



**Development
Cooperation Programme**

**Changing the Game —
Peace by Peace**

———— 2018-2021 ————

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CMI is an independent conflict resolution organisation that operates in complex political and security environments. Strategic partnerships and a low-profile approach based on mutual trust and local ownership are at the heart of the CMI approach. We bring added value for Finnish foreign and development policy by addressing the root causes of conflict and obstacles to development in the areas deemed critical for the future of Europe. We add to the public understanding of development and conflict resolution at a time when the re-emergence of great power politics poses challenges to international peace and security.

Work to prevent and resolve violent conflicts is needed now more than ever. Current approaches struggle to address changing dynamics. In the context of internal conflicts, official actors have to be wary of lending legitimacy to non-state actors or undermining the role of the state bodies. The deterioration of mutual trust undercuts the ability of multilateral institutions to broker peace, as witnessed in the case of Syria.

CMI's independent status gives us space to act when official actors cannot. We can flexibly move between the various formal and informal processes and actors, bridging gaps where they exist and adding to the overall effectiveness of peace efforts. Our regional expertise, professional methods and relationships developed over 18 years, drawing on the legacy of Martti Ahtisaari, enable us to complement official peace efforts effectively and flexibly. We make good use of our Finnish and Nordic value base of transparency, pragmatism and fairness, to nurture trusted relations and direct access to parties in various conflicts.

Peace mediation is critical for advancing the global development agenda, especially in fragile states. Sustainable development rests on the notion of "positive peace", justice and strong institutions as called for in the Agenda 2030. In addressing challenges related to the political system and state-society relationships, peace mediation is particularly valuable to aiding development in fragile states. Indonesian Aceh, where President Ahtisaari and CMI mediated the peace agreement in 2005, is a compelling example of how a successful peace process can enable sustainable economic development, poverty reduction and human development. The

results of peace are solid, but they take time to become fully apparent.

This programme aims to consolidate CMI's position as a leading independent organisation in conflict resolution internationally, building on our track record and distinctive strengths. We seek a closer professional partnership with Finnish actors, both official and unofficial, to strengthen the practice of peacemaking and international comprehensive security, and to identify and implement distinctive Finnish added value. Based on the lessons learned and positive examples from the last programme period, we have identified areas where we believe we can create even greater results to advance the cause of peace.

We believe that strengthening CMI's capacity as a well-positioned and effective non-governmental actor in the world of conflict resolution would well serve both Finnish and global interests. Peace mediation is one of the top priorities of Finland, and it has the potential to be the flagship of our foreign policy – an area in which Finland could punch well above its weight in the international arena. CMI aspires to be part of that story.

The overall objective of this programme is to prevent and resolve violent political conflicts. This is, of necessity, an ambitious goal. Our specific contributions are categorised into three outcomes:

- to improve the quality and effectiveness of peace processes. This is done by contributing to a conducive environment, strengthening participation of key actors in a manner supportive of national ownership, and improving the substantive quality of peace processes and agreements.
- to enhance the resilient agency of relevant actors. This means that all parties central to the processes have the necessary expertise, capacities and opportunities for constructive participation, including marginalised groups, especially women.
- to strengthen the international practice of peace-making through our own experience. This actively shaping the topics for international peacemaking discussions, sharing

2. BACKGROUND

Over the past twenty years, there has been a steady decline in the number and intensity of conflicts worldwide. This trend is now reversing: the number of complex intra-state conflicts is on the rise, with a corresponding increase in the number of civilian casualties.¹ In parallel with this, great power politics have made a pronounced return at the expense of recognised international institutions and norms. The rise of “muscular diplomacy” threatens gains made in the field of peace mediation. This is particularly felt in terms of inclusive approaches to peace and security, as new policy openings by major powers become increasingly insensitive to women’s and minority rights, and even to human rights in general.

The prevalence of internal conflicts highlights the inadequacy of existing international conflict resolution structures to address conflicts that are effectively transnational and fragmented in nature. This trend coincides with the steady contraction of space for civil society in conflict-affected and fragile countries. Most conflicts stem from local grievances and the failure of political and societal processes, but they interact with regional and international interests. In prolonged conflicts, the intertwining of local, regional and international factors renders it difficult to address conflict factors in isolation. European countries, including Finland, are not immune from the fragmentation and globalisation of conflict.

Peace mediation is recognised as an effective and low-cost tool for conflict resolution. This is supported by a growing body of normative frameworks at different levels. The need to advance mediation and conflict resolution is supported by numerous case studies that affirm the effectiveness of political solutions. A RAND corporation study showed that political processes were most effective in ending terrorist groups (43% of 648 cases between 1968-2006), while military force was the least effective (7% of the cases).² Research by the Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative and the Graduate Institute of Geneva confirms the link between inclusiveness

and long-term effectiveness of peace process³.

Efforts to resolve conflict through dialogue also make economic sense. A study commissioned by the British Department for International Development found that “conflict prevention is (or would have been) a cost-effective investment for the international community in all the case studies chosen” and that “a spend of £1 on conflict prevention will, on average, generate savings of £4.1 to the international community.”⁴

Against the backdrop of rising great power politics and resurgence of violent internal conflicts, these established gains in conflict resolution norms and capacities now require defending and further tailoring to respond to the changing conflict landscape. Despite the recognition and evidence of effectiveness of peace mediation, the international community faces several challenges in its meaningful application. Unresolved tensions degrade trust that is pivotal to the functioning of multilateral institutions, and make it more difficult for the international community to give clear mandates, realistic objectives and necessary political support to mediation efforts. This is most evident in the UN Security Council, as the ultimate arbiter of international conflicts has been unable to overcome differences among its permanent members.

The principle of **complementarity and coordination** is also key in the Finnish context, where CMI seeks to build further synergies. Peace mediation is also linked to Finnish identity more broadly. The Finnish tradition of peace mediation is symbolised by the career and Nobel Peace Prize of CMI’s founder, President Martti Ahtisaari, but peace mediation is also recognised in the Finnish Constitution through participation in “international co-operation for the protection of peace and human rights and for the development of society”.⁵

Peace mediation has a clear place in the current Finnish government’s programme, and in the latest Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy and the Government Report on Development Policy. Moreover, it is a core component of the national brand, which emphasises

1 See Uppsala Conflict Database data 2014-2016, Uppsala University

2 Seth G. Jones and Martin Libicki How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa’ida. Rand Corporation (2008).

3 “Broadening Participation in Political Negotiations and Implementation” research project Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (2015).

4 Malcolm Chalmers, Spending to Save? An Analysis of the Cost Effectiveness of Conflict Prevention. University of Bradford (2004)

5 Constitution of Finland, Chapter 1, Section 1 (2000)

Finland as a constructive and pragmatic actor in the international community.

Overall, mediation is a fundamental component of Finnish foreign policy. Finland has been a frontrunner in seeking a more integrated approach that acknowledges the interconnections between security, development and diplomacy. Peace mediation enjoys strong public support in Finland as a field of expertise through which the country can influence global politics. For its part, the popularity of the #äläkerronmartialle fundraising campaign commemorating President Ahtisaari's legacy and CMI's commitment to conflict resolution, demonstrate the importance of peace mediation to the Finnish general public, private sector, and decision-makers alike.

