

Mid-term Evaluation Report

Joint Mid-term Evaluation of the
Search-IPIS DGD Programme 2022-2026

Search for Common Ground &
International Peace Information Service

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**Search for
Common
Ground**



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Acronyms

| | |
|--------|---|
| AI | Artificial Intelligence |
| AU | African Union |
| ASF | Avocats Sans Frontières |
| BHRT | Business and Human Rights Tanzania |
| CHRAAG | Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance |
| COP | Communities of Practice |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| CSDN | Civil Society Dialogue Network |
| DGB | Directorate General for Bilateral Affairs |
| DGD | Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid of the Belgium Development Cooperation |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| DSA | Digital Service Act |
| ECID | Evidence, Collaboration, for Inclusive Development |
| EPLO | European Peacebuilding Liaison Office |
| FCAS | Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| GIPP | Gender, Inclusion, Power and Politics |
| HDP | Humanitarian-Development-Peace |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| LASPs | Legal Aid Service Providers |
| LHRC | Legal and Human Right Centre |
| MFI | Microfinance Institution |
| OHCHR | Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| IPIS | International Peace Information Service |
| MTE | Mid-Term Evaluation |
| PLE | Public Legal Education |
| Search | Search for Common Ground |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| VPI | Voluntary Principles Initiative |

1. Executive Summary

This report presents the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the joint programme between Search for Common Ground (Search) and the International Peace Information Service (IPIS), titled "United for Peace and Sustainable Development in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings," funded by the Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD). The programme aims to promote sustainable peace, development, and equality in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings (FCAS) through advocacy, research, capacity-building, and multi-stakeholder engagement, with a particular focus on Belgium, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The evaluation assesses the programme's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and impact, and provides recommendations for the remainder of the programme's lifecycle.

At the global level, the partnership between Search and IPIS is considered coherent and successful, enhancing both organisations' profiles and credibility within the Belgian development sector. The operational coherence is built on open communication, and the effective leveraging of complementary expertise—Search's peacebuilding implementation and EU access alongside IPIS's research and Belgian networks—have created significant value, even without achieving deep operational integration. However, achieving deeper operational synergy, where the joint effort becomes substantially more than the sum of its parts, has proven challenging and remains an area of untapped potential. As intended by the original programme design, the country-level outcomes in the DRC, Tanzania, and Burundi were implemented separately by each lead partner. While this design choice logically limited opportunities for day-to-day field-level integration, the evaluation noted that partners have identified potential areas for future synergy that were not foreseen in the initial proposal. A key learning is that while complementarity is a strong asset, achieving deeper synergy likely requires programme structures intentionally designed to foster joint implementation at multiple levels, a more ambitious goal than initially realised given operational realities.

In Belgium, the different programme approaches – sustainable business practices, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding – have proved relevant, though contextual changes such as the conflicts in Ukraine and in Gaza have shifted focus away from peacebuilding to more securitised approaches. The programme has been effective in engaging policymakers, particularly through evidence-based advocacy, with both organisations leveraging their local presence in FCAS to inform policymakers, NGOs and private sector actors. In particular, conflict sensitivity training has been well-received, but there is demand for more tailored and practical sessions. The programme has contributed to policy changes, such as the G7's decision to ban Russian diamond imports and the formation of a new mechanism within the Belgian government regarding arms transit. The programme has also significantly advanced the integration of peacebuilding into UNFCCC's Conference of the Parties (COP) discussions and contributed to the Belgian Sahel Strategy and the EU's Sahel approach. The evaluation struggled with mobilising high-level stakeholders for interviews and in gathering survey responses, which is reflected in limitations.

In Burundi, the programme has empowered women through economic initiatives, and media activities and forums have fostered attitudinal shifts and increased women's socio-economic participation. However, the impact on economic empowerment remains limited, with participants expressing concerns about financial sustainability and long-term market access. Significant challenges were faced in mobilising project participants for surveys and interviews, impacting the sample size.

In Tanzania, the programme aims to empower communities and CSOs to engage government and industry in natural resource governance. The programme is highly relevant to the local context, and its design has been adjusted to reflect contextual changes. The research component, particularly the Voices and Kufatilia programmes, has been successful. However, the remedy component, including strategic litigation, has faced challenges due to the political environment. In addition, a lack of gender considerations was flagged by respondents who took part in the training sessions. The programme has contributed to increased capacity among CSOs to monitor human rights abuses and has facilitated greater access for CSOs to corporate actors. Progress indicates that the programme is on track to achieve its overarching outcome in the Shinyanga and Mara regions. Some engagement has also occurred in Manyara with activities planned for Tanga, though it is too early to fully assess outcome achievement across all four designated regions.

In the DRC, the programme focuses on strengthening CSO capacity to monitor human rights abuses in local mining communities and promoting sustainable governance of the artisanal mining sector. The Kufatilia approach is considered highly relevant, and partners have improved capacity to monitor reported incidents. However, challenges include limited budget, phone coverage, and security concerns. The training of SAEMAPE agents and representatives of artisanal mining cooperatives has been successful, but its scope is limited. The programme has contributed to increased commitment and capacity among CSOs and improved practices among trained cooperatives.

Based on the mid-term evaluation, several key recommendations emerge to enhance the programme's effectiveness and impact.

- **Strengthening joint operational strategy and coordination between Search, IPIS and local partners is crucial** to maximise collective impact and synergy. This includes better leveraging each organisation's resources and potentially planning more joint activities where work intersects, particularly in the Belgian outcome. At the country level, better alignment between partners, such as ASF and BHRT in Tanzania, can enhance programme delivery.
- **Enhancing gender integration** across all programme phases, from design to evaluation, is essential. In Tanzania, this involves building upon existing efforts to implement gender-sensitive approaches by continuously seeking ways to move beyond numerical participation targets towards deeper, transformative changes in training and activities that address specific barriers women face. In Burundi, continuing to raise awareness on persistent barriers to women's participation is needed.
- **Improving data collection and measurement practices** is needed. This includes refining indicators in Tanzania and Belgium, addressing delays in research validation in the DRC, and enhancing M&E collaboration between IPIS and Search globally. Furthermore, refining strategies for engaging OECD-based private sector actors is crucial. This includes leveraging multi-stakeholder initiatives like the VPI, conducting

targeted research to inform corporate practices in FCAS, and adopting more qualitative approaches to measure the impact of these complex engagements. Separately, exploring and securing diversified funding sources will be vital to ensure programme sustainability, particularly in the DRC where partners face significant budgetary constraints. There is a need for tailored support and flexibility to address the unique challenges in each country.

- **There is a need for tailored support and flexibility to address the unique challenges in each country.** In Tanzania, this includes adapting to the political climate and providing post-training support, in Burundi managing expectations transparently with participants, while in the DRC, addressing security concerns and improving communication with trained cooperatives.

More detailed, global-level and country-specific recommendations are available in the full report. Overall, the programme has made significant contributions towards its objectives, but ongoing adaptation and refinement are necessary to maximise its effectiveness and impact in the face of evolving contexts and challenges. Continued collaboration, targeted interventions, and a focus on sustainability will be crucial for achieving the programme's long-term goals.

2. Introduction

2.1. Programme Background

The 'United for Peace and Sustainable Development in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings' (hereafter referred to as 'the programme') is a five-year programme jointly implemented by Search for Common Ground (Search) and IPIS (International Peace Information Service). The programme is funded by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) of the Belgium Development Cooperation. The programme's overall aim is to promote sustainable peace and development, and equality in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings (FCAS) with both Search and IPIS taking on different roles and responsibilities depending on the location and activity. The programme operates across four countries which each have their own outcome, detailed below:

- **Belgium** (jointly implemented by IPIS and Search): This outcome revolves around policy-influencing and advocacy and aims to encourage policymakers, private sector actors, and development stakeholders in Belgium, as well as key European, international, and multilateral actors to apply policies and practices that 1) support and regulate sustainable business practices and 2) mainstream conflict-sensitivity and/or integrate peacebuilding, to shape interventions that are conducive to durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS.
- **Burundi**: (implemented by Search): This outcome promotes the economic empowerment and autonomy of women in Burundi and aims to contribute to reducing the prevalent socio-cultural and traditional norms in the country that limit women's participation in socio-economic life. Among others, the outcome improves women's access to professional/economic networks and opportunities, supports civil society organisations (CSOs) working on gender issues, and builds the capacity of media professionals to report on issues related to gender and economics.
- **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** (implemented by IPIS): This outcome contributes to peace and sustainable development in Eastern DRC. It promotes human rights and improves working conditions, strengthens participatory governance in the extractive sector, increases the economic resilience of mining communities and builds the capacity of local communities, CSOs, cooperatives and other relevant stakeholders.
- **Tanzania** (implemented by IPIS): This outcome promotes access to justice, good governance and human rights in the natural resources sector, through evidence-based advocacy, strengthening justice mechanisms and empowering users and informing local, regional, national and international stakeholders about the impact of extractive industries. Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF) is a joint partner of IPIS in this outcome and will be included in the evaluation accordingly.

Specific objectives, target groups and activities per Outcome are mapped in [Annex 2](#). The programme, which began in January 2022, has been running for three years and has a planned end date in December 2026.

2.2. Evaluation Purpose and Use

The aim of the mid-term evaluation (MTE) was to review the programme's progress toward the stated outcomes at global and country-level, assess the effectiveness of the programme's actions and produce actionable recommendations for the remainder of the programme lifecycle. More specifically, the objectives of the MTE are to:

- Assess the performance of the programme against four OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, namely relevance, effectiveness, coherence and impact:
 - For relevance, assess the extent to which the programme's theory of change (ToC) is logically coherent, based on evidence, relevant to specific local, national, and international contexts in which the programme is being delivered, as well to achieving DGD's policy objectives;
 - For effectiveness, assess progress against indicator targets (including substantiation and validation of the policy wins identified), identifying factors that contributed to success or posed barriers;¹
 - For coherence, assess how the programme collaborates with other programmes and initiatives to maximise complementarity; and
 - For impact, assess the extent to which the programme's achievements to date have contributed or are likely to contribute to its intended impacts at different levels.
- Identify learnings and best practices from implementation to-date, including on the cross-cutting themes (gender, climate and conflict sensitivity).
- Assess the extent to which the programme's partnership model – based on joint implementation which leverages IPIS' and Search's respective comparative advantages – delivers the expected added value (increased impact).
- Develop actionable and concrete recommendations, identified from best practices and lessons learned, for programmatic adaptations and for the future design of the next programme, including to improve synergies between the four outcomes and to ensure that the project's ultimate outcomes are met at the endline.
- Provide a proposition on how the Final Evaluation could be conducted in coherence with the MTE process.

In addition, the MTE assessed the extent to which the programme integrates gender, climate and conflict-sensitivity in its design, management, and activities. The aim of which is to assist Search and IPIS to understand its exposure to conflict, gender, and climate risks, and the potential effects on programme effectiveness and impact.

¹ Limitations were identified in the assessment of progress against indicator targets and are highlighted in the MTE report. This is especially applicable to the BE and DRC outcome due to the lack of accessibility of some data and gaps in the measurability of some indicators.

2.3. Methodology

2.3.1. Overview

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative methods, including the collection of secondary data through a review of project documentation, and primary data collection through key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and online surveys. The use of varied data collection methods enabled the triangulation of multiple sources of data, ensuring the findings are accurate, and reliable. The analytical framework and data collection methods are detailed below:

2.3.2. Analytical Framework

The evaluation was structured in accordance with four selected OECD-DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and impact. To assess the project's impact, Outcome Harvesting Methodologies were employed to identify and analyse significant changes resulting from the project. An [evaluation matrix](#) was prepared to guide data collection and analysis. It contains evaluation questions used to collect data against each criterion, along with their respective data sources and collection methods. It also includes specific evaluation questions for each outcome, as identified in consultation with each country team.

2.3.3. Data Collection

Several forms of data collection were employed as part of the evaluation. These are described in more detail below:

Desk Review

The data collection involved a comprehensive desk review of project documentation provided by Search and IPIS. The collection of secondary quantitative and qualitative data served as a strong foundation for understanding the project, its activities, the actors involved and the progress it had made towards its outcomes in each country and at the global level. [Table 8 in the Annex 4.7](#) presents an overview of the project documentation provided to the evaluation team.

Primary Data Collection

Primary data collection was conducted both remotely and in-person, depending on the specific country-context and availability of stakeholders. In-person data collection took place in Burundi, Belgium and Tanzania.² While primary data collection had initially been planned for the DRC, the deterioration of security conditions on the ground made it unfeasible for data collection, consequently, all data collection for the DRC was remote.

KIIs: A total of 52 stakeholders were interviewed as part of the evaluation, including project staff, donors, project partners and government and other relevant stakeholders. The final sample of KIIs is available in [Table 2 in Annex 4.3](#).

FGDs: A total of eight FGDs were conducted in total - seven for the Burundi outcome and one online for the global outcome. For the Burundi outcome, seven FGDs were conducted in-person in Burundi with project participants. Originally, FGDs were planned for Tanzania and the DRC; however,

² In-person data collection in Tanzania was limited (four KIIs) due to the various and spread out locations of stakeholders, but remote data collection ensured that all necessary stakeholders were engaged.

deteriorating security conditions in the DRC made them unfeasible, and in Tanzania, participants were too geographically dispersed to convene in one location. As a result, data collection in both countries relied on KIIs, with additional KIIs conducted in Tanzania with project participants to compensate for the absence of FGDs. The final sample of FGDs can be found in [Table 3 in Annex 4.4](#).

Surveys: Quantitative data was collected via online and in-person surveys for the Belgium and Burundi outcomes. The inclusion of a survey served different purposes in the different contexts. In Belgium, the survey was introduced to measure effectiveness and impact of conflict-sensitivity influencing Belgian Actors. The survey was disaggregated based on gender and respondent organisation. The Belgian online survey had a total of 46 respondents.

In Burundi, the surveys were employed to measure progress against selected indicators. The in-person survey was administered in four selected provinces (Muyinga, Makamba, Rumonge, and Kayanza). The survey was disaggregated based on gender, age and project activity. The Burundi Survey had a total of 392 respondents (55.4 per cent of respondents were participants in the “women in action” forums and 44.6 per cent were members of listening clubs). Overall, 75 per cent of respondents were women, and 25 per cent were men. In addition, an online survey was disseminated amongst media professionals who were trained on economic and gender-sensitive reporting under the project. A total of 16 respondents from national and local radios filled out the online form (nine men and seven women).

Outcome Harvesting Workshop

As part of the evaluation, Bodhi facilitated outcome harvesting workshops with each programme country (apart from DRC, due to ongoing security challenges). This process involved generating outcome descriptions through a comprehensive desk review and analysis of project data, engaging with project staff to refine these outcomes, substantiating findings through primary data collection, identifying patterns and trends, and (after the review of this report) a dedicated workshop for validation of these outcomes. The finalised list of outcomes per country can be found in [Annex 4.8](#).

2.3.4. Data Analysis

The evaluation matrix served as the analytical framework for this report, guiding analysis of the data in line with the evaluation criteria. Our integrated analysis synthesised findings from all data sources to answer the evaluation questions and assess performance against each criterion. For instance, while KIIs provided rich qualitative insights and were a primary source for understanding perceptions of relevance, effectiveness, and impact, the extensive information from tools such as the activity tracker for the Belgian Outcome was used to corroborate, contextualise, and understand the breadth and sequencing of programme activities across its various workstreams. The integrated analysis involved triangulating data to validate findings and identify discrepancies, conducting contribution analysis to assess the project’s role in observed changes, applying a gender and conflict-sensitive lens to all analysis, identifying key success factors and challenges in project implementation, and developing actionable and concrete recommendations for the duration of the project life cycle.

2.3.5. Limitations

The contextual realities in each of the countries required a flexible approach to data collection, which led to variations in the level and nature of data collection across the four countries.

In Belgium, there were some challenges with the mobilisation of some of the KII respondents. This was understandably more difficult in the case of high level stakeholders, and some of the private sector and international institutions either did not reply or postponed their availability until they stopped responding. At the same time, the multi-stage process agreed with programme partners

(including IPIS and Search) for identifying and finalising a diverse list of KII respondents linked to specific outcomes, while thorough, contributed to a longer lead time for mobilising some individuals for in-person interviews in Belgium within the evaluation's timeframe. Despite these challenges, the evaluation team conducted more KIIs than initially planned and managed to sample all stakeholders categories, and adapted to complete the outstanding KIIs remotely. However, given the extensive nature of the programme's engagement—often involving multiple contact points within numerous policymaking bodies (e.g., EU, Belgian Government), private sector entities (e.g., Meta), and civil society networks on complex, multi-faceted issues—the limited number of KIIs, while representative by category, likely only captured a partial view of the full scope and intensity of these influencing efforts.

In addition, response rates to the online survey on conflict sensitivity were limited. The evaluation team made multiple efforts to encourage project participants to complete the online questionnaire, and collaborated with Search to maximise the participation rate. Despite these efforts, their response rate is modest, which can be explained by the high-level profile of many of the participants.

Moreover, there were limitations in the assessment of progress against indicator targets for the Belgium outcome, due to the lack of accessibility of some data and gaps in the measurability of some indicators. To mitigate this, the evaluation team sought alternative data sources, clarified data requests and employed data triangulation. However, these limitations still influenced the assessment's depth and should be considered when interpreting the findings.

In the DRC: Ongoing security challenges in the DRC required the data collection strategy to be adapted to an online format. However, even with this adjustment, some respondents were unable to participate due to limited connectivity and personal security concerns. Ultimately, in collaboration with IPIS it was decided that the evaluation would focus on Results 1 (related to Kufuatilia, but limited to Lualaba and Ituri), 2 (related to training of SAEMAPE agents and representatives of artisanal mining cooperatives in Maniema) and 3 (related to research on conflict dynamics surrounding the mining sector).

In addition, the ongoing security conditions in the DRC made the facilitation an Outcome Harvesting workshop with project staff unfeasible. Consequently, the Outcome Harvesting methodology could not be applied to the DRC Outcome. Nonetheless, programme outcomes have still been identified through secondary and primary data collection and analysis, and described under the Impact section of the DRC outcome.

In Tanzania, the wide geographical dispersion of respondents made it unfeasible to conduct FGDs, as participants were located too far apart. To address this, Bodhi travelled to various respondents in the Mara and Shinyanga regions and conducted additional KIIs to ensure that project participants' perspectives were adequately captured in the report. In Tanzania, a hybrid approach was used, combining in-person and online data collection to account for the geographic dispersion of respondents. These adaptations resulted in variations in data collection across regions, leading to differences in both the type and volume of data gathered.

In Burundi, there were challenges in the mobilisation of respondents. The data collection team in Burundi, faced significant challenges in mobilising project participants for the survey, as well as KII and FGD respondents. This was due to a combination of factors including relocation of some individuals, some incorrect contact details, the impossibility for some respondents to reach a central location, and unforeseen circumstances including local events which made several respondents unavailable. Issues around people changing phone numbers, people not having consistent access to charged phones and limited credit to be able to call/access the internet, were also issues inherent to working in Burundi with poor communities. Whilst the evaluation team made efforts to mitigate these challenges through collaborating closely with local focal points, the evaluation could not meet the original survey sample target of 461 participants. Despite these difficulties, the evaluation team

attempted to collect as many surveys as possible, achieving a total of 392 data points. This achieved sample still effectively captures the perspectives of project participants and provides significant findings. Since all respondents are project participants, the reliability and representativeness of the data are still valid. Ultimately, triangulation of data sources at the analysis stage was also used as a mitigation measure to ensure robustness of findings despite these challenges.

3. Key Findings

This section presents the key findings of the evaluation, first looking at the global level, followed by the country level. The findings are structured in line with specific OECD-DAC criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Impact. This is followed by a Lessons Learned, Best Practices and Crosscutting Considerations Section. Lastly, there will be recommendations for each country as well as overarching recommendations at the global level.

3.1. Global Level

This section examines the overall collaboration dynamics between IPIS and Search within the joint programme structure. It assesses the coherence of their partnership at the strategic level and distils key lessons learned and best practices specifically related to the experience of implementing a unified, multi-country programme together, as distinct from the individual country-level outcomes discussed later. Findings are primarily drawn from a remote FGD involving key personnel from both organisations, supplemented by the desk review of programme documentation. [Annex 4.10.](#) includes two tables summarising the findings in this section against the key evaluation questions (global level), respectively the key lessons learned and best practices.

3.1.1. Coherence

The partnership between Search and IPIS is generally regarded as a coherent and successful collaboration by programme staff. Its establishment allowed the two organisations to strategically position themselves within the Belgian development sector under a unified "Peace and conflict programme" banner, enhancing their profile and credibility from the outset. This joint positioning, combined with consistent, high-quality engagement with the donor (DGD), points to a strong degree of strategic alignment. In fact, the partnership has been positively noted by DGD, which perceives the collaboration as well-aligned and effective compared to other consortia.³

The operational coherence of the partnership is built upon a foundation of open and transparent communication. Representatives of both Search and IPIS highlighted a persistent willingness to discuss challenges and successes candidly, which proved essential for navigating the complexities of joint implementation.⁴ This included managing the inherent differences between the organisations, such as their varying sizes, operational cultures, and internal processes (including Search's links to its US office), and mitigating the impact of recurring challenges like high staff turnover.⁵ While these differences were acknowledged as a background factor, effective communication and stable core programme management – particularly the consistent presence of key coordinating personnel – ensured they did not significantly impede collaboration.

A defining characteristic of the partnership's success lies in its effective leveraging of complementarity. The distinct strengths, networks, and expertise of Search (peacebuilding

³ KII 1; FGD (remote). IPIS & Search Directors and Programme Managers. April 2025.

⁴ FGD (remote). IPIS & Search Directors and Programme Managers. April 2025.

⁵ Project Documentation: Belgium Outcome.

implementation, EU-level access) and IPIS (research community and partners, Belgian networks) were well-matched. This allowed them to support each other's work in practical ways by sharing valuable intel and "opening doors for each other to get meetings [and] connections."⁶ The teams also strategically divided their presence in some networks to help maximise their efficiency. This complementary approach, where each partner brings different assets to the table, has added tangible value to the programme.

However, while complementarity has been a strength, achieving deeper operational synergy—where the joint effort becomes substantially more than the sum of its parts—has proven more challenging and remains, as one participant put it, an area of "untapped potential."⁷ Initial ambitions for a highly integrated model faced practical limitations, leading to some missed opportunities where potential joint work (e.g., on Sahel research mentioned in discussions) did not fully materialise due to logistical issues or time constraints.⁸ The programme's structure, with most country-level activities implemented separately by either IPIS or Search, restricted natural opportunities for field-level integration. Furthermore, differing organisational mandates, security protocols such as Search's need to vet potential advocacy points against security risks for their local teams and approaches to public advocacy sometimes hampered an ambition to seamlessly translate research findings into joint actions or policy positions. Additionally, it was generally observed that IPIS' and Search's networks (e.g. EU institutions, private sector, and peacebuilding CSOs) could potentially be leveraged more effectively than they were through measures such as improved information sharing.⁹

3.1.2. Lessons learned and best practices of having a joint IPIS/Search programme

The implementation of this joint programme provides several significant lessons regarding the establishment, management, and potential of similar other multi-organisation initiatives.

This joint experience underscores the critical importance of investing adequate time and resources in the initial phase of a new consortium. Both programme reporting and FGD discussions highlighted that bringing two organisations together effectively requires a deliberate period for relationship building, establishing a mutual understanding of processes, and developing clear operational rhythms.¹⁰ Future joint programmes should proactively factor in this essential setup phase. Alongside this, the value of consistent, open communication channels and stable core management cannot be overstated. These elements were crucial for navigating the inevitable complexities, managing staff transitions smoothly, and maintaining overall programme coherence.¹¹ This also reinforces the importance of having dedicated capacity for key coordination roles, or ensuring programme managers have sufficient protected time for these functions if their roles are combined.

The partnership clearly demonstrates the benefits of a well-matched complementary model. Even without achieving deep operational integration, leveraging distinct organisational strengths, networks, and expertise created significant value. However, it also highlights the challenges that arise from attempting to align programme structures. The discussion with key personnel revealed a reflective understanding among staff that the initial hopes for extensive integration might have been overly ambitious given the operational realities and the programme's design, particularly the separation of most country-level work.¹² Achieving profound synergy likely requires not only

⁶ FGD (remote). IPIS & Search Directors and Programme Managers. April 2025.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Project Documentation: Belgium Outcome.

¹¹ Ibid..

¹² FGD (remote). IPIS & Search Directors and Programme Managers. April 2025.

compatible partners but also a programme structure intentionally designed to foster joint implementation at multiple levels.

One specific example of successful collaboration was IPIS's flagship event on due diligence.

Here, Search was invited to participate, allowing for a presentation that explicitly combined insights from IPIS's Tanzania project work with Search's experience on Voluntary Principles and related policy perspectives, effectively bringing different programme strands together in one forum. This event was also noted as a catalyst for improved internal awareness, where colleagues unfamiliar with the other organisation's work gained concrete understanding, potentially sparking further, unexpected connections, such as identifying links between partners in Tanzania. Overall, the Belgium outcome remains the most integrated, while other country-specific outcomes have operated more independently. It was concluded that greater integration in DRC and Tanzania could serve to enhance collaboration in future phases.¹³

Effective collaboration requires navigating practical operational differences and constraints.

Issues such as aligning advocacy positions while respecting differing organisational mandates (e.g., Search's multi-partiality approach requiring careful vetting of public statements based on field security assessments) or ensuring field activities do not compromise staff security require careful, ongoing dialogue and sometimes limit the scope of joint actions. This emphasises the need for pragmatic solutions and mutual understanding when translating research or field findings into joint policy work.¹⁴ In addition, the collaboration has ensured high-quality reporting and adherence to deadlines. This has improved operational coherence and donor relations.

Looking ahead, the programme experience so far can help build strategies for enhancing collaboration.

Adopting a more intentional approach to planning joint activities, improving internal communication flows and knowledge sharing (including finding ways to leverage each other's networks more effectively), and fostering more informal interaction between staff were all highlighted as valuable practices or areas for improvement. For instance, programme staff noted significant improvements in their most recent joint planning meeting compared to previous iterations, attributing this to learning from past experiences and ensuring broader, more relevant staff participation, leading to better follow-up and communication.¹⁵ Key personnel also reported that annual meetings have been productive, but more frequent meetings (e.g. quarterly) would be beneficial. Furthermore, fostering more informal interaction between staff across the organisations was suggested during the FGD as a potentially simple yet effective way to build the interpersonal relationships that often facilitate smoother collaboration and idea generation. Systematically improving internal communication flows and knowledge sharing about each other's work across different programme components could also strengthen linkages, particularly the feedback loop between country-level activities and Belgium-based advocacy.

Overall, the partnership demonstrated considerable resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to learning from experience during its first phase.

3.1.3. Global Level Recommendations

Recommendation One: Search and IPIS should develop a comprehensive joint operational strategy for future programme phases.

This should detail specific mechanisms for integrated activities, shared resource allocation, cross-organisational communication protocols, and clear roles and responsibilities. Timelines for joint planning sessions and measurable indicators for operational synergy should be included.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Recommendation Two: Search and IPIS should institute regular joint learning and reflection within global-level programme management. Building on existing practices such as the annual meetings, Search and IPIS should ensure these joint sessions dedicate significant, structured time for both looking back (learning, reflection on successes and challenges, cross-country insights) and looking forward (strategic planning). This could involve extending the duration of annual meetings or instituting more frequent, focused discussions at the management level to systematically facilitate knowledge sharing, strategic adaptation, collaborative problem-solving, and the documentation of lessons learned and best practices to inform ongoing and future programme design.

