

## **Evaluation of Danish Support to Civil Society**

*Three thematic evaluations to support joint learning*

### **Summary, Management response & Follow-up Note**

This note summarises the main findings, lessons learned and recommendations of the Evaluation of the Danish Support to Civil Society undertaken between September 2020 and January 2022. The note includes the management response and follow-up to the evaluation drafted by the Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement Department (HCE). The Evaluation was commissioned and managed by the Evaluation, Learning and Quality Department (ELK) and carried out by an independent team of consultants under the management of INTRAC (UK) and Nordic Consulting Group (DK).

#### **Summary of the evaluation**

##### *Background*

The most recent previous evaluations of Danish support to civil society were carried out through the *Evaluation of the Civil Society Strategy, 2008-2012* (2013) and (partly) the *Evaluation of the Strategy for Danish Humanitarian Action, 2010 – 2015* (2015). Since then, a joint Strategy for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action was developed, *The World 2030* (2017), which confirmed that Danish civil society organisations (CSOs) were expected to play a role in supporting Danish development and humanitarian priorities through Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPA) with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). A follow-up process of the two evaluations included a series of initiatives led by the Evaluation Department over the period 2015-2019 focusing on the enhancement of documentation of results of Danish support to civil society, including a Desk Review of Danish CSO Summary Results Frameworks (2019). The conclusion of this process was that a full-scale evaluation of the civil society portfolio would not produce the results necessary to stimulate learning and improve results. Instead, it was decided to initiate an evaluation series with a focus on three thematic areas:

Thematic Evaluation 1: Public Engagement in Denmark

Thematic Evaluation 2: Strengthening civil society in the Global South

Thematic Evaluation 3: Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

This resulted in three separate thematic evaluation reports, complemented by a brief synthesis report, which the present summary is based on.

The scope of the evaluation was limited to support channelled through Danish CSOs in the period 2017-2021 i.e. funding provided to 16 SPA partners and six pooled funds, corresponding to a little less than half of the total MFA support to civil society. The latter represents approximately 20% of Denmark's total ODA through civil society; perhaps closer to 25% if funding from other programmes is included.

### *Methodology*

The evaluation aimed to promote evidence-based joint learning and adopted a utilisation- focused approach. This meant that findings from the evaluation fed directly into the programming of the new round of SPA in real-time and that a number of recommendations were followed up on during the evaluation process.

The thematic approach meant that the evaluation methodology was based on in-depth case studies, complemented by wider surveys to generate more overall aggregate evidence. Repeated consultations were furthermore held to collect, discuss and validate data. These consultations took place in various forms, including the Evaluation Reference Group, advisory panels for each thematic evaluation, individual interviews and seminars/workshops.

### *Findings*

Overall, the evaluation finds that Denmark's approach to supporting civil society by supporting Danish CSOs and pooled funds, who then support Southern CSOs to address issues of poverty reduction, human rights and humanitarian needs, is logical, valid and based on reasonable assumptions. Combining work in the Global South with awareness and policy work in Denmark was found appropriate to maintain public awareness and support for development cooperation; and seeking to link humanitarian, development and peace work by encouraging a nexus approach was viewed as a relevant way to address previous obstacles.

The evaluation highlights that the Danish way of supporting CSOs is distinctive from the approach of many other donors in that its funds are predictable, long term and flexible with the recognition of the importance of a strong, diverse and independent civil society as a desirable end in itself in line with current thinking around principles of good donorship. The evaluation concludes that the MFA and Danish CSOs should build on what is already there, rather than engaging in change for the sake of change. Nevertheless, the three thematic evaluation reports also raise important challenges and areas for improvement.

### Public engagement in Denmark

While the evaluation shows that Danish CSOs are engaging with large sections of the Danish public in multiple ways, it also found evidence that public engagement is approached very differently and that the extent of engagement varies widely. The evaluation identified three main clusters of organisations, 1) Classic: long-standing public engagement in Denmark, inclination

towards pre-defined constituencies such as faith-based groups and trade unions; 2) Issue-driven: strong attention to a particular issue or theme, diverse target audiences; 3) Activist: highly focused on policy pressure and on advocacy, a predominance of urban target audiences.

