevant stakeholders. This event provided an opportunity for IMs from local peace committees in each community to raise their needs and concerns and work towards strengthening platforms between stakeholders. At a more local level, IMs work in little groups, as following the training sessions, the group of participants was divided into sub-groups responsible for collaboratively identifying the conflicts to mediate and report on a monthly basis.²⁴⁶

IMs in Burundi and Niger reported that the virtual exchange was useful and valuable. Videos of IMs were exchanged and discussed among the IMs in both countries, with the objective of increasing understanding of the role of Insider Mediators to transform conflict in different settings and contexts. A survey conducted at the end of this virtual exchange, using evaluation forms, showed that more than 95 percent of IMs in Burundi and 66 percent of IMs in Niger who watched the videos appreciated the opportunity to interact with IMs from another country.²⁴⁷

VI.e.iii Networks - Challenges

²⁴² KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

²⁴³ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

²⁴⁴ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Bujumbura, Burundi, January 2022.

²⁴⁵ Provided documentation: Q4 report template, pp.9-10.

²⁴⁶ KII. IP. Search Niger. Diffa. January 2022.

²⁴⁷ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021 report, p.12.

Challenges in networking with other IMs were identified in the three countries. IMs in Zimbabwe highlighted the absence of networking opportunities. While they established a WhatsApp group to communicate with each other, the IMs and implementing partner staff felt that a more structured network was required.²⁴⁸ It is, however, important to note that the network of IMs was only fully established in 2021, due to unavoidable delays in programming. There was therefore no opportunity to make progress on networking during the period covered by this evaluation. While IM respondents in Burundi were generally satisfied with networks they had established during the training, one local government official from Rumonge stated that while IMs work well together within their groups, there is a need to strengthen networks with the entire province.²⁴⁹ IMs in Niger stated that while the WhatsApp groups that have been established are useful, some IMs do not have smartphones and are therefore unable to access information shared in the groups.²⁵⁰ In Burundi, the monitoring report for the first quarter of 2021 states that 56 percent of IMs reported that there was no collaboration between mediators at the local and national levels. This was attributed to a lack of action on arranging for these mediators to meet each other.²⁵¹ However, the survey suggests positive progress towards the end of the programme as 31 percent of surveyed IMs from Burundi reported that their collaboration with other mediators has been enhanced at the national level.

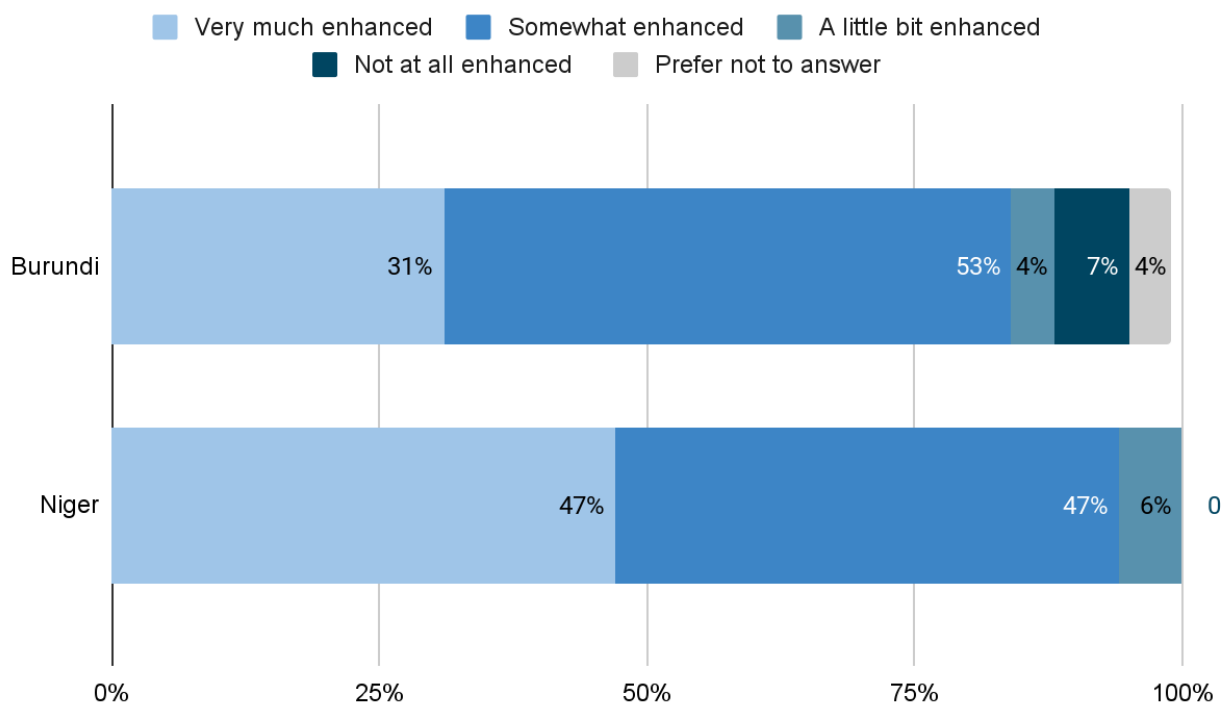
Figure 4: IM's perception on the evolution of their collaboration with other mediators at the national level

²⁴⁸ KIIs. Insider Mediators and implementing partner staff. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January and February 2022.

²⁴⁹ KII. Local authorities. Rumonge, Burundi. January 2022.

²⁵⁰ FGD. Insider Mediators. Niamey, Naiger, January 2022.