Recommendation Three: Enhance collaborative learning and explore complementarities between Search's and IPIS's distinct MEL approaches. Efforts should focus on ensuring consistent application across collaborative components and enhancing joint analysis. Strengthen joint reflection sessions focused specifically on the DGD programme's results, drawing data from each organisation's respective system. The aim should be on shared analysis of progress towards jointly agreed DGD objectives, even if the underlying data collection methods differ. Rather than aiming for full alignment, explore how Search's community-centred MEL insights (e.g., from outcome harvesting) can complement IPIS's research-based evidence, and vice-versa, to create a richer, more holistic understanding of the programme's impact for DGD reporting and shared learning.

Recommendation Four: Enhance clarity and shared understanding on communication practices for joint programme elements and external representation. Recognising that general programme contact points are in place, the focus should be on improving the linkages and strategic alignment between the programme management, policy, and communications colleagues at both Search and IPIS. This will facilitate smoother internal sign-off processes for joint outputs and ensure a shared, timely understanding of what can be communicated externally, particularly when activities have security implications for staff and partners in the field.

Recommendation Five: To enhance the sustainability and potential for broader impact of the collaboration's achievements, Search and IPIS should consider how learnings and synergies from this DGD programme can inform future joint resource mobilisation. While organisation-level funding diversification is a broader strategic concern, the partners can reflect on the successes and challenges of this joint DGD programme to identify particularly impactful collaborative approaches that could be attractive to other donors or inform future joint proposals. This ensures that the value created within this specific programme has a greater chance of being sustained or replicated.

Recommendation Six: Future joint programmes should prioritise dedicated time and resources for initial relationship building between staff from both organisations. Recognising the intent is to foster strong collaboration between two distinct organisations rather than full team integration, this involves ensuring dedicated opportunities (e.g., initial joint planning meetings, cross-organisational briefings on respective methodologies or work areas relevant to the joint programme) for key personnel to connect. Building trust and rapport from the outset is crucial for effective collaboration.

Recommendation Seven: Future programmes should be designed from the outset to facilitate joint implementation. This includes developing shared Theories of Change, joint work

plans, and budget lines that support collaborative activities. Programme design should explicitly address how each organisation's expertise will be leveraged for mutual benefit.

3.2. Belgian Outcome¹⁶

3.2.1. Relevance

This section examines how the programme's objectives and design have addressed the needs of the targeted stakeholders. This includes the programme's alignment with government priorities at Belgian and EU level. This section also considers the relevance of the programme's activities in achieving its intended outcome and whether any adjustments have been made to the programme design. It also considers the continued relevance and validity of the ToC and its underlying assumptions.

The programme's peacebuilding approach was deemed relevant by various stakeholders. However, contextual changes have influenced its relevance over the course of the programme. These include the war in Ukraine and the conflict in Gaza, alongside other significant geopolitical shifts such as the potential impact of a Trump election on European security narratives, the war in Sudan, escalating conflict in Eastern DRC, and the coup in Niger which has contributed to increased suspicion in Sahel countries towards Western interventions. These events, while shifting mainstream political focus towards traditional, securitised approaches to conflict (posing a challenge for peacebuilding funding and prioritisation), have simultaneously highlighted the need for the very non-traditional, prevention-focused peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity approaches that this programme seeks to promote.¹⁷ In response, the programme has adapted by re-emphasising foundational elements: the importance of conflict sensitivity, the core value of peacebuilding, and the necessity of continued engagement in conflict-affected settings, even when not in global headlines or when collaboration with national authorities proves difficult. This latter point on sustained engagement has aligned well with Belgian government priorities, including during its EU presidency and beyond. In addition, there has been a growing recognition of the link between climate change and conflict, a connection noted by several respondents, which the programme has leveraged to demonstrate the relevance of peacebuilding.¹⁸ The programme's focus on the Sahel and the Great Lakes Region remains pertinent, supported by recent policies such as the 2023 EU Great Lakes Strategy and the launch of the Belgian Sahel Strategy in 2023.¹⁹ Additionally, the coup d'état in Niger in August 2023 briefly heightened attention on the Sahel.²⁰

The conflict sensitivity approach was considered the most widely relevant by respondents across different stakeholder categories.²¹ This sentiment was also reflected in the survey results (see figure one below). Respondents asserted that conflict sensitivity is especially relevant when operating in, or working with, FCAS.²² It was particularly highlighted as relevant to the needs of NGOs/CSOs in the context of EU funding requirements, and was also shown to be effectively integrated at a strategic level by development agency stakeholders like Enabel (see *Impact section 3.2.4*). While detailed comparative data on appreciation levels across all stakeholder groups (including

¹⁶ This chapter includes quantitative analysis of progress against logframe indicators for the Belgian Outcome (summarised in Annex 4.5, Table 4), which is based on data primarily reported by Search from its internal M&E tracking. It is important to note that these figures largely reflect Search's specific contributions and activities. While IPIS is a joint implementer of the Belgian Outcome and contributes significantly through its own activities and partnerships (**as detailed qualitatively in this report**), a consolidated quantitative reporting system reflecting combined Search and IPIS achievements against all shared indicators was not fully available for this mid-term evaluation. Therefore, the quantitative achievements discussed here represent primarily Search's reported data, offering a partial view of the overall joint programme's progress for the Belgian Outcome, unless otherwise specified. This highlights a key area for enhanced joint M&E practice.

¹⁷ KII 3; Project Documentation: DGD Outcome Harvesting Journal Q1_2023; DGD Outcome Harvesting Q3-4_2023

¹⁸ KII 5; KII 12; KII 4; KII 3.

¹⁹ Project Documentation: DGD Outcome Harvesting Journal Q1-2_2023

²⁰ Project Documentation: DGD Outcome Harvesting Journal Q3-4_2023

²¹ KII 3; KII 4; KII 9; KII 10.

²² KII 10; KII 3.

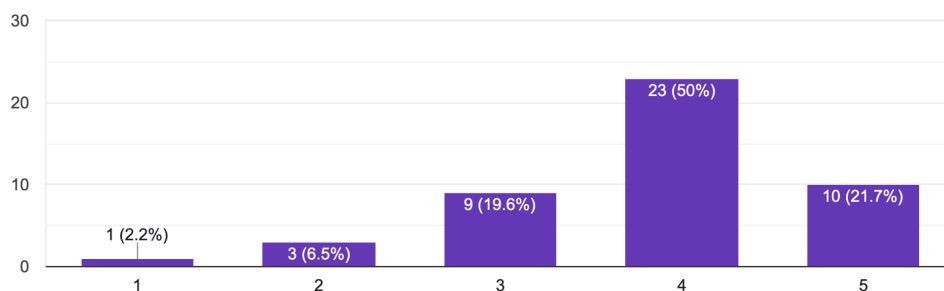
the private sector) is limited, the broad positive reception and specific utility noted by NGOs and development actors underscore its significant value.²³

Figure 1: Survey on Conflict Sensitivity²⁴

The survey below shows respondents rank the survey from not relevant at all (1) to extremely relevant (5).

3. Looking back, how relevant is the conflict-sensitivity training to your daily work? / Avec le recul, dans quelle mesure la formation à la sensibilité aux ...s est-elle pertinente dans votre travail quotidien ?

46 responses



The programme's focus on sustainable business practices was seen as more relevant in some sectors than others, with natural resources being particularly pertinent. For example, while engagement on digital peacebuilding was considered intriguing by stakeholders, its immediate policy relevance and the programme's leverage were perceived as still developing compared to the more established work on natural resource governance. The relevance of natural resources was largely tied to ongoing policy discussions around traceability within supply chains and challenges presented by the current escalation in conflict in the DRC.²⁵ On a separate note, policymakers are increasingly exploring the role of technology in conflict, although its connection to peacebuilding remains less clear. While programme staff have begun to examine the potential role of artificial intelligence (AI) in conflict and peacebuilding, EU stakeholders found the programme's work in digital peacebuilding important but noted that it is an area they have not yet actively engaged with, though they expressed curiosity about this approach.²⁶

While there have not been major changes or adaptations within the programme, it has had some adjustments due to a smaller budget than anticipated. The programme commenced with a significantly smaller budget than initially proposed (receiving approximately 30 per cent less of the funding requested), which necessitated adjustments from the outset in human resources, programme partnerships and its overall ambition. As a result, the project reduced human resources, discontinued partnerships (one per organisation), and remaining partners' budgets were reduced. While activities remained the same, it affected the programme's ambitions as reflected in targets, which were generally reduced by 20-30 per cent.²⁷

Several staff members at the programme highlighted the programme's flexibilities, which has allowed them to pivot resources toward areas of particular interest to the Belgian government, the EU and the Belgian public.²⁸ This is discussed in more detail in the effectiveness section but just to note that this

²³ KII 3.

²⁴ Online Survey, February and March 2025.

²⁵ KII 13; KII 20; KII 10

²⁶ KII 5; KII 10.

²⁷ Project Documentation: Budget Adaptation & Programme Design Changes.

²⁸ KII 5; KII 6; KII 8.

allowed the programme to remain relevant by following and adapting to contextual changes, such as geopolitical events, policy developments or donors interests.

The ToC was built upon IPIS and Search's extensive experience in peacebuilding, research, sustainable development, and private sector engagement. The outcome logic and intended impact were developed by aligning with the needs and priorities of key stakeholders, the relevant policy frameworks in Belgium, the EU, and beyond, and the ongoing efforts of stakeholders such as NGOs, research institutes, policymakers, private sector actors, and networks. A stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted as a baseline to inform the assumptions underlying the ToC.²⁹ While the assumptions remain largely valid, the operational context has evolved considerably since the ToC's creation, particularly with shifting government priorities from peacebuilding to more traditional conflict approaches and changes in the funding landscape. These developments may warrant slight adjustments to the wording of certain assumptions to better reflect the current challenges.

3.2.2. Effectiveness

This section examines the programme's effectiveness in advancing towards its objectives. It identifies the approaches and interventions that have been successful, along with the factors that facilitated these successes, as well as those that have been less effective and the reasons behind this. This section is structured according to the results areas under the Belgium Outcome. The indicator table demonstrating progress toward these indicators is available in [Annex 4.5](#).

Result One: *Policymakers in Belgium, as well as targeted policy actors at the European, international and multilateral level are better informed on and incentivised to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive and/or peacebuilding policies and practices.*

To measure Result One, **Indicator 1.1** looks at the number of targeted policymakers directly reached through project activities. The mid-term joint (Search and IPIS) target for this indicator is 150 people. According to Search's records, their mid-term target for this indicator was 75 policymakers, and the mid-term results show that 156 policymakers were reached, exceeding the joint target. While this indicates significant outreach, it is acknowledged that merely 'reaching' stakeholders is a preliminary measure, and deeper analysis of the quality and impact of these engagements is necessary to understand true effectiveness, a point further elaborated in the recommendations (see *Recommendation Five, Section 3.2.6*). **Indicator 1.2** looks at the percentage of targeted policymakers who report that they are better equipped to influence the policies and practices in their institutions to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practices in FCAS. The joint mid-term target was 50 per cent, and the results for Search indicate that 72.5 per cent of policymakers feel better equipped. This reflects strong effectiveness in capacity-building efforts. It is important to note that this figure is primarily derived from the post-conflict sensitivity training survey and thus largely reflects the views of those who participated in this specific activity. While KIIs provided additional qualitative insights regarding policymaker capacity (see *Annex 4.5, Table 5*), the quantitative result may not fully represent all policymakers engaged through the programme's diverse activities. The online survey further indicated that 75 per cent of policymaker respondents felt they could integrate conflict sensitivity into their work. **Indicator 1.3** assesses the number of sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies/practices successfully ratified as a result of project activities. The joint mid-term target for this indicator is 6. At this stage, the programme has contributed to 4 significant policy changes, representing substantial progress (66.7%) towards the mid-term target. These achievements, reflecting contributions from both partners, include: IPIS's influence on the G7 decision to ban indirect imports of Russian diamonds; IPIS's role in prompting the formation of a Belgian government mechanism on arms transit; Search's contribution to integrating conflict sensitivity into the Belgian Sahel Strategy; and Search's contribution to including

²⁹ Project Documentation: Belgium Outcome

conflict-sensitive approaches in the COP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace (all are further detailed in Section 3.2.4 Impact). This represents progress of 67 per cent towards the mid-term target and puts the programme on track towards its endline target of 11. Progress towards results one is optimistic as Search results for both indicator 1.1 and indicator 1.2 have already exceeded their endline target, which demonstrates the programme might have been too conservative in its targets. Overall, quantitative results for Result One show strong effectiveness in outreach and perceived capacity building among policymakers, with expected moderate progress on actual policy ratification at mid-term.

The programme's focus on sustainable business practices has proven effective in engaging policymakers, particularly through evidence-based advocacy in natural resource governance and the arms trade. IPIS's empirical research is esteemed for its academic rigour, significantly influencing policy discussions.³⁰ IPIS discretion was also highlighted by a respondent, who asserted that they present factual evidence without necessarily advocating for a specific change, which makes their work appear more credible and trusted by the government.³¹ However, a stakeholder observed that IPIS could enhance its impact by deepening its understanding of the challenges private sector entities face in implementing due diligence processes and managing human rights risks within their supply chains.³² Addressing these operational complexities could further strengthen IPIS's policy advocacy efforts.

In the arms trade sector, the collaboration between IPIS and Vredesactie has been particularly effective within the Belgian context. A policymaker noted that their joint efforts, especially regarding military weapons transit information, led to significant governmental action, as detailed in the outcomes section.³³ This partnership's success is attributed to IPIS's robust research and diplomatic skills, complemented by Vredesactie's activist approach, resulting in policy-relevant content that also serves advocacy purposes.

Regarding digital peacebuilding, while the topic is gaining prominence, especially with initiatives like the EU Digital Services Act (DSA), the programme remains at a nascent stage. Staff members from Search acknowledge that the digital arena encompasses a multitude of stakeholders, some with more substantial influence than others.³⁴ A European Union stakeholder acknowledged Search's contributions to digital peacebuilding but expressed doubts about the organisation's direct influence on policy discussions in this area, given the multitude of involved actors. They advised that Search should focus on its core competency of peacebuilding, where it has a strong reputation, and selectively incorporate technology to achieve more sustainable outcomes.³⁵ This contrasts with engagement with private sector actors like Meta, where the programme reports having contributed to discussions shaping definitions of dangerous individuals/organisations (see *Section 3.2.4 Impact*). The specific challenges in achieving greater traction on EU digital policy advocacy were not fully detailed in the MTE data, but may relate to factors such as the breadth of stakeholders involved, the novelty of integrating peacebuilding perspectives into these specific tech regulations, or the specific focus of the content presented. Consequently, the effectiveness of EU-level advocacy on digital policy is an area where impact is not yet clearly demonstrated by the programme, at this mid-term stage. It should also be mentioned that the programme has also been involved in initiatives such as the [Bamako Forum Declaration](#), which involves engagement from private companies in promoting Digital Peace building.

Furthermore, **a significant area of engagement has been the programme's work to integrate peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity into climate change dialogues**, particularly through

³⁰ KII 20

³¹ KII 15

³² KII 20

³³ KII 15

³⁴ KII 5.

³⁵ KII 10

Search's active role in the Peace@COP coalition and advocacy surrounding the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP). This work has aimed to inform and influence international policy actors on the necessity of conflict-sensitive approaches to climate action in FCAS, drawing on the organisation's broader expertise. *Section 3.2.4* provides more insights on this area of work.

One of the programme's most successful aspects is the ability of both organisations to draw on local experiences from programming in FCAS and effectively channel this knowledge to targeted stakeholders. This grounded expertise was particularly valued by policymakers who regard Search and IPIS as leading voices in their respective fields—peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity for Search, and natural resource governance for IPIS.³⁶ For instance, one respondent described how advocacy related to the climate-conflict nexus can make use of the programme's experience in Burundi,³⁷ though it is important to note that Search's broader advocacy on this theme draws from its extensive programme experience across multiple countries including the DRC, Kenya, Mali, and Burkina Faso, providing a wide evidence base beyond the scope of this specific DGD-funded activity. Programme staff also recognised this as a key strength and a unique selling point, distinguishing the programme from more traditional think tanks and policy influencers.³⁸ This can be considered a factor influencing the programme's effectiveness. Another specific, effective example is Search's engagement around the Sahel. Notably, the programme successfully contributed conflict sensitivity perspectives to the Belgian Sahel Strategy, with Search reportedly being the only NGO consulted during the drafting phase, demonstrating clear impact at the national level. Furthermore, the programme is demonstrating influence on EU-level discussions regarding engagement in fragile contexts. For example, a significant event organised by Search in March 2024 brought together diverse stakeholders (including Belgian, EU, NGO, and think tank representatives) to explore strategies for sustained EU engagement in such settings; the resulting outcome document has reportedly been influential in encouraging specific actors to advocate for this agenda within their respective EU or Member State spheres.

Conflict sensitivity approaches were generally viewed as effective by survey and KII respondents, though several areas of improvement were identified. Respondents were very positive in their feedback to the conflict sensitive training provided by Search and expressed a strong interest in more tailored and practical training (for instance, adapting content to specific regions and contexts, looking at humanitarian versus development conflict sensitivity).³⁹ There was also an interest in how conflict sensitivity approaches may change based on target populations, for instance women and girls or migrants and refugees. There was also interest in guidance on applying conflict sensitivity in resource-limited settings and integrating it into financial and logistical planning.⁴⁰ It is clear from the survey data that the training ignited a real interest in conflict sensitivity for respondents. In terms of delivery, participants called for more real-world examples, less theory, longer sessions, and training tailored to their organisational needs.⁴¹ While the training was well-received overall, the feedback points to clear opportunities to enhance its effectiveness and relevance.

Result Two: Private sector stakeholders in Belgium and selected OECD countries in the natural resources, arms trade, and digital sectors are better informed on and incentivised to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practices.

Engaging private sector stakeholders to directly inform and incentivise changes in their policies and practices (Result Two) has presented notable challenges, a sentiment echoed by programme staff

³⁶ KII 4; KII 14.

³⁷ KII 5.

³⁸ KII 5.

³⁹ Online Survey, February and March 2025.

⁴⁰ Online Survey, February and March 2025.

⁴¹ Online Survey, February and March 2025.

and reflected in the more modest quantitative achievements in this area. Evaluating the direct effectiveness of these engagements is complicated by limited MTE access to private sector KII respondents and an acknowledged reluctance from corporate entities to publicly disclose internal policy development processes or attribute specific changes to external advocacy efforts.

To measure progress under Result Two, the quantitative indicators reflect the significant challenges in this area. It must be noted that the following “actual” values are based on data reported by Search only at the time of reporting.

- For Indicator 2.1 (number of private sector stakeholders reached), the joint mid-term target is 75 stakeholders. Search's data shows 30 stakeholders reached, which represents 40 per cent progress toward this joint mid-term goal and 20 per cent progress towards the joint endline target of 150.
- For Indicator 2.2 (% of stakeholders better informed), the target is 50 per cent. However, at mid-term, no data was able to be collected for this indicator. As programme staff highlight, systematically gathering this type of self-reported data from private sector stakeholders has proven practically unfeasible without a disproportionate investment of time and resources not available to the programme. Consequently, progress against this indicator cannot be determined at this stage, and its measurement methodology should be reviewed as noted in the recommendations.
- For Indicator 2.3 (# of practices incorporated), the joint mid-term target is 6. The programme reports 2 instances, representing 17 per cent of the mid-term target and 8 per cent of the endline target of 12. These reported instances refer to: META updating its Dangerous Organisations and Individuals (DOI) policy, a process to which Search contributed input via the Trusted Partnership Programme (as detailed in the Impact *section 3.2.4*); and Petra Diamonds making tangible changes to its grievance mechanism at the Williamson mine following influential research and monitoring by IPIS. Overall, it should be noted that there are significant challenges in both influencing and formally attributing practice changes within the private sector, and that progress towards the ambitious joint targets is at an early stage. The assessment of success for this result area may require different, more qualitative approaches.

The results for Result 2 indicators are very mixed, which underscores the difficulties in achieving and measuring behaviour and policy change within the private sector, aligning with the qualitative findings.

Engaging private sector stakeholders to directly inform and incentivise changes in their policies and practices (Result Two) has indeed presented significant challenges in terms of direct, measurable attribution, a difficulty acknowledged by programme staff from both organisations.⁴² Evaluating effectiveness is complicated by limited MTE access to private sector KIIs and the general reluctance of companies to share internal policy developments or attribute changes to specific external engagements. In addition, there was limited engagement with private sector stakeholders for this research, since only one private sector stakeholder was interviewed for this evaluation.

Despite these measurement hurdles, the programme undertakes substantial engagement. Search's participation in multi-stakeholder initiatives like the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI) is one channel, viewed positively by a private sector respondent for facilitating dialogue. They noted Search's genuine efforts to collaborate with the private sector for sustainable business practices and stated that Search is viewed as a balanced and credible voice within the NGO pillar of the initiative. The respondent was unable to link any specific policy changes in their organisation to the programme, however, they recognised the programmes efforts to facilitate dialogue and fostering consensus.⁴³ This feedback highlights the positive contribution of Search in the VPI, alongside the complexities in evaluating the

⁴² Project Documentation: 2022 Lessons Learned - 'Promote stakeholders in Belgium and beyond as champions of peace and sustainable development'

⁴³ KII 11.

programme's impact on the internal policies of private sector stakeholders. A significant example, detailed in the *Impact section (3.2.4)*, is the programme's crucial role in supporting the DRC's accession to the VPI, which itself represents a national-level policy commitment with implications for corporate practice. Beyond such platforms, Search has also engaged directly with major digital private sector actors, such as providing input to Meta's policies on dangerous organisations and individuals through its trusted partnership programme (further detailed in *Section 3.2.4 Impact*). While these represent important areas of engagement and perceived influence by the programme team, definitively attributing and formally verifying these internal corporate policy changes directly and solely to the programme's interventions for the purpose of this specific indicator proves challenging for an external MTE without explicit, documented corroboration from the private entities themselves linking such changes directly to programme input.

IPIS, too, engages private sector actors extensively, often leveraging its research from countries like Tanzania and DRC for advocacy within the Belgian outcome. For instance, research and follow-up work, such as that concerning Petra Diamonds in Tanzania, is brought by IPIS to multiple international stakeholder meetings and forums (e.g., UN BHR Forum Geneva, OECD (IRMA), BNNR).⁴⁴ This dissemination of evidence-based research to platforms where corporate actors are present is a key part of its strategy to inform and influence their practices. IPIS also responds to corporates that directly contact them for advice, particularly concerning due diligence and responsible sourcing in contexts like Eastern DRC. Furthermore, through its collaboration with partners like EIGHT (under the Belgian outcome), IPIS conducts advocacy work in Belgium that is based on research, such as impact surveys in communities receiving Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT), which IPIS implements as part of the DRC outcome.. Reports from this project are used to engage and convince private actors of the need to adapt their community engagement or development practices.⁴⁵

Overall, while quantitative indicators for Result Two suggest modest direct impact on company practices at mid-term, this is largely a reflection of the profound difficulty in measuring such changes and attributions directly. The qualitative evidence indicates significant ongoing engagement by both Search and IPIS with private sector actors, both directly and through multi-stakeholder platforms, aiming to inform and influence their approaches to sustainable business and conflict sensitivity. This engagement occurs through various channels, including direct advice to individual companies and, crucially, through strategic participation in multi-stakeholder platforms like the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals (EPRM), the Public-Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals Trade (PPA), and the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI). Within these forums, IPIS and Search engage directly with industry representatives to provide evidence-based input, shape dialogue, and influence sector-wide standards and practices.

Result Three: Targeted Belgian NGOs/CSOs and international networks have strengthened expertise and alliances to generate a higher impact on durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS.

As part of this result, IPIS and Search work with a variety of actors, including multi-stakeholder initiatives comprising government, private sector, and civil society actors, as well as specific NGO/CSO networks and platforms within the Belgian and European context. Some of the networks include: the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals; the Voluntary Principles Initiative on Security and Human Rights (VPI); the Environment, Climate, Conflict and Peace (ECCP) community of practice (including its Peace at COP subgroup); the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) and its various working groups; and 11.11.11, CNCD, NGO-federatie, and ACODEV; as well as formal programme partners such as the European Network for Central Africa (EurAc) and the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA). The CSOs and NGOs include Plan International Belgium,

⁴⁴ KII 21, KII 22.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Oxfam Belgium, Caritas Belgium, Îles de Paix, VSF, the Royal Museum for Central Africa and Red Cross Belgium, among others.

Quantitatively, the programme demonstrates significant reach and perceived effectiveness in this area. For **Indicator 3.1**, which counts the number of Belgian NGOs/CSOs and international networks directly reached, the joint mid-term target for the programme was 10 organisations. Search's activities alone have reached 67 entities, substantially exceeding both the mid-term target and the joint endline target of 40. This demonstrates exceptional outreach and engagement. This figure, however, does not include separate engagements conducted by IPIS, whose contributions are primarily captured through qualitative evidence and outcome harvesting. Furthermore, **Indicator 3.2** assesses the percentage of targeted entities reporting they feel better equipped, for which the joint programme's target is 30 per cent. Data from surveys following Search-led conflict sensitivity training shows a result of 76 per cent agreement from participating NGOs/CSOs. It is important to note that this figure is primarily derived from this specific Search-led activity and therefore represents the views of a subset of engaged entities. Nonetheless, it significantly surpasses the target (253.3 per cent progress against the endline) and indicates a strong positive impact on perceived capacity for those who participated.

Progress on **Indicator 3.3**, which tracks the number of relevant policies or practices incorporated within NGOs/CSOs and international networks, is significant. The programme has contributed to at least three such changes at mid-term (mid-term target achieved), representing 60 per cent progress towards the endline target of 5. These instances include:

- A membership practice within the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals (EPRM) being amended based on knowledge provided by IPIS⁴⁶,
- The Belgian development agency, Enabel, changed its practice by contracting Search to provide tailored conflict sensitivity support for its Burundi operations after receiving initial training through the programme (see Section 3.2.4).
- The Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI), an international multi-stakeholder network, changed its practice by successfully admitting the DRC as a member, a process where Search played a crucial supporting and facilitative role (see Section 3.2.4).

This demonstrates tangible progress in influencing the practices of key development actors and international networks, putting the programme on a strong track for this indicator.

Both IPIS and Search are seen as effective in leveraging their expertise and networks to support Belgian NGOs, CSOs, and international networks. Respondents highlighted IPIS's proficiency in natural resources research and Search's strengths in conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding, both significantly informing and enhancing operational strategies.⁴⁷ The programme's capacity to provide grounded evidence from FCAS was deemed invaluable, enriching NGOs' knowledge, addressing resource gaps, and conserving time.⁴⁸ A stakeholder praised Search's active role in the advocacy working group of the Peace at COP subgroup, noting their substantial efforts to bolster the advocacy capabilities of various CSOs and NGOs.⁴⁹ Similarly, IPIS actively contributes its recognised expertise on natural resource governance, conflict analysis, and due diligence to various networks and working groups, including its formal partnership with EurAc, where it informs advocacy and policy positions related to Central Africa.⁵⁰ This technical input is highly valued by partners and contributes to strengthening the evidence base for collective advocacy efforts. Furthermore, both organisations' extensive networks serve as valuable resources, offering NGOs and CSOs access to a broader range of stakeholders.⁵¹ These observations suggest that while formally adopted and attributable policy/practice changes captured by Indicator 3.3 are few at this stage, the programme is having a wider, positive effect on how these organisations approach their work.

⁴⁶ KII 14.

⁴⁷ KII 10; KII 17; KII 4;

⁴⁸ KII 17; KII 4; KII 2

⁴⁹ KII 12

⁵⁰ KII 21, KII 22.