Peace mediation is critical for advancing the global development agenda. The essence of CMI's approach can be found in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which states that: "There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without

sustainable development".

With the Agenda, the UN General Assembly adopted 17 universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which together form the basis for development policy worldwide, including Finnish and EU policies. The linkages between peace, security and development are those that CMI seeks to reinforce. Among the international community there is a stronger understanding and evidence of how conflict represents an anti-thesis to development. **Peace is not simply the absence of war.** The prevalence of low-intensity internal conflict serves to remind us that stabilisation or "negative peace" is a necessary, but by itself an insufficient condition for development. Sustainable development requires strengthening the inclusiveness and responsiveness of state institutions to sources of instability. This need for "positive peace", justice and strong institutions has been explicitly recognised in SDG 16 – to which CMI's Development Cooperation Programme directly contributes.

BOX 1: CMI's Programme Contributes to SDGs and Finnish Development Policy Priorities

In adopting the Agenda 2030 as the normative development framework, the UN has strongly responded to changes in global security and development. The Agenda 2030 highlights the interdependencies and complexities of global cooperation, and the centrality of sustainable peace and societal wellbeing and security as a precursor for development. In aiming to prevent and resolve violent political conflict, CMI's work is well aligned with global and Finnish development policy priorities. Peace and development go hand in hand. CMI's work for strengthening positive peace helps to improve the environment for the realisation of the Agenda 2030's Sustainable Development Goals.

Specifically, the CMI programme contributes to:

- **SDG 16:** Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- **Finnish Priority area III:** Societies have become more democratic and better functioning

CMI's work, emphasising women's effective participation in peacemaking, contributes also to:

- **SDG 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- **Finnish Priority area I:** The rights and status of women and girls have been strengthened

CMI's programmatic objectives fully address **SDG 16 and Priority area III** and contribute to its realisation: promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. Conflict prevention and resolution directly to the reduction of violence and related deaths (**Target 16.1**). The focus areas and means adopted in CMI's programme strongly support efforts to ensure inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making (**Target 16.7**) and to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions (**Target 16.6**). This is achieved through, for instance, by enhancing the inclusivity and representativeness of peace processes and increasing the capacities of central actors. It also contributes to more democratically functioning political institutions and enabling an environment for civil society to function. Indirectly, but nonetheless significantly, CMI's programme supports the broader realisation of representative and inclusive institutions (**Targets 16.7 and 16.6**), promoting rule of law (**Target 16.3**) and reducing corruption (**Targets 16.5**). In the longer term, successful peace processes, again, are a prerequisite for several other targets of goal 16 and priority area III.

Supporting women's meaningful participation in conflict resolution is a strategic priority for CMI. Our work in this regard directly contributes to two **SDG 5** targets and **Priority area I:** ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere (**Target 5.1**) and ensuring women's full and effective participation in decision-making in political, economic and public life (**Target 5.5**). Furthermore, women's participation in peace processes strengthens their position in societal and political systems, and contributes to the prevention of discrimination in the longer term.

Enhancing **women's participation and gender equality** is a core component of the Agenda 2030, especially with SDG 5 and 16. Women, Peace and Security is well established in various UN security council resolutions,⁶ that collectively constitute the global policy framework to promote and protect the rights of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. The 2016 UN concept of "Sustaining Peace" further underlines the importance of inclusiveness in creating a conducive environment for sustainable peace and long-term development,⁷ with women's equal

6 Including UNSCR 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015)

7 In the same vein, UNSG Guterres has emphasised full participation of women at all levels of decision making as an essential precondition for sustainable development.

participation a central element of the approach. Strengthening women's role in peace-making is also among the **key priorities of Finland's foreign and security policy**, as documented in, inter alia, Finland's National Action Plans for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution **1325** on Women, Peace and Security.

Overall, while inclusive mediation directly contributes strongly to peace, security and governance – at best – it can provide a critical contribution to Sustainable Development Goals more broadly. By addressing state fragility, together with actors from other field, peace mediation can contribute to ending a vicious circle of violence, state-society tensions and weak institutions, and open the pathway to the path of development of resilient, prosperous societies.

3. CMI'S STRATEGIC APPROACH

3.1 CMI's Added Value

CMI's position as a leading conflict resolution organisation are based on the same elements that are highlighted in the strategy: our independence and agility, the strong legacy of our founder President Ahtisaari, our Finnish and Nordic background, values embedded in our organisational culture and approach, and the professional methods developed by the organisation since 2000. With the privileged guidance of our founder, CMI has built a strong independent organisation with a track record and strong capacities to contribute to peace processes. His mentoring has allowed professionals to accompany and learn from a Nobel Laureate, while developing valuable networks and skills of their own along the way. This understanding of high-level mediation is balanced by an appreciation of our own comparative advantage as an independent mediation organisation.

Against this background and as highlighted by the evaluation commissioned by Finnish MFA in 2016, CMI is well positioned to work with actors from diverse backgrounds: from official to unofficial and from grassroots to highest decision-making bodies. The need for discreet, agile and informal actors to support formal diplomatic efforts has only increased. As CMI is not bound by the distinction of informal versus formal levels, we can flexibly move between the various processes and actors, bridging gaps where they

exist and adding to the overall effectiveness of peace efforts.

Highlighting our Finnish background and values, CMI's approach to conflict resolution is centred on transparency, pragmatism and fairness. These values are reflected in our work with partners, from donors and formal diplomatic actors to conflict parties and other stakeholders, providing a basis for mutual trust. Despite the discreet nature of much of our work, we are open and transparent towards those we work with about our goals and about whom we work with. This is critical for the trusted relationships necessary for CMI to engage in what are highly sensitive issues.

To ensure this added value is translated into the effectiveness and sustainability of conflict prevention and resolution efforts, part of our professionalism entails understanding where we are best positioned to contribute to conflict prevention and resolution processes. CMI's decisions to engage are thus based on solid conflict analyses that account for the needs of the process, other actors engaged, and the resulting suitability of CMI expertise and methods. Our organisation is built to ensure flexibility and agility, so that when we decide to engage, we are prepared to do so rapidly and with all necessary resources and approaches ready for use in each context.

Our vision: We believe that all conflicts can be resolved. This vision stems from President Ahtisaari's Nobel speech, where he stated that "what people have started, people can end".

Our mission: Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) is an independent Finnish organisation whose mission is to prevent and resolve violent conflicts through informal dialogue and mediation. CMI's mission is operationalised by the 2018-2021 Programme.

Who we are: Former President of Finland Martti Ahtisaari founded CMI in 2000. Since then, our organisation has grown to become one of the leaders in its field, stemming from the track record in mediation and the high level of professional expertise. CMI helps to foster negotiated solutions to violent conflicts by involving all relevant actors in the joint pursuit of sustainable peace. We facilitate dialogue, mediate between the conflicting sides, provide ca-

capacity-building and mediation support at different stages of peace processes, and use our expertise to support the broader peacemaking community.