The overwhelming focus is on engagement with already established target groups, whereas explicit attempts to reach genuinely new segments, including groups who are more sceptical about Danish ODA, are relatively rare. Moreover, public engagement often aims at profiling and fundraising for individual CSOs, rather than achieving collective and long-term outcomes. Increasing collaboration with both private and public sector actors has helped to amplify the voices of Danish CSOs, but there is a significant potential for more joint efforts.

The evaluation further concludes that documentation of outcomes and impact on public support is a major challenge that needs to be addressed in the future. While all organisations measure public reach, only a minority use qualitative data from event participants and several organisations indicated that they do not carry out baseline studies or evaluation activities.

In terms of contributions to policy change, initiatives to mobilise Danes to influence policy on specific issues are not frequent and it is thus difficult to ascertain their effectiveness as other factors may contribute to desired outcomes. Agendas are often set in the international confederations that several Danish CSOs belong to rather than having a Danish focus.

In 2019, all 16 SPA partners were able to raise 20% of their total funding independently, however, 40% of them failed or only just met the 5% target for fundraising in Denmark. This requirement was especially challenging for the more issue-driven organisations.

### Strengthening civil society in the Global South

The evaluation provides significant evidence that Danish CSOs have been able to generate many benefits for their partners in the Global South and the marginalised communities they represent. More than 500 Southern partners supported across the portfolio reported that Danish CSOs have significantly strengthened their capacity. Southern partners have improved their ability to support their constituents, leading to more relevant and responsive programming, and reaching more people.

Enhanced technical skills, including adherence to humanitarian standards, has improved services offered to communities in the short-term as well as longer-term change resulting from advocacy efforts on behalf of communities. Yet, the evaluation also indicates that Southern partners feel that there is insufficient strategic capacity development for their own organisations, going beyond support to implement projects, e.g. in areas such as fundraising and communications. The lack of proper exit strategy for the partnerships is also raised as a weakness, which could undermine progress that has been achieved.

From the MFA perspective, the evaluation highlights that working through Danish CSOs brings benefits such as giving a 'line of sight' to where money gets spent; getting support to emergency locations very quickly; reaching partners that the MFA cannot; providing a bridge between Southern partners and donors, and communicating development efforts in the South to Danish audiences.

The evaluation emphasises that a great deal is being done by Danish CSOs, supported by the MFA, to promote localisation, and that Denmark appears to be a powerful actor within the localisation agenda. At the same time, it specifies that a lot more could be done to facilitate better power-sharing and more equality of relationships with Southern partners. The evaluation underlines that individual CSOs work under very different structures and in very different contexts and that, therefore a diversity of responses is required within the recent impetus for localisation. In particular, there are factors related to the humanitarian sector that can inhibit Danish CSOs from engaging in desired localisation, which need to be addressed. Hence, the evaluation concludes that rather than setting localisation targets top-down, such as those for money transferred overseas, Danish CSOs and pooled funds should be asked to be explicit about what they are trying to achieve within localisation as individual entities, and should be judged on that basis.

Another dilemma on localisation is that compliance issues may undermine the desire to work with smaller or more unusual organisations in the South. Working with new types of organisations such as social movements, networks and the private sector can enable Danish CSOs to reach new groups, but partner diversity is not increasing rapidly and compliance is frequently raised as a major challenge in this regard. The evaluation points out that the new round of SPA is an opportunity for the MFA and Danish CSOs to discuss compliance requirements and the appetite for risk on both sides e.g. by devoting a share of funding to innovative work with newer partnerships with lower compliance thresholds.

One of the major reasons for working in partnership, underpinning the associated localisation agenda, is to seek more cost effective, long-term change. The evaluation concludes that it is hard to establish the overall cost-effectiveness of Danish CSO support to Southern partners for the covered period, as ultimate results have yet to be realised, and the chain of contribution is long and complex. The cost-effectiveness is likely to be judged alongside the overall success or failure of the localisation agenda and the MFA and Danish CSOs will therefore need to monitor this closely going forward over an extended period.

#### Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

MFA civil society funding for the 2017-21 period had two main pillars (CIV and HUM), and both contained references to the double nexus, with the peace aspect being more implicit. Given

that this is a relatively new working area, the third thematic evaluation was more learning-oriented than the others, particularly with respect to unpacking what peace means within a nexus approach.

The evaluation shows that although HDP nexus approaches have been quite loosely defined in most Danish CSOs, a wide variety of HD nexus approaches were implemented and over half the organisations are carrying out work that is peace-related. However, the depth of peace engagement varies and so does the perception of peace activities. By using the *Peace Spectrum Model* from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the evaluation found that organisations were more engaged in peace activities than they initially reported, even though only a smaller number work with a structured approach to peacebuilding.

The evaluation further emphasises the importance of context in defining the scope of potential nexus approaches. In environments where a nexus approach is challenging and where results are harder to come by, only few Danish CSOs seem to be engaged, although CSOs have a critical role to play in such contexts. Strategic service delivery has shown its relevance in contexts where there is a need to shift between humanitarian aid and development activities and with this mechanism in the SPA, organisations are found to be able to work with a human rights-based approach (HRBA) and to fall back on humanitarian aid, when required by a challenging political context. Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) is well consolidated in organisations' work with HRBA and the evaluation finds that using LNOB as a conceptual label can open doors in some contexts, where using peace language may be seen as taking a political standpoint.

Disaster Risk Reduction and climate change projects have been core areas for many organisations during the funding period and the SPA modality has been instrumental in allowing organisations to build their expertise and deliver projects that address resource issues, strengthen resilience, build community level capacity and enhance livelihoods. These projects have, over time, consolidated a double nexus approach.

The results achieved were, by and large, outputs and outcomes achieved by tested approaches of projects in crisis contexts – without pointing to the nexus dimension. Internal reflections on measuring results attributed to a nexus approach have led Danish CSOs to test different approaches. Some organisations have started to include a nexus dimension into their results frameworks and narrative approaches are also seen as valuable to show the additionally of a nexus approach.

Overall, the evaluation finds that the flexibility allowed by the SPA funding modality is conducive for promoting both HD and HDP nexus approaches. The new funding round should improve that further by merging the CIV and HUM funding pillars contributing to more relevant and

effective programming, which is particularly important given the increasing focus on fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

The evaluation emphasises the importance of sharing learning between agencies and the potential for collaboration between organisations with complementary areas of expertise, notably by building stronger linkages with peacebuilding actors in conflict affected situations to achieve better outcomes. Several organisations are working to ensure that local actors and conflict-affected communities have a greater involvement in analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation as part of their localisation efforts. Nevertheless, local actors are often left out of the fora where coordination takes place.

### Cross-cutting issues

While there are positive examples of collaboration amongst Danish CSOs such as the umbrella body Globalt Fokus' technical working groups, the evaluation concludes that overall collaborations falls short of its potential in practice. With regard to public engagement, the evaluation found positive examples of joint fundraising and outreach in schools for example, whereas there were only few concrete joint activities in terms of advocacy for policy change. The evaluation also points to an untapped potential in public engagement involving both CSOs and the MFA. In the Global South, there does not seem to be a good reason to have more collaboration between Danish CSOs, unless there is a specific rationale in terms of working with a Danish embassy or seeking to influence a Danish advocacy target. In relation to nexus approaches, it is particularly important to share learning across organisations and there is a potential for enhanced collaboration between organisations with complementary specialisms.

With regard to monitoring and evaluation and communicating results, the evaluation concludes that there is little the MFA can do to better *measure* wider results due to the challenge of aggregating and summarising achievements across the entire portfolio, it underlines that a large range of options are available to better communicate wider results.

<b>Options for Communicating Results</b>	
1. Map wider results onto a Theory of Change.	7. More consistent annual reporting formats.
2. Map wider results onto a series of dimensions of change.	8. Develop learning or evaluation questions.
3. Develop a portfolio results framework.	9. Develop communication-focused interactive guides.
4. Produce purposeful case studies on a regular basis.	10. Carry out a tracer study.
5. Partner surveys.	11. Joint in-country studies.
6. Use of common methodologies.	12. Joint humanitarian evaluations.