²⁵¹ Provided documentation: Annex B) Rapport de mission de suivi des activités communautaires du projet insider mediator (FR), Mars 2021 - Niger



Limited opportunities for experience sharing between IMs of all three countries. 40 percent of survey respondents in Burundi and 56 per cent of respondents in Niger reported having participated in a joint reflection and learning exercises with peers in another country, or with other actors in the peace process. 100 percent of survey respondents in both countries reported that their capacity for mediation had ‘very much’ or ‘somewhat’ improved due to these exercises. One IM in Zimbabwe reported that she was unaware that the programme was taking place elsewhere.²⁵² Two of IMs in Zimbabwe expressed a desire for greater networking opportunities with other IMs in Africa to understand how they approach conflict resolution and their understanding of mediation. One of them also stated that she would benefit from understanding how women experience mediation in other parts of the world, and, in particular, how they are able to earn the trust of the communities they work with.²⁵³ IMs in Niger also stated that it would be useful to have exchange visits with IMs from other countries, building on the virtual exchange that they have already had with IMs in Burundi.²⁵⁴

²⁵² KII. Insider Mediator. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁵³ KIIs. Insider Mediators. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁵⁴ FGDs. Insider Mediators. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

VI.e.iv Networks - Opportunities

Increasing opportunities for exchanges between IMs from different countries. IMs in all three countries expressed a desire for more opportunities to exchange experiences and learning with IMs from other countries where the programme is being implemented.

Incorporating lessons learned from other implementing partner activities, unrelated to the IM programme. One implementing partner respondent suggested that lessons learned from the Berghof Foundation's work in Somalia could be incorporated in future phases of the programme.²⁵⁵

VI.e.v Networks - Lessons Learned

In order to overcome the challenges to collaboration and coordination between IMs and other peacebuilding actors, the consortium partners realised that including members of existing mediation institutions among selected IMs at the onset of the programme, and inviting other actors to the activities of the IMs, are good practices to bridge the gap between grassroots and higher level actors.²⁵⁶ However, they also highlighted that in all countries, these measures should be combined with the creation of a more formal space for experience sharing between IMs and mediators that work for state institutions.

VI.f Institutionalisation of IMs

VI.f.i Institutionalisation - Assets

The programme has established relationships with relevant institutions in each country, although the strength of relationship varies. In Burundi, the programme has established relationships with local government authorities (including the police), the Ombudsman, Chief of Governor's Cabinet, and CNTB, among others.²⁵⁷ These relationships have been largely developed after 2020, with the new presidential administration emphasising the importance of mediation.²⁵⁸ A forum on mediation was organised in Burundi in December 2020 in collaboration with the Institution of the Ombudsman. There were 68 participants, including 28 women, which included representatives of the Institution of the Ombudsman, senators, and officials from the workers' union, and provincial actors

²⁵⁵ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²⁵⁶ Provided documentation: Mid-term Workshop Report, p.6.

²⁵⁷ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

in the field of mediation. The objectives of this forum were to promote and enhance the practice of mediation, collect recommendations aimed at strengthening the establishment of a framework for promoting the culture of mediation at the national level, and to present the data drawn from the mapping of mediation initiatives.²⁵⁹ CENAP staff also received training on lobbying and advocacy in the third quarter of 2021.²⁶⁰

In Niger, the programme has relationships with HACP and the MR, with the latter characterised as particularly strong.²⁶¹ As an example of this, from 14-16 July 2021, Search co-organised a workshop with HACP to reflect on the existing community conflicts and the role of local mediation in resolving them, and to elaborate a plan for enhanced collaboration between local mediation actors including the mayors, peace committee members, the chefferie and the IMs.²⁶² This workshop was followed up by a joint evaluation mission in the four project locations to follow up on the mediation activities carried out by the local mediators, understand the level of collaboration between the IMs and regional officials of the MR, the HACP and municipal and administrative officials actors and to develop a way in which the IMs can work more formally with these different structures, including institutionalising the local mediators with the offices of the mayors.²⁶³ The results of this mission were presented and further discussed at the national level as part of a capitalisation workshop organised in Niamey at the end of February 2022, with the participation of IMs, partners, and external actors.

In Zimbabwe, the programme works closely with the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission, drawing several IMs from the institution. The programme similarly works with the Council of Churches, as well as other civil society organisations.²⁶⁴

In Niger, Search participated in several events to promote the vertical integration of insider mediation. A regional workshop on the prevention and management of conflicts in the Liptako Gourma was held in Niamey from 28th to 30th June 2021. This brought together the Mediators of the Republic of Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Benin, and key stakeholders in order to share good practices and propose concrete solutions to harmonise conflict prevention at the regional level and to find opportunities for IMs to contribute to national and regional conflict management processes.²⁶⁵ On the 15th and

²⁵⁹ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators - 2020 Q4 report

²⁶⁰ Provided documentation: 2021 Q3 Report.

²⁶¹ KII. MR Delegate. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²⁶² Provided documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021. p.10-11.

²⁶³ Provided documentation: Q4 report template, p.16.

²⁶⁴ KII. Implementing partner Berghof..Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

16th June 2021, Search Niger and two IMs from Abala were invited to Tillaberi by Promediation, funded by EUCAP, to participate in a strategic regional security workshop gathering 60 representatives of the civilian population and the security defence forces to discuss challenges and opportunities for civil-military relationship building.²⁶⁶

VI.f.ii Institutionalisation - Results and Impact

Evidence of ownership of mediation by local administration through involvement in and support of IMs' activities. In Burundi, local authorities reportedly “support” the mediators’ activities, with an implementing partner staff member stating that “[the administration] has built ownership of the mediation process”.²⁶⁷ This ownership also exists in Niger, where several of the IMs are local government authorities (e.g., mayors’ representatives / vice-mayor). The mediation activities actively involve members of the authorities and the chefferie who are not IMs, in a process that ensures mediation outcomes are accepted and recognised. For example, the IMs have been working very closely with the chef de canton in N'guigmi, who has accompanied them in their mediation work and has helped them by providing access to his palace and vehicles when needed.²⁶⁸

VI.f.iii Institutionalisation - Challenges

The programme made limited progress towards its objective of connecting local mediators to national or supra-national actors. Although some progress has been made in Burundi, an implementing partner staff respondent stated that the programme has not made much progress in connecting national and local-level actors.²⁶⁹ IMs stated that they did not know how to collaborate with other peacebuilding actors, or how to coordinate mediation and conflict management activities.²⁷⁰ In Burundi, limited progress took the form of two provincial fora in Gitega and Kayanza (November 2021), that brought together IMs, local administrations and other institutional stakeholders. At these fora, participants raised the need for increased collaboration between IMs and authorities.²⁷¹

²⁶⁵ Provided documentation: 2021 Q2 Report, p.15

²⁶⁶ Provided documentation: 2021 Q2 Report, p.16

²⁶⁷ KII. Implementing partner CENAP. Remote [Bujumbura, Burundi], February 2022.

