

## Annex C: Benchmark - UK CSSF

<b>Country/actor</b>	United Kingdom/UK Government
<b>Instruments /funds</b>	<p><b>Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Established in 2015</li> <li>- Worth £1.2 billion in 2020 (now reduced from 2021).</li> <li>- Enables 14 government departments and agencies to address security priorities in a collaborative way.</li> <li>- The top 3 spending departments are FCDO, MoD and the Home Office (HO)</li> </ul>
<b>Definitions used for peace (building) and stabilisation</b>	<p><b>2011:</b> “... the process of establishing peace and security in countries affected by conflict and instability. It is the promotion of peaceful political settlement to produce a legitimate indigenous government, which can better serve its people. Stabilisation often requires external joint military and civilian support to perform some or all of the following tasks: prevent or reduce violence, protect people and key institutions, promote political processes and prepare for longer-term development.”<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>2014:</b> “Stabilization is one of the approaches used in situations of violent conflict which is designed to <b>protect and promote legitimate political authority</b>, using a combination of integrated civilian and military actions to reduce violence, re-establish security and prepare for longer-term recovery by building an enabling environment for structural stability.”<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>2019:</b> “Stabilisation is an activity undertaken as an <b>initial response to violence or the immediate threat of violence</b>.”<sup>3</sup> “While stabilization should be seen as closely related to peacebuilding, there are differences. Unlike stabilization, peacebuilding situates itself as a transformative activity designed to address the underlying drivers of conflict, whether it be to prevent conflict, resolve conflict or to consolidate post-conflict peace. In some contexts, stabilization activities may support and create the foundations for achieving peacebuilding outcomes.”<sup>4</sup></p>
<b>Annual investments in peace and stabilisation under CSSF<sup>5</sup></b>	<p><b>FY 2015/16:</b> £991m on a cross-government allocation of £1,008m (98%).</p> <p><b>FY 2016/17:</b> £1,104m on a cross-government allocation of £1,111m (99.4%).</p> <p><b>FY 2017/18:</b> £1,182m on a cross-government allocation of £1,188m (99.5%).</p> <p><b>FY 2018/19:</b> £1,256.8m on a cross-government allocation of £1,258.8m (99.8%).</p> <p><b>FY 2019/20:</b> £1,234.3m on a cross-government allocation of £1,266.2m (97.5%).<sup>6</sup></p>

### 1. Brief introduction

This benchmarking study will focus on how the UK applies Whole-of-Government (WoG) approach on peace and stabilisation through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and Stabilisation Unit (SU). The CSSF and the SU are the main mechanism through which the UK engaged in stabilisation prior to 2021, when the Stabilisation Unit became the Office for Conflict, Stability and Mediation (OCSM)<sup>7</sup>. All Departments are eligible to bid for CSSF Funding, with the majority being spent by the FCDO, MoD, and Home Office.

<sup>1</sup> Stabilisation Unit (2011). Cited in Gordon, E. (2019). Conflict, Security and Justice: Practice and Challenges in Peacebuilding. London, UK: Red Globe Press

<sup>2</sup> Stabilisation Unit (2014): The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation. London, UK: Crown Copyright.

<sup>3</sup> Stabilisation Unit (2019). The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation. A guide for policy makers and practitioners. London, UK: Crown Copyright. P. 13

<sup>4</sup> Stabilisation Unit (2019). The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation. A guide for policy makers and practitioners. London, UK: Crown Copyright. P. 19

<sup>5</sup> The Stabilisation Unit is funded from the CSSF annual allocations

<sup>6</sup> In FY 2019/2020, the largest spender of CSSF funding was the FCO, in large part, due to the Peacekeeping contributions (£376.4 million) of which £81.3 million was ODA (21.6%).

<sup>7</sup> Following the merger of Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID).

## 2. Overview of WOG approach, including instruments/mechanisms

The United Kingdom (UK) is often portrayed as a pioneer of developing a WoG approach to tackle issues of armed conflict and fragility.<sup>8</sup> In 1997, the UK launched its WoG approach in pursuit of its foreign and security interests. Then Prime Minister Tony Blair used the idea of 'joined-up' government, arguing that the British government should “speak with one voice” on foreign and security issues.<sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> Since then, the WoG approach has become an integral part of modern UK government.

The UK's WoG approach is characterised by an iteration of different approaches in an attempt to promote an institutionalisation of coordination across departments. The table below provides an overview of the different WoG approaches and the associated instruments/mechanisms between 1997-2018. The CSSF has been the main instrument of the UK's WoG approach since 2015.

