

BMZ



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
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EVALUATION REPORTS 055

The German Civil Peace Service Synthesis Report

Summary



Preface

Development and peace are intrinsically tied to each other and determine one another. Crisis prevention and peacebuilding are therefore fixed components of the German development policy agenda.

In 1999, the German Civil Peace Service (CPS) was founded as a new instrument for civil society peacebuilding. Set up as a joint endeavour (*Gemeinschaftswerk*) of governmental and non-governmental organisations, its aim is to strengthen non-violent conflict resolution and promote peaceful approaches to conflicts and conflict potentials. Thus, it contributes to conflict prevention, reduced violence and post-conflict follow-up. The CPS concentrates on deploying peace experts. At the end of 2009, 583 CPS experts had been deployed in 50 countries with a financial volume of 144 million euros.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) commissioned this evaluation of the German Civil Peace Service, which covers the period from 1999 to 2010. It assesses the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the CPS, as well as its coherence, coordination and complementarity with other activities of German development policy and those of other donors.

An evaluation team from the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP) at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva carried out the evaluation under the leadership of Thania Paffenholz. The

evaluation included eight country studies and was concluded in April 2011. At the BMZ, Katrin von der Mosel and Rita Walraf were responsible for managing the evaluation.

The opinions presented in this study are those of the independent external experts and do not necessarily reflect the views of the BMZ. Comments on the evaluation by the BMZ and by the Civil Peace Service Group (the network carrying out CPS activities) can be found at the end of this report.

This report should be cited as follows: Paffenholz, T. et al. (2011): The German Civil Peace Service: Synthesis Report. *Evaluation Reports 55*. Bonn: Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung.

This summary is available online at http://www.bmz.de/en/publications/type_of_publication/index.html#evaluation. The full versions of the main report and the country studies as well as two volumes of annexes with a report on the evaluation methodology and country case summaries can be requested from the BMZ division “Evaluation of Development Cooperation; Auditing”.

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Summary

1. BACKGROUND

The Civil Peace Service (CPS) was founded in 1999 as a new German government instrument for civil society peacebuilding. The CPS has a number of features making it a unique instrument that does not exist in this form in other countries. From its inception, the CPS has been a joint project of governmental and non-governmental organisations.

The objective of the CPS is to contribute to securing long-term peace by developing structures that promote peace after armed conflict (post-conflict peacebuilding), prevent conflicts from breaking out (crisis prevention) and help strengthen peaceful conflict resolution (mitigation of violence).

Eight German development and peace organisations together form the Civil Peace Service Group (CPS Group – in German: *Konsortium ZFD*). Deploying CPS experts (*ZFD-Fachkräfte*) is the main mode of cooperation between the CPS executing agencies and their partners in conflict-affected countries. For the period 1999 – 2009, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) approved a financial volume of approximately 144 million euros, which funded 583 positions for CPS experts in 50 countries to the end of 2009.

An initial evaluation of the CPS was undertaken in 2002, three years after it was established, leading to important insights into its further establishment and development. In 2009, the BMZ commissioned a second independent external evaluation covering the period from the inception of the CPS in 1999 until 2009/2010. The Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP) of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland, carried out the evaluation. Data collection was completed in mid 2010, and the evaluation process as a whole continued until spring 2011.

The evaluation of the CPS was conducted both in Germany and in eight selected case study countries

(Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, Guatemala, Israel/Palestine¹, Niger, Serbia, and Uganda), ensuring that projects from all CPS executing agencies and all regions in which the CPS operates formed part of the evaluation.

The aim of the evaluation was to create accountability and learning opportunities for the CPS and its main stakeholders and to make recommendations for the future of the CPS and its projects.

The evaluation faced several constraints and limitations. First, only eight out of the 50 countries with a CPS engagement were included. Moreover, the CPS was assessed as an instrument of German development cooperation and peacebuilding policy; an in-depth assessment of each individual project was not carried out. The evaluation also had to accommodate considerable delays in implementation. In addition, methodological challenges in assessing effectiveness and impact were encountered, caused primarily by deficiencies in results-based management of and within the CPS but also by the parameters of the evaluation itself.

2. KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation concluded that the CPS is a valuable instrument that is worth continuing. The CPS's focus on civil society peacebuilding, primarily with a view to strengthening dialogue and reconciliation capacities in conflict societies, fits particularly well into the toolbox of Germany's peacebuilding and development policy, which was developed on the basis of Germany's historical experience in promoting reconciliation after the Second World War.

¹ The BMZ normally uses the term "Palestinian Territories".

The CPS has a number of strengths that set it apart from other civil society peacebuilding instruments and testify both to its achievements and to its future potential.

However, the CPS needs to be substantially strengthened in profile and operations in order for these potentials to be harnessed and for the CPS to become a more significant actor within the framework of Germany's peacebuilding and development policies. **There is also significant room for improvement in the BMZ's steering and management of the CPS.**

This means continuously developing strengths while addressing weaknesses much more systematically. Most of the proposed changes can be carried out within the context of the CPS's current framework. However, substantial changes to the current practice of management and implementation by both the CPS executing agencies and the BMZ will be required.

Core strengths of the CPS

The CPS **focuses on civil society peacebuilding** with a particular emphasis on civil society. The diversity of the German executing agencies operating within the CPS, which are characterised by multiple local entry points, partners and intervention approaches, has helped to make the voices of ordinary people heard at the local level and, in a few cases, even beyond.

The CPS is first and foremost an instrument for the deployment of experts. The core added value of sending experts to conflict countries is the **outsider perspective that these experts have to offer on the conflict context**. Over the last decade, CPS experts have clearly strengthened the peacebuilding potential of CPS partners.

CPS projects have thus achieved a number of positive changes, mostly at the local level. They have contributed to the prevention and mitigation of small local and family conflicts, mostly in the immediate environment of partner organisations.

However, much more could be achieved for local people if the programme reach were enlarged to encompass a much broader level of intervention, both locally and nationally. This is exemplified by a number of good practices within the CPS. For instance, the current programme in Cambodia stands out as a good practice model for effective CPS work. It represents a significant contribution to the strengthening of societal mechanisms for dealing with the Khmer Rouge past and provides complementary support to the immediate work and mission of the Khmer Rouge tribunal. The programme operates at local and national levels and can thus reach broad sections of the population while also influencing national policies. The programme is also based on solid strategic planning and monitoring in a complementary way with other international actors. The CPS programmes in Israel/Palestine, Niger and Burundi have also incorporated a variety of approaches to enhance their local reach. In Uganda, one CPS project has contributed substantially to reducing and preventing violence between two former conflict groups.

When looking at the overall **effectiveness** of activities supported under the CPS programme, most of the projects assessed – with the exception of Cambodia – could not simply be evaluated as effective or not effective because, in each country, partners conduct a variety of activities with different levels of effectiveness. As a general observation, however, **successful activities manage to reach more beneficiaries, expand their reach beyond the local context, focus on key actors for change in the conflict, and implement non-violent approaches in a way that allows issues relevant to beneficiaries to be systematically addressed in their every-day and work contexts.**

Over the years, the CPS has also made progress in its overall development. The current CPS programmes are much more focused compared to the earlier generation. Moreover, the CPS Group jointly developed standards for the CPS in 2004 that provide guidance for operations in the field. These standards were revised and updated in 2008. The introduction of CPS coordinators in the field, which began around 2007, is also a positive development, greatly improving steering and liaison structures.

Core weaknesses of the CPS

After ten years of existence, the **profile** of the CPS remains somewhat ambiguous. The essential question of whether the CPS is a network, an institution, an instrument or a joint fund with common standards has not been clarified by the members of the CPS Group and the BMZ. The CPS and BMZ agree that the CPS has its own profile and will not be an integrated part of the bilateral German development portfolio in a given country, which usually emphasises other sectors or levels of peacebuilding. The BMZ's role in steering, planning and monitoring the activities of the CPS must also be clarified. On this basis, the **BMZ should optimise its steering function**. So far, the BMZ has largely adopted a reactive role (checking and approving applications) and the CPS executing agencies mainly function as a BMZ fund with considerable freedoms – including defining the CPS's own guidelines in a participatory manner, as well as a 100 per cent funding of the Programme. Precisely which role the BMZ should play in steering the CPS programme in the future is an issue that needs to be clarified as a matter of urgency.