²⁶⁸ Written response. Implementing partner. March 2022.

²⁶⁹ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²⁷⁰ Provided documentation: Annex B) Rapport de mission de suivi des activités communautaires du projet insider mediator (FR), Mars 2021 - Niger

Progress in Niger took the form of a workshop with IMs, higher-level decision-makers and HACP (July 2021); otherwise, most engagement was at the sub-national and national level to some extent.²⁷² Indeed, while there was no effective connection with supra-national bodies like the EU, the connection with Nigerien national actors (MR and HACP) was strengthened over the course of implementation, and resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the MR in February 2022.²⁷³

Mediators lack full institutional acceptance or de jure recognition. IMs do not necessarily have full institutional acceptance in Burundi. That is, while mediation is now a priority of the new administration, all relevant institutions are not necessarily receptive to civil society; this has resulted in some IMs having to “keep their head down”.²⁷⁴ One IM respondent highlighted the fragility of the newly established working relationship with institutions, and warned that the absence of CENAP playing a bridging role between IMs and the government could create challenges.²⁷⁵ In Niger, mediators lack de jure recognition (at the national level) around their authority and remit.²⁷⁶ However, efforts have been made to address this issue, which was raised at a workshop held in July 2021 with the HACP and the MR.²⁷⁷ Following this workshop, an evaluation mission has been jointly planned with the aim of advocating for the institutionalisation of the IMs within the offices of the mayors, so that they would offer the IMs a more formal role, by official decree.²⁷⁸

Nigerien external stakeholders’ reporting capacities fall short of needs.²⁷⁹ The MR is deeply involved in the IMs activities, with regional institutional mediators attending all IM activities. The outcomes of these activities are reported up to the head of the institution (i.e., the Médiateur), and then collated by Technical Advisors for reporting to the President and national legislature. However, the process for doing this is inefficient and inhibits the institution from undertaking robust analysis of conflict trends in the country.²⁸⁰ Beyond the limitations in stakeholders’ research capacity, they also lack material resources to accompany IMs.²⁸¹

²⁷¹ Provided documentation: Q4 report template, p.14-15.

²⁷² KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote [Niger], February 2022.

²⁷³ Written response. Implementing partner. March 2022.

²⁷⁴ Internal learning exercise. Remote. February 2022.

²⁷⁵ KII. IM. Remote [Burundi]. January 2022.

²⁷⁶ Mediators and local authorities are attempting to mitigate this challenge at the local level (i.e., through having the Mayor sign a ‘decree’); however, the programme is not approaching such systematically.

²⁷⁷ Provided documentation: Insider Mediators Q3 2021 (1), p.11.

²⁷⁸ Provided documentation: Q4 report template, p.16.

²⁷⁹ Institutions in Niger face several capacity challenges, including funding and technical capacity across a range of subjects. This challenges focuses specifically on reporting capacity, extended to conflict monitoring and analysis, as it most directly relates to the programme.

²⁸⁰ KII. MR Delegate. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

VI.f.iv Institutionalisation - Opportunities

Pursue de jure recognition in Niger. The MR in Niger actively supports institutionalising the IMs through establishing a legal framework through which the IMs can work.²⁸² There is also the possibility of working through the mayors' office, so that they would provide mandates for IMs.

Integrate the work of IMs to the changing local mediation structure in Burundi. A new law has been ratified stipulating that court proceedings should start at the *colline* level (ie. the smallest administrative entity in Burundi). This constitutes a positive institutional step towards more bottom-up approaches to conflict resolution and creates momentum for visibility of the IMs' work.²⁸³ However, an implementing partner respondent indicated that while this signified an effort to encourage grassroots mediation, and presented an opportunity for CENAP to collaborate with the Ministry of Justice, the implications of this new legislation remain unclear. In particular, it is unclear where IMs would fit within this new legal framework, and there is a concern that with these new structures, other initiatives like the IMs could be overshadowed or replaced.²⁸⁴ As the ways in which this legislation is going to be implemented are still being discussed by the commission responsible, there is an opportunity for advocacy on the integration of IMs with new structures.

Hold discussions within the consortium to define an approach to sustainability adapted to the context of each country. On the basis of the achievements of this first phase of implementation, in connecting IMs to local and national authorities in Niger and Burundi for example, it would be key to reflect on what are the next steps on the road to institutionalisation, taking into consideration the risks associated with this, and the different contexts of implementation.

VI.f.v Institutionalisation - Lessons Learned

²⁸¹ Written response. Implementing partner. March 2022.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ This refers to Law 1/03 of January 23, 2021, supplementing the provisions of the civil procedure code relating to the reestablishment of the council of hill notables. Available at: Loi No 1/03 du 23 janvier 2021 portant Complément des Dispositions du Code de Procédure Civile Relative à la Reinstitution du Conseil des Notables de la Colline (gov.bi)

²⁸⁴ KII. Implementing partner, CENAP. Remote [Burundi]. February 2022.

Include relevant institutions in IM trainings. Burundi (police), Niger (MR delegates, the mayors' office and the chefferie) and Zimbabwe (NPRC delegates) saw success with extending capacity building to representatives from relevant institutions. The representatives found the capacity building valuable, with an authority member reporting that such inclusion strengthened the relationship between the programme and the relevant institution.^{285 286}

VI.g Programme Management

VI.g.i Programme Design

Respondents, across respondent-type, reported that the programme design addressed a gap in programming, while meeting the needs of target communities.