⁵¹ KII 12

Result Four: *The Belgian public better understands the importance of peacebuilding and sustainable business practices in FCAS.*

Both Search and IPIS' reputation as experts and their collaboration with other like-minded organisations have supported the communication with the Belgian Public. The quantitative indicators for public outreach show strong performance. **Indicator 4.1**, measuring the number of people in Belgium reached through media and awareness activities, recorded 2,168,294 individuals reached, already exceeding the endline target of 380,000. Additionally, **Indicator 4.2**, counting the number of views of (social) media outputs, tallied 2,254,687 views, also highly exceeding the endline target of 750,000. These figures indicate highly effective public outreach and engagement through the chosen communication channels, as well as the space for more ambitious targets. As noted, these figures primarily reflect Search-led activities, as consolidated data for similar outreach undertaken by IPIS under this result area was not fully available for the MTE.

Qualitative data confirmed that both organisations are regularly approached by journalists for opinion on topics related to the programme including peacebuilding and sustainable business practices in FCAS.⁵² For Search, this engagement with Belgian-focused media has largely been developed during this programme, as prior work in Belgium was primarily EU-level advocacy without specific domestic communications objectives. Search has also conducted outreach activities targeting various public and professional groups to better inform the public on the importance of peacebuilding and sustainable business practices; this included presentations and workshops during events with audiences such as teachers, social workers, commune staff, and journalism students.⁵³ In addition, programme staff at Search also mentioned cooperating with other likeminded organisations and networks in media outreach and even co-authored op-eds to leverage collective efforts.⁵⁴ This material often attempted to communicate what is peacebuilding and why it matters.⁵⁵ While there has been some media coverage of the Sahel as part of the programme, this has been a challenge. Political sensitivities in various partner countries and concerns for the security of local staff and partners can make direct media engagement complex or limit what can be shared publicly. For instance, alongside the challenging media environment regarding Western engagement in the Sahel, similar security considerations and hesitancy from previous country leadership in Burundi also impacted or halted some communications initiatives there. This means programme staff are rightly cautious about media engagement that could be perceived negatively or create risks on the ground.⁵⁶

While ensuring foundational communication to help the Belgian public better understand the importance of peacebuilding, the programme also undertakes thematic communication on specific issues such as the Great Lakes, digital peacebuilding, youth in conflict and the climate-conflict nexus, as evidenced by a range of targeted publications, articles, interviews, and op-eds. Furthermore, Search has demonstrated agility in responding to current events, engaging on “hot topics” such as the conflict in Israel/Palestine or issues like misinformation on social media when relevant to its peacebuilding mandate and expertise.

In addition, although IPIS's core focus is not explicitly on peacebuilding, their work intersects with conflict dynamics through collaboration with key partners. IANSA's focus on small arms and light weapons (SALW) and Vredesactie's advocacy on arms exports both address critical drivers of violence and insecurity. These areas of work create relevant links to peace and conflict, even if indirectly. Articles authored or reviewed by IPIS often in partnership with these organisations, are

⁵² Outcome Harvesting Session with IPIS and Search respectively

⁵³ KII 6

⁵⁴ KII 8

⁵⁵ KII 8

⁵⁶ KII 8.

regularly published on their website, demonstrating consistent engagement on these interconnected issues. Additionally, IPIS has been particularly informative and impactful in promoting sustainable business practices, especially within the realm of natural resource governance.

IPIS both reviews and regularly co-author briefing papers with partner organisations like IANSA and Vredesactie. Their joint work has featured in widely read outlets such as *The Conversation* and *OneWorld*, in addition to regular updates on IPIS's own website.⁵⁷ IPIS's credibility was further recognised through their appearance on a BBC television programme focused on diamond mining.⁵⁸ IPIS and partners frequently participate in conferences, webinars, and panel discussions, offering insights on topics such as SALW, arms exports, and natural resource governance. Moreover, IPIS provides support to journalists seeking informed perspectives on natural resource governance.⁵⁹ As highlighted by one KII, IPIS's expertise is recognised not only in Belgium but also across the EU and internationally.⁶⁰

3.2.3. Coherence

This section explores how the programme and its outcome complements other initiatives in the country, and to what extent the programme has coordinated and leveraged the efforts of other stakeholders including government, NGOs and other international organisations.

The programme established strategic partnerships with organisations that possess the relevant expertise and networks to enhance its effectiveness and extend its reach. This includes formal partnerships, where DGD funding supports joint activities and outputs with key strategic allies. For instance, IPIS works closely with and channels DGD programme funding to four core partners for the Belgian outcome: EIGHT and the European Network for Central Africa (EurAc), who specialise in natural resources; and Vredesactie and the International Network on Small Arms (IANSA), who focus on the arms trade. These are integral partnerships with shared objectives and deliverables under the DGD programme. Search, for its part, has collaborated with the University of Ghent, which is conducting research on what is the role of local institutions and women and youth in mediating conflicts around climate change, and with ECDPM on environmental peacebuilding approaches in the Sahel region.⁶¹ This aligns with broader interest in the field, with other institutions like ECDPM also pursuing similar research streams focused on environmental peacebuilding approaches in the Sahel region.

Beyond these, both Search and IPIS engage extensively in **non-financial strategic collaborations with a wide array of other NGOs, networks, and communities of practice**, which are vital for joint advocacy, information sharing, and amplifying impact. For Search, a key example is its active participation in the Environment, Climate, Conflict, and Peace (ECCP) community of practice. This has led to direct collaborations on joint events (such as with International Alert and Cordaid/CSPPS for COP30), joint event proposals (e.g., with FriEnt for SB62), the co-creation of joint documents where programme messaging is disseminated, and broad outreach to hundreds of individuals within the ECCP community alone. Other important collaborative platforms for Search include the MFF hub (focused on EU funding for external action), engagement with Brussels-based members of Crisis Action for EU advocacy on the Sahel, and participation in the NGO-federatie and ACODEV's Triple Nexus Working Group to promote Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) programming and share insights with other NGOs and DGD. These non-financial collaborations, while not formal partnerships in a contractual sense, are crucial for "opening doors," mutual learning, and achieving broader advocacy influence.

⁵⁷ Project Documentation: Activity Tracker 2022-2023

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Project Documentation: Activity Tracker 2024

⁶⁰ KII 18.

⁶¹ KII 6.

This collaborative approach is central to the programme's strategy. Firstly, part of the programme's objective is to strengthen other NGOs, CSOs and networks and initiatives to generate higher impact on durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS (Result 3). The programme actively takes part in networks, conferences, dialogues and other events where it can engage with other relevant stakeholders. Respondents describe both IPIS and Search as having strong engagement with relevant stakeholders both in Belgium and beyond.⁶²

The programme strategically engages in key policy discussions and developments to identify opportunities for enhancing peacebuilding and promoting sustainable development in FCAS. This approach necessitates a strong presence amongst policymakers – a strength both organisations possess, as noted by respondents – and a deep understanding of contextual developments and the political landscape to effectively identify and capitalise on emerging opportunities.⁶³ While the flexibility afforded by the programme donor contributes to this, programme staff primarily attribute their ability to navigate these complex policy environments effectively to their established networks and extensive experience in the relevant fields.⁶⁴ A notable example of such strategic network engagement and leadership is IPIS's and Search's prominent role within the Belgian Peace Network (formerly the Peace Alliance), where their expertise has led to them being approached by key actors like 11.11.11 to lead discourse on peace and conflict within the sector.⁶⁵ This has enabled the programme to adapt to changes in operational context such as the turn away from peacebuilding toward more militarised and securitised approaches to conflict, as witnessed in responses to the wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

3.2.4. Impact

This section assesses the project's progress towards achieving its overall objective. It should be noted that at this mid-term stage, the evaluation is assessing progress towards outcomes rather than achievement of outcomes, therefore, the assessment will explore early impacts and areas of potential impact. This section starts with the designated outcome for Belgium and is followed by the individual result areas and the unintended outcomes at this stage. Throughout it will interrogate the extent to which the observed changes can be attributed to the project's interventions. Finally, it assesses how the project's impacts are measured and whether the indicators used are appropriate and effective for evaluation impact.

It is important to note that evaluating the impact of an advocacy programme is inherently complex due to the collaborative nature of advocacy, which involves numerous stakeholders. This diversity of contributors makes it challenging to attribute specific outcomes solely to the programme's efforts. Therefore, the following section will highlight areas where the programme has meaningfully *contributed* to impact towards the Belgian outcome.

Belgium Outcome: Policymakers, private sector actors, and development stakeholders in Belgium, as well as key actors at the European, international, and multilateral level apply policies and practices that (1) support and regulate sustainable business practices, (2) mainstream conflict sensitivity and/or integrate peacebuilding to shape interventions that are conducive to durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS.

There are several impacts and potential for impacts under the Belgian outcome. Given the nature of the programme's components - sustainable business practices, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding - the activities and their impact often overlap. The following section highlights the key outcomes and impact areas that can be attributed to the programme at this stage. For an extensive list of outcomes and areas of potential outcome, please see the Outcome Harvesting Matrix located in [Annex 8](#).

⁶² KII 2; KII 19; KII 7; KII 13

⁶³ KII 2; KII 3; KII 10; KII 17; KII 15

⁶⁴ KII 5; KII 6

⁶⁵ KII 21. KII 22.

Sustainable Business Practices

After the outbreak of war in Ukraine, IPIS played a pivotal role in the G7's decision to ban the importation of Russian diamonds. Behind the scenes, IPIS provided invaluable information to the Belgian government, which significantly influenced the EU's stance within the G7. Their expertise in the diamond trade and supply chain due diligence was crucial during this process, according to a government stakeholder.⁶⁶ By producing credible, evidence-based research and offering strategic support, IPIS effectively guided G7 nations toward implementing policies that promote sustainable business practices, thereby advancing the Belgian outcome.

IPIS publication on the arms sector transit through Belgium contributed to the formation of a new mechanism within the Belgian government. The mechanism brings together relevant actors from federal and regional governments to discuss ongoing development in the transport of arms throughout Belgium. According to a respondent in government, this development is directly linked to research published by IPIS on this topic.⁶⁷ This is an example of the programme's direct influence on government actions in support of sustainable business practices.

Partner organisations have reported enhanced capacity, increased knowledge and expanded networks as a direct result of the programme. Both policymakers and NGOs spoke of how their actions had been impacted by the evidence-based research provided by IPIS from mineral producing countries.⁶⁸ This had increased the capacity for smaller organisations and networks which did not have the budget to conduct fieldwork themselves but could use their research to inform programming.⁶⁹ In addition, a government respondent described how IPIS' discrete approach of providing information without an agenda was fundamental to their influence within government.⁷⁰ In terms of networking support, a respondent highlighted IPIS's extensive networks within both Belgian and EU contexts, as well as internationally, which partner organisations have effectively accessed.⁷¹ One partner organisation recounted attending an OECD forum where both IPIS and Search representatives were present, an opportunity that facilitated valuable networking and broadened their professional contacts.⁷² Additionally, a Belgian government representative noted that IPIS facilitated an introduction to a U.S. contact, a connection they might not have secured independently.⁷³ By fostering these connections, IPIS has significantly contributed to the Belgian outcome by promoting synergies among various stakeholders in the realm of sustainable business practices.

As part of their digital peacebuilding efforts, Search has built connections with Meta and offered input on topics related to digital peacebuilding in FCAS through their Trusted Partnership Programme. This includes routinely providing input on local conflict dynamics to inform how Meta can take these into account in their content moderation efforts in specific conflict-affected countries (e.g., Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya), an engagement that is ongoing despite recent changes within the partnership programme. During this time, Meta has updated their Dangerous Organisations & Individuals Policy. At this stage, Search acknowledges that it is difficult to discern its influence on Meta's internal policies, particularly broader policy shifts like the DOI update, and as mentioned private companies are typically not forthcoming about what influences their internal policies.⁷⁴ However, an observation from Search was that Meta appears to be more open to civil society voices at the trusted partnership programme for specific operational input.⁷⁵ When looking at the larger digital

⁶⁶ KII 15.

⁶⁷ KII 15

⁶⁸ KII 15; KII 16; KII 14.

⁶⁹ KII 17; KII 18; KII 16

⁷⁰ KII 16

⁷¹ KII 7

⁷² KII 17

⁷³ KII 16

⁷⁴ Project Documentation: DGD Outcome Harvesting Journal Q3-Q4_2023; Outcome Harvesting workshop with Search, February 2025.

⁷⁵ Project Documentation: DGD Outcome Harvesting Journal Q3-Q4_2023; Outcome Harvesting workshop with Search, February 2025.

peacebuilding component, respondents found it difficult to gauge the level of impact the programme was having.⁷⁶ This assessment may have been compounded by data collection limitations, potentially including the impact of staff turnover within this specific portfolio which can affect the continuity of engagement records and institutional memory regarding influencing efforts.

The DRC's accession to the VPI was supported by the programme. This support included facilitating dialogue between the VPI NGO pillar and Congolese civil society, raising local concerns with relevant ministries, and organising a mission for local CSO representatives to attend the VPI strategic retreat in Geneva.⁷⁷ By joining, the DRC commits to aligning corporate security practices with human rights standards, which is critical in a country where resource extraction occurs in conflict-prone regions. While this is a significant step, implementation remains a major challenge, primarily due to a lack of dedicated financial resources for this purpose, a difficulty that is further compounded by the recent escalation of conflict in Eastern DRC.

Peacebuilding

The programme contributed to the Belgian Sahel Strategy, specifically concerning the inclusion of conflict sensitivity. A key contribution came when Search was invited as reportedly the only NGO to present at an internal Belgian government conference in Abidjan in 2023, where the strategy was being discussed. This provided a crucial opportunity for Search to present its analysis on the region and advocate for the integration of conflict-sensitive approaches.⁷⁸ The contribution of conflict sensitivity to the Belgian Sahel Strategy was confirmed via survey data.⁷⁹ This is a clear example of an early impact generated from the programme towards the overall Belgian outcome. In addition, although direct impact cannot be proven, there is an indication that the programme is influencing the EU's stance on the Sahel, as Search has received some anecdotal feedback from EEAS to indicate this.⁸⁰ This is particularly significant given the challenging policy environment where some EU actors initially leaned towards a general withdrawal – not just militarily but also diplomatically and financially – from Sahelian countries experiencing coups. Against this backdrop, Search and its partners undertook extensive advocacy efforts to counter this narrative. The renewed attention on the Sahel offers potential for change in policies and practices that integrate greater conflict-sensitivity and peacebuilding, and which affirm the importance of staying engaged, even in difficult settings.

The programme has significantly advanced the integration of peacebuilding into the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) discussions. Search stands out as one of the few peacebuilding organisations actively advocating for conflict sensitivity within climate change dialogues.⁸¹ Their pivotal role in the Peace@COP coalition has been instrumental in this advocacy. A respondent highlighted Search's essential contribution to sharing expertise and fostering learning across the coalition.⁸² This collaborative effort is considered to have contributed to the [COP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace](#), which emphasises the necessity of conflict-sensitive approaches and increased climate financing in FCAS. Another respondent noted Search's ongoing efforts to weave peacebuilding into climate change conversations, efforts that have gained traction.⁸³ These initiatives demonstrate Search's efforts to integrate peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity considerations into the global challenges presented by climate change, which contributes to the overall outcome to ensure that there is durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS.

⁷⁶ KII 8; KII 10; KII 5.

⁷⁷ KII 6; Project Documentation: DGD Outcome Harvesting Journal Q4_2022

⁷⁸ KII 5

⁷⁹ Online Survey, February and March 2025

⁸⁰ Project Documentation: DGD Outcome Harvesting Journal Q1-Q2_2024

⁸¹ Outcome Harvesting Workshop, February 2025

⁸² KII 12

⁸³ KII 2

Conflict Sensitivity

Enabel has integrated greater conflict sensitivity into their programming after training from Search. According to a respondent from Enabel, conflict sensitivity is now a core part of their strategy.⁸⁴ The value Enabel placed on Search's expertise is further evidenced by their subsequent decision to contract Search separately to provide tailored conflict sensitivity support for their operations in Burundi, representing a significant step towards embedding these principles in practice. By increasing Enabel's capacity on conflict-sensitivity, there is a reduced risk that its programming will adversely impact the conflict dynamics in the locations of its operations, improving the programme's effectiveness, and ensuring they better mitigate unintended consequences of their programming, all of which will contribute to generating a durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS.

As a result of the conflict sensitivity training, participants have effectively applied learned principles to their work, as evidenced by survey data. Most respondents spoke of dedicating more time to context analysis and actor mapping to understanding local dynamics, with some introducing additional studies into existing programmes to better understand the conflict sensitivity dynamics. Furthermore, the practical tools provided by Search, such as the conflict sensitivity checklist disseminated during trainings, were highlighted by some participants as particularly useful, leading them to report that they have begun integrating these directly into their own programmes. This is a clear instance of the programme contributing to a change in practice within other organisations, though it may represent an individual or team-level behavioural shift at this stage rather than a formal, structural one. It is a promising outcome to follow up on, to see if this initial adoption becomes more widespread and formalised over time. Separately, another impactful change in practice reported by a respondent was a shift in their organisation's approach to local partners, with the training directly fostering a move towards greater co-ownership of programmes. These are just some of the examples of the training application. The survey results clearly show that the programme's training significantly contributed to achieving its intended outcome.

No unintended outcomes were identified as part of the programme at this mid-term stage.

Measuring Impact

Progress towards the overall Belgian Outcome is assessed through several key indicators (see [Annex 4.5](#) for an overview of indicators at the mid-term stage). A key M&E finding is that quantitative tracking for the Belgian Outcome has been largely partner-specific, making a consolidated view of progress challenging. The numbers presented in the indicator table are primarily based on Search's reporting and do not yet include a full, consolidated view of IPIS's contributions. This limitation must be considered when reviewing progress.

For Indicator 0.1 (policy and practice changes), qualitative evidence and outcome harvesting have validated significant policy contributions from both partners. These include IPIS's pivotal influence on the G7 ban on Russian diamonds and the creation of a Belgian government mechanism on arms transit, as well as Search's crucial role in integrating conflict sensitivity into the Belgian Sahel Strategy. The quantitative result in the logframe annex, which is based on one partner's tracking, should therefore be considered a partial figure. By consolidating the validated policy and practice changes across Results 1, 2, and 3, the programme has contributed to at least 10 distinct changes at the Belgian and international levels. This represents substantial progress (66.7%) towards the joint midterm target of 15. The qualitative evidence also demonstrates that the joint programme's collective achievement in influencing policy and practice is substantial and reflects the distinct, high-impact work of both organisations.

This highlights the programme's ability to contribute meaningfully to significant policy and practice shifts, even if attribution remains complex. Concurrently, the programme demonstrates strong results

⁸⁴ KII 4.

in building the conditions for such change. Indicator 0.2 reveals that a significant majority (61.3 per cent) of surveyed target group members report increased and improved collaboration and networks, far exceeding the endline target. This figure is understood to be primarily derived from feedback from participants in activities such as the conflict sensitivity training, which itself can foster networking. While indicative of positive outcomes within that cohort, it may not fully capture the breadth of experiences across all programme activities specifically designed to enhance collaboration and networks among the wider group of targeted stakeholders. Nonetheless, it suggests the programme is contributing to fostering the alliances and connections necessary for collective action and influence among those directly assessed. Similarly, Indicator 0.3 shows that 74.2 per cent of surveyed engaged target groups feel better equipped to implement interventions conducive to durable peace or sustainable development, again surpassing the endline target. This figure is understood to be largely based on responses to surveys following Search-led activities, such as the conflict sensitivity training. While this points to successful capacity enhancement within that cohort, it may not fully represent the experiences of all target groups engaged across the breadth of the joint programme's activities, including those primarily interacting with IPIS. This indicates that programme activities, such as IPIS's evidence-based research and Search's conflict sensitivity training, are contributing to enhancing perceived stakeholder capacity among those assessed. Taken together, while high-level policy and practice change takes time, the strong mid-term results in strengthening networks and capacity suggest the programme is making substantial progress towards achieving its overall intended impact.

At the results level, several refinements to the current monitoring framework are recommended to enhance the relevance and accuracy of indicator data for the remainder of the programme cycle. Firstly, the targets for Result 1 and Result 3 are not ambitious enough, given that indicators 1.1, 1.2, and 3.1, 3.2 and 4.1 have already surpassed their endline targets by a significant margin. In contrast, the targets for Result 2 appear to be more appropriate, as the programme is seeing more moderate progress on results for indicator 2.1 and 2.3 private sector, which presents inherent challenges in measurement.

Regarding the current output indicators (1.1, 2.1, and 3.1), these analyse the programme's reach and could be strengthened by shifting from a simple count of individuals engaged to a focus on meaningful engagement. For example, counting only those stakeholders who have participated in two or more substantial interactions would help distinguish between superficial contact and deeper programme influence.

Secondly, the outcome indicators on policy or practice change (1.3, 2.3, and 3.3) would benefit from adopting contribution-based language and a graded approach to influence. Rather than solely aiming to attribute direct causality to the programme, which is often unrealistic in complex advocacy environments, these indicators could more effectively track the programme's influence. While a comprehensive 'graded approach'—tracking invitations to contribute, reflection of inputs in drafts, and thematic alignment—offers a thorough pathway, it requires significant analytical capacity and resources which may be challenging within current operational constraints. A more immediately feasible way to implement contribution tracking for these indicators would be to focus on identifying and documenting “changes in policy/practice that align with Search/IPIS policy recommendations/advocacy activities.”⁸⁵ This approach still moves beyond direct attribution to assess alignment and influence, providing a more realistic measure of the programme's role.

Lastly, indicators 1.2, and 3.2 rely on self-reporting and currently show strong results under indicator 1.2 and 1.3. There is no data available on 2.2. These results require triangulation with qualitative data to better assess the depth of behavioural or institutional change. This limitation should be reflected in the programme. Specific attention should also be paid to the unique monitoring challenges within Result 2, particularly the private sector's reluctance to disclose internal policy shifts or attribute them

⁸⁵ Contribution from Search staff member during review of the draft version of this report.

to external engagement. In cases such as Meta's trusted partnership or initiatives like the VPI, where the programme engages with stakeholders like Shell and other natural resource extractors, influence may be better captured by tracking instances where programme input is requested or given in discussions, even if policy changes are not publicly disclosed. These types of indirect engagement and influence should be considered, especially for indicator 2.3.

In addition, [Table 5 in Annex 4.5](#) below looks at evidence from the KIIs toward the relevant indicators. To ensure that there is no repetition between the results captured in KIIs and the previous results captured in the logframe, [Table 5](#) highlights the specific changes mentioned by KIIs in the qualitative data.

3.2.5. Lessons learned, best practices and cross-cutting considerations

This section covers mid-term learnings and best practices that have emerged from implementation. This is followed by an exploration of the extent to which the programme's impact will continue after the programme ends.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices

As peacebuilding faces increasing pressure from shifting political and funding landscapes, clearly communicating its value through evidence-based advocacy is more crucial than ever.

In response to a shifting contextual landscape that is marked by governments increasingly turning to militarised and traditional approaches to conflict alongside changes in the funding environment, peacebuilding organisations and programmes like this one have been compelled to return to the fundamentals. There is a renewed need to clearly articulate what peacebuilding is and why it matters.⁸⁶ In this context, evidence-based advocacy that can effectively demonstrate the tangible value and impact of peacebuilding has become more important than ever.⁸⁷

Integrating peacebuilding into emerging fields like technology and climate change is a gradual process that requires time and sustained engagement to generate meaningful impact. Although the links between both technology and conflict, as well as climate change and conflict, have been established, peacebuilding remains a relatively new perspective in these domains.⁸⁸ Respondents noted that the prevalence of technical experts in these fields often requires additional time and effort to introduce peacebuilding concepts, foster understanding, and build genuine buy-in.⁸⁹

The programme's adaptability to changing environments, afforded by donor flexibility, has been essential for effectively navigating complex and shifting advocacy environments across diverse contexts. The programme's flexibility has been critical in navigating the complexity of advocacy spaces that involve multiple actors across both public and private spheres, and in different geographic locations. This adaptability has also been key to responding to rapidly evolving political and contextual changes, whether in Belgium, the EU, or FCAS.⁹⁰ In this regard, donor flexibility with funding has played a vital role, enabling the programme to remain responsive, strategic, and impactful amid uncertainty.

⁸⁶ KII 5

⁸⁷ Project Documentation: 2023 Lessons Learned - 'Promote stakeholders in Belgium and Beyond as Champions of Peace and Sustainable Development'

⁸⁸ KII 5; KII 6; KII 7

⁸⁹ KII 5; KII 6; KII 7

⁹⁰ KII 5; KII 6; KII 8

Tailoring conflict sensitivity training to the specific contexts of organisations or stakeholder groups significantly enhances its relevance and practical impact. While aligning training with the needs of individual organisations may not always be feasible due to resource constraints⁹¹, designing more targeted training around thematic areas or for specific stakeholder groups could address this challenge. For example, offering conflict sensitivity training tailored to specific areas such as programming, research, or policy development, or categorising training by stakeholder type, such as for NGOs/CSOs versus policymakers, can better meet the diverse needs of participants and increase the training's effectiveness and applicability. This lesson informs the subsequent recommendation for more targeted training approaches.

It can be difficult to directly attribute policy or practice changes to the programme, particularly when these changes occur within the private sector or in public arenas with many different actors and factors.⁹² This creates a challenge in effectively measuring the programme's impact. Furthermore, policy and practice changes take time to materialise. A best practice in these cases is to rigorously examine the assumptions made during outcome harvesting to ensure that the programme's contributions are adequately accounted for. Additionally, fostering trust and confidentiality through strong relationships with stakeholders can encourage honest feedback, offering better insights into the programme's influence. Other valuable approaches include systematically comparing the narratives of key policymakers on relevant issues over time to identify shifts in understanding or discourse, analysing different iterations of policy documents (from draft to final versions) to track the potential incorporation of programme recommendations or specific language, and methodically tracking instances where programme input is formally requested by or proactively given to policymakers and other stakeholders during key influencing opportunities.

Sustainability

As many respondents highlighted, a challenge to sustainability of the programme is potential changes in context. During the programme life cycle, there have been contextual changes, which have shifted the operational landscape, including the coups in central Sahel countries (all of them Belgian partner countries), ongoing conflict in Ukraine (Europe), Gaza and the most recent escalation of conflict in the Eastern DRC. Recent funding cuts also pose a risk to sustainability of the programme's impact. This challenge was also mentioned by respondents, who voiced concerns about their impact on programming and capacity while also increasing competition between NGOs and CSOs which could undercut progress towards achieving sustainable business practices, greater conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding.⁹³ These external factors were seen as the main barriers to sustainability of the programme's impact.

The programme's flexibility, emphasis on initiating changes in behaviour, attitudes, and knowledge, and focus on relationship-building enhance its sustainability potential. Activities are designed to promote lasting changes in sustainable business practices, conflict sensitivity, and peacebuilding. To support these objectives, programme materials—including documents, reports, policy briefs, and checklists—are shared with relevant audiences.⁹⁴ Additionally, the strong relationships and reputations that Search and IPIS have established among policymakers, NGOs, and private sector entities are likely to endure beyond the programme's duration, further contributing to its lasting impact.⁹⁵

⁹¹ KII 6

⁹² Project Documentation: 2022 Lessons Learned - 'Promote stakeholders in Belgium and Beyond as Champions of Peace and Sustainable Development'

⁹³ KII 5; KII 3; KII 4; KII 10; KII 16.

