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ANNEX I

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Sri Lanka for 2021

Action Document for Strengthening Social Cohesion and Peace in Sri Lanka (SCOPE)

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan in the sense of Article 23(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act | Strengthening Social Cohesion and Peace in Sri Lanka (SCOPE) CRIS number: NDICI ASIA/2021/043-291 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe) |
| 2. Team Europe Initiative | No |
| 3. Zone benefiting from the action | The action shall be carried out in Sri Lanka |
| 4. Programming document | Multi-Annual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 for Sri Lanka ¹ |
| 5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results | Objective 1. To enhance socio-economic inclusion and partnerships with a focus on the most disadvantaged and marginalised communities Expected result 1. Enhanced economic partnerships across ethno-religious fault lines as means of promoting social harmony Expected result 3. Empowered youth (with a focus on women and girls) to become change agents Objective 2. To strengthen institutions and opportunities for social harmony across communities Expected result 2.1. Enhanced policy frameworks and institutional capacity at central and local level to engage with people, promote dialogue, address conflicts and healing Expected result 2.2. Community resilience strengthened against extremism and any forms of violence (including gender-based and domestic violence) |
| PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION | |
| 6. Priority Area(s), sectors | 152 Conflict Peace and Security 151 Government and Civil Society-general |

¹ Within the maximum contribution of the European Union, the authorising officer responsible may adjust the allocation to the respective budgetary years subject to the availability of the commitment appropriations.

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| 7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) | Main SDG: 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions Other significant SDGs: SDG 1: End Poverty SDG 5 Gender Equality SDG 8: Decent Work/Economic Growth SDG 10: Reduce Inequalities | | | |
| 8 a) DAC code(s) | DAC code 1 – 15220 Civilian peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution (75%) DAC code 2 – 15170 Women’s rights organisations and movements, and government institutions (25%) | | | |
| 8 b) Main Delivery Channel | Multilateral Organisations - 4000 | | | |
| 9. Targets | <input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance | | | |
| 10. Markers (from DAC form) | General policy objective | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Participation development/good governance | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | Aid to environment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Gender equality and women’s and girl’s empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Trade development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Disaster Risk Reduction | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Inclusion of persons with Disabilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Nutrition | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | RIO Convention markers | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Biological diversity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Combat desertification | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change mitigation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change adaptation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Internal markers and Tags | Policy objectives | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Digitalisation Tags: digital connectivity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | digital governance | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | digital entrepreneurship | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | job creation | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | digital skills/literacy | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | digital services | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Connectivity Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Migration (methodology for tagging under development) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Covid-19 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| BUDGET INFORMATION | | | | |
| 12. Amounts concerned | Budget line(s) (article, item): BGUE-B2021-14.020131-C1-INTPA Total estimated cost: 11 000 000 EUR Total amount of EU budget contribution 8 000 000 EUR This action is co-financed in joint co-financing by: German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs for an indicative amount of 3 000 000 EUR | | | |
| MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION | | | | |
| 13. Type of financing | Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.1 | | | |

1.2. Summary of the Action

Due to its history of colonialism, violent conflicts and ethnic polarisation, the state of social cohesion in Sri Lanka is highly precarious. Over a decade after the end of the civil war, mutual grievances and feelings of injustice remain widespread among the country's ethnic groups which are divided along religious and linguistic fault lines. While social cohesion within these groups tends to be high, cross-ethnic social cohesion and opportunities for it are scarce or non-existent. People belonging to other ethnic communities ("the social other") are not recognised and included, but instead excluded and rejected.

Successive governments have often exploited ethnic differences to build up a power base and undermine democratic institutions. By appealing to Sinhalese majoritarian sentiments, a new government won the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2019 and 2020 that saw the country split in half along ethnic lines. A lack of social cohesion leaves institutions unable to address historically-grown societal divisions.

Hence, this action seeks to advance social cohesion in order to contribute to a more inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society in Sri Lanka. As social cohesion demands an "all-of-society" approach, this will be done by working with diverse stakeholders from government, civil society and the private sector to achieve three results:

1. Strengthened community and institutional resilience and capacities to prevent and counter violence and address intersectional discrimination and exclusion
2. A strengthened pluralist, inclusive and fact-based non-discriminative discourse

3. Increased incentives and opportunities for inter-ethnic collaboration and equitable access to resources for men and women in all their diversity and with a focus on the green economic sector.

These results are intended to advance social cohesion by contributing to its three core dimensions of social relations, connectedness, and a focus on the common good (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2013). In order to ensure sustainability of the action, enhancing institutional capacities will be a guiding principle of this actions' intervention logic.

Groups and persons living in vulnerable situations, such as women and youths from minority communities as well as persons with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ who are often subject to intersectional discrimination and exclusion, will constitute primary target groups. By contributing to more inclusive institutions and a more inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society, this action contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 16, 5, 8, 1 and 10. Moreover, it contributes to consequent fulfilment of economic and social rights, and gender equality, in line with Sri Lanka's international human rights commitments.