Independent and informal actors like CMI have a crucial role in convening, supporting and supplementing the conflict resolution efforts of official institutions and governments. We are well placed to work at all levels of society, including the upper reaches of political decision-making. Our Nordic identity is an asset for our work: it reinforces the image of a transparent, unimposing and egalitarian nature of working, with emphasis on responsibility, pragmatism and adaptability. Rooted in this history, CMI remains a multicultural organisation with international reach.

Our values as a responsible organisation are the following: making a difference, integrity in our vision and it's about people.

BOX 3: Key Results of the CMI Programme 2014-2016

In the programme 2014-2016, CMI has identified 28 (23 in the Finnish MFA funded framework) contributions that have had positive effects on processes to resolve or prevent conflict, or to the practices of the international peacemaking community. These include the following highlights:

- Increased space for discussion among Ukrainian decision-makers on key issues related to the Donbass conflict and the future of Ukraine
- Maintenance of channels of communication between conflict parties in Yemen, despite the deterioration of relations of the present civil war
- Increased inclusiveness of the Central African Republic peace process, through operational support to Brazzaville Forum and national consultations
- Increased capacity of key mediators in gender sensitive mediation (156 trained, including 10 UN SRSGs and Envoys)
- Strengthened common understanding on the root causes and joint responsibility of conflict among the warring political factions in South Sudan
- Linking women's voices from the grassroots to national decision-making forums and the official peace process in South Sudan
- Broadened participation of Palestinian civil society in the reconciliation process

- Increased trust and channels of communication between actors in the political system of Libya, ranging from regions, political parties to armed groups

Beyond an assessment of the qualitative highpoints, the following indicators illustrate the scope of the programme in 2014-2016:

- Approximately **100 requests** for new or expanded cooperation from credible stakeholders or conflict parties
- Contributions made to improve **22 processes** for conflict resolution and peace worldwide in **20 countries**
- Approximately **400 workshops**, conferences or seminars organised
- Estimated **10,000 direct beneficiaries**, representing a wide range of actors, including international actors, regional mediation structures, peer organisations, government officials, political parties, parliamentarians, politicians, civil society organisations, academia, expert communities, youth, ethnic minorities and local communities
- The target of **30% women participants** reached in programmatic activities
- Some **4000 consultations** with conflict stakeholders and peers
- **15 internal reviews** and **6 external evaluations** conducted to support learning and adaptive management

The Development Cooperation Programme with the Finnish MFA is a core part of the implementation of CMI strategy, thematically, geographically and financially. The programme is a composite of CMI's proven approaches as well as strategic shifts that CMI as an organisation is planning to make. The programme builds on CMI's local and regional track record, networks and contextual understanding from the three geographical regions that form the core of CMI's activities as an organisation.

In addition to the Finnish MFA programme, CMI has projects which apply similar approaches and reflect the same added value but which are funded from external sources. This includes supporting mediation actors that do not fall into the domain of official development aid, such as the EU. The relation between CMI's Development Cooperation Programme and other activities is synergistic.

4. PROGRAMMATIC THEORY OF CHANGE

4.1 Objectives

The desired impact and the overall objective of the CMI programme is to prevent and resolve violent political conflicts. Together with other actors, CMI endeavours to support conflict parties and societies on the road to sustainable peace through targeted interventions in the geographical and thematic areas where we can best do so.

In seeking to resolve violent conflict, CMI views peace processes through a broad lens, which encompasses a range of different political and societal transition processes, that are relevant to the prevention and resolution of violent political conflict, and that benefit from the use of mediation and dialogue approaches.

CMI pursues impact through **three specific objectives, the outcomes of the programme:**

1. **To improve the quality and effectiveness of conflict prevention and resolution processes**
2. **To enhance the resilient agency of actors relevant for conflict prevention and resolution**
3. **To strengthen international practice in the fields of conflict prevention and resolution in thematic or country-specific topics**

The focus for CMI on the **(I) quality and effectiveness of processes** relies on the acknowledgment that successful peace efforts have at least three elements in common: sufficiently wide and active participation, the ability to address the root causes of the conflict and the ability to produce agreements which are broadly accepted and implementable.

This focus on processes is strengthened by the focus on the **(II) resilient agency of actors** in conflict prevention and resolution. National, as well as international actors participating in the prevention and resolution of conflicts require capacities and networks for participation. This may take very different forms: established actors, such as mediators and mediation organisations may require specialised support. Alternatively, it may be necessary to address asymmetries in the overall capacities of conflict parties and other stakeholders – such as armed groups, minorities, civil society, women or youth – to constructively participate, or for the implementation of peace agreements.

In the long-term, to improve the quality of peace processes it is essential to develop the **(III) best practices of the international peacemaking community**. This focus on strengthening practice responds to changes in the field of mediation and peacemaking, with the steady professionalisation and expansion of those actors involved. The growing complexity of peace processes has created demand for a range of different skills and profiles of support and sharing of experiences on best practices and innovations.

The three specific objectives and the results of the CMI programme are mutually supportive. The principal, and immediate results of the programme are designed to be around processes to resolve and prevent conflict and build sustainable peace. This thrust is enhanced by strengthening the agency of key actors, expanding the number of actors who can constructively contribute to peace, as well as adding to the inclu-

siveness of both the process and its results and their sustainability in the long-term. This is particularly salient in fragile contexts, where resilient agency can be a valuable peace asset in an environment otherwise marked by weak institutions and poor governance.

The implementation of CMI's programme also generates wider results that engage and benefit the peacemaking community at large. Analysis, experiences, and lessons learned from implementation are useful resources to share with the international peacemaking community. The programme strengthens this feedback loop through investments in internal learning mechanisms and policy contributions, to add to CMI's own capacities to deliver, to learn, and to add to global best practices in conflict resolution.

4.2 Beneficiaries and Partnerships

CMI's programme engages an array of organisations, groups and individuals who stand to be change-makers. What determines the selection is their relative ability to advance systemic change for positive peace. To capitalise on its added value as an independent organisation, CMI primarily works with those actors and organisations that already have leverage over wider constituencies necessary for conflict prevention and resolution. This includes individuals in both official, and unofficial capacities, but is not limited to those actors directly involved in existing peace processes. A critical part of doing so successfully involves reaching out to support the participation of marginalised groups, civil society, women and other actors that may be excluded from processes, but whose involvement is critical for sustainable outcomes.

