Lessons to be learned from the EU Crisis Response in the Extended Neighbourhood: EU Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali

Deliverable 7.9

Draft Academic Article to be submitted for publication

Authors:

Ingo Peters, Enver Ferhatovic, Rabea Heinemann,

Susan Bergner, Sofia Marie Sturm

Project acronym:	EUNPACK
Project full title:	Good intentions, mixed results – A conflict sensitive unpacking of the EU comprehensive approach to conflict and crisis mechanisms
Grant agreement no.:	693337
Type of action:	Research and Innovation Action
Project start date:	01 April 2016
Project duration:	36 months
Call topic:	H2020-INT-05-2015
Project website:	www.eunpack.eu
Document:	Lessons to be learned from the EU Crisis Response in the Extended Neighbourhood: EU Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali
Deliverable number:	7.9
Deliverable title:	Academic Article on lessons learned concerning EU policies towards Iraq, Afghanistan and Mali
Due date of deliverable:	30.09.2018
Actual submission date:	05.10.2018
Editors:	Ingo Peters, Enver Ferhatovic,
Authors:	Ingo Peters, Enver Ferhatovic, Rabea Heinemann, Susan Berger, Sofia M. Sturm
Reviewers:	Morten Bøås,
Participating beneficiaries:	FUB, AREU, MERI, ARGA
Work Package no.:	7
Work Package title:	Crisis response in the neighbourhood area
Work Package leader:	Ingo Peters
Work Package participants:	FUB, AREU, MERI, ARGA
Estimated person-months for deliverable:	24
Dissemination level:	Public
Nature:	Report
Version:	1
Draft/Final:	Final draft
No. of pages (including cover):	56
Keywords:	European neighbourhood, Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, crisis, conflict, lessons learned

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Lessons to be learned from the EU Crisis Response in the Extended Neighbourhood:
EU Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali

Ingo Peters, Enver Ferhatovic, Rabea Heinemann, Susan Bergner, Sofia Sturm
(Freie Universität Berlin)

1. Introduction[1]

1.1 The EU's Common and Security Defence Policy and Security Sector Reform Engagements in the Extended Neighbourhood

How effective is the EU's crisis response policy in terms of its CSDP missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Mali? What are the constraining and enabling factors regarding EU policy formulation, implementation and impact in crisis response (SSR in the extended neighbourhood)? What are lessons to be learned from the analysis of CSDP mission in the extend neighbourhood, and which policy recommendation to be inferred? These questions guiding this research are part of the social science discourse on EU foreign policy, which has been focused for some years on the issues of 'actorness and power' of the European Union as an international actor. A salient part of this discourse has been the issue of foreign policy effectiveness, encompassing contributions varying between various degrees of dismissal or praise of EU performance also in comparison to other international actors, states as much as international organizations.[2] This analysis is resting on findings of a project focusing solely on EU crisis response policy in the extended neighbourhood, specifically on the CSDP missions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali.[3] All these missions ought to be placed in the broader context of effort pertaining to the realm of state- and peacebuilding and -- more directly – of EU efforts in Security Sector Reform (SSR).

The breakdown of governance in parts of its neighbourhood since the break-up of Yugoslavia (1991ff) has raised security concerns in the EU and provided opportunities to intervene with SSR efforts in terms of civilian, military or mixed CSDP mission in post-conflict arenas.[4] The EU links its foreign policy objectives to the Treat of Lisbon (TEU/Art.21, 2) which amongst other goals encompass to "preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security" and to "foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty"**.** Security Sector Reform (SSR) has been a linch-pin of the liberal state-building and peace-building processes[5] and a concept at the conjunction of security and

[1] This paper was prepared in the context of the EUNPACK project (A conflict-sensitive unpacking of the EU comprehensive approach to conflict and crises mechanism), funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 693337. Unless otherwise indicated, the views expressed are attributable only to the authors in a personal capacity and not to any institution with which they are associated, nor do they necessarily reflect the views or policy of the European Commission. For more information on EUNPACK project, see http://www.eunpack.eu/
[2] See the extensive literature review as part of the introduction in Peters 2016b.
[3] The deliverables of the aforementioned project providing thorough and detailed analysis of the three cases presented here are accessible via http://www.eunpack.eu/.
[4] See Beswick and Jackson 2011, 251.
[5] See Sedra 2013, 371.

development – two dominant threads of EU foreign policy. Hence, it has been identified as a preferred mode of intervention in crisis areas across the EU designated neighbourhood and extended neighbourhood.[6]

As a concept, SSR is not merely an attempt to integrate the opportunities of expanding development assistance into security-related fields but also addresses the challenges of new demands on development donors. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the „white paper" from the British Department for International Development define Security Sector Reform as the transformation of the security system, which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions, so that it is managed and operated in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework.[7] The overall objective of SSR is to contribute to a secure environment that is conducive to development.[8] Simultaneously, to subsume EU crisis response policy under SSR corresponds to the EU's conflict management and crisis response premises regarding the necessity of a comprehensive approach for generating impact effectiveness.[9] The European Commission self-evaluation of SSR[10] and the annual CSDP lessons learned reports along similar lines identify SSR as effective in promoting common interests and values such as human rights, good governance and strengthening international peace and security.[11]

Comparing the three conflict theatres of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Mali, EU crisis response policy has been facing considerable structural similarities of core challenges concerning a) huge governance deficits, b) delicate ethnic, religious, social and economic fragmentation, c) the embeddedness in regional instability and power struggles, combined with poorly managed borders and cross border interventions, rendering all these cases 'areas of limited statehood'.[12] Moreover, these security challenges covered all levels of state and society affecting EU engagement and effectiveness (and for that matter other international efforts). However, also pronounced differences across cases have to be noted regarding individual histories (including colonial history), political cultures, and the various legacies of war involving external powers, primarily the United States, impinging on the EU's current and future cooperation with the respective governments or (local communities) people.