Additionally, the action contributes to the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III thematic areas of engagement 1) Promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women; and 2) - Ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious island, with a population of 21 million inhabitants, which has been downgraded from middle income to lower middle-income country in 2020. Having overcome in 2009 three decades of civil war, the country that managed to experience periods of up to a 7% per year economic growth in the past years. However, in financial year 2020 the economy contracted by 3.6 % due to terrorist attacks in 2019 and COVID-19 pandemic leaving many with a daily struggle for their livelihoods and disproportionately affecting women. Access to GSP+ has been restored in 2017, providing the EU with substantial leverage in the political and economic domain. Significant balance of payment issues as well as non-sustainability of external debt are major concerns in the absence of an IMF program and constrain the country's ability to accept loans from donors.

Over a decade after the end of the armed conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan government, conflicts along ethno-religious fault lines remain deeply ingrained in the country's social fabric. While the Sri Lankan people long for peace and harmony, socio-economic disparities, lingering trauma and widespread mistrust continue to hinder substantial progress towards an inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society.

Serious constraints in developing institutional capacities over the past decades have left the country unable to effectively and sustainably respond to these manifold challenges. After tentative efforts were made to address long-standing grievances and underlying drivers of conflict under the previous regime between 2015 and 2019, the Presidential elections in November 2019 and a parliamentary election in August 2020 have changed the political arena.

The new government withdrew from the UN Human Rights Council's landmark Resolution 30/1 and rejected UNHRC Resolution 46/1 on promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka. While international actors are deeply concerned about an erosion of democratic institutions, shrinking space for civil society and a deteriorating human rights situation under the new regime, the Sri Lankan government claims to remain committed to a "domestically designed and executed process" to work towards reconciliation and justice for the Sri Lankan people. In a society that is still scarred from decades of conflict and hostility, and where multiple identity groups share the same geographic space, strengthening social cohesion is crucial. Social cohesion fosters strong relations between individuals and societal groups of all kinds, shapes a sense of belonging, promotes a positive feeling of connectedness with the country, and a focus on the common good.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Sri Lanka is a deeply divided society. After decades of conflict and over 25 years of civil war, its ethnic relations are severely polarised, and its political institutions severely weakened. The deep divisions are rooted in a pluralistic cultural setup: Of roughly 21 million Sri Lankans, 75% are Sinhalese, 11% Sri Lankan Tamils, 9% Sri Lankan Moors, and 4% Tamils of Indian origin. In addition, there are other, smaller minorities. Most Sinhalese are (Theravada) Buddhists, most Tamils are Hindu (mainly Shaivite) and most Moors are Muslim (mainly Sunni). Linguistic and religious cleavages hence reinforce each other, giving rise to sharp identity differences.

These differences have been exploited for centuries in the widespread colonial practice of “divide and rule” that deliberately favoured minorities to prevent cross-ethnic collaboration. After winning independence from the British, retributive actions such as the passing of the Ceylon Citizenship Act² or the Sinhala Only Act³ contributed further to deep-seated mutual grievances among the country’s different ethnic groups. Identity differences continue to be highlighted today by the fact that the main ethnic groups tend to live in spatially concentrated clusters. As far as inter-ethnic relations are concerned, the sense of “connectedness” in Sri Lanka is very low. In the absence of such connectedness, politicians very often have been able to exploit ethnic differences to build up a power base and undermine democratic institutions.

Ethnicity-based divisions, the marginalisation of certain segments of society, and weak institutions are key obstacles to cross-ethnic social cohesion in Sri Lanka, which hinges on recognition and inclusion as the most basic requirements. Resilient social relationships, positive emotional connectedness and positive state-society relations cannot grow in a community that is systematically excluded.

A strong sense of alienation between different communities has fuelled recent instances of violence, for example in anti-Muslim riots in Ampara and Kandy in 2018 or after the Easter Sunday Attacks in 2019. Many Sri Lankans are left alone to cope with the impacts of violence and unable to constructively engage in positive social relations. Women and LGBTIQ+ are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence, which has increased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These problems will be addressed by Result Area 1 of this intervention.

Exclusion, discrimination and marginalization are also fostered by public discourse, both in traditional and digital media. Widely circulated myths, hate speech and misinformation fuel divisions that hamper social cohesion; events such as the Easter Sunday Attacks and the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated ethno-nationalist narratives and other divisive content in the country. These issues will be addressed by Result Area 2 of this intervention.

Such exclusion can also be seen inter alia in the economic sector: Disparities in access to economic opportunities and the resulting income inequalities pose a challenge that has likely been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Women are facing discrimination regarding a whole spectrum of human rights, including basic economic and social rights. For example regarding access to employment and entrepreneurship: women labour-market participation is 38% compared to 79% of men; firms with female top managers, 8 % women, compared to 92 %. Similarly, existing challenges regarding labour market entry for marginalised groups have been further exacerbated by COVID-19. These challenges particularly affect women and youth from groups living in vulnerable situations such as IDPs, minority communities and persons with disabilities who often face intersectional discrimination and exclusion. These problems will be addressed by Result Area 3 of this intervention.

Stakeholders will include government bodies, that are the main duty-bearers of the action, both at central and local level in particular those mandated for social cohesion, reconciliation and inclusion – The Ministry of Justice, the likely invigorated Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR), State Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Integration Promotion Officers and other relevant bodies and committees mainly located at district and divisional level. Rights-holders of the action are people. Their rights will be represented by CSOs representing different groups of rights-holders such as persons with disabilities, minorities, IDPs and women, including women organisations and their networks for their familiarity with the local context and relationship with communities and authorities. CSOs representing youths to capitalise their strong interest in participating in policy making at all levels and complements and support of grassroots work. Journalists for their potential role in promoting constructive narratives on diversity; the private sector for its potential role in improving models for collaboration and inclusive employment and trade unions to promote social and economic justice.