Year	Approach	Description	Mechanism/ Instrument
1997	“Joined-up government” policy	Holistic not partial or linear thinking, capable of encompassing interaction between a wide variety of activities, habits, behaviour and attitudes; a capacity to think outside and work across organizational boundaries	-
2004- Late 2000s	Comprehensive Approach	Wholesale state-building and stabilisation activity addressing the drivers of political violence were deemed essential to combating the insurgency in both Iraq and Afghanistan. ‘Post-conflict’ phase was not clearly reached as violence transitioned and evolved; concept of stabilisation, state-building and a phased approach became largely redundant.	PCRU; Stabilisation Aid Fund; CPP; Conflict Pool(CP);
Early- mid 2010s	Civilian-led, integrated approach	Centrality of politics to stabilisation interventions; necessity of an integrated approach to delivery. Central tenets of stabilisation: Creating the conditions for non-violent politics and more ‘normal’ forms of economic activity; establishing the legitimacy of the government.	CSSF/SU
2018	Fusion Doctrine	Further attempts by the UK government to institutionalise coordination among departments.	CSSF/SU;

The CSSF can be regarded as an application of the UK WoG approach through programming. Created in 2015, the CSSF is a unique cross-government fund to “prevent conflicts and tackle threats to UK interests that arise from instability overseas.”<sup>11</sup> It was established in response to the criticisms found in the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) report (2012) on the Conflict Pool (CP)<sup>12</sup>, which was then subsequently replaced by the CSSF.

The CSSF is a flexible and agile fund which often delivers results in the medium- to long-term where no other HMG funding instrument is present, or able to respond quickly, or where activity would not fall into ODA rules. It is supposed to (i) enable the government “to use the

<sup>8</sup> F. Stepputat and L. Greenwood (2013). “Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States and Situations.” Copenhagen, Denmark: Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) Report 2013:15. Available at: [https://www.diis.dk/files/media/publications/import/extra/rp2013-25\\_stepputat\\_web.pdf](https://www.diis.dk/files/media/publications/import/extra/rp2013-25_stepputat_web.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020, WGA 2020 Country Report — United Kingdom. Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Stiftung.

<sup>10</sup> S. Gordon and T. Farrell (2009). Coin Machine: The British Military in Afghanistan, *The RUSI Journal*, 154(3): 18-25.

<sup>11</sup> HM Government (2021). Conflict, Stability and Security Fund: Annual Report 2019/20. London, UK: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

<sup>12</sup> The Conflict Pool was created in 2009 in a merger of the Conflict Prevention Pool (CPP) and the Stabilisation Aid Fund.

optimum combination of development, diplomacy, defence and security assistance rapidly and flexibly in countries at risk of conflict and instability”<sup>13</sup>, and (ii) to deliver against two of the National Security Objectives outlined in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (2015)<sup>14</sup>, and against the UK Aid Strategy (where it contributes to three of the four objectives for aid).<sup>15</sup> Consequently, CSSF programmes aim to bridge the gaps between foreign and national security policy and strategy; and tactics for diplomacy and development. The CSSF can be seen as an additional “pot of money” besides the baseline spending available for each HMG Department/Agency. It provides ODA and non-ODA funding sources to deliver national security objectives.<sup>16</sup> The CSSF operates in more than 80 countries and territories, delivering more than 90 programmes.

The SU is an interdepartmental agency which is funded by the CSSF. The security-development nexus is enshrined in the mandate of the UK government’s SU.<sup>17</sup> Established in 2007, the SU emerged from inter-departmental Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRUC) created in 2004. The SU is a cross-government, integrated civil-military operational unit that provides expertise on building stability, preventing conflict and meeting security challenges internationally.<sup>18</sup> It is designed to be agile and responsive and support different departments stabilization activities as required. The SU has recruited, trained and deployed qualified and experienced Deployable Civilian Experts to support UK government activities in fragile and conflict-affected states, and to multilateral missions on behalf of the FCO and DFID.<sup>19</sup> Prior to 2015, the SU was jointly controlled by the FCO, the DFID, and the MoD. Since 2015, the SU has been funded through the CSSF and governed through the NSC. The SU consists of core civil servant staff members from 12 government departments, as well as serving military and police officers, and civilian experts.

### 3. Positive aspects /what has worked well

The CSSF and the SU have played a critical role for UK’s WoG approach for several reasons.