Multiple engagements of international actors were from the outset unavoidably rendering the EU's operational environment complex and demanding in terms of policy coordination in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali alike. Mostly, the United States have been the agenda setter as much as the international gatekeeper defining the roles left for other actors – states and international as well as non-state organizations as much as the EU – in Afghanistan and in Iraq, but not in Mali. There, the main states engaged have been primarily France, and to a lesser degree Germany and the USA. Regional organisations, such as ECOWAS and the G5 Sahel (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauretania and Niger) with its currently established G5 Sahel force, play a much bigger role in Mali than in Iraq and Afghanistan. In view of the experience with international terrorism, the US's international agenda and the strong resolve after 9/11 in favour of an international intervention mirrored its domestic

[6] As of August 2018, the EU has launched 34 missions and operations. See European External Action Service (EEAS) 2018.
[7] See OECD 2001, 40; Akkerhuys et al. 2009, 9.
[8] See Stewart et al. 2002, 30.
[9] See Council of the European Union 2018 (5266/18) European Commission 2013.
[10] See European Commission 2016b.
[11] See ibid., 10.
[12] See Krasner and Risse 2014.

security priorities. However, US policy in Afghanistan and Iraq has not been confined to military engagement but – and this is sometimes overlooked in discussions in Europe – the United States also became the prime donor for reconstruction, humanitarian and development aid backed up with funds by far excelling EU funding. In Mali, in contrast, France has been the agenda setter and driving force behind Western and specifically EU engagement. The United Nations have been another important actor across cases with a multitude of policy programmes and changing significance over time. The mandating function of the UN Security Council (UN SC) has provided international legitimacy for most military and civilian international activities in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali.

Thus, the three research questions stated at the outset will guide and structure this analysis: In section 2, EU crisis response policy will be evaluated across a standardized foreign-policy cycle (output, outcome and impact effectiveness).[13] Information-wise, policy assessment is based on document analysis, background talks with actors of EU institutions and missions, public perceptions studies, conducted in the framework of the EUNPACK project 'on site' that is inside the countries of concern, and implementation reports by the EU as well as experts' assessments. In section 3, constraining or enabling factors for EU policy effectiveness, will be identified inductively that is generated from the empirical policy evaluation. These factors may be internal or external to EU policy-making, and will include the relevance of official causal premises for successful EU crisis response policy ('comprehensive approach', 'conflict sensitivity', 'local ownership').[14] In section 4, lessons to be learned from the earlier findings will result in general political, structural as well as operational policy recommendation considered most salient. However, it is to be noted that regular lessons learned and EU self-assessments are not always publicly accessible. In view of our own numerous findings and inferences across the policy cycle[15], we will compare those EU 'lessons learned' publicly available with those 'lessons to be learned'[16] springing from our case studies, which may support, question or complement the EU's own lessons. We hence ensure to focus mostly on the 'added value' provided by our project's research and building upon the 'state of the art'.

1.2 Features of EU Engagement and Comparative Case Studies

EU SSR has followed a similar pattern in conflict settings. The end or pause of major hostilities usually is followed by the design of ambitious reform programmes in Brussels based on a liberal model exemplifying principles of human rights and democratic civilian governance and respective reforms of state institutions, especially in the Civil Justice and Security Sector.[17] Following Hänggi,[18] there are three different contexts for SSR: (1) a developmental one, (2) a post-authoritarian (mostly post-communist) one, and (3) a post-conflict one. All three cases covered in this paper though different in detail pertain to the latter category. In each case, the fragmentation of security structures has been particularly challenging leading to similar policies in response to the respective crises.

[13] See Peters 2016a, 27f.
[14] For a conceptual discussion see Tripathi and Ferhatovic 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.1), 53-61. (cf. fn 3).
[15] See Peters 2016a, 27f; Peters et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.1).
[16] Please note: If we address the EU's own lessons, we speak about 'lessons learned'; in contrast, our project findings we address as 'lessons to be learned'. Moreover, these lessons are mostly confined to first-order observations, while the second-order observation of whether and how the EU itself 'learns' from identified lessons is not the focus of this exercise but will merely be raised where relevant. See Luhmann 1995, 94f.
[17] See Sedra 2017, 53.
[18] See Hänggi 2004, 17.

EU Council's, Commission's and Member States' engagement in all three cases relate to diverse historic links to the countries. The salience of individual Member States' advocacy in favour of EU engagement has to be highlighted, not least rooted in their respective colonial past in the EU's extended neighbourhood. Moreover, MS's historical links to the regions and countries in question matter when it comes to initiating and conducting missions and other policies, providing reference points for questions of neo-colonialism[19] or 'soft imperialism'[20] possibly infringing on the EU's policy legitimacy as well as outcome and impact effectiveness. For example Britain in Afghanistan and Iraq and France in Mali acquired special roles in the respective countries as well as they became 'lead nation' inside the European Union's policy-making machinery or regarding bilateral engagement.