The proposal is based on a ‘whole-of-society’ approach considered essential to contribute to the many processes needed – from central to sub-national levels – to promote social cohesion.

Primary beneficiaries, main targeted rights-holders of the action, will be ethnic minorities and groups living in vulnerable situations, as well as persons, such as women and youths from minority communities, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ and displaced people, who are often subject to intersectional exclusion and violence but who have potential to play, at the same time, important roles in promotion of peace.

² The Ceylon Citizenship Act No. 18 of 1948 was controversial law passed by the Ceylon Parliament which did not grant citizenship to Indian Tamils, who were 11% of the population,

³ The Sinhala Only Bill, (1956) act passed by the government of Ceylon made Sinhalese the official language of the country.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society in Sri Lanka.

The Specific Objective of this action is: To advance social cohesion in Sri Lanka.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the Specific Objective are:

1. Strengthened community and institutional resilience and capacities to prevention and countering violence and address discrimination and exclusion
2. A strengthened pluralist, inclusive, non-discriminative and fact-based discourse
3. Increased incentives and opportunities for inter-ethnic (economic) collaboration and equitable access to resources for women and men in all their diversity and with a focus on the green economic sector

3.2. Indicative Activities

Indicative activities related to Output 1:

- *Support women and youth initiatives to enhance their role as active citizens and change agents for social cohesion.*

This may include the designing, piloting and implementation of sustainable models for youth exchanges, youth camps and youth leadership programmes to enhance relationships among different ethno-religious communities and promote inter/intra community trust.

- *Enhance capacity development of government and civil society institutions on national and subnational levels.*

This may include enhancing institutional capacities including with regard to digitalisation which is even more crucial in the present COVID-19 context, bi-lingual capacities which increases access to public services for different ethno-linguistic groups, or cultural fluency to increase awareness and ultimately the performance of institutional staff in diverse teams.

- *Strengthen capacities of Psychosocial Support Service providers in targeted Psychosocial Support areas.*

This may include strengthening the capacities of service providers to more effectively and sustainably address gender-based violence, past trauma related to conflict or the impacts of COVID-19.

Indicative activities related to Output 2:

- *Support independent researchers to systematically track and analyse progress on social cohesion and reconciliation.*

This may include supporting the annual perception survey The Sri Lanka Barometer or initiatives to monitor Sri Lanka's implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals especially SDG 16.

- *Strengthen traditional/digital media actors and facilitate multi-media outreach campaigns to counter discrimination, misinformation and foster social cohesion.*

This may include supporting journalists with conflict-sensitive and responsible reporting, engaging social media influencers to promote inter- and intra-communal tolerance and understanding, or supporting media networks in finding synergies for common action to counteract the spread of negative content and/or fake news that fuels Sinhala ethno-nationalist narratives and contributes to discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation of certain groups (incl. those in the most vulnerable situations) hate speech and/or incitement to hatred.

- *Support youth, artists and cultural actors to facilitate dialogue platforms, cultural activities and creative expressions as a vector for social cohesion, with particular attention on equal participation of women and girls.*

This may include film productions and facilitating film screenings, photography exhibitions or supporting theatre groups that enable people from different groups to come together and openly discuss topics related to social cohesion, reconciliation and healing.

- *Support public historians to promote historical dialogue and archiving to contribute to social cohesion*

This may include promoting a mobile and virtual history museum or initiatives such as the Archive of Memory that critically reflect on Sri Lanka's post-independence history and give voice to pluralist and gender inclusive narratives of history, and/or the development of conflict-sensitive didactical material that respect and promote pluralism.

Indicative activities related to Output 3:

- *Incubate and support inclusive business models that serve the diverse needs of marginalised communities, with a focus on women and youth.*

This may include business coaching for start-ups, entrepreneurship, skills development particularly for youth or women who have less access to economic opportunities, or improving access to financial services which through the provision of credit promotes growth for enterprises and in turn creates new economic opportunities. It will include also support to SMEs and star-ups in the area of green and digital solutions and pilot interventions which support innovative sustainable initiative to promote nature based solutions, and tap, wherever relevant, into the potential of the informal business sector and offer contemporarily financial incentives and opportunities for inter-ethnic collaborations and societal and economic resilience.

- *Support large, medium and small businesses to implement practical measures towards social cohesion, with particular focus on women-led businesses.*

This may include supporting businesses in improving their diversity management, i.e. to hire diverse talent and support an inclusive workplace that values and protects each of its employees equally by providing resources to learn from, connect with and respect individual differences, in turn enhancing productivity as people work together more effectively.

- *Strengthen communities to engage in collective management of community resources/ infrastructure.*

This may include bringing together people from different communities to collaborate in management of common goods and resource areas prone to social tensions, such as fishery, livestock, forestry, water, biodiversity or to collaborate on small community infrastructure projects, such as roads or markets, that are of public and economic benefit for all.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

The action is unlikely to have significant adverse impacts on the environment. Environmental goods such as biodiversity, intact ecosystems etc. are not affected by the activities pertaining to the action, which focuses on the promotion of social cohesion and peace by fostering and enhancing human connections among different communities in the country. To the contrary some initiatives under Output Area 3 will contribute to promote green economy and as opportunity to promote co-benefits incentives for collaboration. Further, the project does not intend to work with partners that could have significant adverse impacts on the environment; the relevant governmental, non-governmental and grassroots partners all work in the field of interpersonal relations and strengthening of human capacities. When partnering with private companies, their adherence to relevant environmental protection measures will constitute a fundamental prerequisite for any kind of cooperation.