The direct beneficiaries of the programme include individuals and organisations that participate in CMI's activities and those of their immediate constituencies or background organisations who directly utilise or benefit from the produced outputs. The **direct beneficiaries** of the programme are envisioned to include, among others:

- Official representatives and leadership of conflict parties
- National and local stakeholders, institutions relevant for conflict prevention and resolution: government officials, political parties, parliamentarians and other politicians,
- Civil society organisations, local communities
- Marginalised and radical groups
- Mediators and their teams

- Representatives of the international community and regional organisations, including conflict prevention, early warning and mediation structures
- Academia, political advisers, thematic specialists, and other expert communities

As CMI's work is always part of broader conflict prevention and resolution efforts, the benefits of this work are not limited to those actors and their constituencies that CMI works with. Rather, successful contributions benefit wide array of actors participating the conflict prevention and resolution efforts. For instance, successful efforts in supporting a lead mediator or building a conducive environment for a peace process, have effects that indirectly benefit numerous actors participating the peace process. Thus, the **indirect beneficiaries** include actors involved in conflict prevention and resolution efforts in the particular country, region and/or organisation. The **ultimate beneficiaries** are those groups, communities and societies who benefit from the results of the targeted, successful conflict prevention and resolution efforts.

Partnerships are a key means to project design and implementation in the field. CMI aspires to create equal relationships with actors relevant to conflict and accompany them through the peace process in the longer term. CMI works jointly with key local actors to ensure that the project is responsive to contextual factors, and nimble enough to respond to dynamics among conflict stakeholders. Partnerships entail capacity-building elements such as training and advice, but more essentially rest on mutual learning of best practices and innovation. Partnerships include different levels of cooperation with regional and international actors as well as expert organisations. These partnerships may not always be formalised, but involve, to different degrees, substantive, access, and logistical components.

4.3 Sustainability

The relevance and sustainability of CMI's programme hinge on three factors: complementarity, local ownership and inclusiveness of the interventions and their results. The application of these factors is context specific, but all three of guide CMI in analysis, design and implementation. Complementarity is ensured through communication and meetings with international actors, peer organisations and stakeholders. In partnerships in the field, CMI works jointly with key local actors to ensure that the project is responsive to contextual factors, and nim-

ble enough to respond to shifts among conflict stakeholders. A large amount of CMI's work is developed from requests from local stakeholders, which helps strengthen the relevance and sustainability of these efforts.

Local ownership and inclusiveness are both critical to sustainability. Externally imposed solutions are unlikely to last long in conflict situations, and efforts without broad buy-in are similarly likely to be contested and of limited effectiveness. Thus, processes can only be effective if they are built in a manner that incorporates the concerns of key stakeholders, and that ensures ownership of the process and its products remain with local actors.

In addition to the sustainability of the process, there must be sustainability of results as well. Within the programme, the sustainability of CMI's efforts is strengthened by linking up with existing broader structures or processes in conflict prevention or resolution, as possible. CMI's projects are designed and implemented so that they retain their relevance: activities can be adjusted and results can contribute to the resolution of conflict in alternative scenarios.

BOX 5: Programmatic Principles

CMI's key principles are based on the decades of international mediation experience of President Ahtisaari, and our accumulated experience as an organisation in conflict prevention and resolution processes. They are informed by global norms and best practice in the field, and reflect CMI's understanding of a code of conduct for third party engagement in conflict and fragile settings. The application of our principles strengthens the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the programme, and indeed guide the direction of our work. CMI's key principles are:

Local ownership: By ensuring local ownership, we pave the way for the sustainability of the conflict prevention and resolution efforts. Our work is based on the commitment by conflict parties and stakeholders to address the key questions of the conflict. They own the process and its results, while we accompany and support them in their effort in terms of methods and expertise. Any agreement requires broader societal engagement to be lasting.

Inclusivity: Inclusion of all relevant actors is key for the sustainability of any agreement, as it ensures the broad-based consideration of the various causes and potential solutions, engenders commitment and plants seeds for participatory processes in the future. In our work, we seek to engage relevant actors, whoever they are, for constructive

conflict resolution. In addition, CMI advances the participation of women as peacemakers and as agents in peace-making processes.

Honest broker: Being an honest broker is crucial for our work with conflict parties and other stakeholders, as they seek to prevent and resolve conflicts with our support. We are open about our role, who we work with and towards what goals, with requisite discretion to safeguard our counterparts. Our impartiality ensures that we act without a political agenda, for the benefit of peace, without preference to any party or interest.

Complementarity: Our work is guided by an assessment of our added value, and we seek synergies with other local, regional and international efforts. We work flexibly within and between different processes, complementing broader peacemaking efforts where various actors reflect their comparative advantages. At specific junctures, we can take on initiatives that formal actors cannot or are not ready to undertake, all the while recognising the limits of our role and remaining ready to step aside if processes are ready for formalisation under another mechanism. We appreciate the importance of fostering political backing for the processes we support and facilitate, in coordination with our partners, and we seek to establish necessary networks and discussions early on, to foster support and ensure best results.

5. FOCUS AREAS

Each context and conflict is unique, involving a different set of issues and actors – as well as processes to resolve conflict. Based on the careful analysis of the context, existing initiatives, CMI's value-added, and stakeholder requests, CMI designs interventions that seek to positively contribute to the resolution of conflict. In its programme CMI promotes **five focus areas of conflict resolution and prevention efforts**:

1. Mediation and Dialogue
2. Mediation Support
3. Support to National Actors
4. Women in Peacemaking
5. Policy and Learning

These focus areas are not exclusive. Rather, they are often mutually supportive for the desired overall impact of a project. All five focus areas are relevant for the programme period, and any single project may apply one or more such focus areas. The selection depends on the i) conflict analysis, ii) analysis of needs and gaps, iii) and an assessment of CMI added value in the specific context.

5.1 Mediation and Dialogue

Through mediation and dialogue, CMI assists conflict parties with influence, capacity, constituency or decision-making power in a targeted context to engage in structured work aimed at preparing, advancing and implementing peace processes. Thus, CMI builds and manages complementary mediation and dialogue platforms and processes, where CMI acts as a convening power for unofficial mediation or dialogue process, which then complement the broader, often officially mandated, peace process. Openings are based on the request and consent from conflict parties and national stakeholders. In most cases, CMI's efforts support and complement peace processes that are led by other actors. However, in these cases CMI maintains the option of being an official mediator in a peace process, if requested and appropriately mandated.

As an independent actor, CMI can provide entry points and spaces for confidence building where official diplomacy is limited. From the point of view of participation, unofficial processes are often better suited for inclusion of marginalised or radical groups. Opening channels between such

groups and actors involved in the peace process can contribute to removing obstacles to participation and support constructive dialogue, and eventually more inclusive political processes.

These platforms can also be useful in addressing agenda items, outside of or insufficiently addressed in the formal processes. This can involve either deepening or broadening the understanding of the issues on the official agenda, or providing pertinent recommendations on how to address them. Alternatively, platforms can raise issues that are critical to the conflict, and which cannot for various reasons be addressed in official frameworks. In addition, these platforms may adopt a different point of view on salient issues, such as long-term visions, political space, or identity politics. By increasing interaction, supportive processes add to the sense of ownership of the peace process among key parties as well as broader society.

Unofficial processes may also provide space to address other relevant aspects for the overall functioning of the peace process. Unofficial processes may be necessary to flexibly search for solutions to core conflict issues, especially ones that are politicised nationally and internationally. In sensitive environments, such as the early phases of processes where parties are unwilling to articulate their positions or even admit to there being a conflict, discretion is essential. Even in deadlocks, such an approach may pay long-term dividends by being the only way to keep channels open and maintain the ability to make peace in the future.