Respondents consistently reported that the programme addressed a needed gap in programming. That is, the target countries are contextually relevant, where insider mediation exists as a conceptual tradition, but have limited explicit support to IMs as such (i.e., through institutionalisation or internalisation. The latter refers to building IM's capacity, knowledge and skills of mediation to the point of internalisation of this knowledge and application in practice).²⁸⁷ To that end, respondents believe that the programme addresses national and international gaps and priorities. The communities, particularly in Burundi and Niger, are conflict-affected; both community members and IMs believe that the IM approach is an appropriate vehicle to respond to these needs (for conflict transformation).

Zimbabwe represents a substantively different context, requiring programmatic adjustments.

Respondents from Berghof report that the Zimbabwe context varies significantly from that of Burundi and Niger. Specifically, that mediator engagement is largely at Track 1.5, where in the other countries engagement is at Track 3.²⁸⁸ This, in turn, proves challenging for developing coherent programme approaches, as well as assessment systems, while also limiting learning opportunities. To that end, one implementing partner staff member initially called in to question the wisdom of including Zimbabwe in the programme.²⁸⁹ There was reported disagreement on this topic, as others found the

²⁸⁵ KII. MR Delegate. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²⁸⁶ KII. NPRC Delegate. Remote [Zimbabwe]. February 2022.

²⁸⁷ KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁸⁸ KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

difference as a positive expression of the diversity of the roles of IMs, and therefore beneficial to include.²⁹⁰ In hindsight, with a better understanding of the different contexts of implementation between countries, all the partners highlight the added value and increased opportunities for learning, as a result of the inclusion of Zimbabwe.²⁹¹

VI.g.ii Implementation Process Efficiency

IP staff respondents reported challenges with implementation process fidelity, at the consortium level. Implementing partner staff, across the partner organisations, reported substantial challenges with implementation processes, particularly citing the nature of the relationship between Search (as consortium lead) and the partners (Interpeace and Berghof, as well as CENAP and IPLG). Specifically, implementing partner staff perceived Search as treating partners akin to subcontractors, rather than equal implementation partners.²⁹² As part of its management of the contract, Search required partners to comply with Search’s standard internal processes for financial and implementation reporting; which non-Search implementing partner staff found burdensome and heavy-handed, with one respondent stating that such processes “endangered” the programme and “cost [firm] more than a third of our [implementation] time”.²⁹³²⁹⁴ There appears little evidence that the consortium comprehensively mapped administrative and implementation processes in the contract phase, such that all involved parties had a shared understanding of requirements. Moreover, there is similarly little evidence to suggest that processes have been harmonised. Nonetheless, implementing partner staff report that improvements have been made to ways of working, including streamlining of coordination meetings with a better structure and clarification of each meetings’ objectives (ie. M&E, content, etc.), improved joint-decision making and communication, and increased experience-sharing events between partners. The partners have also discussed revised approaches for Phase II.²⁹⁵

While the programme received active engagement from EU-Brussels, country-level (i.e., delegation) engagement was lacking. Implementing partner staff reported that the donor (i.e., EU-Brussels) was actively engaged with the programme through the course of implementation.²⁹⁶ However, the country-level EU delegations were notably less engaged.

²⁸⁹ KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁹⁰ KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁹¹ KII. Implementing partner. Berghof and Search. Remote [Zimbabwe and Niger]. January and February 2022.

²⁹² KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote, January 2022.

²⁹⁵ KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

Implementing partner staff, across all countries, reported that the delegations did not engage in a consistent manner; this lack of engagement included cancelling scheduled check-ins and failing to provide required input on deliverables.^{297 298 299} Implementing partner staff reported that this lack of engagement had a non-negligible negative effect on the programme achieving its maximum impact, as the teams were tasked with producing deliverables for the delegations' use without receiving input or guidance on how these deliverables could maximise their utility. For example, the programme was tasked with producing mediator rosters, which would ostensibly be used by the delegations across their respective activities. However, the consortium did not receive such input, inhibiting roster utility,³⁰⁰ In particular, this directly hindered full achievement of Objective 2: 'Support the EU in consolidating and further strengthening its approach to and operationalisation of insider mediation support,' as the potential synergy of action between implementing partners and EU delegations could not be exploited.

VI.g.iii Internal Learning Efforts

Consortium internal learning efforts resulted in tangible programme improvements; however, there is room to improve. The consortium undertook several learning exercises, including creating consortium content, and a consortium management call, convening a mid-term online workshop and having an in-person exchange in Niger. These exercises resulted in tangible programme improvements, for the current phase and for Phase II. For the former, learning exercises resulted in adapted capacity building approaches, and the introduction of solidarity activities in Burundi (from Niger), and sensitisation activities in Niger (from Burundi).³⁰¹ Specifically, the "implement and share" approach detailed under VI.g.i provided this opportunity. However, respondents reported that there is room for improvement. Implementing partner staff reported that the learning activities detailed above were too limited. Moreover, learning reports were often inaccessible, as they were written in French and not translated, or translation was not provided during meetings for non-French speakers.³⁰²

²⁹⁶ KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote, January 2022.

²⁹⁷ KII. Implementing partner Interpeace. Remote [Burundi]. February 2022.

²⁹⁸ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

²⁹⁹ KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

³⁰⁰ KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote, January 2022.

³⁰¹ Provided documentation: Monthly M&E Notes, 2021

³⁰² KII. Implementing partner Berghof. Remote [Zimbabwe]. January 2022.

The programme has not always adequately aligned programme logic with performance monitoring and evaluation. Implementing partner staff respondents reported that the initial programme logic was not adequately captured by the monitoring and evaluation system, including the logical framework.³⁰³ The programme underwent several design revisions during the contracting and inception phase. Moreover, external factors (e.g., COVID) necessitated further adaptations to activity design and implementation approach. Consequently, the initially approved logical framework came to no longer reflect programme activities (and the inherent logic they represented). This mismatch necessitated the creation of a second, or updated logical framework after year one.