During detailed designing of the action and the inception phase, further assessment will be carried out to pre-empt possible environment risks and identify opportunities for nature based solutions, green and circular economy including those based on existing successful experiences and positive lessons.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that the gender equality is an important and deliberate objective, although not the principal reason to undertaking the initiative. Gender equality will therefore be mainstreamed in the activities based on the gender analysis and indications of the Gender Profile.

Human Rights

While the international actors are deeply concerned about a deterioration of the human rights situation in the country, the Sri Lanka government claims to remain committed to a domestically designed and executed process to work toward justice. The action was strategically designed to support the Sri Lankan government in this endeavour while

at the same time enabling it to fulfil its international human rights commitments. The upholding and realisation of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments constitutes one of the main principles of this action. One of the main components of the action's intervention logic is the development of capacities of duty bearers to meet their obligations vis-à-vis human rights, and rights holders to claim their rights; potential negative impacts on human rights will be closely monitored in the action's risk monitoring system (see also above). Vulnerable groups, such as women and youth from minority communities who are often subject to intersectional exclusion, will constitute primary target groups.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that the intervention is designed to include, benefit and be accessible to the most marginalised, including disable people who continue to be on the periphery of decision making, learning, capacity building, mental health, accessing services etc. The inclusion of persons with disabilities and the mainstreaming of disabilities concerns into the action will be cross cutting and will be effectively tracked.

Democracy

Universal values of democracy, good governance and rule of law and human rights for all will be embedded in the Action by promoting effective governance institutions and systems that are responsive to public needs, deliver essential services and promote inclusive growth. The Action will respond to the challenges in the area of democracy by contributing to improving democratic governance and constructive inclusive social dialogue. Involvement of civil society organisations representing widely different groups of rights-holders, and promotion of youths' leadership will contribute to catalyse more peaceful society and inclusive democratic governance.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Mainstreaming conflict sensitivity, or the do-no-harm approach is a fundamental guiding principle of this action and has not only been considered in the design but will also be considered in the planning as well as implementation and monitoring of every partnership or activity. Mainstreaming the do-no-harm principle is closely connected to other cross-cutting issues, for example languages: if activities are only accessible in one language and hence to people from in principle only one ethno-linguistic group, this can increase tensions instead of alleviating them through the respective activity. In line with the Joint Communication 'A Strategic Approach to Resilience in EU's external action' (JOIN/2017/021), issues of resilience will be covered significantly by the Action. Both in terms of adaptability of the state and institutions to maintain and restore functions and social and political cohesion in respect to democracy, rule of law, human and fundamental rights and as capacity of societies to manage opportunities and risks in a peaceful and stable manner in face of external pressures.

Disaster Risk Reduction

As part of strengthening resilience of people related to wide range of shocks including economic, disaster, climate change, leading to social tension, the Action will support public engagement in decision making and disaster risks reduction processes. DRR will be addressed cross cutting and directly especially through Output 3 which offers the opportunity to promote nature based solutions in relation to coastal protection, mitigation of floods and landslides in affected areas.

3.4. Risks and Lessons Learnt

| Category | Risks | Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low) | Impact (High/ Medium/ Low) | Mitigating measures |
|-----------------|--|---|---|--|
| 1,3 | Persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic | H | H | Digitalisation of program activities; Psychosocial Support PSS measures (see output 1) addressing COVID-19 |
| 1 | Increasingly hostile perception of international organisations as "unwarranted foreign interference" | M | M | Full transparency in reporting and coordinating with political partner; Encourage constant political dialogue between EUD/AA and GoSL |

| | | | | |
|---|--|-----|-----|--|
| 1 | Continued grievances, discontent in relation to discrimination or trauma of violence and feeling of exclusion preventing communities from engaging in project activities | L | H | Psychosocial Support measures (see output 2) and economic incentives (output 3) addressing grievances, discontent |
| 1 | Further increase in Sinhala ethno-nationalist sentiment or violence/ conflict between Sinhala majority and religious and ethnic minorities | M | M | <p>SL Barometer monitors trends and can be used as early warning system;</p> <p>Counter negative sentiments, hate speech and incitement to hatred using media campaigns (output 2)</p> <p>Close monitoring that will be based on data disaggregated by at least sex, age, disability and specific groups when applicable in order to promote equal participation, non-discrimination and transparency.</p> <p>A conflict sensitive approach and do no harm approach will be applied incl. flexible procedures and a grievance mechanism to report any wrongdoing or a complaint.</p> |
| 2 | Lack of political will and appropriate policies and programs that address social cohesion | H-M | M | Political dialogue with national government, also on reconciliation agenda. Adapt working areas / partnerships (e.g. more focus on civil society, gender equality see also lessons learnt on diversification) |
| 2 | Shrinking space to work with civil society organisations | M | M-L | Adapt working areas / partnerships (e.g. more focus on output 3, see also lessons learnt on diversification). Political dialogue with national government and relevant ministries. |
| 2 | Socio-economic gender norms as well as cultural and social stigmatisation prevent participation of women and/or other marginalised groups in project activities | M | M | Pro-active addressing of gender norms and international commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment (incl. SDGs), when conceptualising and implementing relevant measures (outputs 2 and 3) |

Lessons Learnt:

Lessons learnt and recommendations from several monitoring missions and strategic evaluations, including the independent Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the Strengthening Reconciliation Processes in Sri Lanka (SRP) programme, have been included in the design of this action. These can be summarised into four main areas: 1) diversification, 2) interconnectedness, 3) capacity building, 4) continuity.