Sustainability of activities is based on the ownership of the process by key stakeholders. In addition to needs assessments, the process is designed together with the actors that CMI is working with. At the level of a peace process, sustainability is built into the idea of complementarity. The elements of the peace process to which CMI is contributing are chosen in such a way that they contribute to positive change also in the long-term and in coordination with other actors ensuring that the contribution is acknowledged and beneficial in the long-term for other actors as well. Another element of sustainability is the capacities and networks that the partners develop, which are also useful in any conflict prevention and resolution efforts that the actors may participate in the future.

5.2 Mediation Support

Mediation support consists of substantive, methodological and operational professional support to an official or unofficial mediator and their team during an ongoing or anticipated conflict resolution process. This assistance is based on request and/or mutually determined need. This approach to mediation support is based on the state of the field, experience from CMI's engagements as well as expertise of CMI staff and networks. Mediation support also entails the advancement of policy frameworks and capacities of mediation actors in both regional and global settings.

The key added value of CMI's work in mediation support is rooted in our in-depth regional expertise, combined with direct access to parties and technical knowledge in terms of methodology and operations. CMI's work in other focus areas ensures that it can provide the combination of methodological and contextual knowledge as well as conflict and needs analyses – based on direct engagement of conflict parties and national actors – for the use of mediators. This enables CMI to contribute to the quality of the peace process in terms of inclusiveness and ensuring that the agreements signed during the process address the root causes of the conflicts and are sustainable over the long-term. This is demonstrated by CMI's track record in mediation support provided to OSCE, AU and sub-regional organisations. CMI also benefits from the reputation and legacy of President Ahtisaari as a mediator in this regard, which provides both access and credibility in the eyes of official mediation actors.

CMI's mediation support work also contributes to organisational and structural learning. Changes that are created with the key individuals within the organisations or structures are expected to be translated into the practice of the organisations or structures and should thus be sustained beyond the specific process or phase of cooperation. However, sometimes CMI supports mediators without a link to any organisation in which cases sustainability of learning is more limited to specific individuals (a mediator and their team). However, even in these situations, it is expected that the same actors will serve as mediators or mediation team members in the future, and thus support for specific process can have long-term positive effects.

Another added value of CMI is the ability to deploy needed resources in a flexible manner, based on the needs of the mediator and the process. Utilising networks and experience from di-

verse areas, CMI can rapidly provide experienced teams with the variety of skill-sets that empower the mediators' potential to push for peace. These interventions are intended to strengthen the capacities and learning of mediators, their teams, and institutions to be actualised through, for example, systematic briefings, joint conflict analysis and process design or on-the-job coaching in ongoing peace processes. The duration of CMI's engagement in this focus area is tied to that of the specific process.

5.3 Support to National Actors

Adopting a demand driven approach, CMI supports national actors in the implementation and design of processes that directly address a violent political conflict or its prevention, by providing advice on inclusion mechanisms, dialogue facilitation methodologies, and undertaking clearly mandated bridging initiatives with key stakeholders. This may include efforts to resolve a specific conflict within the political system, or conflicts between the state and societal actors.

CMI's nature as an independent conflict resolution organisation enables it to navigate the sphere of contested state sovereignties, often associated with weak and fragile states. First and foremost, as an honest broker, with professional experience, CMI is viewed as less of a threat, and it is easier for us to consider and adopt the application of effective and participatory methods in conflict resolution. By working with national actors, CMI aims to avoid duplication and the creation of parallel processes, ensuring that national actors identify priorities and steer conflict prevention and resolution processes in a manner commensurate with their national interests and responsibilities.

However, the support to national actors also focuses on the design and implementation of processes that are a more integral part of broader government policies and societal development. This can include, for example transitions, economic, societal and governmental reforms, constitutional reforms, disarmament, anti-corruption strategies, or climate change mitigation. While not always explicitly framed as conflict resolution processes, these processes can have tremendous potential for preventing conflict from escalating into violence.

Inclusiveness is many times the key for success of any transition process in the long-term. Here, CMI can advise national actors on the design of inclusion strategies, as well work to engage

those groups that national actors cannot or do not want to engage, on their behalf. Here trust-building and bridging mechanisms are needed to ensure genuine participation, and address asymmetries in capacities.

Interventions are always planned in cooperation with the institutions in question and continuous efforts are made to increase local ownership of the processes and their results, providing an incentive for institutions to commit to adopting new approaches. Due diligence is needed to ensure that CMI can support the institutions in reaching and engaging all relevant societal actors required to plan and implement effective policies and frameworks for sustainable peace and effective transitions, without disproportionately strengthening the interests or position of any single actor. Several international organisations such as UNDP, the World Bank, and the EU have institutional support programmes for social cohesion and reforms. CMI interventions seek synergies with these programmes, without compromising local ownership.

5.4 Women in Peacemaking

CMI's focus area on women in peacemaking answers the call for the operational translation of UNSCR 1325 with evidence-based practice, and builds on CMI's track record. The first programme period 2014-2016 enabled CMI to pilot, learn from, and refine strategies on women, peace and security. Building on these lessons and recognising the need to translate normative commitments into concrete support efforts, support to women in peacemaking is one of CMI's five focus areas for the next programme cycle.

CMI's value added in advancing women's role in peacemaking is framed within its wider portfolio, enabling actions that directly feed into ongoing relevant conflict resolution processes. Our emphasis comes from a nuanced understanding of women as political actors, and recognition of their diverse roles in peace and conflict. Rather than relying on global prescriptions, we aim to push the envelope towards politically nuanced, context-specific and locally driven solutions. CMI's work in this approach is rooted in our technical knowledge of multiple inclusion mechanisms, contextual expertise, and access and trusted relations with national actors and relevant power-holders.

The drive of CMI's work is not to provide more advocacy on why women's inclusion is important, but to demonstrate how it can be done and

how this tangibly benefits efforts to achieve sustainable peace. Programmatically, we combine two strategies to support and facilitate women's meaningful participation in peace and transition processes. The first strategy is working with national actors to strengthen women's political influence in peace and security through prioritised geographic engagements. The second strategy is hands-on forms of building capacity among national, regional and international peace support actors on gender-sensitive conflict resolution processes.

The intervention logics for the two strategies are distinct but complementary. For the first, the starting point is a gendered analysis of the given conflict and relevant conflict resolution processes. Recognising that barriers to women's inclusion are multiple and interrelated, ranging from attitudes to social practices and nature of the political system, CMI's focus is in addressing the political challenges that women representatives face and the issues that they prioritise in specific conflict-affected countries. Strategies are developed in each case to support women in exercising their political voice and leadership on peace and security, and to sustain their access and influence over the medium to long term.