EU engagement across cases has been marked by its multiple actorness and policies: The EU Council's as well as Commission's crisis response policy has been, despite all differences in detail, marked by structurally similar problem definitions leading to the same strategic and operational objectives, grand and operational strategies as well as the application of common tools and funding instruments. The latter resemble the manifold options at the EU's disposal, for instance CSDP missions, regional strategy papers, Special Representatives or Commission engagement via DEVCO and ECHO. All EU engagement has been based on Council decisions relating to respective mandates which have been changing to various degrees across cases, details of which will be addressed below. However, the role and motivation of key MS have been varying across cases and over time.

Table 1: EU Crisis Response in the Extended Neighbourhood: Selection of Cases & Cases-in-case

Cases/ Countries Cluster of Sub-cases	Afghanistan	Iraq	Mali
«Council foreign policy»	• **EUPOL-Afghanistan** • ANP Staff College • SSR: CSDP supported/ EC funded and managed • Justice linkages (MoJ/AGO)	• **EUJUST LEX-Iraq** • Including RoL support programme of Commission	• **EU TM Mali** • [SSR: EUCAP Sahel Mali as broader, regional framework]
«Commission foreign policy»	• RoL: EC funding, steering of the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) <u>EXCLUDED</u>: • Trade • Humanitarian Aid • Human Rights • Democratisation • Political Dialogue	• Development Aid • RoL support (s.a.) <u>EXCLUDED</u>: • Trade • Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection (ECHO) • Human rights, electorate process	• EU RoL engagement • Development & Humanitarian Aid <u>EXCLUDED:</u> • Trade (Economic Partnership Agreement) • Electorate Process

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[19] See Nicolaïdis, Sébe, and Maas 2015.
[20] See Hettne and Söderbaum 2005.

1.3 EU Self-Assessment: 'Lessons Learned'

The EU has established its own approach for gathering lessons, encompassing analyses at different levels (strategic, operational and tactical) as well as both the planning and implementation phase of missions and operations.[21] 'Lessons identified' sections are part of the six-monthly reports to the PSC, any report supporting the change of a mandate, and reports on horizontal issues across missions (such as SSR, monitoring, governance and outreach to the local population).[22] Underlying the EU lessons-learned cycle is a distinction between the *observation* of lessons, their *identification* and, eventually, their *processing*. In this regard, "a lesson can only be declared learned, once the full remedial action has been successfully implemented".[23] A lesson observed, on the contrary, refers to any "occurrence(s) or finding(s)"[24] that may potentially provide a base for a future lesson learned. However, though such observations might require improvement, they may not *per se* be negative but could also point to a best practice. A lesson identified thus constitutes the "outcome of the analysis phase"[25] on the base of which remedial action can be taken.

Due to the highly political and confidential nature of this process, it is only possible to track the more generalized lessons as published in annual SSR and CSDP reports. Until 2015, these reports, produced by the EEAS,[26] identified the following key findings**:**[27]

- The **Political Framework for Crisis Approach** (PFCA) showed its potential but could be further improved as SSR requires a constant dialogue within a partner country. This would allow steering the process away from technical details towards serving the political messaging thus keeping SSR on the agenda of the overall partnership.
- The **EEAS should early on start outlining an exit/transition strategy** based on shared conflict analysis also involving the Commission, Member States, host countries and other actors as appropriate.
- For the operational level, the EU identified the need for **pre-deployment training adjusted to the mandate of every Mission**. In consequence, the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and its network institutions developed a specific curriculum for staff to be deployed to CSDP missions and *de facto* started instructions in 2014. This curriculum could be standardised and constitute the required "common foundation of pre-deployment training."
- The revised **Crisis Management Procedures (CMP) improved the deployment procedures** but is said to need further adjustments. Whilst the revised CMP of 2013 generally allowed for an earlier mission deployment and thus visibility in-theatre, the revised procedures have not reduced the overall time required for mission launch. The main delaying factors remain (according to the EEAS report) the duration of the force generation process, which takes up to four months, and the lack of a shared understanding of the implications of the fast track process.

[21] See Council of the European Union 2008b.
[22] See ibid., 3.
[23] Council of the European Union 2012.
[24] Ibid., 6.
[25] Ibid., 15. Note that 'outcome' here means 'result' but not a distinctive phase of any policy cycle.
[26] The Lessons Management Group is chaired by a member of the EEAS Corporate Board and composed of CMPD, EUMS, CPCC, INTCEN, Security Policy and Conflict Prevention, MD CR&OC, CivCom, EUMC and PMG chairs, relevant geographic and thematic departments, as well as the Commission's DG DEVCO, ECHO and FPI. The LMG is assisted by a Lessons Working Group at expert level.
[27] See Council of the European Union 2015 (6777/15).