M&E systems exhibit notable inefficiencies. The consortium’s M&E system, at the consortium level and at partner levels, exhibited inefficiencies. Specifically, partners were responsible for M&E activities, which were then married up for regular reporting, as well as internal learning. Partners reportedly took a non-uniform approach to M&E, which created challenges for data synthesis, particularly for the Search team which produced the donor reports (see also VI.g.i).³⁰⁴ Internal M&E teams also used inefficient means of data collection, relying largely on pen and paper and manual data entry and calculation. For example, in Niger the programme officers create a paper-based activity summary sheet. This then had to be inputted into an Excel spreadsheet manually, and then calculated.³⁰⁵ Such a process is not only inefficient, but has multiple potential fail-points (e.g., data misentry).

VI.g.iv Progress Against Performance Indicators

The following table summarises the programme’s outcome indicators that were measured and recorded throughout the life of the programme.³⁰⁶ The programme exceeded all performance indicators at the programme level, with the exception of I1.

Table B: Indicator progress

Indicator	Achieved in the programme ^{307 308}	Programme Target	Comments on
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³⁰³ KII. Implementing partner Search. Remote, January 2022.

³⁰⁴ KII. Implementing partnerSearch. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

³⁰⁵ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

³⁰⁶ This indicator list is non-exhaustive, and only covers indicators that fell under the scope of the final evaluation. Final measurement of all performance indicators is pending completion of the programme.

³⁰⁷ With the exception of ER2.2.1, all indicators are measured on a four point Likert scale; achievement was calculated by summing the responses on the positive side of the scale (e.g., ‘very satisfied’ and ‘somewhat satisfied’).ER2.2.1 was scored on a binary, ‘yes’ or ‘no’; achievement is the total of ‘yes’ responses.

³⁰⁸ Zimbabwe IMs were not included in the sample for assessment against indicators due to differences in the implementation cycle between Zimbabwe and Burundi and Niger.

% of Target Achieved

Impact: To contribute to national efforts for peace and stability in target countries

<p>I1. % of key actors (insider mediators, involved civil society actors, involved key authorities etc.) report that they are able to engage with each other to contribute to national efforts for peace and stability in target countries.</p>	<p>Number of respondents who replied to the question: 77 (52 men and 25 women)</p> <p>Total positive: 96%³⁰⁹ Burundi: 98% Niger: 94%</p> <p>Breakdown of answers, by gender (across countries): Very much able to engage: Men 75%, Women 72% Somewhat able to engage: Men 23%, Women 20% A little bit able to engage: Men 0%, Women 6%</p>	<p>Indicator measures IM perspective</p> <p style="text-align: center;">100%</p>
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Specific Objective 1: Strengthen local and national capacities for conflict transformation by leveraging insider mediation capacities and processes within existing or potential national peace infrastructures

<p>SO1. % of community members and authorities report that the insider mediators have strengthened local and national capacities for conflict transformation.</p>	<p>Number of respondents who replied to the question: 77 (52 men and 25 women)</p> <p>Total positive: 100%³¹⁰ Burundi: 100% Niger: 100%</p> <p>Breakdown of answers, by gender (across countries): Completely agree: Men 90%, Women 72% Somewhat agree: Men 10%, Women 28%</p>	<p>Indicator measures IM perspective</p> <p style="text-align: center;">65%</p>
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Specific Objective 2: Support the EU in consolidating and further strengthening its approach to and operationalisation of insider mediation support.

<p>SO2.1. % of IM who report seeing value in being part of a group of local and national Insider Mediators in order to contribute to peace and stability</p>	<p>Number of respondents who replied to the question: 77 (52 men and 25 women)</p> <p>Total positive: 99%³¹¹ Burundi: 100% Niger: 97%</p> <p>Breakdown of answers, by gender (across countries): Very much value: Men 96%, Women 80% Somewhat value: Men 4%, Women 16% A little bit value: Men 0%, Women 4%</p>	<p>Indicator measures IM perspective</p> <p style="text-align: center;">65%</p>
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Expected Result 1.1: Insider mediators have enhanced conflict transformation capacity by increasing knowledge and skills in conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation.

<p>ER1.1. % of insider mediators trained report an increase in understanding of mediation</p>	<p>Number of respondents who replied to the question: 77 (52 men and 25 women)</p> <p>Total: 79%³¹¹</p>	
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³⁰⁹ Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D1

³¹⁰ Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. C4_R1

³¹¹ Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D2

^{B12} Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D3 ^{B13} Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D4 ^{B14} Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D5B ^{B15} Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D6A ^{B16} Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D6B		95%	81

<p>ER2.1.2. % of insider mediators report that they have increased opportunities to collaborate with existing platforms to promote peace and stability in target countries</p>	<p>Number of respondents who replied to the question: 77 (52 men and 25 women)</p> <p>Total: 97%³¹⁷ Burundi: 96% Niger: 100%</p> <p>Breakdown of answers, by gender (across countries): Very much improved: Men 65%, Women 44% Somewhat improved: Men 31%, Women 56% A little bit improved: Men 4%, Women 0%</p>	<p>66%</p>	
<p>Expected Result 2.2: Insider mediators receive increased support from peers across borders and other actors involved in EU-supported peace processes.</p>			
<p>ER.2.2. % of IM report they have been able to improve their capacity for mediation through joint reflection and learning exchanges with peers across borders and other actors in EU-</p>	<p>Number of respondents who replied to the question: 36 (21 men and 15 women), which is the number of IMs who reported having participated in joint reflection and learning exercises.</p>	<p>26%</p>	

National total: 88%

Burundi: 84%

³¹⁷ Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D7

³¹⁸ Bodhi Global Analysis. (2021). IM self-assessment survey, February, 2022. D

Breakdown of answers, by gender (across countries):

Very much enhanced: Men 42%, Women 28%

Somewhat enhanced: Men 44%, Women 64%

A little bit enhanced: Men 6%, Women 4%

Not at all enhanced: Men 6%, Women 0%

Prefer not to answer: Men 2%, Women 4%

ER2.1.1 % insider mediators reporting enhanced collaboration between each

70%

supported peace process	Total: 100% ³¹⁸ Burundi: 100% Niger: 100% Breakdown of answers, by gender (across countries): Very much improved: Men 71%; Women 53% Somewhat improved: Men 29%, Women 47%		
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VI.g.v Conflict Sensitivity and Risk Management