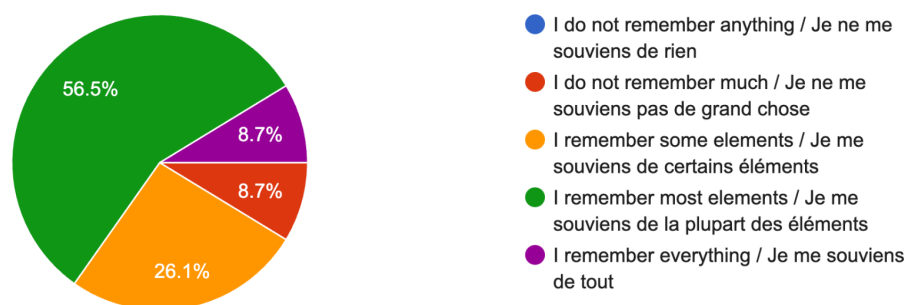
⁹⁴ Project Documentation: Performance Measurement system: Belgium Outcome

⁹⁵ KII 5.

Figure Two: Knowledge retentions from Conflict Sensitivity Training

4. To what extent do you still remember what you learned during the conflict sensitivity training?
/ Dans quelle mesure vous souvenez-vous de ce que v...s de la formation sur la sensibilité aux conflits ?

46 responses



When evaluating the effectiveness of conflict sensitivity training, the majority of participants retain the information provided; however, reinforcing training content may be beneficial to ensure lasting impact. In total, 8.7per cent of respondents (4 individuals) reported retaining all the information presented, while 56.5per cent (26 individuals) recalled most of the content. Conversely, 8.7per cent (4 individuals) mentioned they remembered little of the training material.⁹⁶ Figure Two above offers further insight into the training's sustainability.

3.2.6. Recommendations

The following section provides recommendations for the rest of the programme life cycle:

Recommendation One: Both IPIS and Search should further leverage each other's resources, including expertise, contacts, and networks, to maximise their collective impact in promoting sustainable business practices, conflict sensitivity, and peacebuilding. This is especially the case in advocacy efforts. The evaluation highlights that while both organisations are successful in their respective areas of focus, there are significant overlaps in their programmatic efforts. To enhance effectiveness and increase the potential for impact, the organisations should consider planning joint activities in areas where their work intersects, such as natural resource governance and its links to the climate-conflict-nexus. Collaborative initiatives in these overlapping areas would strengthen their combined efforts and contribute to the programme's coherence.

Recommendation Two: Refine the approach to measuring policy and practice change by consistently applying contribution tracking, particularly focusing on policy/practice alignment with programme advocacy. Given the difficulty of direct attribution in complex advocacy settings, continue the nuanced approach of using direct attribution where the programme's crucial role is clear. For broader influence, systematically track and document 'changes in policy/practice that align with Search/IPIS policy recommendations/advocacy activities.' This provides a more feasible and realistic measure of contribution than attempting to prove sole causality for all changes, while regular reflection on assumptions underpinning any attribution remains crucial.

⁹⁶ Online survey, February and March 2025.

Recommendation Three: Reassess measurement approaches for private sector engagement (Result Two). Given the sensitivity and confidentiality that characterise private sector operations, traditional methods of tracking influence, particularly around internal policy or practice change may not be effective. It is therefore recommended to revisit how progress under Result Two is measured in more qualitative forms of measurement. This could include selective in-depth case studies on specific engagement efforts by both Search (e.g., interactions with Meta, VPI dialogues) and IPIS (e.g., engagement with natural resource companies on due diligence, or with industry platforms based on its research). Process tracing or discourse analysis of publicly available corporate communications could also yield insights. While acknowledging that extensive qualitative M&E can be resource-intensive, the programme should explore focused, feasible qualitative approaches to better capture the nuances of its influence. In particular, Indicator 2.2 should be reviewed for continued relevance and feasibility, to ensure it reflects a realistic expectation for the endline result.

Recommendation Four: Revise overachieving indicator targets and refine change measurement indicators (1.3, 2.3, 3.3). The consistent overachievement of mid-term targets under Results One, Three, and Four suggests that current endline targets may not fully reflect the programme’s potential. It is recommended to adjust these targets upward to better capture the programme’s demonstrated capacity.

Recommendation Five: Strengthen indicators on engagement (1.1, 2.1, 3.1) beyond quantitative reach. Current indicators largely focus on the number of stakeholders reached, which may not sufficiently capture the depth or quality of engagement. It is recommended to define and measure “meaningful engagement”, integrating both quantitative and qualitative dimensions—such as sustained interaction, stakeholder responsiveness, and application of learning. This will enhance the programme’s ability to differentiate between surface-level contact and deeper, outcome-oriented engagement, providing a more accurate picture of influence and effectiveness.

Recommendation Six: Enhance M&E collaboration and mutual learning between IPIS and Search specifically for the Belgian Outcome. Recognising that both organisations have distinct, established M&E approaches, collaboration should focus on jointly reviewing progress towards shared DGD programme objectives. This may include creating opportunities for M&E focal points to share methodological insights (like outcome harvesting, which is currently only conducted by Search) for cross-learning, and agreeing on how to best capture and report data for joint activities or outputs under the Belgian Outcome. Successfully implementing this enhanced collaboration requires dedicated M&E staff time and capacity, which should be factored into current and future resource planning to ensure it is feasible. This would foster synergy in understanding impact, as outlined in Recommendation One, without requiring an overhaul of existing organisational MEL structures.

Recommendation Seven: Search should continue and enhance the development of tailored conflict sensitivity training modules. Reflecting feedback on the demand for customisation, Search should continue its ongoing efforts to design tailored modules that address the specific needs of different organisations, stakeholder groups, and thematic areas. Finalising and implementing these modules will be key to enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of the conflict sensitivity training component. This targeted approach – such as creating specific modules for programming in FCAS, research, or policy development, or categorising training for NGO/CSOs versus policymakers – can better meet diverse participant needs and overcome the challenge of limited funding. Search can significantly increase their capacity to adopt and strengthen conflict sensitivity practices, ultimately leading to more impactful outcomes.

Recommendation Eight: IPIS should continue, and potentially deepen, its research into the specific operational challenges faced by private sector actors in implementing due diligence processes and managing human rights risks. Building on its existing extensive work of analysing

due diligence tools, guiding stakeholders, and advocating for responsible sourcing in multi-stakeholder platforms, further targeted research could focus on identifying practical barriers and success factors from the private sector perspective. This would ensure IPIS' independent recommendations are even more actionable for companies and could inform engagement in platforms like the VPI or other relevant fora. Such research would require dedicated funding that respects IPIS's commitment to independent analysis.

Recommendation Nine: Search and IPIS could improve the accessibility and dissemination of its research findings by creating more user-friendly formats (e.g., infographics, policy briefs, webinars) tailored to different audiences, including policymakers, private sector actors, and CSOs. Moreover, they should consider translating key findings into relevant local languages, ensuring digital accessibility, and establishing channels for feedback and engagement with the intended audiences.

Recommendation Ten: Regularly revisiting and refining the Theory of Change (ToC) assumptions will support the continued relevance in light of shifting operational contexts and emerging challenges. Given the significant shifts in the operational context, particularly with changing government priorities and the evolving funding environment, it is recommended that IPIS and Search periodically revisit and refine ToC assumptions to ensure they remain aligned with current realities. Currently, a slight adjustment to the wording of assumptions may be necessary to reflect new challenges in the peacebuilding landscape.

3.3. Tanzania Outcome

3.3.1. Relevance

This section assesses the Tanzania programme's relevance to the local context and the needs of targeted populations, as well as its alignment with local and national priorities. It also examines how well the programme's objectives align with the broader focus of the partner organisations and lastly, whether the ToC and its assumptions remain relevant and valid at this mid-term stage.

The previous experience that IPIS brings in Tanzania and its consultations with local partners informed the programme design, supporting the approach and activities meeting national and local contexts and the needs of the targeted population.⁹⁷ During the early stages of the programme, IPIS and BHRT conducted regional scoping studies to attempt to develop an understanding of the main challenges in each region.⁹⁸ Various stakeholders were interviewed as part of the scoping studies. These included community leaders in mining areas, artisanal miners, local civil society representatives, government stakeholders, owners of businesses located near mines, and local lawyers and paralegal organisations.⁹⁹ The scoping studies provided contextual information relating to the extractive operations in the regions. This included listing the actors involved in natural resource extraction, the likely impact of these operations, and any existing interventions related to promoting human rights. Risk assessments and mitigation strategies for working in these areas were also conducted.¹⁰⁰ These scoping studies also serve as a baseline to help assess the programme's impact over the project lifecycle.¹⁰¹ These studies were found to be highly relevant as there is limited data on extractive industries and their impact on the local population in these regions.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ KII 21; KII 47.

⁹⁸ KII 21.

⁹⁹ Project Documentation: IPIS - Activity Report. 2022 DGDZ Act. 1.4 Regional Scoping Studies_Activity Report

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² KII 21

All respondents found the programme highly relevant to Tanzanian context at both local and national level. Under the research component, the programme has tried to strengthen documentation and to track and monitor human rights impacts that can be attributed to natural resource extraction via the Kufuatilia¹⁰³ system. In addition, the Voices studies, also under the research component, equips civil society with key research skills to conduct independent research into these issues.¹⁰⁴ Participants in these programmes highlighted how these activities were relevant to the local context and the needs of the targeted population.¹⁰⁵ In relation to the remedy component, the Public Legal Education (PLE) provides training to legal aid providers and local leaders and seeks to empower them to navigate grievance mechanisms and secure compensation for those adversely affected by natural resource extraction. As part of the project design, both the research and the remedy components collectively contribute to the advocacy component via the data they produce which is used in national-level advocacy efforts.¹⁰⁶ At the national level, advocacy efforts are considered highly relevant given the economic significance of natural resource extraction Tanzania (whether through strategic minerals extraction or in the case of the East African Crude Oil Pipe Line (EACOP)). The government is heavily invested in this industry's success, however the voices of local communities are still largely absent from national conversations about natural resource extraction.¹⁰⁷ The programme tries to facilitate the inclusion and strengthening of these local voices, acting as a crucial bridge between community-level realities and national decision-making spaces. For instance, it supports the participation of local CSOs and community members in national-level multi-stakeholder dialogues, such as the Jukwaa conference, and convenes regional community forums where local concerns can be articulated and subsequently channelled to national actors. This approach is therefore proving highly relevant to the context, aiming to ensure that those most affected by extractive industries have a greater say in their governance.

The design and approach of the programme has been adjusted in certain areas to reflect contextual changes and better respond to the needs and capacity of CSOs. These modifications were also informed by findings from the scoping study.¹⁰⁸ The study identified Shinyanga and Mara as regions more impacted by natural resource extraction, leading to a higher prevalence of related issues. As a result, the project adapted its focus to these 'hotspot' areas during the first two years.¹⁰⁹ In addition, the Kufuatilia system which IPIS had already facilitated in the DRC, required adaptation to align with Tanzania's political sensitivities and the operating environment.¹¹⁰ Looking ahead, the programme staff anticipate further adjustments to the programme in response to Tanzania's upcoming elections later this year. The planned adaptations are likely to include adjustments in the timeline of certain activities to avoid operations during the election period. This is due to the perception, often held by the government, that Tanzanian civil society is oppositional to the government, which results in increased scrutiny in the lead-up to elections.¹¹¹ To navigate this, the programme is being strategically adjusted to maintain effectiveness while remaining sensitive to the political climate.¹¹² These adaptations, together with proactive planning for future adjustments, reflect a strong awareness of the operational environment and a commitment to flexibility to ensure that the programme has the desired impact.

Although the assumptions in the ToC remain largely valid, the second assumption should be revisited. This assumption asserts that there is space for civic participation in natural resource governance and development, including legal action and engagement with policymakers and

¹⁰³ The digital monitoring system is referred to as 'Kufuatilia' in the context of the Tanzania programme and 'Kufatilia' (with one 'u') in the context of the DRC programme. This report will use the respective spellings when discussing each country-specific implementation.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ KII 25, KII 27, KII 23.

¹⁰⁶ KII 22, KII 47.

¹⁰⁷ KII 21, KII 22, KII 47; KII 48.

¹⁰⁸ KII 22; KII 47.

¹⁰⁹ KII 22.

¹¹⁰ KII 22.

¹¹¹ KII 47; KII 21

¹¹² KII 21

duty-bearers. Although the programme has been able to carry out the majority of activities such as research, monitoring, documentation, public legal education, and multi-stakeholder dialogue, progress toward the goals of strategic litigation have been markedly more limited. The project originally anticipated that strategic litigation would be a viable activity; however, the current political environment has created challenges, raising concerns for civil society actors involved in such efforts.¹¹³ As a result, this activity may no longer be feasible, necessitating a revision of the second assumption in the ToC.

3.3.2. Effectiveness

This section evaluates which programme approaches and interventions have been most effective, which have been less successful, and how they can be improved. Additionally, it explores the internal and external factors that have influenced the project's activities. This section is structured according to the results areas under the Tanzania Outcome.

Result 1: Mapping and reporting of human rights issues and socio-economic impact related to natural resource governance by civil society organisations and those affected is improved

The programme has been mostly successful in its approach so far, especially in the research component. This includes both participatory research modalities and IPIS's direct, independent research outputs. Both the Voices and Kufuatilia programmes, which often involve training and collaboration with local CSOs for data gathering and monitoring, are considered successful aspects of the programme by both participants and programme staff. Both programmes reflect established modalities for IPIS, outside the realms of this specific programme.¹¹⁴ IPIS's prior experience in implementing Voices and Kufuatilia (through different programmes) has enabled these activities to run efficiently and with minimal disruption.¹¹⁵ Beyond these, IPIS' own independent research conducted under the programme also yields significant insights and impact. For instance, an IPIS study on an Independent Grievance Mechanism (IGM) in the mining sector reportedly provided crucial information that contributed to the law firm Leigh Day revisiting the Petra Diamonds case. Regular analytical outputs, such as the Darubini Quarterly Briefings, also serve to disseminate timely information on natural resource governance and human rights. Their in-country presence has strengthened collaboration with partners, improved oversight of programme activities, and allowed for agile responses to emerging challenges.¹¹⁶ In addition, the Kufuatilia system's success was largely attributed to the connection between grassroots monitoring and documentation and the national level advocacy. One respondent observed that monitoring and documenting the harm done by natural resource extraction can sometimes feel futile, as it often leads to no immediate action, however, knowing that the Kufuatilia system contributed to larger national level dialogue was more motivating and increased the level of commitment among trainees.¹¹⁷

Result 2: Justice seekers are empowered to seek remedy for human rights abuses through improved corporate and government avenues

The remedy component of the programme has yielded mixed results so far. The political environment has posed significant challenges to the strategic litigation activity, raising doubts about its feasibility within the programme's time frame. The other aspect of this component which attracted varied feedback has been the PLE training. For some participants, it led to tangible change by increasing their knowledge, awareness, and appetite for action, however some participants faced barriers to applying their newly acquired knowledge. One respondent described how the training was relevant and increased their knowledge but that they did not have the adequate resources to put the

¹¹³ KII 47

¹¹⁴ The Voices programme has been an activity in other programmes implemented by IPIS and Partners across different African countries.

¹¹⁵ KII 22.

¹¹⁶ KII 47.

¹¹⁷ KII 27

learning into practice.¹¹⁸ Two more highlighted that they had expected the training to have integrated more of a gendered lens, covering the unique challenges faced by women in mining areas and addressing issues related to GBV in the context of natural resource extraction.¹¹⁹ Therefore, while it is clear the PLE activity is relevant and effective for some, the resources available to participants and the gendered-nature of some incidents related to natural resources extraction may need to be further considered in the programme. The programme team has acknowledged this feedback and, for instance, has already planned refresher PLE training. Furthermore, while a deep dive into specific participant needs during the MTE revealed requests for extensive support (such as funding for accompanying persons or childcare facilities to enhance women's participation)—legitimate needs that underscore the depth of barriers faced—addressing these comprehensively would require significant additional resources beyond typical training provisions. The programme's ongoing challenge lies in balancing these profound needs with available resources while continuing to strengthen the gender focus in its content and delivery, building on an existing awareness of gender equality issues within the Tanzanian context.

Result 3: Evidence-based multi-stakeholder dialogues promote corporate and governmental policy changes for improved justice, good governance and human rights in natural resource extraction

Various respondents highlighted the importance of evidence-based advocacy for effectiveness. The programme's effectiveness to date has been attributed to its ability to bring the on-the-ground realities to the national and international level in discussion with government, policy makers and corporate entities through multi-stakeholder dialogue.¹²⁰ According to respondents this enhances the credibility of campaigns and helps garner attention from relevant stakeholders.¹²¹

The programme's strategy of working through partnerships has also been largely effective, drawing on the complementary strengths of each organisation. For example, BHRT contributes strong grassroots connections, HakiRasilimali brings access and influence at the national level, ASF offers legal expertise in grievance mechanisms and access to remedy, while IPIS leads on research and overall programme facilitation.¹²² This collaborative and well-coordinated model has played a central role in driving the programme forward.

A combination of political, operational, and social factors has challenged the programme's overall effectiveness. Respondents identified both external and internal factors that have influenced the programme's implementation. Externally, the political environment posed a significant challenge, as concerns about being perceived negatively by the government made some CSOs hesitant to engage with the programme.¹²³ Internally, several issues impacted upon delivery. For instance, ambitious timelines have not aligned with reality, given the actual time it takes to implement programmes. For example, one of the partners capacities was initially overestimated, requiring IPIS to shift its own activities to provide additional support¹²⁴. Furthermore a 50/50 gender participation target, though well-intentioned, has proven very difficult to achieve due to restrictive social norms that limit women's engagement.¹²⁵ While these challenges have impacted effectiveness, they also provide valuable lessons for adaptation and future planning.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ KII 30; KII 25.

¹²⁰ KII 47, KII 22, KII 27.

¹²¹ KII 48.

¹²² KII 47.

¹²³ KII 47, KII 21.

¹²⁴ KII 22

¹²⁵ KII 21.

3.3.3. Coherence

This section explores how the programme and its outcome complements other initiatives in the country, and to what extent the programme has coordinated and leveraged the efforts of other stakeholders including government, NGOs and other international organisations.

The programme is one of the few initiatives of its kind operating in Northern Tanzania, addressing issues related to natural resource extraction and associated human rights concerns. Since its inception, another programme with a similar focus has been launched by the Danish Institute of Human Rights.¹²⁶ The two programmes have established communication and have begun exchanging information. They are currently exploring opportunities for collaboration, particularly around harmonising their incident reporting mechanisms.¹²⁷ This collaboration aims to enhance the coherence of their efforts and generate stronger, more cohesive evidence of harms related to natural resource extraction in the region.

IPIS and its partners maintain a broad network of CSOs across Tanzania, comprising both direct partnerships under initiatives such as Kufuatilia and Voices, as well as other CSOs engaged through national-level forums and conferences. Ongoing communication and coordination among actors contribute to strategic complementarity and helps to avoid duplication of efforts.¹²⁸ It also supports the responsiveness of programme interventions in the broader ecosystem of civil society activity in the natural resource governance space in Tanzania.

Furthermore, the programme and its partners actively engage with international organisations and platforms to amplify the impact of their work on extractive sector issues. For example, programme partner HakiRasilimali represents Tanzanian civil society in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) Tanzanian Chapter, bringing programme insights to this key multi-stakeholder governance platform. Additionally, programme partners have been significant CSO voices in forums such as the Joint Sectoral Framework (JSF) dialogues organised by the Belgian Embassy, often as key civil society representatives from the extractive sector. In addition, IPIS and ASF actively disseminate programme findings to international stakeholders, enhancing both the visibility and potential influence of the programme's outcomes. Key audiences include UN bodies, international NGOs, and other global actors, and this helps to extend the reach of the programme beyond the national context and positions its evidence to inform broader policy and advocacy efforts in relation to natural resource governance and human rights.

The programme activities are generally well aligned and collectively coherent with the programme outcomes. However, there is potential for improvement in complementarity of activities.¹²⁹ While it is clear all three components of the programme are inter-related, IPIS has identified areas where alignment could be strengthened in the second half of the project. This is particularly relevant between ASF and BHRT, both of which operate under the remedy component. These partners bring distinct yet potentially synergistic strengths: ASF provides crucial legal expertise focused on judicial remedy and strategic litigation, while BHRT offers strong grassroots connections, capacity in community sensitisation, and experience with non-judicial grievance mechanisms. One respondent for example noted that closer alignment and increased cooperation between these two partners could enhance the overall impact of the programme and allow for better leveraging of each partner's unique strengths.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ KII 21.

¹²⁷ KII 22.

¹²⁸ KII 22.

¹²⁹ KII 22.

¹³⁰ KII 22.

3.3.4. Impact

This section assesses the project's progress towards achieving its overall objective. It should be noted that **at this mid-term stage, we are evaluating progress towards outcomes rather than achievement of outcomes, therefore, the assessment will explore early impacts and areas of potential impact.** This section starts with the designated outcome for Tanzania and is followed by the individual result areas and the unintended outcomes at this stage. It then interrogates the extent to which the observed changes can be attributed to the project's interventions. Finally, it assesses how the project's impacts are measured and whether the indicators used are appropriate and effective for evaluation impact. A full list of the outcomes achieved by the programme are included in the Outcome Harvesting Matrix found in [Annex 4.8.](#)

***Tanzania Outcome:** Tanzanian communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) are empowered to engage government and industry in fostering access to justice, good governance and human rights in natural resource governance.*

Overall progress indicates that the programme is on track to achieve its overarching outcome in the Shinyanga and Mara regions where efforts have been concentrated so far. These regions were prioritised as a result of the findings of the scoping studies, as they were found to have greater need.¹³¹ Engagement in the other two designated regions, Manyara and Tanga, is in earlier phases or has been less intensive to date. For instance, some participants from Manyara were included in PLE training in 2024 and participated in the 2023 Jukwaa conference, and IPIS undertook further preparatory work in Manyara in 2024. Activities in Tanga were initially a lower priority as the EACOP project's impacts were less developed there compared to other areas, though activities are planned for 2025. Consequently, while foundational work is emerging in Manyara, the evaluation at this mid-term stage cannot yet fully assess the likelihood of achieving the overarching outcome across all four originally designated regions.

Respondents involved in the Kufuatilia and Voices training and roll out report that it has improved their capacity to collect data and track trends related to human rights impacts arising from natural resource extraction.¹³² One respondent described how the training for Kufuatilia [and Voices] had increased their confidence, especially when presenting community challenges to other stakeholders.¹³³ While this testimony suggests that the programme is fulfilling results area one, it should be interpreted cautiously. Only two of the respondents had completed this training and were involved in its roll out, making the data sample too small to treat these findings as conclusive.

Importantly, the same respondent highlighted a key change in the community behaviour: while there was initial reluctance among community members to share information about violence as a barrier, over time they had become more trusting.¹³⁴ This change in behaviour was attributed to the Kufuatilia system's transparency and its integration with other aspects of the programmes, including national multi-stakeholder dialogue, the PLE and independent grievance mechanism.¹³⁵ While this example is just one person's observations, it may signal progress toward the overarching Tanzania outcome.

Despite challenges in effectiveness, several of the respondents have indicated that the remedy component of the programme is starting to drive change. For instance, the programme has facilitated increased CSO access to and dialogue with corporate actors on remedy and human rights, such as through organised visits to the Barrick North Mara Gold Mine to engage on issues related to justice and community relations. Furthermore, IPIS's work on Independent Grievance Mechanisms

¹³¹ KII 22.

¹³² KII 27; KII 24

¹³³ KII 27.

¹³⁴ KII 27.

¹³⁵ KII 27.

(IGMs), notably the innovative approach to monitoring the Williamson mine's (Petra Diamonds) IGM which involved surveying participants at different stages, has not only been well-received by the community but has also been recognised and cited as a case study in broader policy discussions, indicating an influence on how remedy mechanisms are understood and potentially improved. Beyond these direct company and IGM-related engagements, one respondent described how the PLE significantly raised participants' awareness of the importance of seeking justice, sparking a strong motivation to actively pursue justice.¹³⁶ Another respondent echoed that the programme has increased awareness of different pathways to justice available at the local level.¹³⁷ A particularly notable outcome came from a respondent who participated in the PLE and subsequently established a platform to bring stakeholders together to discuss the impact of local mining operations.¹³⁸ This initiative represents a clear example of behaviour change and a direct outcome of the programme's influence, contributing to broader efforts towards achieving the overarching justice and accountability goals in Tanzania.

Civil society organisations are engaging with different national and international stakeholders at multi-stakeholder meetings. These engagements are crucial for bringing local community perspectives and evidence from the programme's research into broader policy discussions. Nationally, these include conferences like the Jukwaa conference in November 2022¹³⁹, where, as a result of the programme, local CSOs and community members gained exposure, helping to bridge a previously identified gap where local voices were often absent from dialogues with government or corporate entities.¹⁴⁰ Internationally, programme partners have actively participated in and contributed to significant forums such as the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights (UNBHR), OECD events on responsible mineral supply chains, the Alternative Mining Indaba (AMI), and engage with networks like the Kimberley Process (KP), the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) (where partner HakiRasilimali represents Tanzanian CSOs), and Publish What You Pay (PWYP). Moreover, partners attended the Forum convened by the African Union (AU) and co-organised by UNDP, OHCHR, the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, and UNICEF in Addis Ababa in September 2023, and HakiRasilimali participated in a similar high-level forum in Nairobi in early 2024.¹⁴¹ These diverse engagements highlight that partners are increasingly exposed to and influencing discussions with key international stakeholders on mining, business, and human rights.

Local issues are being recognised, with recommendations from multistakeholder conferences being considered by the national government. Last year, three recommendations were taken on board by the Ministry of Minerals.¹⁴² While it could not be verified at this stage whether these recommendations have been acted upon, the heightened engagements of local communities and CSOs in these spaces represents a positive step toward influencing government policy change.

The programme has facilitated greater access for CSOs to corporate actors, including organising visits to the Northern Mara Gold Mine in the Mara Region.¹⁴³ Several CSOs have participated in these visits, which aim to engage with Barrick on issues related to justice, human rights, and community relations surrounding the mine's operations. These information-sharing sessions serve as a platform for dialogue between the two parties, with the goal of increasing mutual understanding and reaching agreements that benefit local communities. While it is unclear whether these engagements have led to tangible outcomes, there may be instances of positive impact. For example, feedback provided by IPIS and its partners (anecdotal information) has reportedly informed improvements to the accessibility of at least one mine's grievance mechanism, suggesting influence on corporate practice aimed at enhancing remedy for affected communities.

¹³⁶ KII 27.

¹³⁷ KII 26.

¹³⁸ KII 29.

¹³⁹ Project Documentation: 202211 DGD Tz_Act 3.1_BHRT_Jukwaa la Uziduaji_Summary Report_final

¹⁴⁰ Project Documentation: Tanzania Outcome Logframe.

¹⁴¹ Outcome Harvesting Session, February 2025.

¹⁴² KII 21.

¹⁴³ Project Documentation: IPIS - Activity Report.

An unexpected outcome has emerged from the programme's activities in relation to the monitoring of the Williamson mine's grievance mechanism. Rather than strictly adhering to established, formalised frameworks for IGM assessment, IPIS and partners developed a user-centric approach. This involved systematically surveying complainants at multiple stages of the grievance process to gauge their direct experiences regarding accessibility, perceived fairness, and effectiveness. This iterative, participatory methodology was well-received by the community and its novelty has since led to it being cited as an informative case study in wider policy discussions, highlighting the value of practical, user-focused monitoring.¹⁴⁴

Measuring Impact

The programme staff and partners have several means of measuring impact including observing engagement in multi-stakeholder forums, receiving activity reports from partners, reading the quarterly briefings produced by partners and annual steering committee meetings, among other informal mechanisms.¹⁴⁵ In addition, while formal scoping studies are not repeated in their entirety, partners like BHRT maintain ongoing context assessment. For example, when launching new activities or expanding geographically, they conduct check-ins with key stakeholders (e.g., via phone) to update their understanding of the current context, identify changes, and ascertain current priorities. This adaptive approach to context analysis helps inform their empowerment and education activities and serves a similar function to baseline updates for understanding shifts over time, though it was unclear during the MTE when more formal updates to the initial comprehensive scoping findings would be consolidated for impact assessment purposes.¹⁴⁶ The programme's indicators are generally considered appropriate and fit for purpose. However, indicators, indicator 1 under the Tanzania outcome remain too vague and difficult to measure.¹⁴⁷ The indicator states:

"Number of CSOs (national, regional and local) with established systems and procedures for fostering the inclusion of voices from communities affected by natural resource extraction in policymaking, rule of law and dialogues with government and corporate actors" - Indicator 1, Logframe

There is a need for clarity on what is meant by *"established systems and procedures"* as it remains unclear, and begs questions about how rigorous these systems should be. Moreover, the indicator attempts to capture both the presence of systems and the effectiveness of these systems in including local voices. However, one is about output (setting up systems), and the other is about outcomes (genuine inclusion), as a result it's unclear how this indicator would be measured.