These lessons largely overlap with a range of recurrent topics highlighted by **external that is non-EU evaluations of CSDP missions and operations**. According to these**,** improvement is needed regarding coordination and communication,[28] understanding of the political context and adequacy of mandates,[29] cooperation with local actors, local ownership in general[30] and staffing of missions.[31] On the meta-level, the largely informal, in-transparent **EU lessons learned processes** (beyond the aforementioned formalized mechanisms) have been criticized.[32]

Despite the European Parliaments low-level influence in EU CSDP, a view at the 2015 evaluation of CSDP issued by the EP provides additional clues. Among the 23 points raised, the EP laments persistent structural shortcomings, such as lacking efficiency of crisis reaction mechanisms, sluggish decision-making procedures, missing financial solidarity among Member States, and the mismatch of mandates with the challenges of the actual conflict environment.[33] Furthermore, the EP criticizes that missions and operations primarily have served fostering the EU´s visibility in unfolding crisis environments at the expense of comprehensive planning and analysis before entering the field. Based on its evaluation, the European Parliament identifies the need for focusing on clearly identified, measurable and sustainable goals.[34]

Based on the 2005 and 2006 produced policy frameworks for SSR[35] and 15 years of SSR interventions, EU's joint staff (Commission and EEAS) formulated a lessons-learned document forming the basis for an EU framework on SSR.[36] The key findings pointed to a general lack of institutional capacity, lack of a long-term political and strategic approach grounded in the wider state-building context, lack of local ownership as well as internal weaknesses in the areas of monitoring and evaluation. EU SSR policy was further hampered by a fragmented policy framework and unclear division of labour. In spite of numerous shortcomings, EU efforts in SSR were in general well perceived and appreciated for the expertise and experience mobilised and applied.[37] A number of lessons were identified:

- Insufficient flexibility and long-term orientation as an overall deficiency EU SSR.
- Insufficient institutional capacity within EU institutions regarding SSR programming and policy dialogues. While expertise was difficult to attract and retain for CSDP/SSR missions in the field, Delegations/Commission had even less access to SSR experts from MS.
- The need for anchoring SSR-related actions in the wider governance and state-building framework. Due to a narrow focus on specific parts of the security and justice systems, a strategic and long-term political approach was mostly missing.
- Insufficient attention was paid to the need of the local population from the perspective of human security.
- Interventions were not tailored to the context. Their design was overly ambitious, characterized by incomplete risk analysis, incomplete analysis of the local situation and insufficient integration of structural causes of conflict into bilateral strategies. Thus, the

[28] See Arnaud et al. 2016; Dari et al. 2012, 52; Gross and Jacob 2013, 23f.
[29] See Dari et al. 2012, 52; Gross and Jacob 2013, 23f; Oksamytna 2011, 10.
[30] See Dari et al. 2012, 51; Minard 2013-14, 32.
[31] See Dari et al. 2012, 53; Gross and Jacob 2013, 24.
[32] See Freire et al. 2010, 49.
[33] See European Parliament 2015, 7.
[34] See ibid., 8.
[35] See Council of the European Union 2005 (12566/4/05); Council of the European Union 2006 (9967/06).
[36] See European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy 2016.
[37] See ibid., 2.

design and delivery of EU intervention on SSR need to be anchored on analysis of the local context based on firm evidence, risk analysis and consultations with local state and non-state stakeholders.

- A lack of national ownership due to a technical approach to SSR. SSR is a deeply political process so operating on the political level and securing a political buy-in from a wide range of partners/ local actors is imperative.
- The project-based approach was deemed not always appropriate due to its short-term nature, rigidity and conditionality this led to unsustainable reforms.
- Weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation, including insufficient benchmarking, and where benchmarks are used they rarely address the overall context of SSR.
- Competition between EU development programmes and CSDP missions continues to be a major challenge resulting in a lack of a clear division of labour and coordination.
- Parallelism and overlap of EU action due to separate decision-making structures. This led to frequent misinterpretations in the field on the roles of EU Delegations and CSDP Missions in regards to representation, reporting, donor coordination in the context of the comprehensive approach.

Concerning the added value of EU SSR action, the EU´s capacity in terms of budgeting was highlighted as well as its supranational nature that provides the EU with vast expertise and experience. Moreover, the EU´s global presence and its experience, specifically with a view to SSR, were emphasized. Most importantly, the EU´s self-assessed added-value was – in particular in comparison to other international actors – located with its positive perception as being a neutral actor in the field. The downside was that the Commission while implementing EU external action programmes was not always seen as a political actor and struggled to match its technical support with appropriate political action.[38]

2. Effectiveness of EU's Crisis Response Policy in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Mali

2.1 Evaluating the EU' Crisis Response Output Effectiveness

2.1.1 Output Effectiveness as *actor coherence*

Actor coherence – measured as actor unity (of voice),[39] viability of compromises and policy determinacy – was across cases a major challenge for the EU in Afghanistan and Iraq from the very beginning while Mali was a relatively 'easy case'. Horizontal as well as vertical coherence was questioned more than once by diverging MS preferences. The often slowly emerging consensus and compromises among MS and thus in the EU Council in the early years of policy formation for Afghanistan and Iraq moreover hampered opportunities for the Commission engagement that is state-building via reforming and building up pertinent (state) institutions.[40]

A few but major examples have – *pars pro toto* – to suffice for empirical evidence: In the case of **Afghanistan**, actor unity resulted from a cumbersome internal process (in NATO and the EU alike)

[38] See ibid., 11-15.
[39] See for the operationalization of categories, criteria and indicators of policy effectiveness ANNEX 7 to Peters et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.1) (cf above fn 3).
[40] See Burke 2009, 8. Divergent priorities among EU actors were never confined to Council foreign policy only; Commission foreign policy was likewise beset by 'vertical incoherence'; for example on Iraq see Peters et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.1), 12.