Ongoing security concerns, particularly in Niger, substantively impacted programme implementation, and serve as a critical threat to future work. The programme operates in complex environments with fluid security situations; the programming in Niger is particularly vulnerable to such concerns. Search employs a robust risk management plan, with dedicated security staff that monitor contextual developments and advise on mitigation measures, which include employing local-based mobilisation staff in areas deemed too insecure for IMs or Search staff.³¹⁹ Nonetheless, severe external challenges are beyond reasonable mitigation measures and have resulted in concrete impacts to programme implementation. Armed groups involved in cross-border conflict around Lake Chad have driven displacement of IMs and their communities, or made communities inaccessible. Insecurity in the Tri-border Area is also impacting implementation. For example, in Tillaberi, IMs are unable “to go 2-3km away from their village to solve a conflict there”.³²⁰ Moreover, given the prominent status that IMs have (as local influencers, and not specifically mediators), IMs are exposed to increased risk, including violence. Specifically, one IM was killed in December 2020; however, there is no evidence to suggest that this was due to his role as a Search-supported mediator, specifically.³²¹

Limited evidence to suggest the consortium is monitoring conflict sensitivity in a systematic manner. The consortium, as part of its regular donor-require reporting, monitored contextual developments, including the programme’s interactions with ongoing conflict(s) and conflict actors. However, the programme did not develop specific conflict sensitivity indicators, nor did it assess adherence to conflict sensitivity principles in a systematic manner. Positively, though, the consortium has identified areas in which it can improve conflict sensitivity in Phase II, including through the provision of more targeted

³¹⁹ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

³²⁰ Provided documentation: Monthly M&E Notes, 2021

³²¹ KII. Implementing partner Search. Niamey, Niger, January 2022.

personal safety and security capacity building for IMs, while also reassessing whether programming can continue in certain locations (in Niger).

7. Conclusions

VII.a Mapping

- **Achievement:** The mapping exercise was an invaluable activity, ensuring a component of conflict sensitivity (i.e., identification of diverse set of IMs who would be accepted by conflicting parties) and relevance to context, while facilitating subsequent activities (e.g., engagement strategy and IM selection)

VII.b Selection of Mediators

- **Achievement:** IM selection was aligned with best practice; through an inclusive and participatory approach, the programme successfully mobilised mediators with high potential to affect change.
- **Challenge:** Cultural barriers served as an obstacle to women's inclusion in Niger and to youth participation in all three countries.

VII.c Capacity-building

- **Achievement:** Capacity building resulted in empowered and capable mediators.

VII.d Practice

- **Achievement:** IMs were successfully mobilised and directly contributed to positive peace outcomes.
- **Challenge:** The medium-to-long-term impact of programme activities cannot be determined.

VII.e Networks

- **Challenge:** Networking efforts illustrate signs of progress; however, capitalising on established networks requires further effort.

VII.f Institutionalisation

- **Achievement.** The programme has largely been successful in establishing relationships with relevant institutions, with NPRC in Zimbabwe, and local authorities in Niger and in Burundi, actively integrating with IM activities.

VII.g Programme Management

- **Achievement:** The programme was relevant to targeted communities, and advanced IP/donor priorities.
- **Achievement:** While the consortium faced challenges in the early stages of the programme with implementation management and processes, these challenges have been largely addressed, well-placing the consortium for a second phase.
- **Challenge:** M&E has proved a consistent challenge, both in aligning the logical framework to the programme logic, and with implementation processes.

7. Recommendations

To Consortium Management, regarding design and activities (general):

Implement sustained and progressive capacity development

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “while valuable, IMs reported that capacity building was not sufficiently maintained throughout the life of the programme”. IM respondents in Burundi and Niger both voiced that the capacity building component was not sufficiently progressive.

Adopting a progressive capacity building approach, where mediators receive training over the life of the programme that builds on existing capacity, could contribute to stronger realised outcomes. Specifically, the programme would do well to conduct a light touch capacity and needs assessment with existing IMs to identify opportunities for further capacity building opportunities, both with new and existing areas of study.

The programme could look to the USIP Academy as a model for progressive learning in peacebuilding.

Allocate funds to a pilot sustainability case study, assessing the extent to which mediation achievements persist.

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “limited evidence of the long-term durability of peace outcomes”. The programme is not systematically monitoring mediator-led peace outcomes in Burundi and Niger; to that end, the consortium is unable to speak to the long-term durability of these outcomes.

To address this programming gap, Phase II could allocate funding to a sustainability case study. This study would assess the extent to which mediators’ achievements are maintained (i.e., whether the conflict remains mitigated) through representative cases of outcomes or agreements that have strengthened, maintained or fallen apart. In turn, the study would identify barriers to maintaining these achievements, highlighting factors that could be addressed to improve durability (e.g., whether the programme needs to intervene in a given period after an activity, or whether solidarity activities have a substantive impact).

This recommendation is related to M&E Recommendation Two.

To facilitate promoting the role of IMs in each target country, develop an advocacy and engagement strategy, at the country level and globally, that can be disseminated to the community of practice.

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “mediators lack requisite institutional acceptance or de jure recognition.”. Mediators in Burundi lack institutional acceptance, while mediators in Niger lack legal recognition. These mediators, globally, could be better integrated into the wider community of practice and its peacebuilding mechanisms. Prior to Phase II, taking into consideration the risks associated with institutionalisation, the consortium should hold strategic discussion on its approach to sustainability and the extent to which to pursue institutionalisation in each context.

On the basis of this discussion, during Phase II, the consortium’s programming would benefit from developing an advocacy and stakeholder engagement strategy targeted at further promoting the role of the IMs.

Increase opportunities for cross-country experience sharing and learning:

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “Limited opportunities for experience sharing between IMs of all three countries.”

During Phase II, the implementing partners could aim to increase networking activities at a supranational level, including quarterly in-person meetings and a face to face global meeting of IMs, travel conditions allowing.