The Danish CSOs and MFA have already discussed these options at the end of the previous evaluation, and the evaluation suggest to renew discussion around which are plausible and desirable, taking into account the relative costs and benefits of doing so.

### **Recommendations and Management Response**

The three thematic evaluation reports included a total of 26 recommendations of which 16 were directed to MFA. These 16 recommendations are listed below with the management response.

#### *General comments*

The MFA welcomes the evaluation with the three thematic evaluation reports. The process itself has been extremely valuable with numerous consultations, sharing of experience and learning across all engaged actors and with the genuine and committed involvement of not least all civil society partners making the recommendations relevant and to the point. The evaluation has already to a large extent informed MFA's work with civil society partnerships and policy areas and played a significant role in the development of the new Strategic Partnerships 2022-2025. The evaluation has pointed to central areas for improvements as well as provided specific recommendations and suggestions for how to proceed. These are very valuable for the ongoing development of MFAs engagement with civil society. As is evident from the management response on the different recommendations below, the MFA to a large extent agrees with the recommendations and has initiated the follow-up on several aspects and/or is in the process of doing so.

#### *Comments to the specific recommendations*

#### Thematic Evaluation 1: Public engagement

**Recommendation 1:** *The MFA should (a) maintain broad objectives for Project and Programme Related Information to include wider calls to action on SDGs and other global issues as well as programme related results and (b) allow strategic partners to spend up to 3% of the programme budget of the SPAs public engagement activities in Denmark.*

Management response – Recommendation 1: MFA agrees with the first part of the recommendation (a). This means, that objectives of the IPE funds (renamed from PRI to Information and Public Engagement funds – IPE) are kept broad and engagement targets based on the partners' key strengths and competencies in the SPA 2022-2025. MFA does not agree with allocating 3% of the programme budget towards IPE initiatives as described in recommendation (b). The new SPA 2022-2025 maintains the level of 2% of the budget, however, IPE funds are calculated as a percentage across the entire budget. In the former structure, it was calculated as 2% of the lot CIV and lot LAB budgets only. Therefore, the total numeric amount is increased which to some extent meet the recommendation of increasing the budget for IPE initiatives.

**Recommendations 2:** *The MFA should allocate at least DKK 30 million per year to an engagement pool for ‘Collective Impact’ allowing consortia consisting of at least two strategic partners and one media or event partner to apply once a year for initiatives with a time perspective of at least 18 months, with priority given to engaging new target groups and documentation of results at outcome level.*

(See below)

**Recommendation 3:** *The MFA should allocate at least DKK 5 million per year to a funding mechanism for **smaller grants** of up to DKK 250,000, open to applications twice a year, with priority given to calls-for-action at local level and innovative approaches to engaging non-traditional target groups.*

Management response – Recommendation 2 and 3: The MFA agrees that pooled funds is an important mechanism in fostering public engagement, but does not consider the specific suggestions of recommendation 2 and 3 to be ideal for the purpose. Instead, the MFA will launch two new support mechanisms of pooled funds with different targets, purposes and applicants. Both will be launched in the spring of 2022.

The Information and Public Engagement Pool (DKK 25 m.) is aimed at engaging and informing Danes on global issues of relevance to development cooperation and SDGs and/or engaging citizens in making a difference for a more just, secure and sustainable world. The GLOBUS pool (DKK 18.8 m) aims at engaging Danish students and apprentices in the UN Sustainable Development Goals and in international development cooperation alongside partners in the Global South.

Both pools have a strong emphasis on cross sector partnerships and hard to reach audiences. Large Collective Impact projects with partners outside the sector are prioritized in The Information and Public Engagement Pool, but smaller stand alone initiatives are welcomed too.