consisting of different stages which developed from low and misguided commitments in the beginning to gradually enhanced engagement. This became manifest in a gradual increase in MS troops, EU staff and budget contributions, which resulted in a gradual harmonization of the EU engagement by 2011/2012. In the case of **Iraq**, after the US-led war on Saddam in 2003, a profound split between war-opposing and war-supporting Member States preceded and significantly influenced the EU internal decision-making processes regarding the EU engagement in general and deployment of a CSDP Rule of Law mission in particular. As consequence, the initial commitment especially of those MS which had been opposing the war, was hesitant, thus favouring a low level of engagement without an ambitious state-building strategy but resting on the premise of 'security first'. This became manifest by a refusal to immediately contribute troops though this would be indispensable in view of the premise that military security was a *sine qua non* for all peace- and state-building efforts, and by a repeated lack of harmonization between EU institutions and Member States.[41]

Sometimes deviating preferences of some Member States undermined efforts at reaching substantial compromises and common positions at least temporarily. For example, the reconstruction of **Iraq** for some time ranked low on the EU agenda due to the UK and France reserving this issue for the United Nations.[42] Likewise, initiatives for creating the post of an EU special envoy or representative to **Iraq** and opening an EU office in Baghdad was temporarily blocked not least by France since Paris was hedging against US preponderance by confining institution-building in Iraq to the framework set by the UN.[43]

In Afghanistan Member States maintained bilateral security sector support projects like the German GPPT or Italian *Carabinieri* regiment seconded to NTM-A. UK meanwhile maintained a close hold of its operations in Herat throughout the duration of EUPOL. Coordination between the MS remained difficult both, within the IPCB and LOTFA due to diverging national approaches.[44]

In contrast, the engagement in **Mali** was from the very beginning characterized by a largely unitary and swift reaction in the face of the unfolding crises. The Council requested the planning for a possible CSDP mission already in October 2012. This was not only an immediate response to UN Resolution 2071 but also preceded the official Malian request for help from France by two months.[45] The one-step-a-month fashion – from the presentation of the crises management concept to its approval and the final Council decision on EUTM on January 17th furthermore led to the rapid deployment of the mission.[46] Hence, in the case of Mali, the lead nation France (with strong support from Germany) has played an enabling role in formulating common European policies.

Regarding *output determinacy*[47] – the second indicator constituting 'actor coherence' in this study – in fact, the determinacy of Council Conclusions has across cases been higher than the

[41] See Burke 2009, 8.
[42] See Crowe 2003 534f.
[43] See Youngs 2004, 8.
[44] See European Court of Auditors 2015, 15-17.
[45] See Council of the European Union 2012 (14926/12), 5; United Nations Security Council 2012. The Malian government officially requested support by France on 11th January 2013. See The Telegraph 2012.
[46] See Council of the European Union 2012 (16316/12) , 3; Council of the European Union 2012 (17535/12) , 3; Council of the European Union 2013 (5415/13) , 2.
[47] See Thomas 2012, 459f. This criterion was measured by a linguistic analysis of core EU documents to identify variations of the binding quality of EU statements. For details see ANNEX 2 to Peters et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.1) (cf. above fn 3).

determinacy of the overall sample that is including Commission policy documents.[48] At least in the case of **Afghanistan**, this can be attributed to the circumstance that, in contrast to Council policies, Commission policy formulation was intended to remain flexible in the face of dynamically changing policy priorities. Concerning the case of **Iraq**, regarding the challenges of defining a common approach after the 2003 war outlined above, the quantitative analysis of EU documents suggests that despite the many divergences at the outset, once documents were formulated, that is the output of internal decision-making was fixed, the determinacy of official statements were remarkably strong. In the case of **Mali**, the EU shifted from a rather non-active position in 2010 and 2011 towards a more supportive and operationally engaged actor from 2012 onwards. However, especially in the later documents the EU's increasing focus on support to local actors – especially the G5 – has been very much in line with the EU's overall strategy of enhancing regional structures and coordination. Overall, however, the determinacy of document wording mostly mirrored the interest of compromise formulations allowing for political interpretation and leeway.

2.1.2 Output effectiveness as *process coherence*[49]

Evaluating the EU policy-output effectiveness concerning 'coherence of policy features', the core strategic as well as intermediate objectives of the EU have overall been continuously visible in EU policy formulation and hence remarkably coherent across cases. In view of respective political, economic and social challenges, EU strategic objectives covered in short improving 'security', 'stability' and 'prosperity' as has been indicated by the Council, Commission, and Member States alike.[50] In **Mali** a fourth dimension was prominent, connected to the EU's intermediate aim and grand strategy for peace-building, that is the support of efforts at achieving institutionalized domestic 'peace agreements and reconciliation'. The EU's ambitious programmatic statements on its intermediate objectives (grand strategies) of democratization, dialogue and partnership as well as the EU's normative premises of good governance were policy-wise operationalized in a modest and focused way.