First, the CSSF brings together **different viewpoints of government organisations and departments (e.g., DFID, FCO, MoD, HO) and fosters inter-ministerial collaboration.**<sup>20</sup> The CSSF has acted as a catalyst for a more integrated UK government response to instability and conflict, and promoted cross-government working. It has incentivised different government departments and agencies to respond to National Security priorities in a more collaborative way,<sup>21</sup> partly owing to the fact that their funding was pooled under the CSSF.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the WGA 2020 Country Report for the UK notes that “the establishment of formal committee structures to determine the allocation of resources and the co-location of personnel from the FCO, the MoD, the DFID, and other ministries and agencies in overseas missions led to

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<sup>13</sup> HM Government (2018). National Security Capability Review. London, UK: Cabinet Office.

<sup>14</sup> National Security Objective 1 is “Protecting our People (Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Serious and Organised Crime, Crisis Response)” and National Security Objective 2 is “Projecting our Global Influence (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Peacekeeping)”. For more information, see HM Government (2018). National Security Capability Review. London, UK: Cabinet Office

<sup>15</sup> UK Aid Objective 1 is “Protecting Global Peace, Security and Governance (Peacebuilding; Preventing Violent Extremism; Governance such as Organised Crime and Corruption)”, UK Aid Objective 2 is “Strengthening Resilience and Response to Crises (Strengthening Resilience; Responding to Growing Instability; Response to Crises)” and UK Aid Objective 3 is “Tackling Extreme Poverty and Helping the World’s Most Vulnerable (Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict; Supporting Women’s Leadership; Support to Refugees, Vulnerable Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons)”.

<sup>16</sup> HM Government (2021). The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. About us. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/conflict-stability-and-security-fund/about>

<sup>17</sup> Zycck, S.A. and Muggah, R., 2015. Preparing Stabilisation for 21st Century Security Challenges. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 4(1), 1-9.

<sup>18</sup> Stabilisation Unit (2021). About us. London UK: Crown Copyright. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/stabilisation-unit/about>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>21</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>22</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020, WGA 2020 Country Report — United Kingdom. Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Stiftung.

improvements in informal networking, which in turn led to further adjustments being made in the formal architecture.”<sup>23</sup>

Second, the CSSF demonstrates a **strong approach to conflict sensitivity and engages in strong analysis of conflict** making it well informed about dynamics and developments. A 2019 ICAI follow-up review into the CSSF concluded that “the CSSF has made significant progress in instituting good aid practice in fragile and conflict affected areas, including investments in thorough conflict sensitivity analysis and ‘do no harm’ risk assessments, results management, transparency and ODA compliance.”<sup>24</sup> The SU has contributed to the contextual understanding of fragile and conflict affected states, including the drivers and systems of conflict, and continues to build the UK’s evidence base for strategy and policy development in this area. One good example in this regard is the UK’s approach to analyse conflict. There is a strong coordination between departments when it comes to developing a coherent approach to conflict sensitivity.<sup>25</sup> In many of the countries in which CSSF operates, the SU delivers a Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability (JACS) to understand the needs and interests of key actors and the underlying drivers of conflict and violence.<sup>26</sup> The purpose of JACS is to develop a shared understanding of drivers of conflict across the different government organisations and departments (e.g., DFID, FCO, MoD, HO).<sup>27</sup> The use and dissemination of knowledge through JACS has worked very well on an individual country level based on the findings from the several interviews conducted.<sup>28</sup>

#### 4. Challenges/areas for improvements

This section briefly highlights the challenges and areas of improvements under the CSSF which could help inform the future WoG constellation of the Danish PSF. A number of fairly predictable occurrences and challenges can be observed in the UK’s whole of government approach, which shows a lot of similarities with the challenges under the PSF.

The three major stakeholders, FCO, DFID and MoD, have exhibited **highly different organisational cultures** which led to a competition over status, agendas and resources.<sup>29</sup> Significant power struggles between the three ministries could be observed. For example, “ambassadors, as Her Majesty’s representatives overseas, consider themselves to be *primi inter pares*”.<sup>30</sup> In line with the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) produced within MoD in 1998<sup>31</sup>, the British Armed Forces should be a “force for good in the world” whereby national security and prosperity was highly dependent on the promotion of international stability.<sup>32</sup> The Armed Forces, as represented by defence attachés, felt that they could provide the most effective access to the security services and, thus, to decision-makers in conflict and post-conflict states. DFID, however, possessing the largest budget for overseas spending, considered itself as a global network of leading development experts and practitioners. As a result, competing organisational cultures have sometimes led to competing agendas. Given the highly different organisational structures, hierarchies and reporting requirements, it has often not been easy to deliver a coherent cross-Whitehall approach.<sup>33</sup> Whilst many of these issues have gone away as the fund has evolved, organisational structures, siloed working and departmental autonomy present ongoing challenges to optimal collaboration.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> HM Government (2021). Conflict, Stability and Security Fund: Annual Report 2019/20. London, UK: Crown Copyright.