CMI's experience shows that third-party facilitators and targeted support can make a difference in supporting united and effective political advocacy by women. The second strategy assumes that mediators and peace support actors have a general knowledge on the gender and inclusion agenda, but struggle to implement it in practice. To address this gap, CMI also assists peace process actors to develop the necessary confidence, skills and political backing to try new, more inclusive ways of peacemaking. In this manner, CMI aims to reinforce the capacity of mediators on gender and inclusion issues and enable them to fulfil their mandate in a more qualitative manner to achieve sustainable peace. CMI's support to women in peacemaking is rooted in our principle of inclusiveness, and firmly guided by national ownership and complementarity to ensure sustainability. Our work therefore situates itself as part of a longer-term process of political and social transformation. CMI seeks to identify and test innovations of how to better support the inclusion of women. By targeting actors who have leverage and relevant formal roles,

CMI's support can enhance strategic and organisational capacity of key stakeholders or create catalytic shifts in political structures in a manner that will outlast the programme cycle. Broad cooperation with other actors ensures that direct

beneficiaries do not become dependent on CMI in cases where long-term support continues to be necessary to consolidate the gains made.

5.5 Policy and Learning

Through its Policy and Learning focus CMI contributes to the development of the field of peace mediation in the international community to better address challenges of complex conflicts. This approach is rooted in i) the cumulative lessons learned from CMI's experience in different contexts and themes, ii) the expertise and experience of President Ahtisaari as a leading global mediator, and iii) CMI's partnerships in the international peacemaking community, convening platforms and dialogue with peer organisations, governments, think tanks and international and regional organisations. Within this focus, special effort is placed on seeking strong complementarity with Finnish efforts to support the international peacemaking community, as well as seeking innovations jointly developed with other actors.

CMI's focus on Policy and Learning intends to create feedback loops between **thematic topics** identified and informed by CMI's work and learning from key national, regional, and international actors. These topics are based on the internal learning mechanisms of CMI, centred on internal reviews and critical friend practices, combined with CMI access, networks and analysis. Provisionally, such thematic topics could include the principle of subsidiarity, the role of political parties, the role of women in peacemaking, and planning, monitoring and evaluation of peace processes. Selected topics are bound to evolve as per contextual dynamics and emerging trends.

Herein, a critical element of the policy and learning focus area is strengthening **methodological innovation**. The focus area serves as a platform for developing further the seeds of innovation that have been identified in the practical problem-solving work in other focus areas. Examples of potential innovations in the next programme period include using artificial intelligence and big data for enhancing the PME system, testing new social media tools in practical conflict resolution work and testing assumptions based off neuroscience and psychology in selected cases in CMI programme.

One distinctive feature of CMI's policy work is that it is conducted as a joint effort with national and regional actors and conflict parties, who are closely involved in these efforts to contribute

to international discussions, and that the work is closely linked to realities on the ground. Being well-grounded in specific contexts is essential to identify what are those elements that potentially can transcend specificities and prove to be best practices overall. This close cooperation has been highly valued by international stakeholders, in the form of access to primary sources of information and analysis of conflict parties, national stakeholders.

This is closely tied to another key element of Policy and Learning, increasing understanding of **conflicts** in the regions CMI is active in. Unfortunately, at times, there may be limited understanding on the possibilities of conflict resolution and conflict drivers at the international level, especially in closed and difficult to access conflicts such as Yemen, Burundi, and Libya. With its presence and networks in several such difficult contexts, CMI is uniquely posed to contribute to a stronger global understanding of such conflicts, and how to best address them. Here too CMI's added value is based on close cooperation with the conflict parties and national stakeholders, whose analysis, perspectives and recommendations reflect those with intimate experience of the conflict. By involving multiple stakeholders, the intention is to provide comprehensive, yet nuanced picture of the situation of conflict as well as a variety of challenges and realistic options for conflict resolution.

Additionally, CMI's increased investment in Policy and Learning is an opportunity to institutionalise the **experience and legacy of the Founder of CMI, President Martti Ahtisaari** and provide the wealth of cumulative expertise for the use of the international community. Moreover, in his capacity as Advisor to CMI, President Ahtisaari will continue to actively support CMI's programmatic work with his substantive advice and global networks, including by serving as a convener of CMI's Advisory Network which brings together seasoned conflict resolution experts with diverse regional and thematic expertise. Members of the Advisory Network will serve as both participants and facilitators of the policy and learning focus area and represent a critical arena for engagement with the international community.

The relevance of CMI's Policy and Learning work is ensured through a two-fold assessment of the targeted topics and contexts. On one hand, the close cooperation with local, national and regional actors ensures that the topics and the related analysis are rooted in relevant needs of those affected by the conflict or those positioned to resolve them. Close cooperation with internation-

al partners, supported by the Advisory Network, ensures that the topics and the analysis also respond to the needs of the international community. CMI's PME system plays a pivotal role in both incubating and supporting feedback loops between the two.

6. GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CMI's programme will be implemented primarily in three geographic regions: Eurasia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. CMI has a strong track record in these regions, where substantive networks, access and credibility that have been built up over ten years of work.

The geographic selection reflects countries and regions that have experienced severe, violent political conflict or are in a fragile situation. In these regions, CMI's programme complements the foreign and security policy tools available to Finland, such as crisis management. The programme also covers some least-developed countries, such as Burundi, where it complements development activities with efforts aimed at finding political solutions that can alleviate both instability and poverty in the long term.

The organisational structure and support functions are designed to support activities in these areas. While maintaining efficiency and effectiveness through focus, CMI remains open to opportunities also in other regions. Potential new projects or any expansion of CMI's geographic reach will go through a careful due diligence process, reviewing opportunities, risks, and capacities to deliver, before any decisions are made. The sections below describe the main characteristics of the contexts in the three regions as well as CMI's added value in these contexts.

6.1 Eurasia

CMI has worked to contribute to a peaceful future in Eurasia for over a decade in conflicts where mediation efforts deserve persistent, complementary action. The overall logic of the work is based on the idea of identifying small constructive steps that can be implemented despite the challenging international environment and help-

ing the parties to maintain minimum level of mutual trust and internal cohesion. Another key aspect is supporting domestic and international knowledge transfer, to ensure relevant capacities are built and sustained, to enable proactive agency when the international climate is conducive to making progress in the peace processes. These are essential to broader efforts to maintain the ability of the parties to solve the conflicts in the future.

The added value that CMI can provide in the region is based on the regional experience and far-reaching networks, a commitment to long-term engagement and our impartiality as an organisation combined with the strong Finnish values. This provides a unique ability to pursue independent conflict resolution and to retain the role of honest broker in support of the region's most difficult peace processes.

Envisaged Projects for 2018-2021

- Improving Relations, Dialogue and Confidence between Chisinau-Tiraspol
- Advancing Dialogue in and Around Ukraine
- Eurasia: Supporting Regional Mediation Skills

6.2 Middle East and North Africa

CMI's work in the region is characterised by continuity, and upholding the principles of honest broker and local ownership. In a region saturated by external interventions, CMI's Finnish background is highly valued, allowing us to establish solid networks ranging from elites to local actors, in many of the region's conflict affected countries. The combination of locally owned initiatives for dialogue on central issues of national importance, and the ability to link up these processes to regional and international actors set CMI aside. Support for conflict resolution processes that are owned and led by local actors, coupled

with agility and ability to operate in high risk areas, are important advantages compared to formal mediation actors.