Despite the aforementioned policy coherence, a shift of EU concerns towards containing migration gradually emerged following the escalation of violence in the whole MENA and Greater Middle East in the wake of the 'Arab Spring' of 2011. Hence, the EU has been working on migration on bilateral and regional levels, in **Afghanistan** specifically on the issue of Afghan refugees hosted in Pakistan and Iran.[51] In **Iraq**, the challenges of in-country and intra–regional migration specifically from Syria was on the EU's agenda,[52] and in **Mali** policy also shifted towards a regional dimension of the crisis, including security and migration.[53] This complement to the EU agenda signifies a strong nexus between the EU's and its MS internal and external policy agenda.

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[48] See Thomas 2012, 459f. Since we are not starting from a mono-causal assumption, we also do not assume 'actor unity' to be the one and only factor 'determining' policy effectiveness. Instead, we took as premise what Thomas presented as his result: 'policy coherence' may be a *necessary but not a sufficient pre-condition* for effectiveness. For other usages of the concept of 'determinacy' see, for example, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005.

[49] See ANNEX 7 to Peters et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.1) (cf. above fn 3). Criteria encompass *coherence of policy features*, *continuity of core concepts*, and *institutional coherence.*

[50] For an overview on EU policy features see ANNEX 6 to ibid. (cf. above fn 3).

[51] See European External Action Service (EEAS) 2016; see Kanwal Sheikh 2016.

[52] ???*IP

[53] See Council of the European Union 2010 (15570/10); Council of the European Union 2012 (9009/12); Council of the European Union 2012 (14926/12); Council of the European Union 2015 (6052/15); Council of the

On the operational level, problem definitions, objectives and strategies also show a high degree of continuity and visibility, hence indicating significant policy-output effectiveness: In **Afghanistan**, **Iraq** and **Mali** the identified operational strategies – 'dialogue and partnership', 'ownership' as well as 'capacity building' – have been continuous features of EU policy-making output (that is documents and statements) across the time-frame of this investigation. Hence, the policies on the countries and regions addressed in this report resembled features marking the European Union foreign policy overall, from Neighbourhood Policy to interregional policies vis-à-vis Africa, Asia or Latin America as much as to the extended neighbourhood. These general characteristics seemingly resemble a 'one-size-fits-all approach'.[54] The specifics of the EU's policy-making are, however, as explicitly stated by the EU commission regarding Iraq, strongly defined by the respective challenges of the specific case in question, including adjustments made in view of changes on the ground.[55]

Obviously, the Good Governance principles and norms (democracy, human rights and rule of law) have been guiding EU policy formulation across cases. Moreover, operational strategies (transformative mechanisms) like *socialization* (by dialogue and partnership), and *capacity-building* (by empowering state institutions, personnel and civil society) are well-known features of EU policy strategies. *Conditionality*, another often found EU strategy – no matter whether in its positive or negative form[56] – in our cases has not been part of the EU's policy declarations and documents but might *de facto* become important during policy implementation.

Our second criterion for *process coherence* is framed as *Continuity of Core Concepts* marking EU policy output, primarily *the comprehensive approach, conflict sensitivity, and local ownership,* addressed now in this order. The **concept of *comprehensive approach*[57]** is inherent in the policy features identified as a 'grand strategy' of EU crisis response pertinent documents, which trickles down to the operational level:

- as part of the internal challenges of policy coordination among EU institutions and Member States' engagements;
- as part to the internationalization/ regionalization strategy also encompassing external factors influencing political and social process in our case countries;
- as part of inter-organizational cooperation with the UN, the World Bank or concerning significant state-actors like the United States;
- as part of grand strategy of democratization and good governance, inherently encompassing all levels of society requiring reforms in political, economic and societal structures and processes on all levels of government.

Since these features of EU engagement were also found to govern its operational objectives, strategies and tools, the comprehensive approach resembles the ambition of matching complex challenges by complex EU responses. In parts of the expert literature, this policy feature is often qualified as 'unique' to EU crisis response or even foreign policy in general. However, such a claim is unsustainable in view of, for example the UN's 'integrated missions' or the US 'all of government approach'. [58] As the quantitative document analysis reveals, the usage of the concept of

European Union 2015 (7203/15); Council of the European Union 2015 (7823/15); Council of the European Union 2012 (8067/12).

[54] See Börzel and Risse 2004.

[55] See European Commission 2004.

[56] See for a proper start on this issue: Smith 1998.

[57] For a detailed conceptualization of the *comprehensive approach* see Bátora et al. 2016 (EUNPACK D 4.1), 6.

[58] See, for example, Biscop 2004, 5f, 10-13; Post 2015, 79f; Pirozzi 2013, 6.

'comprehensive approach' has been stressed more in EU documents than 'conflict sensitivity' or 'local ownership', which can indeed be subsumed as being parts of the 'comprehensive approach'.[59]