1) On diversification, the political context in Sri Lanka has been highly volatile in recent years. After a peaceful transition of power from the presidency of Mahinda Rajapaksa to the administration of his successor Maithripala Sirisena in 2015, political infighting within Sirisena's coalition government culminated in a constitutional crisis in October 2018 that rendered his Government almost dysfunctional. This paved the way for the election of now President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and a landslide win for his party at the parliamentary elections, marking another significant shift in the political arena. As a consequence, significant changes and shifts in the institutional set-up of government – such as repeated cabinet reshuffling, personnel changes, and alterations in the mandates of partner ministries – constitute a major limiting factor in effectively and efficiently delivering sustainable outcomes.

Working in such a volatile context – which was complicated further by the COVID-19 pandemic and events such as the Easter Sunday Attacks – demands flexibility and adaptability. Diversification, both horizontal and vertical, is hence a key feature of this action. Past experiences (as captured by SRP's MTE) have shown that cooperation with a multitude of stakeholders from the private sector, government and civil society (horizontal diversification) at national, subnational and grassroots levels (vertical diversification) make it possible to quickly respond to changes in context by adapting working modalities and prioritising working with some partners over others if necessary. This also constitutes a risk mitigation measure that increases the action's overall resilience.

2) On interconnectedness, complex concepts such as peace or social cohesion relate to many different aspects of people's lives. Consequently, they cannot be sustainably advanced by tackling merely one of these aspects but should instead be addressed from multiple, closely interrelated angles. In other words, social cohesion calls for a "whole-of-society" approach. This lesson is built into this action by pursuing the specific objective through three outputs engaging in different areas of intervention – for instance business support, psychosocial support, media, arts – and thus contributing to a more holistic approach to social cohesion and ultimately peace. To further foster this interconnectedness and prevent working in silos, many of those areas, particularly institutional capacity building, are relevant across the three outputs; so are cross-cutting issues such as do no harm, gender, and languages.

3) In relation to capacity building, not least due to its violent past, institutional capacities of both government institutions and civil society organisations in Sri Lanka are severely lacking. This constitutes a major limiting factor for implementation on the one hand and for achieving not only short-term, but long-term sustainable impacts on the other hand. Former evaluations such as the SRP-MTE have shown that a relevant strategy in overcoming this limitation lies in understanding the dynamics and needs of both governmental and civil society institutions and in cultivating strong relationships especially with relevant government officials. Institutions need to have the capacity to effectively and efficiently respond to and address the needs of the population, even (and especially) once immediate support from foreign-funded actions has ended. Institutional capacity development is hence an integral part of this action and one of the guiding principles of this action's intervention logic.

4) In relation to continuity, this action is directly in line with a strong recommendation from the SRP-MTE towards continuity. In a post-conflict context replete with interconnected political and societal challenges, progress towards sustainable peace and development is necessarily slow. Change happens over time, and the continuity of successive actions is key to achieving it. This action hence intends to build on previous experiences (particularly from the SRP program), not only in its design but also during implementation. It will make use of the opportunity to seamlessly take over strong working relationships with relevant government institutions and continue partnerships that have been well established in the past. Working with the same civil society partners over several years does not only facilitate collaboration, it also enhances the quality of institutional capacity development that can be delivered to the partners to enhance their role in the social cohesion landscape in Sri Lanka and ensure sustainability of this action.

3.5. The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is shaped by considerations at the nexus of social cohesion, institutions and prosperity (see Easterley et al. 2006). Empirical evidence suggests that in most post-war societies and emerging economies, a lack of social cohesion contributes to weak institutions which limits growth and prosperity. Conversely, strong economic growth is likely to be a key feature of peaceful societies governed by effective public institutions, and such institutions are in turn likely to be a key feature in societies where social cohesion is high. This is usually the case in countries with lower inequalities and more linguistic homogeneity. However, there is no adverse effect of ethnolinguistic diversity on growth where institutions are sufficiently well developed. The corollary is that social cohesion and good institutions are most necessary and beneficial where there are ethnolinguistic divisions. Formal institutions can strengthen the “social glue” that is in shorter supply when there are ethnolinguistic divisions and tensions.

Theory of Change:

Hence, the specific objective of this action is to advance social cohesion (outcome). Based on the empirical evidence presented above, social cohesion in combination with stronger institutions will contribute to a more inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society (impact).

If women and youth become active citizens for social cohesion and inter-community tolerance and understanding, and institutional capacities, at least at local levels, are enhanced, and Psycho-social services are strengthened (through key activities), and the assumptions outlined in the logframe apply (meetings and gathering are not hampered, beneficiaries are motivated and CSO leadership is exercised), **then** community and institutional resilience and capacities in response to violence, discrimination and exclusion will be strengthened (output 1).