**Recommendation 4:** *The MFA should maintain the requirement for strategic partners to raise the 5% in cash contributions in Denmark as a proxy indicator for public engagement and (b) conduct a cost-benefit analysis to assess the total costs involved for organisations without a fundraising tradition in raising the 5% cash contributions.*

Management response – Recommendation 4: The MFA agrees with the first part of the recommendation and the new SPA 2022-2025 maintains the requirement of raising 5% in cash contributions in Denmark. The MFA will however not conduct a cost-benefit analysis, since the responsibility of conducting such an analysis is considered to lie with the organisations and not the MFA.



**Recommendation 5:** *The MFA and CSOs should explore options for a three-year synergy scheme of targeted public engagement partnerships between MFA and CSOs with a group of 2-3 partners per year on the basis of a suitable match with government development priorities and priority issues of partners.*

Management response – Recommendation 5: The MFA agrees that there is a need for cooperation and partnerships between CSOs but have chosen to address the issue in a different manner than suggested in recommendation 5 in order to maintain flexibility. Instead, the new SPA 2022-2025 states that partners are expected to play an active role in the exploration into different approaches to a collective impact project with the other strategic partners during the partnership period 2022-2025. This will allow for successful collective impact projects to evolve over the years instead of changing every year and allow for partners to participate when they see a fit between the nature of the project and their engagement plans, target groups and competencies.

### Thematic Evaluation 2: Strengthening civil society in the Global South

**Recommendation 6:** *The MFA should ensure that any localisation targets, such as those for money transferred overseas, should apply across the portfolio of support: Danish CSOs work under different structures and in very different contexts. Rather than setting targets top-down, Danish CSOs and pooled funds should be asked to be explicit about what they are trying to achieve within localisation as individual entities, and should be judged on that basis. To help Danish CSOs think through how best to strengthen localisation within their own context, it would be helpful to have external resource people to work with each Danish CSO on an individual basis to review the current situation, set objectives on localisation, make practical suggestions, and challenge.*

Management response – Recommendation 6: The MFA partly agrees with the recommendation. As part of SPA 2022-2025 Danish CSOs across the portfolio have been requested to develop a ‘Local Leadership Strategy’ where they, based on their individual structure, context and mandate, set objectives for strengthening local leadership, including transfer of funds as well as decision making power to local partners. Progress towards set objectives in the strategies will be subject to ongoing follow-up including as part of annual reporting and consultations between the MFA and the Danish CSOs. General conditions to improve the localisation-agenda across the SPA-portfolio has also been applied related to a 20 pct. maximum expenditure at head quarter level in Denmark, and the possibility to include 7 pct. administration for local partners, meaning that MFA to some extent set targets top-down as well. Finally MFA does not oppose the idea of having external consultants supporting each Danish CSO regarding their localisation approach/efforts, but considers it a task for the individual CSO to consider the relevance of.

**Recommendation 7:** *The MFA and Danish CSOs should jointly discuss the contradiction between demands for increased localisation, requests to work with newer forms of partnership, and demands for more compliance, and identify appropriate solutions: In particular, MFA should consider whether it is possible to include some funding with fewer compliance requirements that would help Danish CSOs support newer forms of partnership.*

Management response – Recommendation 7: MFA agrees with the recommendation of jointly discussing the issue with Danish CSOs and has engaged in dialogue with civil society partners in various settings – both individual consultations and as part of more general discussions on civil society framework conditions. The MFA generally supports risk-willingness acknowledging the different and difficult circumstances, where Danish CSOs and their partners operate. Overall compliance requirements (e.g. zero tolerance regarding corruption) withstands but with an ongoing attention to areas, where it is possible and relevant to make adjustments provided that additional risk reducing measures are put in place. The MFA is looking into ways of using alternative reporting mechanisms in circumstances where a more flexible approach is required.