Moreover, a substantive review is required to determine how the CPS, as a **state-funded joint endeavour** (*Gemeinschaftswerk*) of civil society and governmental organisations, **expresses this sense of togetherness** in practice. It is important to clarify whether the joint endeavour will go beyond joint fi-

nancing and uniform standards of implementation on a strategic level.

The current main practice of CPS expert deployment (one CPS expert per partner) is not sufficiently oriented towards the needs of partners. Partners require support on a wide range of issues, e.g. to fund activities and local staff, as well as for institution-building and management, networking and facilitation, protection, and specific competences in peace, justice and human rights. Among all these needs, facilitating and networking are the core strengths that CPS experts can contribute with their outsider perspective. They are more important than funding, which is also crucial but which can also be dealt with by other means.

The **effectiveness** of CPS-supported initiatives is mixed but, overall, **the horizontal and vertical reach of activities under CPS programmes remains limited**. Among the countries assessed, only one country programme as a whole was highly effective (Cambodia) and two are likely to become effective in the future (Burundi, Niger) if they broaden their outreach.

It was also found that the CPS executing agencies mainly support socialisation and social cohesion activities such as peace education, dialogue between conflicting groups, training in non-violence, and trauma healing. Only in two of the case study countries is there a focus on protection and lobby/advocacy activities. This demonstrates an emphasis on long-term changes in individuals' attitudes and behaviours. The evident prioritisation of specific fields of activity is not necessarily a problem if it is in line with the partners' peacebuilding objectives, needs and potential.

However, in most countries, the evaluation identified a **routine focus on activities, particularly socialisation and social cohesion**, that may not always be appropriate. More openness to alternative

ways of implementing these activities is required, along with a greater focus on the general public's immediate peacebuilding needs. It was also noted that socialisation activities, especially when it comes to training, are often conducted in a 'technical manner' with insufficient explanation of how partners and beneficiaries can solve their problems in practical ways with non-violent approaches. **Partners' needs and CPS competencies should therefore be combined in a more effective way.** The focus on a combination of peace education and dialogue only makes sense in strategic terms if based on solid analysis of immediate peacebuilding needs.

Sustainability is not mainstreamed adequately in the planning and implementation of CPS interventions. Moreover, the possibility of providing follow-up support without the presence of CPS experts – a situation that is envisaged in the 2008 CPS Standards and identified as an important instrument for achieving sustainability – is rarely utilised by the CPS executing agencies.

Apart from a few notable exceptions in Cambodia and Guatemala, and some projects in Burundi, Palestine and Uganda, **gender aspects** are not adequately mainstreamed in the programmes. In Guatemala, gender mainstreaming has been systematically strengthened. To this end, a post for a gender expert was created in the DED country office to provide support for all partner organisations. These efforts have already brought about changes in partners' attitudes and thus helped to integrate women's rights into the project framework.

As far as **efficiency** is concerned, it is noticeable that **results-based management within the CPS executing agencies and their partners** is weak (aside from recent notable efforts) and there is also **significant room for improvement in the BMZ's steering and management of the CPS.** The knowledge and capacity of the BMZ regional desks remain underutilised, as they mainly play a reactive role when it comes to assessing funding requests. At present,

these regional desks are not part of a prior joint discussion process. The number of staff handling such a large programme as the CPS within the BMZ division for peace and security is also too limited for ensuring effective steering and coordination of the programme. A major administrative weakness that impacts on the quality of implementation is the large time gap between the request for a CPS expert and his/her actual arrival in the country.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations serve as starting points for making the CPS a more effective, efficient and sustainable peacebuilding instrument.

Overall

1. **The evaluation recommends that the CPS be continued. However, considerable changes should be undertaken to make the CPS a more relevant instrument that complements other German and international peacebuilding instruments.** Such a renewed CPS may serve as a specific German instrument for peacebuilding in the future. Some of the CPS programmes evaluated and a considerable number of CPS projects have demonstrated that the CPS can help to bring about positive changes in conflict countries.