The **concept *conflict sensitivity*[60]** has been part of pertinent documents on EU crisis response policy throughout the years. In addition, the EU has indeed signed up for the 'do-no-harm' approach as an indispensable premise for its conflict and crisis management policy. But the actual 'continuity and visibility' of the 'conflict-sensitivity' concept, has shown remarkable differences: In the case study on EU crisis response in **Iraq,** for example, the quantitative analysis of core EU documents shows that the concept of 'conflict sensitivity' has been explicitly used comparatively – that is relative to the other two core concepts – least in the **Iraq**, more in the **Afghanistan** and most in the **Mali** document sample.[61] This dis-continuity of reference questions first, its substantial significance for policy-making, and second, its relevance for policy implementation. Another challenge for EU engagement in any unstable country is being caught in the 'counter-insurgency logic', for example in Afghanistan.[62] This refers to the policy ambiguity coming with the support for one conflict party in order to enhance the stability in the country while this coincidentally tends to preserve the status-quo, which fed the ongoing conflict in the first place.[63] Especially regarding **Mali,** empirical evidence of our qualitative analysis shows another challenge: For the daily work of EU practitioners, the concept *conflict sensitivity* tends to be merely sullenly accepted in general terms if not explicitly discounted or neglected. For example, background talks with EEAS officials in Brussels revealed a lack of awareness and knowledge of desk officers about the concept of 'conflict sensitivity'.[64]

The EU's performance concerning its ambition to include *locals* as to facilitate *local ownership*[65] has been identified as one of the pertinent features of EU crisis response on the level of policy-formulation. The concept of *'local ownership'* appeared most often across EU policy documents and our three cases – relative to the concepts of 'conflict sensitivity' or 'comprehensive approach'. The EU's declared strive for instigating 'local ownership' has moreover been apparent by a distinct terminology – 'assist', 'support', 'facilitate' – the Council or the Commission used when formulating strategic as well as operational objectives, possibly to avoid any impression or to possibly preclude any suspicion the EU would super-impose its own preferences on the respective country and their 'local' actors.

When it comes to *institutional coherence*, our third criterion for *process coherence* – operationalized as horizontal/ vertical coherence across Community and Council foreign policy domains – empirical evidence (as we will see in the next subsection) points at remaining challenges of horizontal as much as of vertical coherence. [66] However, the 'multiple actorness' (addressed

[59] See again the Annexes to the three case studies to D 7.1 (cf. above fn 3).
[60] *Conflict sensitivity* in the context of EU crisis response implies recognizing the complexity and multi-layeredness of conflict, and that different groups in conflict have differing perceptions of the root causes of conflict and legitimate actions and agents. For details see Bátora et al. 2016 (EUNPACK D 4.1), 31f.
[61] See ANNEX 3 to D 7.1 for details (cf. above fn 3).
[62] See Vermeij 2015.
[63] Information from background talks with ECHO officials in Brussels, 6 March 2017.
[64] Information from background talks with EU officials in Brussels, 7 March 2017.
[65] In all three cases, this concept comes with particular challenges regarding the fragmented character of the societies in question, which makes "the" specific local hard to identify. For details on various forms of ownership as defined in EU documents, see ANNEX 4.6 to Heinemann 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.1) .
[66] An additional criterion for output effectiveness is – according to our conceptual foundation (see fn3!) – *substantial consistency* on the level of policy output. However, since this issue is intrinsically linked to causal inference and that is explanatory factors, the respective findings will be incorporated to the following section covering possible explanatory variables generated from our policy evaluation (section 3).

above) and the many departments, working units and desks involved in the Brussels machinery of the Council as much as of the Commission – almost unavoidably – goes along with process-coherence problems already on the phase of defining policy output.

In **Afghanistan** the institutional coherence in the field remained a challenge as the EU Delegation/EUSR had neither the expertise in SSR nor the capacity to politically guide the Mission. Coordination between EUPOL, the EUSR and the EU delegation was initially very weak, although from 2010 the revised mandate further clarified their respective roles and responsibilities.[67] An additional reference to the responsibility of the Head of Mission was included: the HoM was to "coordinate with other EU actors on the ground and […] receive local political guidance from the EUSR." Intra-EU coordination improved in the wake of the establishment of EEAS in 2011, which has provided a structured coordination mechanism and led to a 'double-hatted Ambassador' (both EUSR and Head of EU Delegation). Turf wars, lack of clarity over how the comprehensive approach should be applied proved burdensome during the duration of the mission. As the Commission considered the project-based approach to be sub-optimal, owing to difficulties in finding beneficiaries and because of the significant administrative burden of managing projects. It therefore preferred trust funds, predominantly LOTFA, in the rule of law sector in Afghanistan. However, using LOTFA as the main vehicle for financing the Afghan rule-of-law sector entailed shortcomings like the mismanagement of funds and lack of transparency, which for example led to temporary suspension of payments to the fund. Further LOTFA had very limited experience of capacity building in the sector so in 2013 out of a budget of 524 million USD, an amount of 506 million USD concerned police salaries. In fact, less than overall 3.5 % has been committed on capacity building.

The lack of prioritization and coordination between the Commission and the CSDP/SSR Mission EUPOL thus lead to projects like the establishment of the staff college as well as the oversight function within LOTFA ineffective.[68] It is believed that up to US$200 million of assistance from the UNDP-managed Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) could have been lost to fraud, corruption and mismanagement in the Ministry of Interior.[69] The European Union have considered suspending funds to LOTFA, which pays the bulk of the police salaries, due to such irregularities.[70] An August 2014 report of the U.S. Department of Defense's Inspector General found that more than 4,500 payroll payments to Ministry of Interior employees totaling US$40 million were potentially improper. Moreover, the Ministry was responsible for millions of dollars of unauthorized salary deductions and ineligible expenditures, including land purchases and allowances paid to uniformed employees.[71]

In the Iraq case, the empirical investigation of EU policy output also revealed some issues of institutional coherence in the Brussels machinery. Already in 2003, *Crowe* pointed out that early on in EU engagement in Iraq *de facto* decision-making patterns privileged the HR over the formal tasks of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) regarding coordination with other key players and with Council endorsement. Javier Solana's partial empowerment was not least due to the leadership role he *de facto* had played in certain aspects of EU policy on the Balkans and in the Middle Eastern

[67] See European Court of Auditors 2015, 18.
[68] See ibid., 18f.
[69] See Lynch 2014.
[70] See Conger 2014.
[71] See Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Defense 2014.