**Recommendation 8:** *The MFA should invest in building a small core team responsible for localisation, supported by representatives of CSOs, including Southern representatives as appropriate: This team should be tasked with ensuring that new SPA and pooled fund policies and practices around localisation, working with newer partnerships and compliance are consistent and coordinated. At the very least, no new policies or structures should be put in place without a very clear sense of how they will impact on existing policies and structures. Working through a small team with designated roles will mitigate the past tendency to outsource work when developing new processes (such as applications for SPAs etc.) to different people or groups who do not necessarily share the same views.*

Management response – Recommendation 8: The MFA agrees with the recommendation of having a small core team responsible for localisation (local leadership) and has anchored the responsibility within the Partnership team in the department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement (HCE). In the preparations for SPA 2022-2025 there has been held consultations and workshops with Danish CSOs including with input from local partners which has informed the ‘five core elements in strengthening local leadership’ in the information note (i.e. equitable partnerships, transfer of money and ownership, capacity development, local leadership, coordination and policy influence) for partners to develop their ‘Local Leadership Strategy’ from and report against on annual basis. Furthermore, localisation/local leadership is a cross cutting concern in all reviews to be conducted with partners from 2022-2025 and all strategic partners will include a local partner survey during the partnership period to ensure the local partners’ perspective and input to the cooperation and localisation agenda. All aspects of the work will be closely coordinated by the Partnership team at HCE and Danish CSOs will be involved and consulted on an ongoing basis and when relevant.

**Recommendation 9:** *Danish CSOs and the MFA should jointly discuss how better to support Southern partners to diversify their income bases or raise funds: This is something that Southern partners want; and feel their Danish partners are not currently delivering sufficiently.*

Management response – Recommendation 9: The MFA agrees to the extent, that Danish CSOs should have diversification of income bases and fundraising as a focus in their partnerships with Southern partners, and encourage partners to focus on this. For strategic partners it is a part of their ‘Local Leadership Strategy’. It is however outside of the MFA mandate to engage in more specific discussions about *how* better to support Southern partners, as it is considered to lie within the responsibility of the Danish organisation and their cooperation agreements with their partners.

**Recommendation 10:** *The MFA should encourage and incentivise Danish CSOs to invest in institutional capacity strengthening of local and national partners: This has been recommended by some Danish CSOs, in line with Grand Bargain commitments that more efforts should be invested in local and national actors’ organisational development and institutional capacities. Institutional barriers to such capacity strengthening need to be discussed and mitigated.*

Management response – Recommendation 10: The MFA agrees with the recommendation and encourages Danish CSOs to invest in institutional capacity strengthening of local and national partners. MFA has included the aspect as one of the ‘five core elements of strengthening local leadership’ in the SPA 2022-2025 and will follow progress on this in annual consultations and results reporting.

**Recommendation 11:** *The MFA should encourage CSOs to ensure that trusted and approved local partners receive the same level of flexibility as Danish CSOs in respect to multi-year and flexible funding agreements, including core granting: This could be done in simple ways such as asking Danish CSOs to report on progress towards this ambition in annual reports, thereby ensuring that they know this is expected of them. This kind of light touch approach would also enable Danish CSOs to justify their decisions in cases where it was felt such flexibility was not possible or appropriate.*

Management response – Recommendation 11: The MFA agrees with the recommendation and encourage Danish CSOs to show same level of flexibility as the MFA shows Danish CSOs. Following this recommendation, consultations has been held with Danish CSOs in order to ensure as far as possible, that MFA requirements do not stand in the way for such practice. Several elements have been changed in the new SPA 2022-2025 in this regard, e.g. the possibility to include 7 pct. administrative fee for local partners (this was earlier on only possible for strategic partners themselves) and the possibility to transfer funds from one year to the next without prior approval from MFA (as long as the total grant will be spend within the partnership period). These

elements will expectedly ensure flexibility for local partners as well to accommodate for changes in context and needs. These elements are an integrated part of the localisation-agenda and will be part of the annual reporting.

**Recommendation 12:** *The MFA and Danish CSOs should have an early discussion on the costs and benefits of pursuing new approaches to summarising and communicating portfolio-level results, and different options for M&E under the new SPA arrangements: If new approaches to summarising and communicating portfolio-level results are desired then various options need to be discussed, and a subset adopted. There is a large range of options available to better communicate portfolio-level results, some of which were recommended in a previous evaluation, and some of which have already been adopted. These are listed in box 7 in section 6 of this report.*

Management response – Recommendation 12: The MFA agrees with the recommendation and has already in 2021 started the process with multiple workshops and consultations with Danish CSOs, especially strategic partners and pooled funds, to identify a relevant approach to summarizing results at portfolio-level. The purpose is – together with Danish CSOs - to develop a set of cross-cutting indicators/domains of change (based on the specific suggestions presented in this report) for partners to report against on annual basis as part of SPA 2022-2025. The work is in progress and expected to be ready for implementation Q2 2022.