On a separate note, one of the programme partners discussed one of the challenges in meeting the gender quotas which are included in the targets – 50 per cent women/ 50 per cent men participation.¹⁴⁸ According to the respondent, this target is not feasible. It fails to take into account the entrenched gender norms in targeted areas of the programme which limit women's participation in activities outside of the domestic sphere. In these areas it is mainly men who are involved in civil society and legal aid, which makes it difficult for the programme to reach its targets.¹⁴⁹

3.3.5. Lessons learned, best practices and cross-cutting considerations

This section covers mid-term learnings and best practices that have emerged from implementations. This is followed by an exploration of the extent to which the programme's impact will continue after the programme ends.

¹⁴⁴ KII 22.

¹⁴⁵ KII 21; KII 26

¹⁴⁶ KII 21;KII 22.

¹⁴⁷ Project Documentation: Logframe

¹⁴⁸ KII 21

¹⁴⁹ KII 21.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices

Several lessons learned and best practices were captured by this evaluation. They cover topics such as the programme's ambitions, approaches to sustainability, and gender. They are explained in more detail below:

Thorough needs assessment is crucial: The decision to prioritise the Mara and Shinyanga region based on the findings of the scoping studies shows the importance of such studies at the beginning of the project. The realisation that two regions had much higher needs than originally anticipated is a key learning point. A more detailed and nuanced assessment of regional disparities and challenges could potentially have been done earlier, which may have informed the project at the design phase. The lesson to take away is that early, detailed information about regional needs can help mitigate risk and avoid over-promising and under-delivering. It is important to note, however, that the programme's ability to fully operationalise activities based on initial scoping was also influenced by external factors, including commencing with a lower budget than originally applied for and subsequent delays in fund disbursement, which impacted the timeline for partner engagement and activity rollout.

Flexibility and real-time adjustment: The programme demonstrated its ability to adjust to the findings of the scoping study to focus on the regions in most need. The practice of adjusting focus and scaling back to prioritise the two high-need regions in the first two years is a strong example of adaptive management. In addition, the programme is already anticipating the adaptations that will need to occur for the election period later this year. This adaptive approach should be captured as a best practice of the programme.

Gender considerations must be actively addressed in design and implementation:

The scoping study highlighted entrenched gender norms and challenges faced by women in natural resource extraction, and the programme has proactively implemented several gender-responsive strategies to address these. For instance, efforts were made to ensure strong female representation in data collection, with a 50/50 target for female surveyors who were specifically tasked with focusing on gender-sensitive aspects like Gender-Based Violence (GBV), discrimination, and grievance handling. Similarly, in organising panel discussions at national and international fora (e.g., with the University of Brussels in Arusha and at the UN Business & Human Rights Forum in Geneva), the programme aimed for at least 50/50 female representation and provided dedicated preparation to enhance participants' confidence in public speaking. Furthermore, 'women's inclusion in extractives' was designated the focal theme for the 2024/2025 'Voices from Tanzania' research series, and the 2024 Voices training included a dedicated session on studying gender challenges in the extractive sector.

Despite these specific actions and a clear commitment to gender equality, fully overcoming deep-seated barriers to ensure consistently equitable participation across all activities proved challenging. For instance, achieving the ambitious 50/50 male-to-female overall participation target often remained difficult without an even more comprehensive, adaptive strategy to systematically dismantle all specific barriers within every activity. This experience underscores the ongoing need for continuously refining gender-responsive strategies that go beyond numerical targets to actively attempt to dismantle the practical and structural obstacles women face. This includes targeted outreach, adapting interventions, and ensuring women from target communities have avenues to influence activity design and feedback mechanisms, and continuing to foster women's leadership within partner organisations and programme governance structures. A significant challenge also lies in securing the financial and operational means required to comprehensively mitigate all deep-seated practical and structural obstacles women face (e.g., providing transport or childcare support to enable participation). For instance, while the programme's steering committee has strong female representation from the project partners, further thought could be given to how women beneficiaries themselves can more directly shape the design and adaptation of activities that affect them, perhaps through more structured consultation or participatory design processes when planning new

interventions. Addressing gender dynamics from the outset and throughout the programme remains crucial to ensuring meaningful participation and impact.

Support for practical application of learned skills is essential for sustainability: During the programme, it became clear that while participants received valuable training, some required additional support to effectively apply this theory into practice. This practice of building-in support for trainees in the aftermath of training is integrated into some aspects of the programme, for example the Voices programme (see sustainability section below for more information). This lesson underscores the importance of providing continuous, hands-on support and follow-up training to ensure that the skills and knowledge acquired during the programme are not only understood but are also applied effectively, leading to sustainable impact. Offering opportunities for ongoing learning and practical application is key to ensuring that the programme's outcomes are enduring and transformative.

Sustainability

The programme has integrated sustainability considerations into the design and implementation of the programme. These are discussed below alongside the potential challenges to sustainability.

IPIS has taken several measures to strengthen the sustainability of the programme's impact. These include the decision to prioritise activities in the two regions of Shinyanga and Mara, ensuring that their efforts were sustained over a longer period of time in the areas of most need;¹⁵⁰ a focus on upskilling and increasing capacity of existing CSOs entrenched in the targeted communities; and the efforts to help partners and local CSOs build networks with different stakeholders at local, national and international level. It's clear that sustainability was a critical consideration in the programme's design and implementation.

The programme puts a strong emphasis on working with local partners, and local CSOs to build capacity and increase awareness and knowledge. This is central to the Tanzania outcome. Their activities with civil society and communities have had different levels of sustainability built into their structure. For instance, the Voices activities involve a sustained engagement of approximately one year, encompassing initial training, a period of mentored research by participants leading to the final publication of their findings, with ongoing contact with IPIS researchers and Tanzanian focal persons throughout the process. This model was recognised by respondents as producing sustainable impacts.¹⁵¹ The success of this activity is now planned to be integrated into the PLE programme to overcome obstacles in implementing learnings.¹⁵²

Other aspects of the programme including the Kufuatilia system, were considered sustainable by those using it, this was because as a documentation tool it only required a smartphone.¹⁵³ However, one respondent did highlight that while data collection and monitoring are crucial, simply gathering data is not enough and that something meaningful needs to be done with the information to make it truly effective.¹⁵⁴ This raises a challenge for sustainability: while the tools for documentation might remain in place, ensuring that the data is actively used, analysed, and leads to informed action often requires continued support. Indeed, as programme staff noted, civil society partners will likely always require resources to adequately follow-up on all reported incidents and provide comprehensive support to those affected. Yet, the programme contributes to long-term sustainability by building crucial local capacities: the skills in monitoring and advocacy, established modus operandi for rights-based work, and strengthened networks developed through the programme are enduring assets. Moreover, the increased visibility and credibility gained by partners through their engagement can, in turn, enhance their ability to attract further resources independently. The key to long-term

¹⁵⁰ KII 22.

¹⁵¹ KII 22; KII 47; KII 21

¹⁵² KII 22

¹⁵³ KII 23

¹⁵⁴ KII 27

impact, therefore, lies in both ensuring systems are in place for data to drive meaningful change and in fostering the resilient local capacity that can sustain these efforts, even if direct incident follow-up remains partly dependent on future resource availability.

3.3.6. Country Recommendations

The following section provides recommendations for the rest of the programme life cycle and any future iterations of the programme.

Recommendation One: Revise the second assumption in the ToC to better reflect the challenges surrounding civic participation in natural resource governance, particularly with regard to strategic litigation, in light of the current political climate. As highlighted by respondents, it appears unlikely that strategic litigation will be feasible under the current political conditions, which are expected to intensify during Tanzania's election year. Therefore, it is recommended that this activity be either revised or removed at this mid-term stage to ensure the program remains aligned with the evolving context.

Recommendation Two: Strengthen gender integration in programme design, implementation, and evaluation. There are both immediate and future recommendations which IPIS and partners could do to enhance the gender-sensitivity of their programme. These are as follows:

Integrate gender considerations when revisiting scoping studies: Respondents mention the intention of repeating scoping studies to measure programme impact, providing an opportunity to integrate gender considerations to better understand the differentiated experiences, roles, and barriers faced by women and marginalized groups in natural resource governance. This gender-informed scoping should guide programme adaptation and ensure activities respond to real, context-specific challenges. For further information see: Gender, Inclusion, Power and Politics (GIPP) Analysis Toolkit by Evidence, Collaboration, for Inclusive Development (ECID).¹⁵⁵

Introduce gender-sensitive approaches in training and capacity building activities: This can include inclusive content that reflects the distinct roles and rights of women and men in resource governance; gender-sensitive facilitation including adjusting time and locations to encourage women's engagement; and create opportunities for women to safely express views, share experiences, and contribute meaningfully.

Develop gender-sensitive indicators for the endline evaluation instead of the 50-50 women's quota in place. These can assess the extent to which women can participate meaningfully, beyond just representation. For further information see: OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker.¹⁵⁶

For future iterations of the programme, consider conducting a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis at inception phase. This will help identify intersecting barriers faced by women, youth, people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups, and promote the integration of these insights into the ToC, activity design, and stakeholder engagement strategies.

Recommendation Three: Strengthen post-training support to enhance practical application of PLE. The programme could integrate more robust follow-up mechanisms to support trainees in applying their knowledge within their communities. While the initial training provides foundational legal awareness, ongoing support is critical to ensure that theory is translated into practice. This additional support could include a structured follow-up system including regular check-ins, peer learning groups, and mentoring to monitor progress, troubleshoot challenges, and reinforce learning. Practical

¹⁵⁵ ECID (2021). Gender, Inclusion, Power and Politics (GIPP) Analysis Toolkit. Available at: link.

¹⁵⁶ OECD (2024). OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker. Available at: link.

resources (e.g. toolkits, guides, or legal fact sheets) could also be beneficial to equip trainees with the tools needed to confidently deliver legal services.

Recommendation Four: Assess the practical benefits of translating targeted Kufuatilia tools into local vernacular languages (beyond Swahili) . Such an assessment should weigh the potential gains in user efficiency and accuracy against the associated costs and technical effort, focusing on materials most critical for effective system use by these specific personnel. This will improve community-level engagement, increase the quality and quantity of documentation, and ensure the tool serves its intended purpose of supporting rights-based monitoring and reporting.

Recommendation Five: Continue and broaden regular political context reflections to include a wider range of local CSO partners. While IPIS and its core project partners already engage in regular check-ups (e.g., monthly project meetings) where context is discussed, the programme should ensure these, or dedicated sessions, systematically incorporate a wider range of local CSO partners for collective reflection on the evolving political environment, civic space sensitivities, associated risks, and adaptive strategies. Building on planned initiatives, such as dedicated strategy sessions with diverse CSOs on engagement in the extractive sector, will help ensure broad-based responsiveness to the evolving context and maintain the relevance and safety of all programme activities and partnerships in Tanzania.

3.4. Democratic Republic of Congo Outcome

This section on the DRC Outcome should be read with the limitations of the evaluation in mind, as ongoing security challenges in the DRC limited the scope. In collaboration with IPIS it was decided that the evaluation of this outcome would focus on Results 1 (related to Kufuatilia, but limited to Lualaba and Ituri), 2 (related to training of SAEMAPE agents and representatives of artisanal mining cooperatives in Maniema) and 3 (related to research on conflict dynamics surrounding the mining sector).

3.4.1. Relevance

This section examines how the programme's objectives and design have addressed the needs of the targeted stakeholders in the mining sector in DRC. This includes the programme's alignment with key priorities at the national and local levels.

Overall, the programmatic approaches for this outcome are contextually-relevant and address key priorities at the national and local levels. Partner CSOs perceive the Kufuatilia approach to be relevant, aligned with, and supportive of their work. The participatory process through which partners have been able to directly shape the evolution of Kufuatilia up to its current form as a network, is a key factor of its relevance. Indeed all partners interviewed as part of the MTE reported that they are involved in the design and improvement of project interventions and objectives to ensure alignment with existing needs and feel like their suggestions are valued and directly influence decision-making regarding Kufuatilia, including for example the shift of platforms and the creation of the network.¹⁵⁷ In particular, the Kufuatilia model is perceived by partners as being highly relevant to the work they were already doing and contributing to advancing their goals. It is also reported to present an added value to other existing networks – a partner highlighted that the Kufuatilia model promotes constant contact and collaboration between members of the network.¹⁵⁸ Indeed, the new Kufuatilia approach (creation of a network with a focus on fostering close collaboration between current members) is particularly relevant to improve efficiency of partners' efforts by enabling greater coordination and collaboration including through resources and experience sharing (see more under Impact), which also ultimately contributes to improving reporting and follow-up of incidents. This approach is welcomed by partners

¹⁵⁷ KIIs 38; KII 39; KII 40; KII 41.

¹⁵⁸ KII 38.

as providing them with a new improved way of working and ultimately improved their ownership of the approach. As highlighted by a partner, “Kufuatilia arrived at the right time. There was an urgent need to revitalize the sector.”¹⁵⁹

The training approach under Result Two was also considered to directly address some of the most pressing issues and gaps regarding the governance of the artisanal mining sector. Training participants highlighted that the intervention was an innovative initiative, which had never been implemented in the Maniema province before.¹⁶⁰ A respondent explained that in the context of the Province, whose economy is driven by artisanal mining and where state services, miners and security services, and affected communities coexist, “capacity building and support for the parties involved is more than necessary to ensure that activities are carried out in compliance with the law, human rights, the environment, and local development. Hence the relevance of the Project.”¹⁶¹ The training was able to address gaps both at the level of supervision of cooperatives (lack of training of SAEMAPE agents) and at the level of those cooperatives themselves (lack of formalisation and management of those structures).¹⁶² However, some gaps were identified including the omission of key actors in the sectors who could have also benefited from the training, including military and security service personnel who operate in the mining areas.

3.4.2. Effectiveness

This section evaluates the effectiveness of project activities under Result One (related to Kufuatilia, but limited to Lualaba and Ituri), Result Two (related to training of SAEMAPE agents and representatives of artisanal mining cooperatives in Maniema) and Result Three to a lesser extent. It examines which approaches and interventions have been most effective, which have been less successful, and how they can be improved. Additionally, it explores the internal and external factors that have influenced the project’s activities.

Result 1: Congolese civil society organisations have strengthened capacity to monitor human rights abuses in local mining communities, and to advocate for mining sector governance reforms.

With the support of IPIS and the development of the new Kufuatilia platform, partner CSOs from the Kufuatilia network have improved capacity to monitor reported incidents in the mining sector, and are actively working to resolve them. However, partners face several recurrent challenges. Since 1st January 2024, partners have been using the new Kufuatilia platform (replacing ULULA) which continues to be improved and updated by IPIS to increase its ease of use. However, partners’ monitoring work is challenged by key issues including limited budget. Indeed, the budget allocated to partners is reported insufficient to cover costs related to reporting (incentives) and monitoring of incidents (transport and remuneration of personnel). For example, a partner reported that the remuneration of the focal points working on the project was not covered by the budget allocated by IPIS as they were choosing to spend it on activities given the small amount.¹⁶³ Other key challenges include limited phone coverage, poverty (which limits capacity to buy communication units to report incidents), insecurity (including presence of armed groups and security forces), size of territory covered by CSOs and limited access to certain areas, and the absence of structures like local and provincial monitoring committees (CLS and CPS) in some areas (eg. Irumu Territory) which created a challenge for partners to monitor incidents.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ KII 41.

¹⁶⁰ KIIs 42; KII 43.

¹⁶¹ KII 43.

¹⁶² KII 45.

¹⁶³ KII 41.

¹⁶⁴ Project documentation: Rapports de suivi des incidents 2023; KIIs.

Whilst partners have successfully implemented various activities of dissemination, the scope and number of these activities remain limited due to budget and security limitations. Partners have implemented dissemination activities including radio spots, awareness raising through meetings with local stakeholders (to present the reporting mechanism), distribution of flyers to community members, mass awareness-raising sessions,¹⁶⁵ but the scope and diversification of communication or awareness raising channels remains limited due to both insecurity and budgetary constraints. Indeed, partners highlighted that the limited budget allocated per partner (4000 USD in 2023, and increased to 6000 since 2024) is insufficient to cover all the costs related to dissemination activities (including transportation costs, production and broadcasting of radio programmes, organisation of workshops, and remuneration of facilitators). The budgetary constraints are also compounded by the large size of the territories covered by partners which require significant human and logistical resources to reach all areas. Partners therefore often only implement these activities in the more accessible areas and are forced to leave behind some areas.¹⁶⁶ Whilst some CSOs try to supplement IPIS' financial support through their own resources, this remains insufficient, and dependent on each partners' levels of resources. Therefore, whilst partners have a good understanding on initiatives needed to raise awareness on the system and to encourage communities to report incidents (including for example training for members of mining communities on issues like the protection of environment, the risks and dangers of using mercury, their rights, the mining code and regulations, etc; communication material including signs with instructions on the reporting system, use of media, popularisation of legal instruments), they are limited in their ability to implement them. This in turn limits the level of awareness on Kufuatilia and ownership of the system at the community level in the target territories, especially in the most remote areas where levels of incidents reporting remain low.

Overall, despite the aforementioned challenges, good communication and collaboration with IPIS, and between members of the network was highlighted as a key factor contributing to the effectiveness of project activities under this Result. In particular, CSOs consulted for this MTE highlighted the high level of responsiveness of IPIS, including to address issues on the platform or to provide support when requested by CSOs. The various meetings also contribute to Kufuatilia's effectiveness through providing opportunities to collectively fine tune approaches, set ambitions and directions, and share experiences.

*Result 2: A more sustainable and responsible governance of the artisanal and small-scale mining sector.*¹⁶⁷

After a mission was organised by SAEMAPE, CEGEMI et MALI in 2023 to identify training needs and target areas, the training was successfully delivered to SAEMAPE agents and to representatives of selected cooperatives. At the time of the MTE, evaluation missions to assess application of learning and the level of restitution were being planned by partners. However, several challenges limited the effectiveness of this activity. First of all, due to lack of availability of trainers, the training of trainers for SAEMAPE agents was delivered on two occasions with a gap of five months in between, which was reported to have negatively impacted the quality of the training.¹⁶⁸ In addition, partners highlighted limited ability to ensure that training is being reinstated within cooperatives due to limited financial and human resources to organise regular monitoring missions, provide continuous coaching and guidance to maximise application of learning, and provide refresher training sessions.¹⁶⁹ It was also mentioned that despite efforts to adapt training modules to the needs of the cooperatives, some modules were not entirely relevant to their needs, including for example the module on exploitation techniques which focused on scientific aspects rather than practical ones which would have been more adapted to the Içacooperatives, and the modules on diligences which was reported to not have been adequately

¹⁶⁵ Project documentation: Rapports de suivi des incidents 2023; KII 5.

¹⁶⁶ Project documentation: Rapports de suivi des incidents 2023.

¹⁶⁷ Note that due to the security situation, only partners of one training could be included in this evaluation.

¹⁶⁸ KII 43.

¹⁶⁹ KII 44.

localised to reflect on-the-ground realities (artisanal exploitation rather than industrial).¹⁷⁰ Nonetheless, a participant in the training consulted for the MTE highlighted that the training had been generally appreciated and that modules including on risks related to mining, on the administrative management of mining cooperatives, and on how to ensure respect for human rights in mining were found to be particularly relevant and valuable to the cooperatives.¹⁷¹

Result 3: Better holistic understanding of the conflict dynamics surrounding the mining sector

Delays in the approval of research outputs are hindering the effectiveness of activities under this result. After initial working sessions have been held with CSOs involved in qualitative research on the dynamics and causes of conflicts surrounding the artisanal mining sector, CSOs have been able to conduct a mapping of conflict in their respective provinces and research projects on various topics. This includes for example research on conflicts related to customary power and natural resources in the province of North Kivu (conducted by ASSODIP), and on gold mining in the Ngayo Group, in Mambasa territory, Ituri (conducted by RHA). Two new research projects on the current M23 crisis have also been established, for which data collection has been completed (one with ASSODIP, and one with ACADHOSHA in South-Kivu) in the period from October to December 2024. Preliminary data has been presented at an international IOB/UAntwerp seminar, and draft reports have been written.¹⁷²

However, the validation process for the research products encountered some challenges, including delays linked to internal issues within CEGEMI who was responsible for supervision of the research process, and to issues of quality of the research produced in one instance. This can indicate the need for closer guidance around data collection and report writing to maximise effective use of partners' resources and ensure that they are well equipped to produce quality research that can be used in a timely manner for advocacy purposes.

3.4.3. Coherence

This section explores how the programme and its outcome complements other initiatives in the country, and to what extent the programme has coordinated and leveraged the efforts of other stakeholders including government, NGOs and other international organisations.

Partner CSOs on Kufuatilia collaborate with local stakeholders as part of their efforts to monitor and resolve incidents. This includes other relevant CSOs, and NGOs, state services in charge of managing and controlling mining sites (SAEMAPE and Division des Mines), CLS and CPS, and mining cooperatives active in the target areas.¹⁷³ For example, CSOs' focal points participate in meetings with CLS and CPS, although these structures are not active in all locations where partners operate. Whilst ASSODIP (Masisi Territory) shares its monitoring report with the CPS and CLS, and was even able to directly engage with the president of the CLS for advocacy sessions and sharing of cases of identified violations, in Irumu Territory where CDJP operates, these structures are not in place.

Efforts were also made to ensure internal coherence and create links with other work undertaken by the partners. Partner CSOs strive to promote Kufuatilia as part of other initiatives, which demonstrates efforts to improve coherence. For example, a partner reported taking advantage of other project activities, including a programme with 11.11.11 to raise awareness amongst local stakeholders on Kufuatilia.¹⁷⁴ CEGEMI also explained that the project directly fuels other initiatives as for example, it uses Kufuatilia as a case study as part of an article developed under another project,

¹⁷⁰ KII 43.

¹⁷¹ KII 42.

¹⁷² Written comment. Project Staff. May 2025.

¹⁷³ Project documentation: Kufuatilia - Rapports de suivi des incidents - 2023.

¹⁷⁴ KII 38.

Driving Change, which explores the participation of mining operators in ethical supply chain initiatives.¹⁷⁵ This partner also explained that the project was also creating a bridge for CSOs to participate in other training courses they offer.

3.4.4. Impact

This section provides an assessment of the project's early contribution to the intended higher-level impacts.

The project contributed to increased commitment from CSOs and their increased capacity to monitor human rights abuses in local mining companies and to take action to resolve them.

Partners consulted in the MTE have explained that the project strengthens their role and enables them to better support the mining communities and to address issues that affect them. One partner in Ituri reported: "It helps us stay close to our communities, [...] it allows us to know their concerns and problems."¹⁷⁶ Successful resolution of conflicts and issues also serve as concrete evidence of the impact of the project on the security situation in mining communities. However, some contextual factors continue to hinder the work of CSOs as for example a partner explained that although they managed to reduce artisanal exploitation of cobalt in a residential neighbourhood, the issue could not be completely resolved due to political interests.¹⁷⁷ Another partner also reported facing similar issues where despite authorities' willingness to cooperate to address issues, their influence was sometimes limited when high-level political actors were involved.¹⁷⁸ This highlights the need for strategic advocacy at high-levels to raise awareness around political issues, although this would require careful risk assessments.

In addition, limited resources also constrain the work of partners to address issues. For example, a partner explained that beyond awareness raising on Kufuatalia and the resolution of individual incidents, more activities are needed including for example awareness raising of mining communities on the mining code and regulations, but that they are not able to do so due to a lack of resources.¹⁷⁹

Another key impact of the project is the rise of a collective way of working between CSOs, which also increases their legitimacy at the local level. The creation of the networks at the provincial levels is contributing to a sense of collective mission and identity between partners. At the provincial level, partners attend quarterly meetings to share their challenges, and identify priority incidents that require collective action. They are then able to intervene together to leverage the strength and expertise of various members and resolve issues. For example, in Lualaba, partners pulled resources together to organise a visit on a site, in collaboration with SAEMAPE and the Division des Mines to assess an issue related to mining too close to a metalco factory and to report the issue to authorities.¹⁸⁰

Overall, partners in both Lualaba and Ituri reported that the project enabled them to experiment working as a consortium, which has proved highly effective. Indeed, partners realised the added value of concerted reflection and action through the consortium, and also explained that working together enabled them to be stronger and have more weight and legitimacy and face less backlash risks, especially when exposing human rights violations.¹⁸¹ A partner in Lualaba also explained that beyond going as a network of CSOs from the province, they present themselves as a national network which

¹⁷⁵ KII 44.

¹⁷⁶ KII 41.

¹⁷⁷ KII 38.

¹⁷⁸ KII 39.

¹⁷⁹ KII 38.

¹⁸⁰ KII 39.

¹⁸¹ KIIs 38, 39, 40, 41.

they reported changes the dynamics of their interaction with authorities.¹⁸² However, the level of structuration and dynamism of the networks varies from one province to another. For example, the network in Ituri is particularly proactive as a lead has been appointed and they have already collectively identified strategic areas of enquiry and advocacy and are currently exploring the issue of environmental degradation (due to pollution by mercury and cyanide), the role of the national forest fund (FFN) and the to the use of funds levied on mining operators for environmental management and protection.¹⁸³ This can be explained by the fact that all CSOs are located in Bunia which facilitates coordination, whereas for example in North Kivu some partners are in Goma and others in Beni.¹⁸⁴ In addition, differences in the security situation can also explain disparities between provinces. This highlights the need for tailored support to various networks to identify gaps in needs and capacities and strategically address them.

Increased collaboration between CSOs also takes places beyond the provincial level as through the annual meeting and the WhatsApp group which includes all target CSOs, partners are able to share experiences and seek advice from each other.¹⁸⁵ For example, a CSO in Lualaba explained that they were solicited by another CSO from Uvira (that they met through Kufuatilia) to support their work under another project.¹⁸⁶

Partners have also gained a more holistic understanding of the mining sector. Partner CSOs explained that the project, and more specifically the data available in the platform, also improved their understanding of the situation across and beyond their province as they would previously have a little overview, limited to their own target areas.¹⁸⁷ For example, one partner explained that the platform enabled them to have an updated knowledge of the presence of armed groups and armed forces which helps the analysis they conduct internally on the political and security situation in the country.¹⁸⁸ This in turn, improves CSOs' ability to conduct evidence-based advocacy and provide more tangible data about priority issues to authorities.¹⁸⁹ For example, a partner reported: "Before, we couldn't properly channel our work. But now we have enough information that we can capitalise on and that we can even use for advocacy. We have access to well-classified data with the platform - we have a real database that we can exploit - we have all the elements we need at our disposal for when we approach decision-makers."¹⁹⁰

Increased awareness of Kufuatilia at the local level in mining communities is also another key impact of the project. In Ituri a partner explained that the monitoring work of the member CSOs had also become easier since local authorities started to get to know them and Kufuatilia.¹⁹¹ This partner also highlighted that there are an increasing number of incidents which are reported by community members as "people have understood that it is important to report malfunctions in the mining sector."¹⁹²

The pilot training provided under Result Two also contributed to improving SAEMAPE agents' capacity, although the scope of impacts are limited given the low numbers of agents trained. Key respondents highlighted that SAEMAPE agents are now better equipped to train and supervise mining cooperatives and more able to support miners and encourage them to work in accordance with human and environmental rights.¹⁹³ A key informant from a local cooperative reported that changes

¹⁸² KII 38.