<sup>25</sup> TANA (2019). Stabilization-Development Nexus. Literature Review. Copenhagen, Denmark: Tana Copenhagen ApS

<sup>26</sup> HM Government, 2018, Conflict, Stability and Security Fund: Annual Report 2017/18. London, UK: HM Government.

<sup>27</sup> Stabilisation Unit, 2017, Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability. Guidance Note. July 2017. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/765448/JACS\\_Guidance\\_Note.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765448/JACS_Guidance_Note.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>29</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020, WGA 2020 Country Report — United Kingdom. Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Stiftung.

<sup>30</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020, WGA 2020 Country Report — United Kingdom. Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Stiftung.

<sup>31</sup> Ministry of Defence (1998). Strategic Defence Review. London: Crown Copyright.

<sup>32</sup> Cleary, Laura R. (2011). “Triggering Critical Mass: Identifying the factors for a successful defence transformation.” *Defence Studies* (11)1, 43–65.

<sup>33</sup> Field phase interviews.

FCO, DFID and MoD also have had **diametrically opposed viewpoints to attacking problems in the field of international development**. DFID staff have often been “somewhat idealistic development practitioners”<sup>34</sup> who strongly believe in the usefulness of developing Theory of Changes (ToCs) and log frames for maximising development impact.<sup>35</sup> Such tools have not lent themselves consistently well to enabling an agile, responsive fund, the results of which can often be intangible: this has led to challenges over what the Fund has achieved. DFID is the only UK government department that has had a long programming experience in international development.<sup>36</sup> In contrast, MoD and FCO staff do not work with a ToC/log frame approach as these are alien concepts to them. At the same time, DFID staff have been reluctant to embrace the role of security in international development practices and to cultivate relationships with people that have stronger political influence and look at development work from a military/strategic lens rather than a humanitarian/“doing good well” lens.

In the area of **achievements of medium- to long-term results**, there is a strong juxtaposition between the CSSF’s intention to deliver results in the medium- to long-term in the area of peacebuilding and stabilisation through long-term engagements on the one hand, and the use of the CSSF as an ‘emergency tool’ to demonstrate political commitment and further political interests.

The CSSF is supposed to enable the Embassies to work together in a more coordinated way and to bring best practices together from other government departments. However, there are significant **coordination problems** as the CSSF is not “owned”/“led” by a specific organisation. Each Department/Agency is highly autonomous and there is no difference in superiority. As a result, each Department/Agency thinks foremost about its own objectives and goals given that there is a lack of a well-defined goal behind the CSSF which all stakeholders can jointly support.<sup>37</sup> When working across different Departments/Agencies, it often remains unclear which organisation has the final say in how things are done, and how organisations can be incentivised to comply to the CSSF reporting requirements.

The **allocation of funding** also poses a challenge. In theory, any Department/Agency can apply for CSSF funding, provided they can show that their projects/programmes have a clear link to UK’s national security.<sup>38</sup> Before the creation of the CSSF, DFID was seen as having a disproportionate amount of money available overseas and other departments like the FCO were envious. Under the establishment of the CSSF, FCO has received and spent the largest share between 2015-2020 (63.2%), followed by the MoD (19.3%), DFID (8.3%), HO (3.1%) and HMT (2.8%).<sup>39</sup> The allocation of funding, however, can also cause misalignments between a Ministry’s own goals and objectives and those by the CSSF. For example, the MoD has an enormous budget and receives minute funds (in relative terms) from the CSSF. As a result, MoD is struggling to take the goals of the fund seriously and go through all the administrative and bureaucratic reporting requirements, which are far in excess of its own.<sup>40</sup>

There is considerable room for strengthening **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) processes** within the CSSF. The 2018 ICAI Review of the CSSF found that the CSSF has “inadequate results management processes, with basic information on what the programmes had achieved either missing or incomplete in almost all programmes reviewed (...) Programme design documents often fail to distinguish accurately between activities (such as training security