**Recommendation 13:** *The MFA should seek opportunities to influence current practices within the humanitarian sector that inhibit localisation, alongside other like-minded donors if possible: Many humanitarian donors do not create the conditions that allow humanitarian NGOs to do capacity development. Specifically, many work only in one-year cycles (e.g. European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)). Danish MFA is an exception, and representatives of Danish humanitarian organisations believe MFA should step-up, attempt to persuade other donors of the need for longer-term funding strategies, and thereby help enhance the potential for the kind of localisation they would like to see in humanitarian situations.*

Management response – Recommendation 13: The MFA agrees with the recommendation and will try to influence current donor practices when relevant and possible. A step in this regard is the newly appointed position in the Grand Bargain Workstream 2 on Localisation, where MFA from 2022 holds the position as chair and will use the platform for strengthening and sharing of approaches and practices.

**Recommendation 14:** *The MFA should develop a new Civil Society Policy to replace the previous one: This should go into more detail on Denmark's approach to supporting civil society than Denmark's new Strategy for Development Cooperation – 'The World We Share: Climate, fragility and human rights at the forefront' – and could be developed in a participatory way, incorporating the voices of the CSO sector in both the North and the South.*

Management response – Recommendation 14: The MFA does not agree with the recommendation. Denmark’s approach to supporting civil society is founded in the Strategy for Development Cooperation “The World We Share” with substantial emphasis of both commitment to as well as strategic priorities of supporting civil society development as part of the foundation for Danish development cooperation. The ‘How-to-note’ on Danish support to civil society further elaborates how the strategic priorities will be implemented more specifically.

### Thematic Evaluation 3: Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

**Recommendation 15:** *Strategic service delivery is a key mechanism that enhances a nexus approach in fragile and conflict affected situations – the mechanism is an HD approach, but opens perspectives to potential entry points for addressing aspects of peace. MFA should pay particular attention to the value of this mechanism and potentially expand its applicability.*

Management response – Recommendation 15: The MFA agrees with the recommendation. Strategic service delivery (SSD) is already integrated by many of the strategic partners in the HD approach. There is a potential linkages from SSD to the Peace dimension of the nexus. In many conflict settings – e.g. Somalia, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq – donors, incl. Danida, have provided support to basic services in order to incentivize peace dialogues and/or reestablish social contract between government and constituents. This work can be expanded and applied more systematically. MFA is interested in following up on learning from the partners on this area during the SPA 2022-2025 and will include it in both strategic dialogue and consultations with partners as well as in reviews.

**Recommendation 16:** *Organisations and MFA should strengthen dialogues in order to build joint knowledge on nexus approaches, and in particular peace within a triple nexus approach. This is important as Denmark increasingly prioritises fragile and conflict affected contexts. The dialogues can also help to showcase such efforts in relation to the Denmark’s candidature for the Security Council.*

Management response – Recommendation 16: The MFA agrees with the recommendation. The dialogue between MFA and partners is considered very valuable and MFA welcomes partner-led forums in this area, for instance the Danish, NGO-led “Network for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding” which facilitates learning, experience exchange and policy inputs at the Copenhagen level. The MFA prioritizes learning and policy development related to its work with fragile and conflict affected countries, including on the HDP nexus. As examples, the MFA takes part of the Stabilization Leaders Forum, where like-minded states share relevant experience; the MFA participates in the OECD International Network on Conflict and Fragility; the MFA is developing internal guidance on its development assistance in the HDP nexus as well as on peace and stabilization in fragile and conflict-affected countries. Closely related, the Inter-Ministerial

Peace and Stabilization Fund is under external evaluation, and findings will feed into a process of improving the functioning of the Fund. Moreover, the MFA is strengthening its knowledge base on climate and security in fragile contexts, including through partnership with specialized think tanks such as Adelphi.