Envisaged Projects for 2018-2021

- National Vision Building and Conflict Mitigation in Libya
- Supporting Palestinian Dialogue and Consensus
- Fostering Regional Dialogue in the Middle East and North Africa

6.3 Sub-Saharan Africa

CMI's work in Sub-Saharan Africa builds on a combination of targeted, in-depth country files and efforts to support regional and sub-regional organisations in the operationalisation of the APSA. With longstanding partnerships with the AU and selected RECs (ECOWAS, ECCAS, IGAD, EAC), CMI is in a unique position to provide targeted support to regional peace efforts, assist in the advancement of regional collaboration, and convene and participate in policy dialogue on the praxis of African regional peacemaking.

CMI has a growing track record in working with political parties to facilitate intra-party and inter-party dialogue with a view to opening up political space and enabling peaceful contestation of politics. This work is characterised by a confidential, discreet, and informal methodology that allows CMI to create safe spaces for conflict parties to test ideas and search for constructive, inclusive solutions in a non-threatening environment.

Envisaged projects for 2018-2021

- Advancing Constructive Dialogue in the Great Lakes
- Supporting African Mediation Capacities and Efforts

6.4 Programme Work in and with Finland

With the emergence of the refugee crisis in 2015, CMI began to systematically engage and share key messages of our work on conflict resolution, regarding root causes of conflicts and the role of mediation as a cost-efficient and sustainable way of solving them. These messages were advanced by CMI's leadership and experts, and they resonated well with Finnish decision-makers, politicians, private sector, and civil servants. In Finland CMI actively contributes to public discourse and builds the interest and engagement

of the general public through various media and public speaking engagements. During 2014-2016 CMI experts provided over 520 interviews to Finnish media and audiences.

As a result, we were able to pass on information and build relationships with stakeholders who can enable and support CMI's work. Participation in the public discourse allows CMI to increase the awareness of Finns on specific conflict situations and the inherent development needs but also on the role of Finnish actors in the peacemaking. This contributes to raising the awareness of the Finnish audience about the different tools of development cooperation and to strengthening of public support towards the development cooperation more broadly.

During the programme period, CMI seeks further complementarity and synergies with the Finnish actors. This includes both strengthened cooperation around selected topics and joint mediation efforts in selected country files. CMI discusses mutually relevant issues with various foreign and security policy actors in Finland, while maintaining independence and discretion where necessary. CMI is one channel to enhance Finland's peace mediation capacity in the global environment, as noted in several memorandums and white papers. The briefings serve to offer insights and more detailed information of our work and networks, and are given on a regular basis to political decision-makers, civil servants, media representatives and civil society actors. These discussions contribute to an enhanced joint understanding about conflict dynamics in general and how conflicts can affect Finland.

CMI seeks to strengthen its strategic partnership with the Finnish MFA. CMI also wishes to forge closer professional ties with Finnish actors, both official and unofficial, to strengthen the practice of peacemaking and international comprehensive security, and to identify and implement distinctive Finnish added value. This includes, inter alia, other NGOs involved in peacemaking such as Finn Church Aid and Felm, universities and private companies. In the same spirit, CMI aspires to extend its cooperation with corporate partners.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

CMI's communications work to ensure that our key audiences – the Finnish general public and decision makers, experts and conflict parties – know, understand and engage in our work and with the broader peacemaking community. CMI's communications team approaches audiences through a variety of channels, each with a carefully tailored message. CMI's key communications channels are:

- Website and social media
- Print and broadcast media
- Audiovisual contents (videos, images)
- Communications materials (brochures, publications, newsletter)
- Events, seminars, meetings and networking with target audiences

Over the programme cycle, increased emphasis will be on developing social media engagement and content. However, print and broadcast media remain important as they remain primary channels for certain audiences, and a key venue for our experts to present work and comment on current affairs. CMI will monitor the progress of programme communication regarding the prioritised channels and audiences.

CMI's focus is on the general audience in Finland and specific expert stakeholders abroad. Most of CMI's communication in Finland are done in the Finnish language. CMI's audiences can be divided into three categories:

- 1. General audience in Finland:** The majority of CMI's communications targets this audience, with general-level messaging about the importance of CMI's work, peace, and conflict resolution as an aspect of CMI's global education activities. This audience is reached through our website, social and traditional media, videos, and large events and campaigns. Specific sub-categories include the general public, decision-makers (i.e. politicians, business leaders, civil servants), the Finnish MFA, the media and journalists, and academia and students.
- 2. Experts:** Most of this communication is carried out by CMI's experts around the world working in English. This includes sharing of knowledge with peer organisations and other experts and co-organising events. It also includes briefs to governments and donors. Specific sub-categories include: CMI's peer organisations and other foreign policy ex-

perts, funders (governments, foundations), international, regional and sub-regional organisations, and the media.

- 3. Conflict parties:** This communication is done in the field, by CMI's project staff and local stakeholders, while CMI's communications team supports, advises and provides materials. Media strategies related to work in the field, whether proactive or reactive, belong to this sphere of communications. Efficient communication here is important, as the quality and potential impact of peace processes are dependent on working with 'key individuals', including decision-makers, opinion formers, those with access to decision-makers, as well as those who represent the views of their constituencies.

7.1 Global Education – Ahtisaari Days

CMI has developed and led Ahtisaari Days since 2011 as the organisation's global education programme, in cooperation with the Finnish MFA. It has been organised as a one or two-day event in a selected city in Finland each year in early November. On this day, President Ahtisaari with CMI staff has visited several schools and universities to talk about conflict resolution to students and the general public combined with a public event with President Ahtisaari. In 2016, the Ahtisaari Days' approach was sharpened to focus on teachers and students from eight grade up to high school level nationwide, marking a transformation from a single event/ location format to a wider year-around programme.

The new format better serves CMI's aim of promoting conflict resolution as a civic skill among students. To further serve this end, a new website has been created for the Ahtisaari Days, with materials for interactive exercises on negotiation and dialogue skills available for teachers and students to use anywhere. These materials were designed in collaboration with a group of teachers and education professionals supported by CMI's conflict resolution experts to ensure their suitability and to align them with the new curriculum. Feedback from schools has been very positive. More materials are being developed, with growing interest from schools and teachers to use them. With the help of the Ahtisaari Days materials, students and teachers get more information on a very complicated world, and on how conflicts can be resolved through dialogue.

8. RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

CMI faces different operational, public and policy contexts, which have implications for CMI's programme, including on its management, processes and tools. Through its programmatic framework, CMI works to devise an approach that suits its needs, and is sensitive to complexity. CMI's Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) has three purposes: enhanced 1) Learning, 2) Management, and 3) Accountability. These three purposes come together to improve the quality and effectiveness of the overall CMI programme.

CMI has invested significantly in the first programme cycle (2014-2016) in building up its approach and capacities in Results-Based Management (RBM) captured in the internal policy called Results-Based Management at CMI. The first cycle has been a valuable learning experience, which has greatly boosted CMI's organisational culture and capacities around results, and hence guides the new CMI programme.