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<sup>34</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>35</sup> DFID (2016). Building Stability Framework. London, UK: DFID. Available at: [https://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/DFID\\_Building%20stability%20framework%202016.pdf](https://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/DFID_Building%20stability%20framework%202016.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>37</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>38</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>39</sup> HM Government (2021). Conflict, Stability and Security Fund: Annual Report 2019/20. London, UK: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

<sup>40</sup> Field phase interviews.

forces), outputs (the skills that are acquired) and intended outcomes (people using their new skills in useful ways) (...) The lack of meaningful results data means that neither the CSSF nor external reviewers such as ourselves can ascertain whether CSSF investments are effective and achieving good value for money”.<sup>41</sup> The 2018 ICAI Review also suggested that the CSSF could provide a better ToC and a clearer outline of how to identify, manage and mitigate risks of doing harm and how programs will achieve objectives by detailing what the outcomes and assumptions are. The review further highlighted that there exist gaps in results management and that practices of synthesizing and sharing evidence on what works can be improved.<sup>42</sup> While the CSSF is strong in the academic literature of conflict analysis the findings are often not used to guide policy. Frequent staff turnovers in the different ministries and at field level have also contributed to difficulties in retaining institutional memory.

Very recently, the **SU has been disbanded** and has become the Office for Stabilisation, Conflict and Mediation (OCSM). The OCSM is now responsible for the operational management of all Humanitarian and Stabilisation Operations Team (HSOT) conflict stabilisation projects and deployed personnel. While the SU was a cross-department fund under no specific Ministry, the new OCSM is located directly under the FCDO. It is widely believed that the role of the OCSM will change and become increasingly political.<sup>43</sup>

## 5. The Recent “Global Britain Agenda” and looking forward

The 2018 ‘Global Britain’ agenda<sup>44</sup> underscores the UK’s determination to further consolidate its WoG approach and to remain a global player in the field of international (development) cooperation.<sup>45</sup> As a result of this Global Britain Agenda, a few important changes regarding the UK’s WoG approach can be observed, including an updated approach to stabilisation with a strong emphasis on security and modern deterrence and the integration of departments and the assessment and recalibration of development assistance.<sup>46</sup>

In 2018, the UK government introduced the Fusion Doctrine. Building on the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) (2015) which is at the heart of UK’s national security policy, the Fusion Doctrine is aimed at strengthening the UK’s collective approach to national security, global influence and economic prosperity even further (see Figure 1). The Fusion Doctrine is intended to improve the ability of the NSC to make national security strategy and then implement its decisions across Government. Recognising that “building a culture of common purpose across departments requires improved accountability to shift incentives and behaviours towards a more genuinely whole-of-government approach”<sup>47</sup>, the Fusion Doctrine is supposed to create “a more accountable system to support collective Cabinet decision-making, with the introduction of senior officials as senior responsible owners to deliver each of the NSC’s priorities.”<sup>48</sup>

By the end of 2018, the UK government published the “Government’s approach to Stabilisation: A guide for policy makers and practitioners”. This document should “act as a handrail for those tasked to develop policy and deliver programmatic activities, providing guidance on the political, security and justice, and service delivery aspects of stabilisation. It examines how we address

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<sup>41</sup> ICAI, 2018, The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund’s aid spending. A performance review. 29 March 2018. Available at: <https://icaei.independent.gov.uk/html-version/cssf/>

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Field phase interviews.

<sup>44</sup> House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee (2018). 6th Report Global Britain. HC 780. 12 March 2018. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmfa/780/780.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> Seely, B. and J. Rogers (2019). “Global Britain: a Twenty-First Century Vision.” London, UK: Henry Jackson Society. Available at: <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/HJS-Global-Britain-%C2%AD-A-Twenty-first-Century-Vision-Report-A4-web.pdf>.

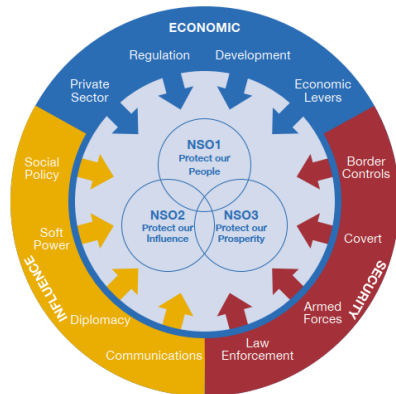
<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> HM Government (2018). National Security Capability Review. London, UK: Cabinet Office.