¹⁸³ KII 40.

¹⁸⁴ KII 46.

¹⁸⁵ KII 39.

¹⁸⁶ KII 38.

¹⁸⁷ KIIs 38; KII 39.

¹⁸⁸ KII 41.

¹⁸⁹ KII 38; KII 41.

¹⁹⁰ KII 38.

¹⁹¹ KII 40.

¹⁹² KII 40.

¹⁹³ KII 43, 45.

were visible in the behaviour of SAEMAPE agents since their training, as they engage less in confrontations with miners.¹⁹⁴

However, the limited number of agents trained limits the scope of impact of the training. Although it was planned that these agents would reinstate the training and train other agents, key respondents highlighted that the scope of this restitution remained limited due to resource limitations. In particular, whilst restitutions can be organised at the level of main localities, those in more remote locations could not be targeted.¹⁹⁵ A key respondent highlighted that given the level of resources required to organise training, without incentives and support from IPIS there is a lack of willingness to do so.¹⁹⁶ Due to budget constraints, IPIS decided to set up this part of the program as a pilot project to evaluate the feasibility of this type of training programs (training of trainer), in only two mining zones, (one in Maniema, one in South Kivu, including a limited number of cooperatives), the experience gained during the pilot can be used for upscaling as part of a subsequent program.

A key impact of the programme to date is improved practices among trained cooperatives in Maniema, despite some limitations. Indeed, some positive changes were reported among trained cooperatives regarding respect of their obligations, including improved reporting on production statistics to be presented to relevant state services (activity reports). For example, a key respondent explained that before the training, cooperatives did not present their production statistics (especially in the gold sector) but that since the training the state service had been able to trace some quantities of gold that were not recorded before.¹⁹⁷ Another key respondent also highlighted that cooperatives were also taking action to improve their structure and management, including through appointing support staff such as accountants and through organising regular meetings.¹⁹⁸ In addition, a key respondent highlighted that members of cooperatives were now more aware of their rights and started to defend themselves against arbitrary arrests by security agents, which has in turn reportedly led to a reduction in such incidents.¹⁹⁹

However, the scope of impacts are also limited given the low numbers of representatives of cooperatives trained and the challenges in reintroducing the training (lack of resources and lack of time for miners to attend training).²⁰⁰ Whilst some cooperatives whose focal points were trained created a synergy to share experiences and facilitate restitution of the training, they are facing significant resource constraints. A representative of this synergy explained that after the training, the cooperatives organised training and awareness raising for other members of their cooperatives, albeit limited to some locations due to a lack of resources.²⁰¹

Another key change at the level of the mining cooperatives trained under the project is an increase in the participation of women. As a result of efforts by SAEMAPE during training to encourage cooperatives to include more women in the management of the cooperatives, anecdotal evidence suggests that more women are now performing administrative functions within the cooperatives. For example, a representative of the above-mentioned synergy of cooperatives explained that since the training a cooperative had appointed a female president, that another had appointed a female finance manager, and that generally, cooperatives had encouraged women to take part in decision-making.²⁰²

¹⁹⁴ KII 42.

¹⁹⁵ KIIs 43 and 45.

¹⁹⁶ KII 45.

¹⁹⁷ KII 45.

¹⁹⁸ KII 42.

¹⁹⁹ KII 43.

²⁰⁰ KII 43.

²⁰¹ KII 42.

²⁰² KII 43.

An unintended negative impact of the project is the creation and confusion and resentment among trained cooperatives due to a lack of communication on next steps and management of expectations. A representative of a group of cooperatives trained expressed concerns around the lack of updates from project staff on next steps after the training. The respondent explained that the project created expectations and hopes through the training and then “disappeared” which has been disheartening for CSOs.²⁰³ It was reported that the project staff encouraged them to develop business plans to receive technical material support (including mining equipment), but that they did not receive any more information on this since. As two evaluation missions will be undertaken in 2025 in 2026 by a SAEMAPE/CSO team to evaluate if lessons learnt have been and are in the process of being implemented, these should be an opportunity to clarify next steps with cooperatives.

3.4.5. Lessons learned, best practices and cross-cutting considerations

Given challenges faced by partners working on Kufuatilia, the decision to focus on a limited number of provinces (despite the high level of demand to expand the area of implementation) is a good practice to ensure that efforts are targeted on improving the current model, offer close support to partners and address issues before scaling up. Given budget restrictions and challenges, this decision could also be extended to reducing partners to ensure adequate levels of support and maximise the quality of impacts.

Discussing sustainability at this stage with partners is a good practice that can generate collective and creative strategic initiatives to ensure lasting impacts. Initiating discussions around sustainability is contributing to maximising ownership of the network and encouraging partners to reflect strategically on the future of the model, their ambitions for it and the gaps to implement it. Indeed, partners have explained starting to discuss sustainability at the occasion of the annual meeting which has given them food for thought.²⁰⁴ Key considerations for the future which are currently discussed include exploring fundraising options to implement activities such as awareness-raising (including contributions within the network and external fundraising from donors), increasing collaboration with other stakeholders, and starting advocacy activities to further leverage the work of the network.

Involving local authorities, including during the training and monitoring (under Result Two) as done by SAEMAPE is a good practice to increase local ownership of the project, and sustainability. This is especially strategic to increase their cooperation in supporting a more sustainable and responsible governance of the artisanal and small-scale mining sector.²⁰⁵

IPIS’ approach to engaging partners in the project design phase was also a good practice. Indeed, budget planning was based on partners’ suggestions, followed by negotiations to match restrictions, although reductions were forced due to causes mentioned previously.²⁰⁶

3.4.6. Country Recommendations

Recommendation One: Adopt outcome harvesting as an internal monitoring approach: Partner organisations (including from Kufuatilia) could be supported in harvesting outcomes and collecting stories of change, which could then be discussed collectively and documented. This would not only improve the measurement of project impact, but would also improve the capacity of partners

²⁰³ KII 42.

²⁰⁴ KII 41.

²⁰⁵ KII 45.

²⁰⁶ Written comment, Project Staff. May 2025.

(especially CSOs working in Kufuatilia) to provide evidence of their impacts and access external funds.

Recommendation Two: Regarding Kufuatilia, the programme should assess the feasibility of increasing the budget allocated to partners. Supporting partners with sufficient budget to cover reporting incentives, monitoring costs (transport, personnel), and dissemination activities would maximise project impacts and would also improve geographical coverage. An increase in financial support should also be accompanied by capacity-building on financial management and guidance on funds allocation to ensure effective use.

Recommendation Three: Regarding Kufuatilia, the programme could strengthen sustainability planning efforts. IPIS should continue discussions on sustainability with partners and support them in areas including: fundraising, partnerships, and advocacy strategies. In particular, capacity-building on advocacy could encourage partners to adequately exploit data and evidence from the platform beyond monitoring. A needs assessment should be conducted to identify specific capacity gaps and technical needs that can be addressed by IPIS or other strategic partners before the end of the project.

Recommendation Four: Regarding Kufuatilia, the programme should formalise the network and clarify its vision and mission (both at the provincial and national level). This would ensure stronger ownership of the project's objectives, increase the autonomy of the networks, reinforce collaboration and foster joint initiatives beyond the monitoring of incidents. IPIS could consider supporting a structuration of the networks to streamline decision-making and coordination efforts (support networks in appointing leadership, clarifying their objectives, and developing vision documents), and to operationalise working groups within the network, leveraging the unique spheres of expertise of partners.

Recommendation Five: The programme could explore synergies to maximise collective impacts of Kufuatilia. Exploring partnerships with relevant stakeholders could facilitate relationships between partners and authorities at the provincial level and increase their perceived legitimacy. In addition, IPIS could aim to support (or partner with stakeholders who can support) the revitalisation of CPS and CLS, as these are key structures at the local level and their absence limits the work of partners.

Recommendation Six: For training under Result Two, the project should improve the effectiveness by increasing the level of financial and human resources. This should include support to trained individuals to disseminate the training and document it; allocating sufficient financial and human resources to organise more regular monitoring missions, providing continuous coaching and guidance to maximise application of learning, and providing refresher training sessions, all of this (where feasible in the current context); and supporting initiatives like the newly created synergy of the mining cooperatives.

Recommendation Seven: The project should also improve management of expectations for training under Result Two. This would involve improving transparency and communication to project participants to avoid frustrations and unrealistic expectations, including on the project's objectives and its limitations. In particular, mining cooperatives should be immediately informed about next steps to address their concerns.

Recommendation Eight: The project should explore opportunities for scaling up training under results area three. This could include: 1) Expanding training to other relevant stakeholders, including to military and security service personnel who operate in the mining areas, to customary authorities and customary services who are based on the mining sites, and mining agents assigned to the mining sites. Joint training or other activities bringing these stakeholders together could also be explored to

promote greater mutual understanding and collaboration. 2) Increasing the number of representatives of cooperatives and SAEMAPE agents to maximise impacts, especially in light of the limited capacity of trainees to reconstitute the training.

3.5. Burundi

3.5.1. Relevance

This section examines how the programme's objectives and design have addressed the needs of the targeted stakeholders. This includes the programme's alignment with key priorities at the national and local levels. It also explores the relevance of the different activities implemented by each project partner. This includes the media activities and the forums of popular expression implemented by Search; the training of target groups on financial inclusion, support to the development of business plans, and allocation of grants, implemented by RIM; and awareness-raising sessions and forums on women's entrepreneurship and women's economic empowerment implemented by Dushirehamwe.

The project design was anchored in a strong local understanding of dynamics and informed by previous interventions, which ensured strong contextual relevance. Indeed, the project *Je na We mw'iterambere* was partly developed based on a combined report which served both as baseline study and as a mid-term evaluation of Tuyage project's²⁰⁷ component 3 ("Enabling Environment for Economic Empowerment of Women in Burundi"), and ultimately identified opportunities to build on learnings from Tuyage and to sustain and expand impact for participants.²⁰⁸ Therefore the project's key strategic approaches were directly designed to address gaps and lessons learned from Tuyage. These include the need to foster transparency in local government interests and concerns (which is now addressed through the Townhall sessions), to leverage the strengths of media organisations to build capacity and increase quality of programming (which the DGD project addresses through capacity-building of media professionals), and to increase support networks among project participants (which for example the "Women in Action" Forums aim to address), and improve access to seed-funding for women's economic initiatives (now addressed through partner RIM as part of the DGD project).

The project is also directly aligned with national priorities. The project's focus on women's economic empowerment directly supports current efforts by the government to promote inclusive development, as included for example in the Vision document "Burundi Emerging Country in 2040 and Developed in 2060" which includes a focus on gender-sensitivity and equity. Recent national initiatives such as the second edition of the National Forum of the Private Sector of Burundi organised under the theme "Public-private dialogue, lever of inclusive economic growth," and the Forum of Women Leaders which was held in Burundi in 2024 also demonstrate a positive shift towards greater inclusivity and gender equality, and highlight the relevance of the project in directly supporting this trend.

Project participants involved in the project and consulted for this evaluation unanimously reported that the themes addressed by the project are relevant to the context of the target communities. Participants reported that activity models including radio programmes, training, Women in Action Forums and Townhall sessions were all relevant for promoting women's socio-economic participation. For example, members of the listening groups explained that the radio programmes produced and broadcasted by the project were particularly relevant to address issues related to gender norms through raising awareness and showcasing alternative narratives, and to "open eyes" and initiate changes in beliefs and perceptions of women's roles.²⁰⁹ Media professionals

²⁰⁷ USAID-funded project called "Tuyage (Let's Talk): Information Access and Economic Discourse Strengthening."

²⁰⁸ Project documentation: Combined Report: Tuyage and United for Peace Conflict Scan and Mid-Term Progress Report. August 2022.

²⁰⁹ FGDs 1; FGD 2.

trained under the project also unanimously highlighted the relevance of the training and coaching to improve the role they can play in advocating for greater participation of women at different levels.²¹⁰

Participatory approaches across project activities also contributed to the project's relevance.

For example, it was explained that priority themes for various awareness-raising activities undertaken by Dushirehamwe (including around positive masculinity, and the role of women in decision making at different levels for example) were identified through consultations at the local levels, including FGDs, to identify the key challenges hindering the participation of women in economic activities.²¹¹ In addition, project participants supported by RIM were enabled to develop business plans based on income generating activities they chose themselves. Media professionals who participated in the project also reported that they had ample opportunities to express their needs and capacity gaps, including during the critical listening sessions. They explained that, for example, the training they received on fact-checking, script writing and on the choice of speakers emerged from their own recommendations.²¹²

The partnership approach, leveraging local partners' various spheres of influence and areas of expertise is also highly relevant to achieve the project's objectives.

The strategic combination of work within communities on the ground, at a high-level (advocacy) and with the media, are contributing to addressing barriers to women's participants from various angles, thus maximising impacts and the project's potential for sustainability.

Ultimately, the programmes' approach (focused on the socio-economic empowerment of women) is highly relevant to promoting social cohesion in the current context of Burundi.

As further highlighted in the Impact section, the focus on socio-economic empowerment of women is fostering collaborative relationships at both the household and community levels and bringing individuals together for common economic objectives, across divides.

3.5.2. Effectiveness

It is important to note that the quantitative analysis for the Burundi outcome focuses on progress against the Result-level indicators. This approach was chosen for two primary reasons. Firstly, as outlined in the evaluation's terms of reference, it was acknowledged that the programme's routine monitoring data for this component had limitations. Secondly, the MTE's primary data collection was designed to robustly measure tangible changes at the participant level, which align directly with the Result-level indicators. The overarching Outcome-level indicators for Burundi are, by design, very high-level (e.g., assessing shifts in social norms or CSO initiatives across the country) and cannot be accurately measured by the specific primary data collection tools used in this MTE. Therefore, to ensure data quality and methodological rigour, progress towards the overall Outcome is assessed qualitatively in the Impact section (3.5.4), which synthesises findings from all data sources, rather than being presented quantitatively in the table in Annex 4.5.

Overall, the project was highly effective in achieving expected results and objectives at mid-term, despite facing significant contextual challenges.

The MTE identified that the midterm targets were achieved for five indicators out of six indicators measured. Only one mid-term target was not achieved (Ind 1.1 related to the capacity of media professionals in producing content supporting the transformation of discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women) but significant progress was still achieved from baseline [Table 7 Annex 4.5](#).

Quantitative data collected shows that for most indicators mid-term targets were exceeded and endline targets are already met. Although the project had passed its midpoint at the time of the MTE

²¹⁰ FGD 7.

²¹¹ KII 31.

²¹² FGD 7.

which can partly explain this overachievement, as qualitative data provides more nuance regarding the effectiveness of project activities it highlights some limitations in the way indicators capture impacts. Analysis of the project's logframe has identified some key challenges, including inadequate lines of questioning to assess progress against some indicators. For example, for indicator 2.1: "per cent targeted women who believe they can make a positive difference in the economic empowerment of women in their community," the associated evaluation question is "Does your business activity contribute to increased investment and economic profitability in your household?", which does not appear to be related to the community sphere mentioned in the indicator, nor to the notion of influence or capacity of being a change agent. However, respondent bias could potentially be a factor explaining overachievement given the high level of expectations expressed by project participants during the MTE (especially around hopes for financial support). To see the progress made against indicators please see [Table 7 Annex 4.5](#).

Result 1: Social norms limiting the socio-economic participation of women – particularly young women – are changing positively and cultural barriers are diminishing.

Media activities, including Search media productions and joint media programmes with local radio partners are particularly effective to initiate attitudinal and behaviour changes in target communities. Indicator 1.2 examines the percentage of listeners of media programs produced within the framework of the project who demonstrate their support for the inclusion of women in the economy and for gender equality, compared to non-listeners. In the midterm, 95.5 per cent of female listeners and 94.9 per cent of male listeners reported their support for the inclusion of women in the economy. This result is significant since the baseline was 90 per cent for female listeners and 40 per cent for male listeners, with male listeners showing an improvement of around 65 per cent. This exceeded the midterm target.

Qualitative data highlight that the approach of producing radio programmes presenting women role models was particularly effective to raise awareness on the wide range of women's experiences and abilities and inspire other women to take action. For example, a member of the listening group in Muyinga shared that a specific radio programme presenting an association of women fishermen in Rumonge and also presenting another woman who built a house by selling meat directly encouraged her to engage in an income generating activity.²¹³ This experience sharing approach was also particularly effective in convincing men of the roles that women can play beyond domestic chores as reported by some male respondents in FGDs.

In addition, training and coaching of media professionals (journalists) has been highly effective to promote gender sensitive journalism. Although the midterm target for indicator 1.1 was not achieved (percentage of media professionals targeted by the project who have improved their skills in producing content supporting the transformation of discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women), significant progress was made. More exactly, 75 per cent of respondents to the survey reported that thanks to the "Je na We Mw'Iterambere" project in the last 3 months, they have produced content that supports the transformation of discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women, and 12.5 per cent responded that they were not able to.

Media professionals continue to face obstacles in production of content that supports the transformation of discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women. The main challenge, reported by 11 out of 16 respondents (68.75 per cent), is the fear of women to express themselves on radio which highlights the pervasiveness of socio-cultural norms that prevent women from feeling free and safe to share their voice. Respondents explained that this was associated with a fear of backlash from partners and communities. Whilst media professionals reported that the project had equipped them with techniques to approach communities and foster a trust climate to encourage women to

²¹³ FGD 2.

participate in the radio programmes and feel safe in expressing themselves, this sometimes remains insufficient. Another key challenge raised by media professionals is related to reaching women in remote locations due to logistical constraints and the lack of resources to travel to some areas.

In addition, media professionals consulted through this MTE identified a number of remaining capacity-building needs including training on audiovisual editing techniques, mobile journalism (including on how to take pictures and use social media to share quality info in real time), investigative journalism techniques, as well as training on specific issues concerning women, including women's role in politics, and the environment as they expressed interest in producing more programmes on the role of women in the protection of the environment.²¹⁴

The project also successfully fosters greater collaboration between civil society and media stakeholders. Indicator 1.3 demonstrates the percentage of targeted CSO members who report regularly interacting with the media to transform discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women. In the midterm, 51.9 per cent of female CSO members and 40 per cent of male members stated that they regularly interact with the media to challenge and transform discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women. Both male and female target CSO members demonstrated significant enhancements compared to the baseline, with males at 5 per cent and females at 15 per cent. This also surpassed the midterm target. Reports from networking sessions also highlight that women feel more comfortable talking to journalists and expressing their views through media, including sharing their economic achievements.²¹⁵

Result 2: The potential for economic empowerment of women – particularly young women – is strengthened in target communities.

Significant progress was achieved under this Result, demonstrating the effectiveness of the combination of Dushirehamwe and RIM interventions. Indicator 2.1 examines the percentage of targeted women who believe they can make a positive difference in the economic empowerment of women in their community. At the midterm, 99.3 per cent of survey participants reported that they believe they can make a positive difference in the economic empowerment of women in their community. This result exceeded the midterm target (70 per cent) and showed significant improvement compared to the baseline figure of 55 per cent.

Indicator 2.2 demonstrates the percentage of women and young girl “entrepreneurs” supported by the project who have significantly higher incomes or savings at the end of the project. 93.2 per cent of respondents indicated that they currently have higher incomes or savings compared to before participating in the program. This result surpassed the midterm target and showed significant achievement compared to the baseline figure of 45 per cent.

‘Women in Action’ Forums successfully contribute to fostering greater collaboration, experience sharing and mutual support between women and other stakeholders (including local authorities and micro-finance institutions) at the community and provincial levels. Indicator 2.3 looks at the percentage of women and young girl entrepreneurs targeted by the project who report having a better support network to increase their autonomy following their participation in the project. Overall, 97.3 per cent of women and young girl entrepreneurs reported having a better support network. This is a considerable improvement compared to the baseline of 10 per cent, and it also exceeded the midterm target of 75 per cent. Qualitative data also supports this result as participants in women in action forums reported that these forums provide an opportunity to create support and mentoring networks between women (see more under the Impact section of this

²¹⁴ Media professionals survey, FGD 7.

²¹⁵ Provided documentation: Networking session reports.

report).²¹⁶ At the time of the MTE it was reported that as a result of forums and restitution sessions organised in the cooperatives by the representatives who participate in the forums, 32 new collective entrepreneurial activities were initiated (at the cooperative level) and 18 new individual activities were initiated.²¹⁷

Despite some successes, the effectiveness of activities supporting economic projects (training target groups on financial inclusion and developing business plans, monitoring of the development of business plans and provision of grants to the best projects) is hindered by budgetary constraints and limited capacity to monitor groups' projects. Target groups were successfully trained on topics covering Microbusiness game, Business planning, Savings and credit and Investing and supported in developing business plans. Whilst the approach of local coaches to monitor the development of the business plans was highly relevant to ensure close support, it would have been beneficial to ensure continuous coaching to monitor implementation of those plans and to support groups in connecting with micro-finance institutions and accessing financial services. However, it was explained that this could not be done due to a lack of budget.²¹⁸ It was also reported that the partner's ability to monitor the progress of the implementation of business plans developed (those not awarded the grant) would be highly limited due to the same financial limitations and issues related to transport. In this context, the likelihood that the target groups will be able to implement those plans is highly uncertain, especially given the concerns explained by the project participants regarding the lack of material and financial resources to achieve their objectives as set out in their business plans.²¹⁹

General considerations around effectiveness

Key external challenges are affecting the overall effectiveness of programme activities. Fuel shortage and inflation of all costs are the biggest challenges negatively impacting the implementation of activities despite project staff's efforts to adapt, as it creates delays, forces changes in the scope of activities and limits the ability of project staff to organise monitoring missions. In order to adapt to these factors, partners have had to increase the allocation of travel expenses for project beneficiaries, which had repercussions on activities. For example, it was reported that the number of participants to some activities had to be reduced, and it was also raised that RIM had to shorten the length of training sessions due to an increase in costs related to accommodation and transport of participants.²²⁰ These challenges also hinder the level of inclusivity of the project as it sometimes limits the participation of community members in remote areas (for whom the reimbursement of transport costs remains largely insufficient to participate).²²¹

Other key challenges which specifically apply to the media component of the project include high mobility of journalists due the precariousness of the media sector, climate hazards (as a contract with a radio had to be interrupted after it was submerged by the rise of lake waters), and a lack of partner radios' capacity to monitor audiences and the number of listeners which limits understanding of the project's reach. In addition, another monitoring issue has been raised which is due limited capacity of Dushirehamwe's local focal points to conduct quality monitoring and reporting of local activities (including awareness-raising) due to a lack of incentives, lack of access to phones with cameras to document activities and no access to android phones or laptops to type reports which means they have to send pictures of their handwritten reports.²²² This highlights the need for capacity-building of partners and affiliated staff to ensure adequate documentation of project's achievements and to further support local monitoring capacities.

²¹⁶ FGD 4.

²¹⁷ KII 31.

²¹⁸ KII 33.

²¹⁹ FGDs.

²²⁰ KII 33.

²²¹ KII 31, FGDs.

²²² KIIs 31, 34.

Participation, Inclusion, and Adherence to the Protection and Participation Policy

The mid-term evaluation revealed that around 98 per cent of project participants reported that the project was participatory and inclusive and effectively reflected their opinions. In addition, most participants indicated that they felt safe²²³ when they participated in the project. The same trend was observed across different sex and disability status groups.

According to the survey, 74.4 per cent of participants were aware of how to report harmful or concerning incidents they faced while participating in the project. For the 25.6 per cent who were unaware, information was provided to enable them to report any concerns.

3.5.3. Coherence

Significant efforts are made by the project to build synergies with stakeholders at the local level including local authorities, local leaders, microfinance institutions and local media.

Several of the project's activities including various forums are specifically designed to leverage the roles of all those stakeholders in promoting and supporting women's participation in economic development at the community level. This ultimately contributes to building a strong ownership of the project's objectives at the local level.

Through its advocacy component, the project also created strong synergies with other stakeholders. In 2023 and 2024, Search benefited from an Enabel Junior Expert on 'advocacy and communication' who contributed to developing a strategic advocacy plan around three key thematic areas: 1) School attendance of girls in primary and secondary education; 2) Women's rights to inherit land; and 3) Female representation in politics (especially in high-level decision-making positions). In order to implement this plan, a Think Tank composed of more than 30 members including international organisations, and national stakeholders was created. Through 2024, the Think Tank focused its efforts on the first theme of this plan, which ultimately culminated in a workshop organised in November 2024 with experts which led to the development of a strategic note which was presented at the occasion of a forum in December 2024. Following a consultation with the Minister of Education, these advocacy efforts resulted in an agreement to integrate a paragraph into the new law on education which is currently amended, although this has not been done yet. As a commission of six members of the Think Tank are in charge of following-up on this aspect of the advocacy, the rest of the Think Tank is now shifting its efforts towards a new theme, on inheritance. This component of the project is a key success which demonstrates the extent of the project's efforts to leverage the influence and expertise of other stakeholders.

However, the MTE identified missed opportunities to build synergies with other international organisations intervening in the target localities. For example, it was mentioned that a women's cooperative supported by the project and engaged in agriculture had been approached by World Vision and received material.²²⁴ This crossover of activities shows opportunities for collaboration to achieve greater collective impact.

3.5.4. Impact

This section provides an assessment of the project's early contribution to the intended higher-level impacts.

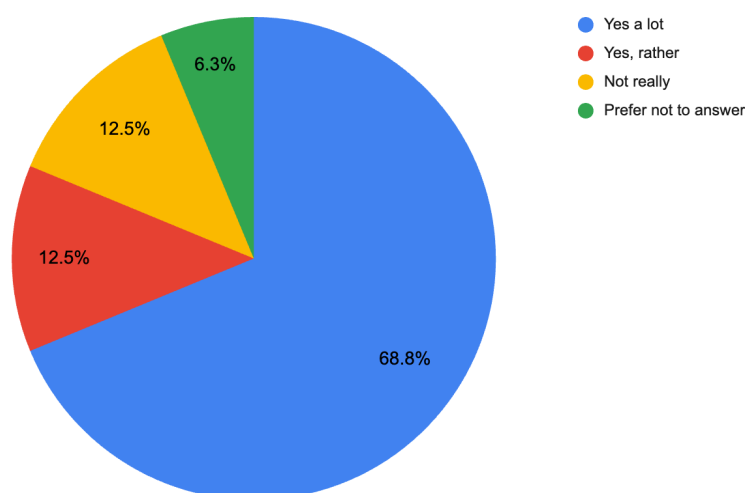
²²³ Feel Safe Scale: 5 (very safe) to 1 (not at all safe). Overall = 4.2, Male = 4.3, Female = 4.2, No Disability = 4.2 and Disability = 4.2

²²⁴ KII 34.

Result 1: Social norms limiting the socio-economic participation of women – particularly young women – are changing positively and cultural barriers are diminishing.

A key impact of the project is the increased capacity and motivation of media professionals in engaging in gender-sensitive and economic reporting. As represented in Figure Three below, media professionals involved in the project have acquired greater confidence in covering issues related to gender norms and women’s economic empowerment. This impact is particularly significant as it can generate a number of secondary impacts linked to an increased visibility of women in the media landscape.

Figure 3: Following your participation in the “Je na We Mw’lterambere” project, do you feel more confident in covering economic issues on social norms and women’s economic empowerment?