To Consortium Management, regarding design and activities (inclusion):

Update the initial mapping exercise to reflect current contextual realities and identify gaps related to women and youth inclusion

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “youth are underrepresented across the programme”. The Phase I mapping exercise was successful, in that it served as the foundation for the mobilisation of a diverse set of IMs. However, this set of IMs was composed of an overrepresentation of non-youth, and to a lesser extent, women. In Phase II, the consortium could update its initial mapping exercise. This updated exercise could facilitate replacement of no-longer-engaged IMs, through replacement and supplementation of additional youth and women IMs. Specifically, the mapping could target youth leadership groups, young professional societies, university groups, women’s rights organisations,

women's professional organisations, among others. The mapping could pay special attention to groups that intersect the two demographic profiles (e.g., young women's leadership organisations).

Conduct a Cultural Political Economy Analysis in education institutions to assess the state of peacebuilding education and its impact on future generations of IMs, especially in Niger and Burundi

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase "youth are underrepresented across the programme". Implementing partner staff across countries expressed a need to understand the next generation of mediators.

While Berghof is already partnering with Africa University, in Niger and Burundi, to better understand the potential viability of the next generation of mediators, the teams should conduct a Cultural Political Economy Analysis (C-PEA) of the state of peacebuilding education in each country's respective educational institution(s). A C-PEA would assess the extent to which a culture of peacebuilding exists within higher institutions, and where there are entry opportunities for the programme, particularly with respect to mobilising potential mediators.

In line with plans to develop a ToT approach, pilot a formal mentorship programme to increase inclusivity

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase "youth are underrepresented across the programme".

As the consortium implements a ToT approach for Phase II, the consortium would do well to adopt a mentorship programme as a related component. Specifically, pairing young mediators with established mediators can facilitate learning, while also providing legitimacy to the younger mediators, who face such challenges due to cultural norms around authority and age.

This recommendation is related to recommendation three under 'internal learning'.

Broaden the pool of Insider Mediators:

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under the keyphrase "Selected IMs represent a diverse cross-section of demographic profiles found in the respective communities"

As the consortium learned the value of a diverse group of IMs, the consortium could build on this lesson learned and improve this best practice by expanding and further diversifying the pool of insider mediators, to include more women and youth but also different profiles from the communities.

Strive to include more training modules on youth and gender sensitivity:

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “IMs identified gaps in the training modules, particularly around inclusion and sustainability.”

As the consortium discussed the need to further account for young and women mediators’ specific needs, for Phase II, the consortium would do well to integrate a training session for girls in all countries, as well as modules on youth engagement and gender sensitivity.

To Consortium Management, regarding internal learning:

Transfer ownership of thematic pillars to consortium members, to improve utilisation of each members’ competitive advantage(s)

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “consortium internal learning efforts resulted in tangible programme improvements”. Each consortium member has skills or thematic areas that it excels at relative to the other partners; however, these are not being utilised in a systematic manner.

During the design phase for Phase II, the consortium would do well to complete a light-touch skills and needs assessment for partner organisations. This could then be used to identify thematic areas in which each partner excels, which the partner then leads through the duration of Phase II implementation. Through fully utilising internal expertise, the consortium would maximise its ability to be greater than the sum of its parts.

Increase regularity of learning exchanges, at consortium level and country level, developing concrete action plans for implementing learnings.

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “consortium internal learning efforts resulted in tangible programme improvements”. Implementing partner staff and IM respondents highly

valued learning opportunities, but expressed a desire to increase these opportunities.

For implementing partner staff, the consortium could look to make learning opportunities more explicitly defined and scheduled in the Phase II implementation plan. That is, the consortium should ensure there is an understanding and expectation that a given amount of time will be dedicated to regular internal learning exercises. This should extend across the consortium (i.e., partner to partner), but also within country offices; for example, events such as the Search staff retreat in February 2022, where staff from the regional field offices were brought together.

For IMs, the consortium could look to upscaling the opportunities for exchange between IMs within countries and across countries. The evaluation team recognises there are real logistical constraints to frequent in-person exchanges both within and across countries. To that end, the team could adopt low-invest, high impact exchange approaches. For example, Phase II could employ a 'buddy system' whereby IMs are all paired with a peer in another country, to support each other through the duration of the programme.

To M&E:

Utilise digital tools for internal data collection/management processes.

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase "M&E systems exhibit notable inefficiencies". Specifically, teams largely rely on manual processes for data collection, entry and analysis, which serve as bottlenecks in the reporting process.

In Phase II, all consortium members would do well to utilise digital tools for data collection and management processes. Utilisation can take many forms, and can be adapted to staff capacity. Using electronic forms for activity recording and reporting has the lowest barrier to entry. That is, the partners' respective M&E teams could create an electronic form that has preset codes for activity type, date, location, attendance figures, etc. that the programme officers fill on completion of each activity. This data is then automatically collated and integrated into the results framework. This eases the monitoring burden for the country teams, while also streamlining reporting at the consortium level (i.e., for consortium donor reporting).

Pilot a mediation reporting system, whereby IMs can securely and independently report mediation outcomes.³²²

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrases “Nigerien external stakeholders’ research capacity falls short of needs” and “M&E systems exhibit notable inefficiencies”. MdR currently reports mediation activities, under which the IMs work falls, to the President and legislature, annually. However, the process for collating such data is inefficient and inhibits real-time decision making. Partners also track such outcomes, and the process is similarly inefficient.

The consortium could benefit itself, as well as its external stakeholders, by implementing a mediation outcome reporting system. That is, mediators could have a secure and closed system to track progress of their mediation activities (e.g., mediation open, mediation in progress, etc.), while documenting cataloguing information (e.g., type of conflict, duration, outcome, etc.). This data could then be integrated into analysis software (e.g., ConnexUs³²³ or ArcGIS) to chart conflict trends and contribute to the consortium’s understanding of the environment in which it is operating. Such efforts could mitigate the bottlenecks in information flow from the local level to the consortium level.