The 2016 MFA-commissioned evaluation found CMI's RBM system to be well-established in covering all necessary levels and functions. While the project level is more advanced, there are still challenges in aggregating the assessment at the level of the entire programme. Staff capacities need to be strengthened and more attention to be given to how the various processes and tools work in practice to the maximum pos-

sible effect. An emphasis on the real-time aspects of reporting and monitoring in a PME system that is grounded in the context was a key recommendation of the evaluation. The development of CMI's RBM also includes stronger incorporation of cross-cutting themes, such as gender and human rights, into PME tools. A core challenge is how to reconcile the external expectations on results reporting and the rather linear mainstream approaches to monitoring and evaluation with the complexity of the operational environments and the work CMI engages in.

This feedback informs the planned design adaptations for the next programme cycle 2018-2021, during which CMI strives to further advance these developments and refine existing practices. Preserving CMI's adaptive management style was an explicit recommendation of evaluation. During this programme cycle, we want to develop and strengthen it. Organisationally, the central hub of expertise in this field is the Programme Management Office (PMO).

Other instruments for monitoring are the **annual and tertile project reports, internal memos and reports** from travels and activities, that enable reflection of project progress against plans. Continuous monitoring takes place by the project teams and Regional Heads.

BOX 6: Measuring Results in Complex Environments

The resolution of conflict is a complex undertaking. Conflicts are quintessential "wicked problems": their characteristics are unique and tend to change over time, and they foster polarisation and fragmentation. Efforts to prevent and resolve conflict centre on transitional and transformational processes that seek to address the underlying sources of conflict in the political and societal spheres. Such contexts are rarely neatly defined, but prone to involve multiple actors and variables. Conflicts are not static, as both escalation and de-escalation affect the alignment of actors, and opportunities available. Processes to resolve conflict are imperfect, and liable to face set-backs.

As a pervasive feature in conflicted political systems, complexity presents both challenges and opportunities for conflict resolution, and in particular the results-based manage-

ment thereof. In such circumstances, demonstrating cause and effect relations in simplistic terms is not possible or even desirable. Rigidly linear mind-sets tend to fail. Well-argued designs and preliminary results are overtaken by unpredictable events. Resilience, the ability to absorb and adapt in the face of the unpredictable, produces the best insurance against shocks. In settings where unpredictability and fragility are rife, unintended effects cannot be avoided. For the field of conflict resolution, any approach must be designed so that it is as sensitive as possible to complexity.

Nonetheless, organisations that work on conflict and peace face growing public demands for demonstrable results and better value for money. These demands are not unreasonable, and require more creative and flexible approaches to assess and communicate the results of its work both to funders, decision-makers and the general public.

Internal reviews are focused stocktaking and planning exercises that discuss changes, results and lessons. Reviews are designed to enhance learning within project teams as well as more widely across CMI, in a manner sensitive to complexity by feeding into renewed analysis, design and management. Internal reviews have an important complementary role in CMI's overall system of PME, adding on the teams' own efforts and enhancing the overall credibility of the assessment. Internal Reviews also serve as an important input for the Leadership Team and decision-making processes. External evaluators commissioned by donors and CMI alike have found internal reviews particularly useful material in getting introduced to the design thinking, challenges of implementation, adaptation and learning and result narratives in CMI's projects.

CMI's activities are evaluated by external experts. In 2016 there was an **external evaluation** of CMI's programme and RBM evaluation tasked by the Finnish MFA as described above. CMI commissions evaluations of its projects, and welcomes evaluations initiated by donors. Project or thematic evaluations are mostly useful learning opportunities as long as the selection criteria for the evaluator(s) and the chosen methodology are well-informed of the nature of conflict resolution work and appreciative of the complex environments and flexibilities needed in this field. CMI studies all evaluations carefully and drafts a Management Response for each.

8.1 Adaptative Management

To meet CMI's overall objective of preventing and resolving violent political conflicts, the management structure of CMI is by design efficient and agile – what we term **adaptive management**. It enables goal-orientation, meaningful growth, efficiency and the wellbeing of staff in very challenging contexts. Our decision-making mechanisms are clear and transparent. The organisation in all of its activities adheres to the values, principles and ethical code of conduct of the Finnish development policy and cooperation.

CMI is a non-profit NGO registered in Finland. According to our by-law the highest decision-making organ of the organisation is the General Meeting. CMI's Board of Directors is responsible for the long-term strategy and significant financial decisions, the approval of new members and the appointment of the Executive Director. The Board is led by the Chairman and it includes eight ordinary board members selected by CMI members for a two-year period.

CMI's Executive Director leads the execution of CMI's mission and the implementation of CMI's strategy. The Leadership Team (LT) supports the Executive Director in planning and decision-making. It consists of the Executive Director, two Programme Directors, Director of Finance and Administration and the Director of Communications and Fundraising. The programme monitoring in the LT is based on updates from the Programme Director and Regional Heads on progress and risks as well as updates on finances from Director, Finance & Administration.

The Programme Directors and Heads are responsible for leading and monitoring the implementation of the programme. The Leadership Team and the Heads meet every other month to discuss, plan and monitor CMI's programmatic activities and other important issues.

The Heads are responsible for the planning and implementation of programmatic actions in their respective regions. The activities are carried out as projects. Each project has a Project Manager, or a dedicated Project Officer, who is responsible for the daily management and monitoring of project activities. Project teams consist of Project Managers, Project Officers and Advisers who are experienced subject matter experts bringing another quality assurance dimension to the projects. Financial monitoring is carried out by a dedicated controller from the finance team who acts as business partner for the project team.

In addition to continuous monitoring of implementation, the project team and the Head have a monitoring discussion at least once a month. Regular visits are an important means of monitoring, and project staff produce mission plans and reports. These reports provide useful information for monitoring progress. Regional teams organise internal meetings, which include project reflection. The Project Document, the Results Framework and Risk Assessment are used in reflection meetings and planning workshops.

The project staff and the Head produce the project's tertile updates in narrative and financial versions, which are submitted to the Programme Directors, PMO and the Finance & Admin team. The reports look both backwards and forwards by assessing significant changes, progress and preliminary results and providing an update of risks and assumptions. These both numeric and written results are presented as an overview of the programme to the LT for discussion. The situational picture combines information on the substance work in projects, financial reporting and forecasts and human resources data from the

relevant systems available. The LT makes decisions on changes, prioritisations and resourcing as needed.

A similar process is followed in the annual planning and annual reporting phases: overseen by the respective LT members, PMO and the Finance & Admin team prepare the process, instructions and templates for the teams to use as per their projects. The same units receive, aggregate and analyse the data and produce an overview as well as draft annual plans/reports for the LT to approve.

Financial accountability is a prerequisite for CMI's external credibility and trustworthiness. Receiving donations from various governments, foundations, companies and other private sources for its mission to resolve conflicts and build peace, obligations of financial accountability and transparency are particularly high for CMI. As a non-profit NGO, CMI monitors its finances in a responsible way to meet the qualitative and quantitative expectations of our work.

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