If this action will lead to increased economic incentives and opportunities for cross-cultural collaboration in the economic sector (output 3), strengthened community and institutional resilience and capacities in response to violence and exclusion (output 1), and to a strengthened pluralistic, inclusive and fact-based public and media discourse (output 2), and the assumptions outlined in the logframe will apply (no major economic downturn, CSO leadership is exercised, political and security situation remain at current level, internet and media remain accessible), **then** social cohesion will be advanced (outcome).

If independent research to track and analyse progress on social cohesion is supported, traditional and media actors are more accountable, dialogue platforms are facilitated, and historical inter-community dialogue is supported (through key activities), and the assumptions outlined in the logframe apply (internet and media remain accessible, target group feel safe to operate, influential extremist voices remain within manageable limits), **then** a pluralistic, inclusive and fact-based public discourse and media will be strengthened (output 2).

If inclusive business models working across and with diverse community on common objectives are supported, and communities engage in collective management of resources/infrastructure as opportunities for peace dividends (through key activities), and the assumptions outlined in the logframe apply (Private sector incentivized to cooperate, no major economic downturn, government resource allocations to target area remain stable), **then** cross-community collaboration, tolerance and understanding through the economic sector will be strengthened (output 3).

3.6. Logical Framework Matrix

At action level, the indicative logframe should have a maximum of 10 expected results (Impact/Outcome(s)/Output(s)).

It constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

| Results | Results chain: Main expected results | Indicators: | Baselines | Targets | Sources of data | Assumptions |
|---------|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| Impact | To contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society in Sri Lanka | 1. Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive (disaggregated by sex, age, disability and population group) (SDG Indicator 16.7.2) 2. Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months (disaggregated by sex, age, disability and population group) (SDG Indicator 16.1.3) | From 0% as reference to be defined at the start of project | 1. Positive trend (to be further specified in DoA) Increase by 10 % 2. Negative trend (to be further specified in DoA) Decrease by 10 % | 1. SDG progress reports (SDG 16/5/8) 2. SDG progress reports (SDG 16/5/8) | <i>Not applicable</i> |
| Outcome | To advance social cohesion in Sri Lanka | 1. Score of social cohesion, 2. Score on trust in institutions, 3. Score on acceptance of diversity, 4. Score on civic participation 5. Score of gender equality or prevalence gender violence 6. Number of persons involved in local reconciliation and social cohesion, confidence-building initiatives thanks to support of the EU-funded intervention, disaggregated by sex and ethnicity 7. *Extent to which local and national media portray positive images of women and girls in political and public life (EU GAP-III). | From 0% as reference to be defined at the start of project | 1.1- 1.6. Improved score by 10% at the end of the project (to be further defined) 1.7. 10% improvement (=some qualitative improvement of ways of women and girls involvement in public life is portrayed | 1. Bertelsmann Stiftung Social Cohesion Radar 2. Bertelsmann Stiftung Social Cohesion Radar 3. Bertelsmann Stiftung Social Cohesion Radar 4. Bertelsmann Stiftung Social Cohesion Radar 5. Annual Sri Lanka Barometer Report 6. Project reports and monitoring data 7 Project reports and monitoring data | National and international political context remains conducive for programmatic intervention on social cohesion Commitment and enabling space to foster cohesive relationships among different groups especially group leaders |

| | | | | | | |
|----------|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| Output 1 | <p>Strengthened community and institutional resilience and capacities in relation to violence including gender based violence and address exclusion</p> | <p>1.1. *Number of individuals directly benefiting from EU supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict peace-building and/or conflict prevention (EURF 2.28) (disaggregated by sex, age and population group)</p> <p>1.2. Percentage of participants involved in program-supported initiatives who confirm increased resilience and capacities in response to violence and exclusion (disaggregated by sex and age)</p> <p>1.3. Percentage of partner organisations that have institutionalised measures to increase resilience and capacities in response to violence -based and exclusion with support of the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>1.4. Number of youth (girls and boys) and women participating in cross-community exchange models supported by the EU-funded intervention, disaggregated by sex</p> <p>1.5. Percentage of government and independent practitioners and partner representatives (government and Civil Society) trained by EU funded intervention with increased knowledge and/or skills in psychosocial service delivery and outreach (disaggregated by sex)</p> <p>1.6. Number of people benefitting from programmes to counter Gender Based Violence (EU GAP-III)</p> <p>1.7. ** Number of grass-root CSO benefitting from EU support.</p> | <p>Baselines will be defined during the first year of implementation. Scores in terms of percentage will be calculated referring to data at 0% at the time of the baseline.</p> | <p>1.1.1. At least 10,000 individuals directly benefiting from programmatic activities</p> <p>1.1.2. At least 70% of participants confirm increased resilience and capacities as a result of program-supported activities</p> <p>1.1.3. At least 60% of partner organisations have institutionalised measures to increase resilience and capacities</p> <p>1.1.4. At least 1,500 women and youth (combined) participated in cross-community exchange models (disaggregated data).</p> <p>1.1.5. At least 70% of participants confirm using their newly acquired knowledge and skills</p> <p>1.1.6. At least 1000 people benefitting from GBV programmes</p> <p>1.1.7. At least 500 CSO benefitting from EU support.</p> | <p>1.1. Project-internal monitoring</p> <p>1.2. Survey/focus group discussion</p> <p>1.3. Reports from implementing organisations</p> <p>1.4. Project-internal monitoring</p> <p>1.5. Survey/focus group discussion; cross analysis of implementing organisations' reports</p> <p>1.6. Project reports and monitoring data.</p> <p>1.7. EU Delegation data</p> | <p>Organisation of meetings, gatherings and events is possible</p> <p>Targeted communities and individual well informed and motivated to participate in project activities</p> <p>Capacity, time and willingness of CSOs to play a lead role in project activities</p> <p>Covid-19 restrictions on public life and natural disasters allow project activities</p> |
|----------|---|--|---|---|--|---|