Strategic

2. **Sharpening of the CPS's profile.** Clarification is required as to whether the CPS is a network, an institution, an instrument or simply a joint fund with common guidelines and standards. It is crucial that this debate is not reduced to achieving a consensus on terminology but results in practical new processes. It must also be conducted via a process that involves the BMZ

and all members of the CPS Group. The CPS Standards and the relevant BMZ guidelines therefore need to be revised once the CPS's profile has been defined.

3. **Introduction of CPS country strategies** (covering more than one CPS executing agency) to turn the CPS into a strategically planned endeavour. These strategies have to go much further than existing strategies and should agree on common objectives and results-oriented programme planning, allowing swift and practical operationalisation of the executing agencies' individual measures.

The strategies should involve all CPS executing agencies, the BMZ division for peace and security, the BMZ regional desks as well as all stakeholders in the field, and they should be updated every three to five years. These strategies should not be managed by the BMZ alone. Rather, their decision-making processes should reflect the idea of a joint endeavour (*Gemeinschaftswerk*) and they have to make use of potential synergies among stakeholders to enhance relevance and effectiveness. Based on solid analyses of context and partners' needs and the know-how and capacities of the CPS executing agencies, joint intervention and deployment strategies should be developed that are supported by all stakeholders. These strategies are particularly important in countries in which several CPS executing agencies are operating. A more strategic planning process would also sharpen the CPS's profile.

Programming

4. **An appropriate mix of cooperation modalities is required**, e.g. flexible CPS expert deployment combined with other modes of cooperation based on analysis of the context and partners' needs. This could include the deployment of regional or local experts, funding of local staff and project activities, and cooperation with local service providers.
5. **CPS expert deployment demands a change in perspective** in order to better respond to partners' needs in a more relevant, effective and sustainable way. The current practice of deployment – one expert to one partner – cannot remain the main or only mode of deployment. Deployment has to be more flexibly configured and consistently targeted towards partners' needs and the CPS's strengths, i.e. its outsider role in the conflict. The option of deploying a team of CPS experts to a country to support the diverse needs of different partners should also be exercised more often.
6. **Focused CPS programmes, i.e. geographical/issue-based**, should continue to be implemented.
7. **The horizontal and vertical reach of CPS programmes** should be expanded to make them more relevant and effective.
8. **Addressing people's long-term and immediate peacebuilding needs**: CPS lines of activity should be the result of a solid peacebuilding needs assessment which takes account of support activities by other actors as well as analysing CPS executing agencies' strategic advantages and the needs of their partners. Whether the CPS continues to focus mainly on social cohesion and socialisation activities or engages in other lines of activity will largely depend on the results of these needs assessments.
9. **Gender mainstreaming** will also have to be improved.
10. **Sustainability aspects** must be substantially improved.

Management and monitoring

11. **Results-based management:** All CPS country programmes and projects need to be based on solid results-based management to strengthen effectiveness and sustainability. Strategies and planning processes should include a definition of objectives, fields of action and corresponding indicators as well as a pre-defined monitoring system. There should be a consistent focus on enhancing the reach of activities, addressing people's pressing needs and further developing conflict and human rights monitoring and lobby/advocacy work.
12. **Strengthened role of CPS coordinators** with training and capacity building. This management tool should be continued and consolidated, as it has contributed – and could do so to an even greater extent in the future – to strengthening exchange among CPS experts in the field and enhancing the profile of the CPS. It is also important to note that networking by coordinators may facilitate the identification of entry points for peacebuilding. In order to make better use of these opportunities, CPS coordinators should receive specialised training not only in management but also in comprehensive peacebuilding. Exchange between coordinators also needs to be organised more systematically and a liaison structure established that includes all CPS executing agencies, if more than one CPS coordinator is present in a country.
13. **More robust procedures.** Planning, monitoring, and management procedures and the BMZ's approval process should be strengthened to promote the implementation of an effective and efficient CPS. This must include the expansion of personnel capacities within the BMZ division for peace and security and the CPS secretariat.

BMZ's Comments

The Civil Peace Service (CPS) is an operational instrument established by Germany for civil crisis prevention and conflict management (peacebuilding). It is a practical tool for *working on conflict* and thus enhances German bilateral development cooperation in an increasingly important field of work. This evaluation of the CPS is the result of a comprehensive and intensively verified analysis which has produced sound recommendations for further action.