Media professionals have been able to produce programmes covering issues related to women, using various formats. A few examples include a report and debate on women in politics and their impact on economic development, a portrait to present the contribution of women seed multipliers in the country's development, a report on the negative impacts of cohabitation or polygamy, as well as programmes on collaboration and joint work between spouses.²²⁵ The type of content produced illustrates a key change in the way issues related to women are covered in the media, shifting from a main focus on negative aspects and challenges (including gender-based violence) to the development of content showcasing women’s strengths and successes.

Beyond the production of such content, the media professionals’ rising commitment to gender-sensitive journalism is also visible through the development of new radio programmes to be integrated in the broadcast schedule of their media, and their efforts to reconstitute the content of training they received within their teams.²²⁶ In addition, a partner radio reported that the project had also raised awareness on gender equality within their staff and that the percentage of women journalists within the radio had now increased from 15 to 40 per cent.²²⁷ The project also contributed to increasing confidence among female journalists as the seven female journalists who participated in the online survey reported that they feel more confident in covering economic issues on social norms and women’s economic empowerment (five reported feeling a lot more confident and two reported feeling rather more confident).

²²⁵ Survey with media professionals.

²²⁶ FGD 7.

²²⁷ KII 36.

Positive changes in social norms, attitudes, and behaviours related to gender are also identified, although barriers to women’s economic participation persist. This includes changes in perceptions of the economic role women can play in their households and communities. The combination of media production, awareness raising activities, and the new economic initiatives started by women are contributing to gradually increasing communities’ acceptance of economically active women. This was reflected in the quantitative survey with project participants. In terms of opinions regarding the inclusion of women in the economic life of the community and its relation to the development of the whole community, 89.8 per cent of male participants reported that it is very important, and 8.2 per cent stated that it is important. No one indicated that it is not important or the project had a detrimental impact (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Opinion - Perceptions of the importance of the inclusion of women in the economic life of your community in relation to the development of the whole community

| Item | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| Very important or essential | 89.8% |
| Important or essential | 8.2% |
| Moderately important or essential | 2.0% |
| Not at all important or essential | 0% |
| The project had a detrimental effect on these initiatives | 0% |

Men consulted in focus group discussions for this MTE also directly reported the project’s impact on their behaviours. For example, a member of a listening group in Muyinga reported: “It helped me learn how to behave at home, that I should let my wife do certain activities and participate in associations.”²²⁸ Several women across focus groups also reported that their husbands were now trusting them to do their own activities.²²⁹ Beyond direct project participants, positive feedback from listeners after the broadcasting of the radio programmes produced under the project also provide evidence of a growing support for women’s participation in economic activities.²³⁰

There is also an evolution from the traditional roles in the domestic sphere and increasing collaboration between husbands and wives in economic initiatives and the sharing of household chores. For example, it is reported that among participants of listeners' clubs who engage in farming, harvests are now increasingly managed collaboratively between spouses and women in these households are also increasingly involved in household financial decisions.²³¹ Participants also reported that more women are now entering professions previously reserved for men, including welding, masonry and butchery.²³²

These changes are also linked to a more general change in the way women are recognised and included in decision-making at the household and community level. Women consulted for the MTE explained that they noticed that their voice was now more valued in meetings in the community or in various groups.²³³ This is directly linked to changes in the perception of women’s capacities, including thanks to various forums and media productions which contribute to both challenging gender stereotypes and increasing the visibility of women in the public space.

²²⁸ FGD 2.

²²⁹ FGDs 1-6.

²³⁰ Project documentation and KIIs 35, 36.

²³¹ Project documentation.

²³² FGD 5.

²³³ FGDs.

However, despite these positive indicators of change participants also highlighted remaining barriers to women's economic participation. Project participants surveyed for the MTE identified several key obstacles that limit the economic autonomy of women in their community. The most frequently mentioned obstacle, at 35.5 per cent, was limited access to financial resources or investment opportunities for women. This highlights the relevance of the project's efforts to connect women to MFIs but also shows that there is an opportunity to continue raising women's awareness on access to financial resources, and to work with MFIs to reach out to women in communities. This was followed by restrictive social norms regarding the role of women in society at 17.9 per cent, and lack of family support for women's entrepreneurial initiatives at 12.5 per cent. Participants in FGDs explained that husbands still sometimes prevent their wives from participating in economic activities (mainly husbands of women not directly involved in the project).²³⁴ They also explained that women could remain reluctant to show their capacities by fear of accusations of witchcraft and other superstitions.²³⁵ It was also highlighted that religion remained a barrier, which highlights the need for increased collaboration with religious leaders, including as part of the forums organised by Dushirehamwe.

The project also contributed to improved self-confidence in women, and increased freedom and capacity to make their own choices. For example, a participant in a listening group in Makamba reported: "Participating in discussions has helped me build my self-confidence. I've learned to speak better in public, to listen actively, and to respect the opinions of others."²³⁶ The project directly contributed to breaking down barriers and limiting beliefs around women's capacities, as explained by a participant in the Women in Action forum in Muyinga: "We opened stores. We previously thought it was impossible, but we realized that nothing is impossible, despite the challenges."²³⁷ Women are starting to realise their own potential and capacities and their ability to act independently from their husbands.²³⁸ For example a participant in the Women in Action Forum in Muyinga reported "Participation in the forum has changed the way women viewed themselves. They believed they had no value; that their role was to take care of housework and do farm activities. But now women are aware of who they are; they are the pillars of the family and of the household."²³⁹ Women have also found the courage to assert themselves and convince their partners to support their activities. For example, a participant in Muyinga reported: "After receiving the training, I sat down with my husband to explain the knowledge I had acquired and suggested that I start growing corn and beans."²⁴⁰

Increased self-confidence also contributes to increasing the leadership of both younger and older women at the local level - with female project participants reporting that the project had motivated them to act as role models and act to support other women in the community. Examples were identified of women supporting other women in their community to engage in income generating activities, or stepping in to support families by raising awareness of husbands on joint household resource management. For example, a member of the listening group in Muyinga (33 years old) reported: "I encouraged other women to understand that it's important to have your own money without having to wait every day for their husband to do everything in the household."²⁴¹

²³⁴ FGD 2.

²³⁵ FGDs.

²³⁶ FGD 1.

²³⁷ FGD 6.

²³⁸ FGDs 1-6.

²³⁹ FGD 6.

²⁴⁰ FGD 2.

²⁴¹ FGD 2.

Beyond increasing their recognition at the household and community levels (as highlighted previously), women also explained that a key impact of their economic empowerment is a sense of freedom and ability to buy things for themselves without having to ask their husbands.²⁴²

Increased collaboration between different stakeholders at the local level around economic issues is also a key change that can be attributed to activities bringing together a wide range of local stakeholders. Relationships between the different groups affected by the activities are strengthened (particularly between the media and economic actors). Women respondents in FGDs also reported that they felt supported and respected by local authorities and that activities like the townhall forums had increased visibility of the activities and that local authorities have been actively supporting them.²⁴³

Result 2: The potential for economic empowerment of women – particularly young women – is strengthened in target communities.

The project is contributing to increased economic autonomy for women participating in the project. The groups whose economic initiatives are supported are beginning to produce encouraging results as the associations/cooperatives have begun to market their first products and generate independent income.²⁴⁴ For women who were already economically active, their participation in the projects contributed to boosting their income thanks to changes they made after receiving training, including in terms of planning (setting clear objectives, establishing a business plan and monitoring progress), working collaboratively, and more confidently selling or promoting their activity. For example, a participant in Muyinga reported: “Before the project, I worked alone at home, but I understood that it is necessary to go and join forces with others to find out how to improve my basketwork and to find out about the market and updated prices. We now receive a lot of orders, and hence a high income. [...] In addition our group does a lot of advertising which implies a lot of orders and in the end a satisfactory profit.”²⁴⁵

Other project activities have also encouraged women to start or diversify their income generating activities (including livestock farming, agricultural processing, and trade) and to take action to access financial services. For example, following the Townhall sessions, women members of the listeners' clubs in the Makamba commune opened an account with the microfinance institution 'Hope Fund'. The listening groups and Women in Action forums have also been driving the development of a high number of initiatives by showing women the variety of activities they could carry out.²⁴⁶ These activities have also contributed to improving women's financial management skills as, for example, associative groups are learning to reinvest funds in their savings groups rather than sharing all profits at the end of the year and starting again from scratch. In addition, groups have also started opening accounts with micro-finance institutions as through exchanges they realised that they were putting their funds at risk by keeping them within their group.

The project is also improving social cohesion by fostering strong collaborative relationships at the community level. Activities such as townhall forums and Women in Action forums have contributed to creating networks of mutual support, resource sharing, and knowledge sharing, which contribute to strengthening social ties and improving social cohesion. Indeed, learning to work collectively and join forces was highlighted by respondents in all focus groups as a key takeaway from the project.²⁴⁷ In particular, communal forums are valuable spaces through which participants can connect with each other, share their experiences and identify opportunities for cooperation, especially

²⁴² FGDs.

²⁴³ FGDs 3, 4.

²⁴⁴ Project documentation and FGDs.

²⁴⁵ FGD 2.

²⁴⁶ KII 31.

²⁴⁷ FGDs.

between entrepreneurs. A participant in the forum Women in Action in Makamba reported: “The first thing this project has brought us is solidarity. For example, where I live, there are 37 of us, and I helped women join cooperatives. This was a great support to them: they would then explain to their husbands what they were learning, and little by little, the couples began to work together and help each other. Today, women actively contribute to the household's needs, even in their husbands' absence, because we are all involved in this dynamic.”²⁴⁸ Other examples were shared of project participants reporting that they had shared their knowledge with neighbours and acquaintances, and encouraged them to get involved in income generating activities, thus illustrating the development of a strong sense of solidarity at the community level. Listening groups also fostered improved cohesion between community members who have been able to develop collective economic initiatives and work collectively.²⁴⁹

The project is also contributing to reducing the economic exclusion of the Batwa community, which is a marginalised ethnic minority, as for example a cooperative of Batwa women was created in Makamba to encourage them to carry out collective entrepreneurial activities.²⁵⁰

3.5.5. Lessons learned, best practices and cross-cutting considerations

The focus on awareness-raising approaches and the creation of informal networks and capacity-building is particularly strategic to ensure sustainability, as it fosters autonomy and independence and encourages communities to find collective solutions at the local level. This is a good practice to encourage locally-led economic development, although it requires adequate support to ensure success (see below). In addition, informal support networks at the community level show a strong potential for long-term continuation as project participants anticipate that groups such as the listening clubs will “continue to play an important role in the communities”, and women explain that they are motivated to continue their peers in the community.

Whilst the change in gender norms is likely to be sustained, the project's impacts on economic empowerment appear to be more fragile. Although project participants have managed to start income-generating activities and demonstrate high levels of motivation to develop those, many expressed high levels of concerns over their ability to achieve their objectives given the lack of financial resources to invest in the necessary quality material (for example a group explained that they had decided to start a plant nursery but that due to a lack of adequate financial resources they had bought low quality seedlings which had led to some losses), and the risks associated with climate hazards and increasing population density which can jeopardise the work of groups engaged in agriculture and livestock) and concerns around excessive taxes.²⁵¹

In general, there is dissatisfaction from project participants that the project has shown them how to start economic activities but not how to sustain them, which highlights the need for more technical support and long-term monitoring and coaching. It also highlights the need for increased transparency and communication around what the project's can and cannot do to better manage expectations and avoid frustrations which can in the long run hinder the social cohesion gains achieved so far.

Leveraging the success of activities initiated under Tuyage is a key strategic approach. The Tuyage project was successful in creating listening clubs, and although DGD does no longer support the creation of those groups, continuing to monitor their activities and the creation of new ones through a Whatsapp group is highly strategic to leverage the potential of those groups as incubators

²⁴⁸ FGD 5.

²⁴⁹ FGDs 1-2.

²⁵⁰ KII 31.

²⁵¹ FGDs.

for income-generating activities. This model appears to work well as a transition from Tuyage as it offers a platform for connection and mutual motivation, whilst promoting full ownership of initiatives.

Activities around financial education training of groups and support the development of business plans requires longer implementation timeframes to ensure adequate support and assessment of impacts. Indeed, although remaining budgets are limited and the end of the project is near, there is a strong need to continue supporting participants (including local coaching to support the quality of action plans, their implementation, the creation of credit files and also to support the level of recovery of granted credits).

The provision of financial support to groups requires a careful assessment of risks and mitigation measures. The risk of market distortion was raised in relation to the grants allocated for the most successful business plans. Indeed, a key respondent explained that in the past, such grants had created issues at the local level, where some community members would refuse to repay their loans because other individuals supported by organisations wouldn't have to repay their grants.²⁵² This highlights the need for developing mitigation measures and in the future could justify exploring alternative forms of financial support, including via microfinance institutions (with dedicated funds that can be used for credit, with low interest rates instead of grants) to put emphasis on access to credit.

The project made significant efforts to improve gender-responsiveness. For example, efforts were made to include more men (husbands and male local authorities) in the project's activities in order to create a more sustainable change, and to promote positive masculinities through dedicated media programmes (co)created by Search and the smart couple approaches (seeking to transform relationships between husband and wife in the management of household finances).

Bringing together a wide range of local stakeholders to foster collaboration at the local level around economic issues is a key good practice, as these collaborative activities directly contributed to strengthening relationships between different groups, thus ensuring greater sustainability of impacts.

3.5.6. Country Recommendations

Recommendation One: Assess the possibility to continue supporting and monitoring the progress of groups trained by RIM until they reach a certain maturity. The project should aim to consolidate the autonomy of the groups trained to maximise their ability to implement their business plans and ensure sustainability of the economic activities. Indeed, given concerns raised by participants there are high risks that the groups (including those supported with the grants) will dislocate after the end of the project if there is no adequate monitoring. The project could assess the feasibility of continuing funding local coaches to support the groups trained, and especially to support the implementation of their action plans and to build their relationship with MFIs (for example to support the constitution of credit files, the allocation of credits to avoid misappropriations, and also to support the recovery of credits granted).

Recommendation Two: Increase efforts to strengthen the inclusion of marginalised communities, including people with disabilities, albinos and the Batwa communities. Whilst efforts are made to involve these groups in activities, their inclusion required a specific focus and dedicated awareness-raising on their economic integration to address specific barriers they face and promote more inclusive economic development.

²⁵² KII 33.

Recommendation Three: Increase transparency and communication on the project's objectives and capacities. Given the high level of expectations amongst project participants and some concerns around the lack of support for their economic activities, project staff should aim to clarify any misconceptions around what the project aims to provide and achieve. This includes using future monitoring missions and activities to address any confusions around next steps so that participants do not engage in activities expecting future support.

Recommendation Four: Continue to raise awareness on barriers to women's economic and social participation. As this MTE highlighted a number of persisting barriers to women's economic participation including but not limited to fear of backlash, and religious barriers, as well as barriers to women's freedom of expression on the radio for example, this highlights the need for intensified awareness-raising on these issues. This also implies capacity-building for Dushirehamwe's focal points at the local level who facilitate awareness raising activities, or the allocation of resources to invite experts to address expertise gaps. For example, these focal points are not necessarily equipped to address specific issues (especially around family planning which constitutes a key issue for women's economic empowerment, as access to family planning empowers women to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, and life choices which can lead to improved education and economic opportunities).

Recommendation Five : Address remaining needs of media professionals to further improve their ability to produce content that supports the transformation of discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women. This could include for example thematic training on issues around the protection of the environment and climate change adaptation and technical training on the use of social media, and the use of technology. Whilst some training on these issues were already provided, not all focal points participated. This highlights the need to support greater transfer of knowledge and skills by trained individuals to other professionals. The model of training of trainers could be explored to facilitate this. In addition, Search could aim to support synergies between media to encourage them to pull their resources together and thus address challenges around limited access for example.

Finally, as the high mobility of journalists due the precariousness of the media sector remains a key challenge within the media sector, Search should develop targeted strategies to address it effectively. The model of Training of Trainers mentioned previously could mitigate this challenge, as equipping internal media staff (including higher level positions less impacted by mobility) with the skills to deliver training could ensure that internal expertise is maintained but also ensures that in the event that trainers change media they can share knowledge and expertise in their new workplace.

Recommendation Six: Enhance capacity-strengthening of partners and affiliated staff. Search could aim to improve the partnership approach through dedicating more time and resources to understanding and addressing partners' needs for capacity building, including in finance, M&E and communication or visibility.

Recommendation Seven: Improve indicators to better capture impacts. Analysis of the project's logframe has identified some inadequate lines of questioning to assess progress against some indicators. To address this issue, revising the formulation of evaluation questions and indicators and clarifying the definition of the impacts to be measured in the endline is key. For example:

- Terminologies and concepts measured in indicators need to be better defined in the logframe:
 - For *Ind.OS2.2 :% of women and young girls "entrepreneurs" supported by the project who have significantly higher income/savings at the end of the project*, "Significantly" should be defined (What is the measurement threshold?) This can then be

reformulated *% of women and young girls “entrepreneurs” supported by the project whose income/savings have increased by X% at the end of the project.*

- For *Ind. OG.1: % of women and girls in targeted communities who are taking action to influence socio-economic changes in targeted communities*, the project team needs to clarify what is the context of "taking action". What is quantified as taking action? What does “taking action” constitute in?
 - This should be done for all indicators as a number of other concepts remain undefined and open to interpretation, which limits the analysis of the specific impacts of the project. This included for example notions like “a better support network” (Ind.OS2.3)
- Ensure alignment of questions to indicators. For example:
 - For indicator 2.1: “per cent targeted women who believe they can make a positive difference in the economic empowerment of women in their community,” the associated evaluation question is “Does your business activity contribute to increased investment and economic profitability in your household?”, which does not appear to be related to the community sphere mentioned in the indicator, nor to the notion of influence or capacity of being a change agent. If the intention is to measure beliefs in capacity to act as a positive change agent, then the question asked to participants should be reworded accordingly. Conversely, if the intention is to measure increased investment and economic profitability, then the indicator should be reworded accordingly.

4. Annexes

4.1. Evaluation Matrix

Available [here](#).

4.2. Mapping of objectives, target groups and activities per Outcome

| | Belgium (IPIS & Search) | DRC (IPIS) | Burundi (Search) | Tanzania (IPIS) |
|----------------|--|---|--|---|
| Results | <p>Outcome: Policymakers, private sector actors, and development stakeholders in Belgium, as well as key actors at the European, international, and multilateral level apply policies and practices that (1) support and regulate sustainable business practices, (2) mainstream conflict sensitivity and/or integrate peacebuilding to shape interventions that are conducive to durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS.</p> <p>Result 1: Policymakers in Belgium, as well as targeted policy actors at the European, international and multilateral levels are better informed on and incentivised to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practices.</p> <p>Result 2: Private sector stakeholders in Belgium and selected OECD member countries in the natural resources, arms trade and digital sectors are better informed on and incentivised to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practices.</p> <p>Result 3: Targeted Belgian NGOs/CSOs and international networks have strengthened</p> | <p>Outcome: Strengthening the capacities of local communities, civil society organisations, cooperatives and technical services, to increase their contribution to peace and sustainable development in eastern DRC, by improving the human rights situation and conditions of work in the artisanal mining sector, by increasing knowledge on the causes of conflicts and the resilience of mining communities, and by strengthening participatory governance of the sector.</p> <p>Result 1: Congolese civil society organizations have strengthened capacity to monitor human rights abuses in local mining communities, and to advocate for mining sector governance reforms.</p> <p>Result 2: Congolese civil society organisations have strengthened capacity to monitor human rights abuses in local mining communities, and to advocate for mining sector governance reforms.</p> <p>Result 3: Better holistic understanding of conflict dynamics around the mining sector.</p> <p>Result 4: Establish the basis for sustainable governance reform, thereby creating a more stable and peaceful context for the artisanal mining sector.</p> <p>Result 5: Provide a guaranteed living income through targeted cash transfers to</p> | <p>Outcome: Develop an environment conducive to better inclusion and increased participation of women in economic and social matters.</p> <p>Result 1: Social norms limiting the socio-economic participation of women - particularly young women - are changing positively and cultural barriers are reduced.</p> <p>Result 2: The economic empowerment potential of women – particularly young women – is enhanced in target communities.</p> | <p>Outcome: Tanzanian communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) are empowered to engage government and industry in fostering access to justice, good governance and human rights in natural resource governance</p> <p>Result 1: Mapping and reporting of human rights issues and socio-economic impact related to natural resource governance by civil society organisations and those affected is improved</p> <p>Result 2: Justice seekers are empowered to seek remedy for human rights abuses through improved corporate and government avenues</p> <p>Result 3: Evidence-based multi-stakeholder dialogues promote corporate and governmental policy changes for improved justice, good governance and human rights in natural resource extraction</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| | <p>expertise and alliances to generate a higher impact on durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS.</p> <p>Result 4: The Belgian public better understands the importance of peacebuilding and sustainable business practices in FCAS</p> | <p>all residents of 5 - 10 villages in an artisanal mining area (depending on the size of the village).</p> | | |
| Target groups and beneficiaries | <p>Target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policymakers in Belgium; - Policy actors at European, international, and multilateral levels including the EU; - MSI, platforms, agencies, networks; - Private actors in the natural resource, arms trade, and digital sectors in Belgium and selected OECD countries; - Belgian federations in relevant sectors; - Belgian NGOs/CSOs working on peace and conflict; - Selected NGOs/CSOs from FCAS; - Other Belgian/international NGOs/CSOs and platforms as relevant; - The Belgian media and general public. | <p>Target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 CSOs (30% of the staff involved will be female: partners for 1) research, raising awareness among minors, audits of cooperatives; and 2) mapping to increase transparency in the cobalt sector. - 20 CSOs (20% CSOs women) to manage the Kufuatilia system; - CEGEMI (UCB): academic partner for training/research (30% of researchers will be women). - The SAEMAPE: 20 agents (30% women) + coordinator <p>Beneficiaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20 CSOs in the Kufuatilia network. Communities in affected areas benefit from interventions - 6–8 cooperatives; 60-80 members (25% women) - 240 artisans (25% women) - The authorities, the state, civil society will benefit from the results of the research - Communities will benefit from the proposals developed during the round tables - State services will benefit from the mapping of cobalt mines (artisans indirectly) - 1000 villagers receiving guaranteed income | <p>Target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women (in particular young and/or marginalised women): 24 per locality (including at least 8 young women aged between 18 and 35); - Local, provincial and national authorities and decision-makers: 10 individuals per locality; - Local, regional and national media: 20 journalists and players in the sector; - Associations and civil society organisations (local and national): 7 organisations and 12 savings groups; - Local economic players: 20 representatives from the sector. <p>Beneficiaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communities in the target provinces, particularly men; - All Burundian women; - Listeners of partner radio stations - Companies benefiting from the added value created by women. - Local, provincial and national | <p>Target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 community representatives - 20 CSOs (local, national and intern.) (50% women), incl. 4 focused on women rights - 4 small-scale miners associations (30% women) and Tanzania Women Miners' Association - 4 trade unions (30% women) - 20 industry associations & businesses (25% women) - local government authorities in 4 regions (30% women) - 8 ministries and agencies (50% women) - 20 academics (50% women) - Tanzanian Judiciary (Court of Appeal, High Court, and Subordinate) (non quantifiable) <p>Beneficiaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5000 local community members affected by natural resource exploitation spread over 4 regions (50% women) - 4000 workers in artisanal and small-scale natural resource extraction (30% women) - 400 workers in large-scale/industrial natural resource extraction |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|---|---|
| | | | authorities and decision-makers | |
| Activities | <p>R 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence-based materials to inform sustainable business, conflict-sensitive and/or peacebuilding (pb) policies and practices in FCAS (case studies, reports, white papers) policy advocacy based on the produced materials (contribution to consultations, roundtable discussions, private briefings) Engage in MSI and networks to share information (info) and best practices from FCAS and influence policy and practice (through governing board positions or conferences) capacity building for policymakers, including training on pb, conflict sensitivity, and sustainable business practices <p>R 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence-based materials to inform private sector stakeholders on sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or pb practices in FCAS (reports, guidance documents) capacity building, e.g. sharing of the materials produced, trainings, tools Engage in MSI and networks to share info and best practices from FCAS and influence business practices (through governing board positions or conferences) <p>R3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint activities with relevant Belgian and intern. NGOs/CSOs and | <p>R1: CSOs manage Kufuatilia, which is a system for reporting and monitoring incidents in the artisanal mining sector (human rights abuses, child labour, pollution, etc.). CSOs ensure appropriate follow-up with the relevant bodies. Kufuatilia will strengthen their capacity to monitor human rights abuses and advocate for reform of the sector.</p> <p>R2: Mining cooperatives should contribute to the formalisation of the artisanal sector, but in reality they do not function well. SAEMAPE's technical department is unable to supervise the cooperatives. CSOs will organise training to improve craftspeople's knowledge of mining legislation. CEGEMI will organise workshops on cooperatives to better prepare SAEMAPE for its tasks. SAEMAPE will organise training for cooperatives to improve their management. SAEMAPE will carry out audits (in collaboration with CEGEMI). Reliable and professional cooperatives will thus contribute to sustainable governance of the sector.</p> <p>R3: Sustainable peace can only be achieved through a conflict resolution process based on holistic understanding. An analysis of the conflict context will be carried out in collaboration with CSOs and CEGEMI. Qualitative research will focus on inter-community relations and land conflicts.</p> <p>R4: The research findings will form the</p> | <p>-A2.1 "Women in Action" exchange forums</p> <p>-A2.2 Forums for popular expression between decision-makers and citizens</p> <p>-A2.3 Raising awareness of gender issues in existing economic cooperatives</p> <p>-A2.4. Support for initiatives in favor of women's economic participation</p> <p>-A2.5. Synergy of capacities with other actors: economic and governmental actors, and CSOs around the economic integration of women</p> <p>-A2.6. Communication and visibility</p> <p>-A2.7. Strengthening personnel and partners' capacities.</p> | <p>-Activity 1.1 Human rights impact assessment & mapping of natural resource extraction using mobile data collection tools: training of surveyors from local (northern Tanzanian) civil society organisations</p> <p>-Activity 1.2 Field-based case studies into human rights impacts of natural resource extraction: training of civil society members on "research & reporting writing" for "Voices from Tanzania" case studies</p> <p>-Activity 1.3 Community-based incident monitoring and reporting: awareness raising campaigns in local communities on the use of the phone-based human rights incident reporting and monitoring system that will be developed for this project</p> <p>Result 1, Output 1.2</p> <p>-Activity 1.4 Baseline assessment</p> <p>-Activity 1.5 Human rights impact assessment and mapping by trained civil society surveyors</p> <p>-Activity 1.6 Investigative field research into specific case studies</p> <p>-Activity 1.7 Community-based incident monitoring and reporting</p> <p>-Activity 1.8 Launch of referral pathways for incidents collected</p> <p>-Activity 1.9 Monitoring of civic space regulations</p> <p>Result 1, Output 1.3</p> <p>-Activity 1.10 Publication of output related to Output 1.2</p> <p>-Activity 1.11 Publication of Quarterly Briefings</p> <p>-Activity 1.12 Development of a "digital information hub" "</p> |