<sup>48</sup> HM Government (2018). National Security Capability Review. London, UK: Cabinet Office.

transnational threats (counter-terrorism, serious organised crime etc.) within stabilisation contexts.”<sup>49</sup> The UK Approach supports wider UK government strategic and policy frameworks, such as the National Security Strategy (NSS) and SDR (2015)<sup>50</sup> which incorporates and develops the Building Stability Overseas Strategy (2011)<sup>51</sup> and complements DFID’s Building Stability Framework (2016)<sup>52</sup>.

**Figure C.1: Framework for UK’s National Security**



Principle: “To deploy security, economic and influence capabilities to protect, promote and project our national security, economic and influence goals.”

Source: HM Government (2018). National Security Capability Review.

While early definitions of “stabilisation” focused primarily on the use of military force to combat insurgent groups, coupled with building local governance institutions and the capacity to deliver basic services, military force is no longer considered a prerequisite.<sup>53</sup> The UK government has also come to understand that stabilisation interventions cannot follow a one-size fits all approach, given the need for intervention to be context-specific. Nevertheless, the UK has adhered to three central stabilisation principles in supporting stabilisation. Stabilisation interventions are intended to “**protect** the means of survival and restore basic security, **promote** and support a political process to reduce violence as well as **prepare** a foundation for longer term stability”.<sup>54</sup> The CSSF has remained the main financial instrument to fund peace and stabilisation programmes.

To support the government’s drive for integrated working across departments to deliver its global strategy, DFID has been merged with the FCO in 2020 to become the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).<sup>55 56</sup> In 2021, the UK government published “Global Britain in a competitive age - The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy”.<sup>57</sup> At the heart of the Integrated Review is an increased commitment to security and resilience, so that the British people are protected against threats. The publication of this document has once again reemphasized the close links between Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy in the UK’s WoG approach.

<sup>49</sup> Stabilisation Unit (2019). The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation. guide for policy makers and practitioners. London, UK: Crown Copyright.

<sup>50</sup> HM Government (2015). National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom. London, UK: Crown Copyright.

<sup>51</sup> FCO, DFID and MoD (2011) Building Stability Overseas Strategy. London, UK: Crown Copyright.

<sup>52</sup> DFID (2016). Building Stability Framework. London, UK: Department for International Development.

<sup>53</sup> For more information, see E. Gordon (2019). Conflict, Security and Justice: Practice and Challenges in Peacebuilding. London, UK: Red Globe Press

<sup>54</sup> HM Government (2018). National Security Capability Review. London, UK: Cabinet Office.

<sup>55</sup> This merger is similar to the model used in Australia and Canada.

<sup>56</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5801/cmselect/cmcaff/809/80902.htm>

<sup>57</sup> HM Government (2021). Global Britain in a competitive age - The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy. London UK: Crown Copyright.

## 6. Conclusion

Despite the rather critical ICAI aid spending review of the CSSF in 2018, it can be concluded that, compared to other countries' stabilization frameworks and activities, the UK's stabilization program stands out in relation to its "conscious conceptual evolution of stabilization, its support to academic research and its development of policies and guides for stabilization efforts".<sup>58</sup> The UK has one of the "most clear and comprehensive conceptualisations and approaches to stabilization, as a civilian led, 'whole of government' integrated approach."<sup>59</sup> Each iteration of approaches has provided some improvements (either through reforms, new institutions, or an increased focus on a unified approach to foreign policy).

The UK's WoG approach is characterised by a formal and centralised system that provides direction and coordinates activity across government. Furthermore, the UK has "an established system for assessing global trends and security risks, (...) a process for the regular review and revision of the National Security Strategy and associated doctrines and (...) internal and external accountability mechanisms are being continuously refined, and substantial funds for conflict response and development assistance have been set aside and ring-fenced".<sup>60</sup>

However, several challenges have become evident under the WoG approach and CSSF instrument, such as highly different organisational cultures, diametrically opposed viewpoints to attacking development challenges, coordination problems, allocation of funding and weak MEL processes.

Even though the UK's future relationship with the EU remains uncertain, the UK government has continuously emphasized its commitment to work on a multilateral basis to resolve conflict and consistently demonstrated its recognition of the value of the WoG approach in its overseas operations in the area of peacebuilding and stabilisation.

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<sup>58</sup> TANA (2019). Stabilization-Development Nexus. Literature Review. Copenhagen, Denmark: Tana Copenhagen ApS.

<sup>59</sup> TANA (2019). Stabilization-Development Nexus. Literature Review. Copenhagen, Denmark: Tana Copenhagen ApS.

<sup>60</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020, WGA 2020 Country Report — United Kingdom. Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Stiftung.



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