

Annual Review - Summary Sheet

PROGRAMME TITLE: CSSF Great Lakes		
Country/Region:	Great Lakes, Africa	
HMG Partners (LEAD in bold)	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) , Department for International Development (DFID)	
Total Budget:	ODA: £1.1m	Non-ODA: £0.2m
Start Date: April 2015	End Date: March 2020	
Outputs		Score
Increasing regional and national dialogue on key conflict issues within the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and improving understanding within Her Majesty's Government (HMG) of the conflict dynamics.		B
Better UK understanding and influence with DRC military allowing HMG to support reforms.		B
Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) improves Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) storage and management.		A
Enhanced capability of FARDC, civil society and medical practitioners to tackle Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and care for victims.		B
Enhanced HMG understanding of the Conflict and Human Rights situation in Burundi and sustained local response to conflict incidents.		A+
Local reconciliation and mediation processes supported across all 18 provinces of Burundi.		A
Programme Score: B	Risk: Medium	

Summary of Programme Performance

Year	FY15/16	FY16/17				
Programme Score	A	B				
Risk Rating	Medium	Medium				

What support is the UK providing?

The CSSF Great Lakes programme serves the 'governance' and 'reducing conflict' pillars of the Great Lakes NSC Strategy, and fills gaps between DFID programmes and the FCO's Magna Carta Human Rights Fund, drawing together workstreams within these programmes, providing a series of precise, niche interventions. Activities were selected for their potential to have a significant impact for relatively low investment, whilst being flexible enough to respond to a highly dynamic political context and a deteriorating security environment. It has four distinct policy strands;

- Strand 1: Support to strengthen regional relations, via the continuation of two 'track two' diplomacy interventions.
- Strand 2: Supporting military reform within DRC, including the continued deployment of a defence advisor, and a weapons marking and storage programme.
- Strand 3: PSVI (Preventing Sexual Violence in conflict Initiative) work to improve accountability for those who commit Sexual and Gender-Based Violent (SGBV) crimes, and provide assistance to survivors.
- Strand 4: Projects and new UK resource to improve information about human rights and other abuses in Burundi and support diplomatic and legal efforts to end impunity.

Some aspects of this programme continued from previous years, while other interventions e.g. in Burundi and on PSVI were new for FY16/17.

Summary of progress and lessons learnt/actions taken since last review

Challenges to the programme management remain in part due to the geographical and political operating realities, but also through implementing activity through a large range of small NGOs.

The previous review found particular value in the work in Burundi, which this review has backed up, and although the Burundi funding is expected to increase in 17/18, the coordinator role which has proved to provide extra benefit to HMG is being pared back.

Last year's review highlighted concerns over whether the programme should continue to receive funding. This review backs up the core findings from last year, namely that projects delivered under Great Lakes CSSF are valuable and predominately hitting their targets. The programme could still articulate the value added by CSSF more clearly, the 16/17 programme continued to be internally facing in part, looking to improve UK understanding of the context to inform policy and programme decision making, as much as being focused on delivering external outputs.

Going forward the programme should be reassessed against the National Security Objectives with renewed focus against what higher level outcomes can be achieved, to give confidence the programme is not spreading itself too thinly or focusing on interventions which deliver well against output milestones but struggle to achieve higher level impact. The long term trajectory of the programme should also be reassessed, with clear end points and exit strategies for long-running projects defined. The review team particularly endorse the addition for 17/18 of new work supporting human rights in the context of elections in DRC, which should be a time-limited but potentially high-impact intervention.

The review team overall found that the Great Lakes CSSF programme continues to give HMG a good degree of value for money especially for a relatively low cost programme, works well in niche areas and provides a 'more than the sum of its parts' benefit.

Summary of recommendations for the next year

1. **Shape and scale:** The programme board should consider if the number of projects could be further reduced with an emphasis on increasing funding to fewer projects, in order to achieve greater impact.
2. **Resourcing:** The programme board should consider if additional resource is needed to support the administrative work of the programme.
3. **Multi-year planning:** Programming should be multi-year where relevant and all projects should have a clear proposed trajectory, especially those which have continued for a number of years.
4. **Governance:** British High Commission Kigali to ensure sufficient oversight of Burundi projects, including through actively monitoring the projects and building relationships with implementers alongside the new Burundi project manager, in light of high level of risk and withdrawal of Burundi coordinator.
5. **Monitoring + Evaluation:** The programme team should continue working closely with the M+E unit to improve monitoring and evaluation processes, and in particular completing the programme level results framework which should include gender sensitive indicators and milestones where relevant.
6. **Financial management:** The programme team should liaise closely with implementing partners during the year on financial management, messaging out to remind them of good practice and the need for activity based budgets.
7. **Programme management:** Early procurement planning and multi-year contracting with break clauses should be used where appropriate in future years to ensure easier programme management, greater confidence for smaller implementers and a more long-term, strategic approach to programming.