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| Output 2 | A strengthened pluralist, inclusive and fact-based public discourse | <p>2.1. Extent to which initiatives/products supported by the EU-funded intervention contribute to more pluralistic, inclusive and fact-based public discourse</p> <p>2.2. Percentage of project partner organisations that have integrated public debates, traditional/social media approaches, art-related/historical dialogue events to promote pluralistic and inclusive discourse into their regular programmes</p> <p>2.3. Number and quality of public debates (involving diverse audiences) based on findings of annual Sri Lanka Barometer survey supported by the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>2.4. Number of people reached by traditional/digital media actors and campaigns that engage in positive or firm messaging to counter hate speech and disinformation</p> <p>2.5. Number of media actors trained on ethically sensitive journalism and reporting and other relevant issues</p> <p>2.6. Percentage of participants in art-related dialogue events who confirm to have questioned/challenged their assumptions about other groups (disaggregated by sex and age)</p> <p>2.7. Number of public historians who show a high level of personal initiative to engage in historical dialogue/archiving initiatives</p> | Baselines will be defined during the first year of implementation. Scores in terms of percentage will be calculated referring to data at 0% at the time of the baseline | <p>1.2.1. At least 50% of project-supported initiatives/products annually have been taken up in the wider public discourse in Sri Lanka</p> <p>1.2.2. At least 50% of partner organisations have integrated relevant activities/approaches into their regular programmes</p> <p>1.2.3. 10% improvement (=some qualitative improvement of ways of women and girls involvement in public life is portrayed.</p> <p>1.2.3. At least 12 public debates involving diverse audiences for every annual barometer, with participants rating the debates as at least a 7 on a scale from 1 to 10</p> <p>1.2.4 At least 1 million people reached by program-supported media campaigns</p> <p>1.2.5. At least 150 media actors trained</p> <p>1.2.6. At least 50% of participants confirm to have questioned/ challenged their assumptions</p> <p>1.2.7. At least 15 history teachers/lecturers and another 15 public historians show a high level of personal initiative</p> | <p>2.1. Project-internal monitoring; external media analysis</p> <p>2.2. Reports and cross reports from implementing organisations</p> <p>2.3. Project-internal monitoring</p> <p>2.4. Project-internal monitoring</p> <p>2.5. Project-internal monitoring/ external media analysis</p> <p>2.6. Project- internal monitoring</p> <p>2.7. Survey/focus group discussion</p> <p>2.8. Project-internal monitoring</p> | <p>Political, economic and security situation continue at least at the same level to allow space for constructive narrative</p> <p>Supported local actors are credible and feel safe to operate</p> <p>Internet and social media are still freely accessible</p> <p>Influence of voices of factions of extremists remain within manageable limits</p> |
|----------|---|--|---|--|--|---|

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|----------|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Output 3 | <p>Increased incentives and opportunities for inter-ethnic collaboration and equitable access to resources with a focus on the green economic sector for women and men</p> | <p>3.1. **Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support a) firms b) people (all financial services) c) people (digital financial services) (GERF 2.14)</p> <p>3.2. Number of initiatives supported by the EU-funded intervention facilitating cross-community collaboration in the economic sector</p> <p>3.3. Percentage of initiatives supported by the EU-funded intervention with a focus on the green economic sector</p> <p>3.4. Percentage of women and youth (girls and boys) involved in project-supported initiatives and belonging to different religious and ethnic communities who gained access to decent employment or new business opportunities with support of the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>3.5. Percentage of managers and employees in large, medium and small businesses involved in project-supported by the EU-funded intervention who confirm that diversity management has improved working conditions/productivity (disaggregated by sex, age and population group)</p> <p>3.6. Number of initiatives supported by the EU-funded intervention in which people (women and men) from different communities collaborate to jointly manage community resources/infrastructure</p> <p>3.7. **Number of people directly benefitting from EU supported interventions that aim to reduce social and economic inequality, disaggregated by sex (EURF 2.15)</p> <p>3.8. **Number of people who have benefited from institution or workplace based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU a) all VET/skills development b) only VET skills development for digitalisation (EURF 2.14) (disaggregated by sex)</p> | <p>Baselines will be defined during the first year of implementation. Scores in terms of percentage will be calculated referring to data at 0% at the time of the baseline</p> | <p>1.3.1. At least 1,200 beneficiaries in communities supported by the program have gained access to finance services for a green economy, disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity</p> <p>1.3.2. At least 36 initiatives facilitate cross-community collaboration in the economic sector</p> <p>1.3.3. At least 50% of program-supported initiatives focus on the green economic sector</p> <p>1.3.4. At least 50% of women and youth involved in project-supported initiatives have gained access to decent employment or new business opportunities disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity</p> <p>1.3.5. At least 50% of managers and employees participating in dedicated programme activities on these issues confirm that diversity management has improved working conditions/productivity disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity</p> <p>1.3.6. At least 36 community-based infrastructure or resource management initiatives are jointly managed by people from different communities</p> <p>1.3.7. At least 10,000 people</p> <p>1.3.8. At least 5000 people (sex disaggregated).</p> | <p>3.1. Project- internal monitoring</p> <p>3.2. Project- internal monitoring</p> <p>3. Project- internal monitoring</p> <p>3.4. Survey/focus group discussions</p> <p>3.5. Survey/focus group discussions</p> <p>3.6. Reports from implementing organisations</p> <p>3.7. Project- internal monitoring</p> | <p>Private sector motivated and incentivised to take part in project activities</p> <p>No (low-medium) economic downturn, especially on target value-chains, makes it more difficult to achieve growth of target SMEs and economic activities</p> <p>Government and other stakeholders commitment and resource allocation to economic growth of marginalised areas and specific groups such as women and youth remain stable</p> |
|----------|--|--|--|--|---|--|