Moreover, amended access to this data could be provided to external stakeholders, particularly the MdR, increasing the respective institution’s capacity to respond to changes in contextual realities, while also contributing to practical institutionalisation of IM activities. This system, if implemented, could serve as a value-add, constituting a novel and proprietary data source that the consortium could leverage for future programming.

This recommendation can contribute to addressing challenges noted under ‘Networking’.

Hold a ToC/RF workshop during the inception phase, where a Theory of Action is created to bridge the ToC to the RF

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “the programme has not always adequately aligned programme logic with performance monitoring and evaluation.”. For several reasons (discussed

³²² The evaluation team acknowledges that the consortium is proposing piloting a similar system in Phase II. This recommendation is designed to inform potential areas of expansion for the proposed system.

³²³ <https://cnxus.org/>

under “V.g.i Programme Design”), the programme faced challenges aligning its programme logic to the performance monitoring and evaluation framework.

During the Phase II design workshop(s), the consortium could consider co-designing and then implementing a Theory of Action (ToA). A ToA differs from a Theory of Change, in that the latter describes causal conditions, while the former describes causal mechanisms. To that end, a ToA can bridge the gap between the ToC and the results framework, by clearly describing the measurable mechanisms which will be implemented in order for the programme to progress through its logical pathways.

These revised strategy documents should incorporate a conflict sensitivity component, with explicit conflict sensitivity indicators.

To EU-Brussels:

Encourage delegations to actively engage with the programme, as a means to maximise the impact of the EU’s investment and strengthen vertical integration

This recommendation is derived from findings nested under keyphrase “while the programme received active engagement from EU-Brussels, country-level (i.e., delegation) engagement was lacking”. Specifically, implementing partner staff reported that the lack of consistent engagement from the respective EU delegations negatively impacted programme achievement.

During the Phase II inception phase, EU-Brussels would do well to moderate a planning meeting between each partner and the partner’s respective country delegation to establish mutually agreed upon expectations for engagement. This meeting should establish clear lines of communication, taking into account the likelihood of turnover both within the partner organisations and country delegations during the course of Phase II implementation. Moreover, the meeting should establish designated accountable parties for ensuring engagement, within the partner organisations, delegations and EU-Brussels.

The consortium can ease this process by ensuring that internal workplans are relatively fixed, such that expectations for windows for input are clearly established and scheduled.

8. Final Conference

On March 28th and 29th, programme implementation staff, mediators and other stakeholders participated in a hybrid conference in Nairobi, Kenya. This conference served as the programme capstone, recounting the progress made over the past several years, while identifying areas for improvement and future programming.

Overall, the conference was well received by the participants. The programme team collected feedback forms at the end of each day; overall results for the day are displayed below.

Table C: Feedback form outputs, by day

Category	Very much met expectations	Somewhat met expectations	A little bit met expectations	Not at all met expectations
Relevance of sessions	Day 1 – 88% Day 2 – 95%	Day 1 – 12% Day 2 – 5%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%
Informative nature of sessions	Day 1 – 81% Day 2 – 80%	Day 1 – 19% Day 2 – 20%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%
Quality of speakers	Day 1 – 88% Day 2 – 90%	Day 1 – 12% Day 2 – 10%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%
Logistical support	Day 1 – 69% Day 2 – 90%	Day 1 – 31% Day 2 – 10%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%
Venue	Day 1 – 64% Day 2 – 85%	Day 1 – 21% Day 2 – 15%	Day 1 – 14% Day 2 – 0%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%
Accessibility	Day 1 – 82% Day 2 – 80%	Day 1 – 12% Day 2 – 20%	Day 1 – 6% Day 2 – 0%	Day 1 – 0% Day 2 – 0%

Over the two days, the conference was divided into eight sessions, or four per day. Feedback forms were also collected for each sessions; results for each session and category for the response 'very much met expectations' are presented in the table below.

Table D: Feedback form outputs ('very much met expectations') by session.

Session	Relevance of session	Informative nature of session	Usefulness of session
Session 1: Presentation of project results and lessons learned	88%	71%	82%
Session 2: Results from the final evaluation	88%	82%	69%
Session 3: IM experiences	95%	88%	100%
Session 4: IM visualisation	94%	100%	100%
Session 5: Risks and psychosocial support	84%	68%	79%
Session 6: Advancing the existing tools on IMs	89%	67%	74%
Session 7: Knowledge management	89%	79%	75%
Session 8: Peace process inclusion	95%	85%	90%

The key takeaways that emerged from these sessions are as follows:

- Need for ongoing training - whether it is basic mediation or specific modules, the IMs see the value of ongoing training throughout the project, not just at the beginning.
- A TOT and a mentoring system are also key to ensure connections between Phase II and Phase I mediators. The programme needs to capitalize on older mediators to be 'door openers' for younger/women mediators in Phase II.
- The programme needs to ensure the tracking of mediations and their results, linked to the possibility of a follow-up. That is, the programme needs a system to collect information (e.g., ArcGIS), in addition to simple metrics IMs could report on at the end of each session.
- The programme team wants to support mediators in gaining credibility and wider recognition. This happens differently in every country and will require localisation to ensure the programme is supporting them in constructive ways.
- IMs want to connect both nationally, with others working in other parts of the country, and internationally across borders. The programme should provide mediators the opportunity to do so both through activities and through tech systems.
- Psychosocial support is key and should be provided to all IMs throughout the project. An expert should be budgeted for to provide both a safe space for dialogue and concrete tools to enhance resilience.
- The programme should link its work to the EU/UNDP through regular meetings in Phase II. The programme wants to be able to contribute to the EU guidelines on mediation, to create a consortium basic mediation training for IMs, and to issue regular policy briefs. The programme wants to reach a clear agreement with the EU/UNDP on the programme's contribution in this space.
- The programme wants to enhance the visibility of the project and the relevance of IMs. To this end, in Phase 2 the programme will ensure the collection of video material and testimonials throughout the project.

9. Appendices

All appendices can be found in a separate document.