The identified strengths reflect and affirm core elements of the CPS's practice to date. The CPS's main objective is **civil society empowerment for conflict transformation and peacebuilding**. **The deployment of peace experts has generally proved its worth here. The diversity of executing agencies** engaged in development and peacebuilding means that conflicts can be addressed effectively in their specific local and cultural contexts. There is clear evidence that the deployment of peace experts has a positive effect on conflicts, also extending beyond the local context.

The BMZ endorses the evaluation team's fundamentally positive assessment of the CPS, but it also recognises the weaknesses identified by the evaluation. Many small-scale measures at local level, lacking in coherence, cannot fulfil the potential for whole-society transformation identified in the evaluation report.

It is therefore important to refocus the CPS on the basis of the identified strengths and weaknesses and the experience gained over the last ten years. This applies especially to the interplay between the governmental and civil society actors involved in the CPS in Germany. The CPS can, in many cases, have a far more significant impact if its approaches are more strategic in focus and the institutions engaged in it coordinate their activities more intensively. The BMZ's priority will therefore be to address the deficits identified in the steering process at programmatic level (i.e. in all country-specific meas-

ures) and increase its own efforts to monitor and assess the impacts of the CPS's activities in the countries concerned. The starting point for this process are the country strategies agreed with all stakeholders, which pool the various strengths of the executing organisations in an optimal manner in order to achieve specific, attainable and measurable goals at the end of the process. The responsibility for defining and achieving these goals lies primarily with the executing agencies. Here, it is more important than ever to focus on generating useful synergies with other programmes that are being implemented by German and international development cooperation in order to enhance effectiveness.

It is also important that all stakeholders agree to these roles on a binding basis via a trust-based process, and fulfil them consistently, thereby making it possible to sharpen the profile of the Civil Peace Service. Civil crisis prevention and conflict management are needed now more than ever in order to reinforce the interaction between state and civil society. The political parameters are already in place, and the evaluation makes practical recommendations in this context. The CPS thus has an opportunity to expand its pioneering role as a German governmental/civil society instrument for peacebuilding and development, to emerge strengthened from the dynamic created by the innovative reform of German development policy, and thus to stand out as a key player in the international arena as well.

Comments by the Civil Peace Service Group

The evaluation of the Civil Peace Service was a complex process in terms of the issues to be addressed and posed numerous methodological challenges.

The report confirms that the CPS is making important contributions to non-violent conflict management. With its combination of peacebuilding and development practice and expertise, the CPS occupies a unique position in the German landscape. By deploying peace experts in local projects – a task which the CPS has undertaken for many years – the executing agencies in the Civil Peace Service Group promote local people's peace. The deployment of these experts is already supplemented flexibly on a needs-oriented basis by local or short-term experts and other components. There are various case studies which highlight the CPS's potential to build on its previous successes and impacts – both in terms of its regional scope and by increasing its influence at middle and higher levels of decision-making in the societies of the countries concerned.

Due to their individual contexts and specific goals, the various projects have widely differing profiles. Their underlying concepts have not been systematically reviewed as part of the CPS's overall programme. There is, nonetheless, considerable scope for learning here.

Strengthening local partner organisations in strategic networking with like-minded actors is crucially important for a sustainable peace process. With the further development of inter-agency CPS country strategies, which is the desired approach, it is therefore important to build on the potential links with partner organisations and maintain strong local ownership. The evaluation has only focused intermittently on the views of the target groups; proper account of their perspectives must also be taken in inter-agency processes in future.

The Civil Peace Service Group endorses the recommendations to adapt the application process and administration of funds more effectively to the ever-

changing situations in the conflict regions and to adopt a more flexible and pragmatic approach in this regard. Together with the BMZ, the Group will make every effort to improve the effectiveness of organisational procedures in Germany.

The Civil Peace Service Group greatly welcomes the process of shared learning and the further development of the CPS initiated by the evaluation. The agencies within the CPS have already made great efforts to set the required changes in motion at institutional level. We agree with the evaluation team's view that the process of introducing results-based management can only be brought to a successful conclusion if additional financial resources are made available.

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