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this Action, it is envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement. Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁴.

4.3.1. Indirect Management with a Member State Organisation

This action may be implemented in indirect management with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). This implementation entails management of activities aimed to achieve the overall objective: 'To contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society in Sri Lanka', its specific objective 'To advance social cohesion in Sri Lanka' by means of three result areas as described in section 3.

This envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: Multiple-year experience in Sri Lanka in the area of social cohesion and reconciliation, as well as good long-standing reputation and acceptance among civil society and Government, demonstrated respectively through finalisation of contracts for implementation of projects activities in area of social cohesion and reconciliation, and through agreements (i.e. Memorandum of Understanding) with Government Line Ministries (Government). Good technical capacity to formulate and manage project implementation, including the presence of a core management team with expertise in the areas of social cohesion and reconciliation. Demonstrated capacity to mobilise human and financial resources for implementation of the planned activities and backstopping.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement pillar-assessed entity using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realization of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5. Indicative Budget

| Indicative Budget components | EU contribution (amount in EUR) | Third party contribution (Foreign Office of the |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

⁴ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

| | | Federal Republic of Germany) (amount in EUR) |
|--|-----------|---|
| Indirect management with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) – cf. section 4.3.1. | 7 750 000 | 3 000 000 |
| Evaluation - cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3. | 250 000 | N.A. |
| Totals | 8 000 000 | 3 000 000 |

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

A steering committee co-chaired by the EU Delegation and a leading government ministry will be established and convened on regular basis. The steering committee will include a balanced representation from relevant government ministries and departments involved with implementation on one side, and representatives of civil society on the other.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the Action.

Gender equality, human rights and rights-based approach expertise will be ensured during the implementation of the Action as relevant. They will also be integrated in relevant capacity building activities and documents (i.e. ToRs etc.), as minimum requirements of expertise.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

Monitoring and evaluation will assess gender equality results and implementation of rights-based approach working method principles (applying all human rights for all, meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making, non-discrimination and equality, accountability and rule of law for all and transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data) in terms of implementation of the project and project outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation will be based on indicators that are disaggregated (minimum sex and age when applicable). In order to monitor development and inequalities, data/indicators will be disaggregated even further including disability, group etc. when applicable.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles for data collection, baseline surveys, analysis and monitoring will be tasked to a dedicated monitoring unit established within the project management team of the implementing agency, and where necessary to specialised entities contracted and financed through the project budget. Data, including baselines, and statistics may be retrieved also from national database or specialised institutions. Allocations under Support Measures may be utilised for audits and/or additional visibility activities if necessary.

Central to the idea of setting up the Sri Lanka Barometer under output 2 is the establishing and sustaining the relationship between the right-holders and the duty-bearers around the concept of holding the former accountable for their obligations towards the latter.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a mid-term and a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultant contracted by the Commission.

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out for problem solving, learning purposes in particular with respect to possible adjustments of the strategies in order to achieve the expected results.

A final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the action will address sensitive issues in politically charged context.

These will be carried out for learning purposes, in particular with respect to the effectiveness and possible adjustments of the strategies in order to achieve the expected results.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least six months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination⁵. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project. Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

APPENDIX 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention⁶ (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress.

⁵ See best [practice of evaluation dissemination](#)

⁶ [ARES \(2021\)4204912](#) - For the purpose of consistency between terms in OPSYS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI have harmonised 5 key terms, including 'action' and 'Intervention' where an 'action' is the content (or part of the content) of a Commission Financing Decision and 'Intervention' is a coherent set of activities and results which constitutes an effective level for the operational follow-up by the EC of its operations on the ground. See more on the [concept of intervention](#).

Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a ‘support entities’. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention is defined in the related Action Document and it is revisable; it can be a(n) (group of) action(s) or a (group of) contract(s).

Tick in the left side column one of the three possible options for the level of definition of the Primary Intervention(s) identified in this action.

In the case of ‘Group of actions’ level, add references to the present action and other action concerning the same Primary Intervention.

In the case of ‘Contract level’, add the reference to the corresponding budgetary items in point 4.6, Indicative Budget.

| | | |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Option 1: Action level | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Single action | Present action: all contracts in the present action |
| Option 2: Group of actions level | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Group of actions | Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#): |
| Option 3: Contract level | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 1 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 2 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Single Contract 3 | |
| | (...) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Group of contracts 1 | |