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|--|---|--|--|---|
| | <p>networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Share expertise and info with/between NGOs/CSOs •Create a Belgium-wide informal network (tentatively the Peace Alliance) for Belgian NGOs/CSOs to share info and best practices and coordinate activities for peace •Engage in and strengthen Belgian and international platforms, agencies, and networks on peace and sustainable business practices •Engage NGOs/CSOs from FCAS in Belgian and international fora (meetings with policymakers and private sector actors, and engagement in MSI) <p>R4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provide the media with quality info about sustainable business practices and pb in FCAS (through press releases, interviews, journalists' field visits to FCAS) •Media campaign, social media ads, TV spots for instance through Peace Champions (public figures raise awareness for pb and sustainable business practices) •IPIS/Search representatives as speakers at public events (SDG Week, festivals, or the European Development Days) | <p>basis for an exchange of ideas between stakeholders. Thematic round tables will be organised. The proposals developed will form the basis for solutions that will lead to sustainable governance reform.</p> <p>R5: Through targeted monthly cash transfers to the inhabitants of a mining village, the financial resilience of households will be strengthened in partnership with the ASBL EIGHT. This will make it possible to move away from a survival strategy towards sustainable socio-economic strategies. The project will begin in Maniema, and from the 4th year onwards we will start in South Kivu.</p> | | <p>Result 2, Output 2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Activity 2.1 Study on available remedies in the field of natural resources governance -Activity 2.2 Capacity enhancement for CSOs/ Legal Aid Service Providers (LASPs) -Activity 2.3. Community-based incident monitoring and reporting: training of selected regional/local CSOs on the use of the phone-based human rights incident reporting and monitoring system that will be developed for this project -Activity 2.4 Public Legal Education <p>Result 2, Output 2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Activity 2.5 Strategic litigation -Activity 2.6 Legal protection for human rights defenders <p>Result 3, Output 3.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Activity 3.1 Participation in networks & platforms at (inter-)national level <p>Result 3, Output 3.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Activity 3.2 Organisation of annual evidence-based multi-stakeholder dialogues at national level -Activity 3.3 Organisation of evidence-based multi-stakeholder exchanges at local level <p>Result 3, Output 3.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Activity 3.4 Policy notes to promote policy changes -Activity 3.5 Bilateral engagements with targeted governmental or corporate actors and platforms -Activity 3.6 Advocacy through (social) media & communication |
|--|---|--|--|---|

4.3. KII Samples

Table 2: List of KII respondents

| Country | Planned KIIs | KIIs conducted |
|--------------|--------------|---|
| Global | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 DGD representative |
| Belgium | 18 | 20, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 programme staff (IPIS and Search) 4 Policymakers and development stakeholders in Belgium 1 Key actor at the European, international, and multilateral level 1 Private sector stakeholders 10 Belgian NGOs/CSOs and international networks |
| DRC | 8 | 9, including with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 IPIS staff 3 partners (SAEMAPE, CEGEMI, MALI) 1 representative of a synergy of mining cooperatives in Maniema 2 representatives of Kufuatilia Lualaba 2 representatives of Kufuatilia ituri |
| Burundi | 8 | 9, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 with Search staff 1 with Réseau des Institutions Micro-financières 1 with Dushirehamwe 1 Local radio partner 1 Local authority representative 3 economic actors |
| Tanzania | 12 | 13, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 project staff- IPIS 1 with ASF (partner in joint outcome) 1 with the Business and Human Rights Tanzania (implementing partner) 1 with HakiRasilimali (implementing partner) 6 programme participants (3 in Shinyanga Region and 3 in Mara region). 1 Belgian government stakeholder in Tanzania 1 expert in Grievance Mechanisms |
| TOTAL | 47 | 52 |

4.4. FGD Samples

Table 3: Sampling of FGD respondents

| Country | Planned FGDs | FGDs conducted |
|--------------|--------------|--|
| Global | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme managers (IPIS and SEARCH) and directors |
| Burundi | 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 group made up of media professionals trained in economic reporting and gender-sensitive reporting (Bujumbura) 6 FGDs spread between 2 target provinces (Makamba and Muyinga) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 groups with representatives from the “Women in Action” exchange forums 2 groups with citizens who participated in the popular expression platforms 2 groups with members of listening clubs |
| Total | 8 | |

4.5. Indicators table

Belgium Outcome²⁵³

Table 4: Belgium Performance Monitoring Framework

| Indicator | Baseline | Midterm Target (Search/IPIS) | 2024 Midterm Results | Progress (% of Midterm Target) | Endline Target |
|--|----------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Outcome: Policymakers, private sector actors, and development stakeholders in Belgium, as well as key actors at the European, international, and multilateral level apply policies and practices that (1) support and regulate sustainable business practices, (2) mainstream conflict sensitivity and/or integrate peacebuilding to shape interventions that are conducive to durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS. | | | | | |
| 0.1: # of relevant policies and practices at Belgian and international level that have integrated sustainable business practices, mainstreamed conflict sensitivity, and/or integrated peacebuilding as a result of project activities. | 0 | 15 | 10 | 66.7% (Partial) | 28 |
| 0.2: % of target group members actively engaged in the project who state that they have increased and improved their collaborations and networks within and beyond their field of expertise | 0 | 50% | 61.3% | 122.6% (Exceeded) | 50% |
| 0.3: % of target groups engaged in the project, that state they feel better equipped to implement interventions in FCAS that are conducive to durable peace or sustainable development | 0 | 50% | 63.0% | 126.0% (Exceeded) | 126.1% |
| Result One: Policymakers in Belgium, as well as targeted policy actors at the European, international and multilateral levels are better informed on and incentivised to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practice | | | | | |
| 1.1: # of targeted policymakers directly reached through project activities | 0 | 150 | 156 | 104.0% (Exceeded) | 350 |

²⁵³ Disclaimer: This table mainly represents Search's performance monitoring data only. IPIS' full logframe and targets were not included. The only exceptions are the policy/practice change indicators (0.1, 1.3, 2.3, 3.3), where the narrative in the report attempts to reflect a more consolidated picture. The progress percentages should be interpreted as a partial view of the overall joint programme's performance.

| Indicator | Baseline | Midterm Target (Search/IPIS) | 2024 Midterm Results | Progress (% of Midterm Target) | Endline Target |
|---|----------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1.2: % of targeted policymakers who report that they are better equipped to influence the policies and practices in their institutions to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practices in FCAS. | 0 | 50% | 72.5% | 145.0% (Exceeded) | 50% |
| 1.3: # of sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies/practices successfully ratified as a result of project activities. | 0 | 6 | 4 | 66.7% (Partial) | 11 |
| Result Two: Private sector stakeholders in Belgium and selected OECD member countries in the natural resources, arms trade and digital sectors are better informed on and incentivised to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practices. | | | | | |
| 2.1: # of private sector stakeholders directly reached through project activities. | 0 | 75 | 30 | 40% (Partial) | 150 |
| 2.2: % of private sector stakeholders engaged in project activities who report that they are better informed on and more likely to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding practices in their activities in FCAS | - | 50% | 0% | - | 50% |
| 2.3: # of sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding practices incorporated in private sector companies as a result of the project activities. | 0 | 6 | 2 | 17% (Partial) | 12 |
| Result Three: Targeted Belgian NGOs/CSOs and international networks have strengthened expertise and alliances to generate a higher impact on durable peace and sustainable development in FCAS | | | | | |
| 3.1: # of Belgian NGOs/CSOs and selected international networks directly reached through project activities | 0 | 20 | 67 | 335% (Exceeded) | 40 |
| 3.2: % of targeted Belgian NGOs/CSOs and international networks who report that they are better equipped to contribute to durable peace and sustainable development | 0 | 30% | 76% | 253.33% (Exceeded) | 30% |
| 3.3: # of sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies or practices incorporated in NGOs/CSOs as a result of the project activities. | 0 | 3 | 3 | 100% (Achieved) | 5 |
| Result 4: The Belgian public better understands the importance of peacebuilding and sustainable business practices in FCAS | | | | | |
| 4.1: # of people in Belgium reached through media work and awareness raising activities | 0 | 190,000 | 2,168,294 | 1,141.2% (Exceeded) | 380,000 |
| 4.2: # of views of the (social) media outputs. | 0 | 375,000 | 2,254,687 | 601.3% (Exceeded) | 750,000 |

Table 5. Evidence from KIIs: Changes To Logframe

| Indicator | Change reported from KIIs |
|---|--|
| <p>1.2: % of targeted policymakers who report that they are better equipped to influence the policies and practices in their institutions to apply sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies and practices in FCAS.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IPIS has provided valuable information and contacts within natural resource extraction, which has better helped policy makers to apply sustainable business practices, according to one policymaker. ● Another provided example of how IPIS provided knowledge on sustainable business practices was regularly used to inform policy ● One respondent (hadn't attended the training on conflict sensitivity) but provided information on how the Search training had impacted conflict sensitivity practices in their department. |
| <p>1.3: # of sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies/practices successfully ratified as a result of project activities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One respondent mentioned how IPIS had impacted the policy of G7 on Russian diamonds and how IPIS and Vredesactie's research had also influenced government practice on weapon transits. |
| <p>3.2: % of targeted Belgian NGOs/CSOs and international networks who report that they are better equipped to contribute to durable peace and sustainable development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One respondent from NGO background, referenced Search's informative sessions related to peacebuilding in the Sahel that were useful to their organisation ● Another referred to guidance which Search provided on peace mediation policies including written comments ● One respondent referred to Search knowledge on advocacy in peacebuilding enriching their network and supported their efforts ● One respondent referred to IPIS knowledge of sustainable practices as highly valuable for their work in the DRC, including jointly organising co-panel discussion on natural resource extraction in the DRC ● One respondent described IPIS knowledge on due diligence enhancing their knowledge on sustainable business practices ● Another organisation described how IPIS provided the empirical groundwork for their programming on sustainable business practices in the DRC regarding artisanal miners |
| <p>3.3: # of sustainable business, conflict-sensitive, and/or peacebuilding policies or practices incorporated in NGOs/CSOs as a result of the project activities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One instance recorded where a membership practice to a network was amended due to the knowledge that IPIS provided |

Tanzania Outcome

Table 6: Tanzania Performance Monitoring Framework

| Indicator | Baseline | Status (Start Y3) | Target (Y3 / Midterm) |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Outcome: Tanzanian communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) are empowered to engage government and industry in fostering access to justice, good governance and human rights in natural resource governance</p> | | | |
| 0.1 Number of CSOs (national, regional and local) with established systems and procedures for fostering the inclusion of voices from communities affected by natural resource extraction in policymaking, rule of law and dialogues with government and corporate actors | CSOs have limited capacity to effectively voice and represent community concerns in policymaking, rule of law and dialogues with government and corporate actors. | 6 CSOs engaged by IPIS ¹ | 8 CSOs collecting & reporting incidents, referring, following-up... |
| 0.2. Increase in CSOs' engagement with government and corporate actors to foster a human rights-based approach to natural resource governance (disaggregated by type of engagement, type of stakeholder and topic) | Due to a lack of field-based monitoring/evidence, CSOs have limited clout to meaningfully engage with government/corporate actors and affect the agenda on impacts of natural resource extraction. | 1 national multistakeholder workshop (Jukwaa 2023); 32+ bilateral engagements reported by partners (various topics/stakeholders listed in detailed logframe) | 6 multilateral and bilateral evidence-based dialogues where CSOs engage government/corporate actors... |
| 0.3. Community members in resource-rich areas feel increasingly confident and able to report issues related to natural resource governance (disaggregated by gender, age, region, classification of issue) | There is underreporting of human rights issues due to a lack of awareness and structures that systematically collect this type of data. Baseline survey TBD. | 0 (System in design phase; Indicator rephrasing proposed) | 50 users per region/year using system (min 25 per cent women reports) - <i>Target contingent on system launch & indicator rephrasing.</i> |
| 0.4 Increase in evidence-based data and community perspectives on natural resource governance reported in the media (disaggregated by type of media, topic) | Media reporting on natural resource governance is only limitedly based on evidence and does not often take local perspectives into account. | 1 article (The Chanzo, related to IPIS research) | Min. 4 media articles published... (min 50 per cent highlight gender, min 30 per cent environment) |

| Result One: Mapping and reporting of human rights issues and socio-economic impact related to natural resource governance by civil society organisations and those affected is improved | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1.0 Number of CSOs from Dar es Salaam, Dodoma and the focal regions in northern Tanzania whose staff show an increased capacity in evidence-based mapping and reporting of human rights issues in natural resource governance (disaggregated by gender, role & region) | CSOs generally have limited hands-on experience/capacity to gather, analyse and report community-based data... Skill level pre-test planned. | 11 CSOs (BHRT: 5, IPIS: 6); <i>Note: <50 per cent women trained in IPIS activities.</i> | Staff from min. 8 CSOs show improved skills... (50 per cent women trained). |
| 1.2 A dedicated digital platform facilitating phone-based incident reporting by communities on human rights issues related to natural resource extraction and monitoring and follow-up by civil society is operational. | 0 | 0 (System in design phase) | 1 dedicated digital platform developed and operational. |
| 1.3 Increase in the number of issues related to natural resource extraction and governance followed up by targeted investigative field research (disaggregated by region, classification of issue) | Human rights issues... remain largely under-investigated/undocumented by field-based research and not accessible to an international audience. | 5 case studies conducted by IPIS; <i>Note: 0 specifically on gender issues.</i> | Min. 11 field-based case studies conducted. (Min. 50 per cent target issues faced by women/vulnerable groups). |
| 1.4 Improved accessibility of evidence-based reporting on natural resource governance in Tanzania to national and international stakeholders | Evidence... is either not available or not easily accessible/digestible to a national and international public. | 0 (Digital hub website in development phase) | A digital central information hub... developed and available online... (Min. 75 per cent content partially available in Kiswahili). |
| Result Two: Justice seekers are empowered to seek remedy for human rights abuses through improved corporate and government avenues | | | |
| 2.1. Increase in the number of justice seekers engaged through the project who report having access to information on human rights and access to remedy (disaggregated by gender and region) | Justice seekers are generally unaware of how to access information on remedy... A baseline survey planned (pre-test). | Not assessed yet (Methodology TBD) | 60 per cent of justice seekers... show increased awareness... (50 per cent men, 50 per cent women). |
| 2.2. Increase in the proportion of justice seekers engaged through the project who are satisfied with the legal advice and/or support provided by civil society | In many cases, justice seekers are not accompanied... The baseline survey will collect data on current | Not assessed yet (Methodology TBD) | 60 per cent of justice seekers state satisfaction... (50 per cent men, 50 per cent women). |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| actors (disaggregated by gender, region, and type of incident) | satisfaction... | | |
| 2.3. Improvement in the capacity of legal actors who receive training through the project (disaggregated by gender, role and region) | Often, legal actors do not have the tools and skills... A baseline survey will evaluate their capacity (pre-test). | 0 (Capacity building strategy TBD between partners) | Staff from 8 CSOs/LASPs show improved skills... (50 per cent women). |
| 2.4. CSOs/ Legal Aid Service Providers (LASPs) are increasingly following-up on reported incidents identified through the digital incident reporting platform to ensure that justice seekers have access to remedies | 0 incidents 0 incidents registered nor followed-up in the to-be-developed system. | 0 (System in design phase) | 40 per cent of incidents reported through the platform are followed up... |
| Result Three: Evidence-based multi-stakeholder dialogues promote corporate and governmental policy changes for improved justice, good governance and human rights in natural resource extraction | | | |
| 3.1: Increase in proportion of interventions by local civil society/community members at national/local dialogues... (disaggregated) | Between 2019-2020, 1 of 5 sessions at past national conferences presented local voices. | Partial/Unclear: 33 per cent sessions at Jukwaa 2023 had community interventions; 1 regional workshop held. <i>Note: Needs clearer tracking.</i> | Local actors... actively present... in 25 per cent of sessions at dialogues organised through the project. (50 per cent women presenters). |
| 3.2: Policy recommendations are shared/developed during national/regional dialogues... (disaggregated) | Structural multi-stakeholder initiatives to formulate/discuss policy recommendations... are absent. | 0 sets formally linked to project dialogues. <i>Note: Broadening indicator suggested.</i> | Annually, 1-2 sets of policy recommendations are shared/developed... (Min. 20 per cent address women/vulnerable groups issues). |
| 3.3: Number of government/corporate stakeholders... with increased capacity to formulate evidence-based policy changes... (disaggregated) | Capacity and awareness... often not sufficient to guide policy decisions. Baseline survey planned (?). | Not assessed yet. <i>Note: Indicator rewording & tracking methodology suggested.</i> | Min. 15 government/corporate stakeholders state increased skills/know-how... |

Burundi Outcome

Table 7: Burundi Performance Monitoring Framework²⁵⁴

| Indicator | Baseline | Midterm | Midterm Target | Endline Target |
|---|------------------|--|------------------|------------------|
| Result 1: Social norms limiting the socio-economic participation of women – particularly young women – are changing positively and cultural barriers are diminishing. | | | | |
| Ind.1.1: % of media professionals (F/M) targeted by the project who have improved their skills in producing content supporting the transformation of discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women. | 50% | 75% (of respondents to the survey) | 80% | 90% |
| Ind.1.2: % of listeners (M/F) of media programs produced within the framework of the project who demonstrate their support for the inclusion of women in the economy and for gender equality, compared to non-listeners. | F: 90% M: 30% | F: 95.5% M: 94.9% | F: 92% M: 40% | F: 95% M: 55% |
| Ind.1.3: % of targeted CSO members (F/M) who report regularly interacting with the media to transform discriminatory social norms and cultural barriers for women. | F: 15% M: 5% | F: 51.9% M: 40% | F: 25% M: 15% | F: 45% M: 35% |
| Ind.1.4: % of representatives of local authorities [government agencies] in the targeted communities who believe that the inclusion of women in the economic life of their community is "very important" to the development of the entire community. | 45% | N/A ²⁵⁵ | 55% | 75% |
| Result 2: The potential for economic empowerment of women – particularly young women – is strengthened in target communities. | | | | |
| Ind.2.1: % targeted women who believe they can make a positive difference in the economic empowerment of women in their community | 55% | 99.3% | 70% | 85% |
| Ind.2.2: % of women and young girl "entrepreneurs" supported by the project who have significantly higher incomes/savings at the end of the project | 45% | 93.2% | 60% | 75% |
| Ind.2.3: % of women and young girl entrepreneurs targeted by the project who report having a better support network to increase their autonomy following their participation in the project | 10% | 97.3% | 75% | 85% |
| Participation, Inclusion, and Adherence to the Protection and Participation Policy | | | | |
| % of participants who feel that their voice and opinion are taken into account in the project | N/A | 98% | N/A | 90% |
| % of participants who feel safe during their participation (in the project/activities) | N/A | 80% indicated that they felt very safe or safe | N/A | 100% |
| % of participants who are aware of the reporting mechanisms | N/A | 74.4% | N/A | 90% |

²⁵⁴ For an explanation of the scope of this indicator table, please see the methodological note in Section 3.5.2.

²⁵⁵ It was decided jointly with Search that the data for this indicator would be collected through Search's monitoring missions.

4.6. Data Collection Tools

Qualitative data collection tools for the BE outcome available [here](#).

Survey tool for the conflict sensitivity training participants available [here](#). Please note that the survey will be translated in French once the questions are approved.

Qualitative data collection tools for the Tanzania outcome available [here](#).

Qualitative data collection tools for the DRC outcome available [here](#).

Qualitative data collection tools for the Burundi outcome available [here](#).

4.7. List of Key Documents Reviewed

Table 8: Overview of the project documentation provided to the evaluation team

| Type | Documents |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Belgium (Search and IPIS)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BE Stakeholder mapping: Stakeholder mapping of the Belgian (institutional and private sector) peacebuilding landscape in the framework of the joint 5-year DGD programme “United for Peace and Sustainable Development in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings” • (Search) Updated Master Excel, including workplans, policy/practice wins, updated indicator logframe and activity tracker • (Search) Outcome harvesting journals for 2022, 2023 and 2024 • Performance scores for 2022 and 2023 (performance measurement system) • (Search) Monitoring data and documents (M&E reports, outcome harvesting documents, activity documentation, etc.) • Documentation on conflict-sensitivity trainings • Proposal: Budget Adaptation & Programme Design Changes (March 2022), ‘Promote stakeholders in Belgium and beyond as champions of peace and sustainable development’, and final proposal. • Activity Tracker & Documentation |
| <i>DRC (IPIS)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logframe • Performance scores • Proposal and Budget Adaptation & Programme Design Changes (March 2022) • Activity Tracker & Documentation • Activity reports |
| <i>Burundi (Search)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring reports, including quarterly reports • Activity reports • Advocacy plan • Logframe and MEAL plan • Proposal |
| <i>Tanzania (IPIS)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logframe • Performance scores • Progress Reports from Steering Committee (Outcome SC) • Proposal and Budget Adaptation & Programme Design Changes (March 2022) • Activity Tracker & Documentation • Narrative reports |

4.8. Outcome Harvesting

Outcome Harvesting Matrix is available [here](#).

4.9. Proposition on how the Final Evaluation could be conducted in coherence with the MTE process and revised ToC.

Based on the findings and lessons from this Mid-Term Evaluation, the following principles are proposed to ensure the Final Evaluation is coherent and builds effectively on the MTE process:

- **Longitudinal Analysis:** The Final Evaluation should use this MTE as a comprehensive mid-point baseline. The Final Evaluation should aim to interview participants interviewed at midline to assess changes in perceptions and attitudes. This will strengthen the evidence of change and further strengthen the project's impact.
- **Assess the extent to which the project institutes project handover activities:** The MTE identified potential avenues for the project to partner with stakeholders and hand over its activities to assure sustainability. The End Term evaluation should focus on how these activities were handed over to different stakeholders, and whether stakeholders have been prepared and equipped to implement these activities beyond the project's lifetime
- **Utilise Refined M&E Approaches:** The Final Evaluation methodology should incorporate the M&E lessons from this MTE. This includes applying contribution analysis for policy influence work, using feasible qualitative methods to assess private sector engagement, and focusing on “meaningful engagement” rather than simple reach, as recommended in the Belgian Outcome (*Section 3.2.6*).
- **Consolidated Joint Programme Data:** A key prerequisite for a successful Final Evaluation will be the use of a consolidated M&E system that captures the contributions of both Search and IPIS to the joint Belgian Outcome indicators. Addressing the data aggregation challenges identified in this MTE will be crucial for a comprehensive final assessment.

A more detailed methodological design for the Final Evaluation, including specific evaluation questions and tools, could be developed in consultation with Search, IPIS, and DGD based on these principles.

4.10. Global Level: Key Findings, Lessons Learned and Best Practice

Table 9: Summary Findings for Key Evaluation Questions (Global Level)

| <i>Main Evaluation Question</i> | <i>Overall Summary Finding</i> | <i>Related Sub-Questions & Findings</i> |
|---|--|---|
| <p>3.1 How well did Search and IPIS collaborate to ensure coherence in their strategic approach?</p> | <p>Collaboration is regarded as coherent and successful. Strategic alignment is strong, supported by joint profiling, open communication, effective management of organisational differences (despite challenges like staff turnover), stable core management, and positive DGD perception.</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>3.2 To what extent is the Project more than just the sum of each outcome?</p> | <p>The project adds value beyond individual outcomes primarily through complementarity, leveraging distinct strengths and networks effectively. However, deep operational synergy remains limited ('untapped potential') due to structural design (separate country work) and practical constraints, meaning it hasn't fully become substantially more than the sum of its parts in a synergistic sense.</p> | <p>3.2.1 Successes: Effective joint profiling ("Peace and conflict programme"); leveraging complementary strengths/networks (intel sharing, access, strategic division of network presence); open communication; stable core management.</p> <p>3.2.2 Limitations: Unrealised potential for deep operational synergy; missed opportunities for joint work (e.g., Sahel research); structural limits on field integration; challenges from organisational differences and staff turnover; constraints on translating research to joint action due to different protocols/mandates.</p> |
| <p>4.1 Does the joint implementation increase the impact and how can it be even improved?</p> | <p>Joint implementation enhances potential impact via increased credibility (joint profiling) and broader reach achieved through leveraging complementary assets. Improvement could come from fostering deeper synergy via intentional planning, informal interaction, better knowledge sharing, improved network leveraging, and potentially structural changes (like joint country work) in the future.</p> | <p>4.4.1 Leveraging Expertise: Expertise/networks are effectively leveraged through complementarity (e.g., Search's implementation/EU access + IPIS's research/Belgian networks; strategic division in some networks). Full <i>maximisation</i> is limited by the lack of deep synergistic integration and opportunities for more effective information sharing across networks.</p> |
| <p>5.1 What are key mid-term learnings and best</p> | <p>Key learnings centre on: needing dedicated time/resources for consortium setup; the crucial role of communication and stable core</p> | <p>5.1.1 Synergies for next grant: Future collaboration could benefit from designing for deeper</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>practices from implementation, including on the global partnership and collaboration?</p> | <p>management (esp. amidst staff turnover); the benefits and limits of complementarity vs. synergy; the importance of programme structure for enabling integration; navigating operational differences pragmatically; and the value of intentional joint planning.</p> | <p>integration, potentially through joint implementation in specific countries (DRC/Tanzania mentioned).</p> <p>5.1.2 Linking interventions (learning loop): Examples like the Due Diligence event show successful linking is possible but challenging. Improving requires intentional planning, systematic knowledge sharing, and potentially joint thematic work, while acknowledging constraints from structure and operational differences (e.g., security vetting).</p> |
| <p>5.2 What programmatic adaptations are needed for the rest of implementation (including to improve synergies between the four outcomes) to ensure that the project's ultimate outcomes are met at the endline?</p> | <p>Adaptations should focus on enhancing collaboration within the current structure: increased intentional joint planning (learning from recent successes); fostering more informal staff interaction; improving internal communication and knowledge sharing systems; finding ways to leverage networks more effectively; potentially increasing meeting frequency. Fundamentally overcoming synergy limitations may require structural changes beyond the current implementation period.</p> | <p>3.4.1 Strengthening/Creating Links: Existing links (esp. Belgium outcome) can be strengthened, and others fostered, through more intentional joint planning (e.g., thematic), improved communication/knowledge sharing, better network leveraging, and more informal interaction. Creating <i>deep</i> operational links where none exist is difficult given the current structure (separate country work), but successful examples like the Due Diligence event show potential for bridging components.</p> |

Table 10: Lessons Learned and Best Practice from the Joint Programme Model

| <p><i>Lesson Learned / Best Practice</i></p> | <p><i>Key Insight / Implication</i></p> |
|--|---|
| <p>Invest Adequately in Partnership Establishment</p> | <p>New consortia require dedicated time/resources factored in upfront for relationship building, understanding processes, and establishing operational rhythms to ensure effectiveness.</p> |
| <p>Prioritise Open Communication & Stable Core Management</p> | <p>Consistent, transparent communication and stable key coordinating personnel are crucial for navigating complexity, managing challenges (like staff turnover), and maintaining overall programme coherence. Dedicated/protected time for coordination roles is important.</p> |
| <p>Leverage Complementarity;</p> | <p>Well-matched complementary strengths provide significant value.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Recognise Synergy Limits (Structure Matters)</p> | <p>However, deep operational synergy is challenging and depends heavily on programme design (e.g., joint country implementation might be needed) and cannot be assumed even with compatible partners.</p> |
| <p>Navigate Operational Differences Pragmatically</p> | <p>Effectively managing differing mandates, protocols (e.g., security vetting), or approaches requires ongoing dialogue, pragmatic solutions, and mutual understanding, especially when linking field research/realities with joint policy or advocacy work.</p> |
| <p>Adopt Intentionality in Joint Planning & Activities</p> | <p>Proactively planning specific joint activities and improving planning processes (e.g., broader participation) yields better results and fosters collaboration more effectively than relying solely on organic opportunities. More frequent meetings could be beneficial.</p> |
| <p>Foster Informal Relationships</p> | <p>Simple measures to encourage informal interaction between staff across organisations can significantly strengthen interpersonal relationships and trust, facilitating smoother professional collaboration.</p> |
| <p>Improve Internal Knowledge Sharing & Network Leveraging</p> | <p>Systematically improving communication flows about each partner's work and finding ways to more effectively share information from and leverage respective networks can enhance collaboration and impact.</p> |
| <p>Maintain Resilience, Adaptability, and Learning Commitment</p> | <p>The partnership's ability to navigate challenges, adapt practices (like planning meetings), and maintain a commitment to learning demonstrates key qualities for successful long-term collaboration. Interest exists in continuing and deepening the partnership.</p> |