Quartet.[72] Still HR Solana's empowerment found its limits if tensions existed between MS and the Council and particularly the respective Presidency.[73]

Coordination among EU institutions as well as between the EU institutions and external actors was also a challenge concerning the EUJUST LEX integrated rule of law mission under CFSP and thus Council control. In view of the mission's narrow mandate and – due to the instable security situation – limited in-country presence its "cooperation with the European Commission, the US and European bilateral programmes were crucial" [74], not least in the Rule of Law Sector Working group chaired by the Iraqi Chief Justice. Hence, functionally as much as politically, to have two offices, a Coordination Office in Brussels and a Liaison Office located on the British embassy in Baghdad, accompanied a year later by the European Commission office, might give rise to suspicion for enhanced coordination problems and thus lack of policy coherence.[75] However, given limited information access regarding the early years of the mission to the knowledge of this author, coordination problems on the ground between EU institutions (horizontal coherence) as much as between institutions and MS (vertical coherence) presumably were mitigated by the various institutions' location on the same British compound in Iraq. By virtue of this arrangement, the British moreover provided for the security of the others in view of the varying security situation in Bagdad and Iraq.[76]

In Mali coordination issues between the EEAS and the Commission persist.[77] For example, with the latest EDF review, the Commission identified security as a priority concern marking a significant departure for an institution which has been responsible for development for a long time. Additionally, the lack of institutionalised policy coordination and cooperation between the Commission and the EEAS up-to-date has in practice undermined a comprehensive approach to the Mali conflict.

2.2 Evaluating the EU's Crisis Response Outcome Effectiveness

The evaluation of EU crisis response policy-outcome effectiveness through its missions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali is comparing the output with the outcome dimension – that is policy implementation as 'promises made vs. promises kept'.[78]

2.2.1 Outcome effectiveness as *actor unity*

***Actor unity* is an indispensable precondition for any mission mandate adopted on the output level of policy-making; mandates may be more resilient when resting on substantial compromises rather**

[72] See Crowe 2003, 542.
[73] See ibid., 541.
[74] Korski 2010, 236.
[75] See ibid., 235.
[76] Policy analysis of the EU's long-term engagement – as in Iraq – is severely hampered by difficulties of information access even via background talks in Brussels and elsewhere. As in national ministries, respective personnel on relevant positions in the Council, the Commission or nowadays the EEAS are also 'revolving' that is normally changing posts after two to four years thus mostly abolishing the opportunity for building up 'institutional memories'.
[77] Although not as relevant for this specific CSDP case study, coordination issues persist also between the Commission services themselves, namely between DEVCO and ECHO. Information from background talks with ECHO officials in Brussels, 6 March 2017 as well as with DEVCO official in Brussels, 8 March 2017.
[78] The evaluative criteria established for this analytical step are, first 'actor coherence/unity' and 'policy resonance' with policy output; second, 'process coherence' – operationalized as horizontal/ vertical coherence and policy coordination; third the implementation of EU ambitions that is its policy practices regarding 'conflict-sensitivity' and the 'comprehensive approach' and 'local ownership' are investigated.

than on formulas interpreted differently by individual EU MS. Evolving mandates are (though not uniquely) a feature EU crisis response policy, which basically may be due to changing context (security situation, changing priorities of EU actors involved, or lessons observed, identified and processed– lessons learned) during the policy-making process. CSDP missions' mandates/OPLANs were adopted in **Afghanistan** four times in eight years, in **Iraq** twice in eight years (2005-2013), and in **Mali** four times in seven years for EUTM Mali (2013-2020) and two times in four years for EUCAP Sahel Mali (2015-2019).

While **in Afghanistan**, the Mission's initial focus was on training, it proved to be insufficient in order to develop the required degree of sustainability within the Afghan institutions. This approach was hence functionally adjusted progressively replacing a capacity-building by an advising approach. **In Iraq,** defining the original mandate for the EUJUST LEX mission, as we already learned from the output section, meant finding a compromise between those EU MS which had joined the US coalition in the Iraq war in 2003 and those who had not. Later on, the lines of contention did not always stick to the original camps. This, for example, became visible the UK's and Germany's early engaged in out-of-country training. Likewise in late 2008 Denmark and the Netherlands circulated a proposal suggesting that the mission and its mandate should be significantly beefed up, which faced resistance from a number of staff-contributing countries, however. Moreover, the UK and Denmark had a head start in the southern provinces where their troops were stationed stressed by both founding a police academy is Basra.[79] Ultimately, the Council agreed to extend and reinforce the EUJUST LEX Iraq mandate, authorising in-theatre pilot activities and holding out the promise of turning the mission into a more robust endeavour.[80] The EUJUST LEX Iraq mission was terminated in December 2013, while under the leadership of Germany a new EU Advisory Mission (EUAM Iraq) in support of Security Sector Reform has been launched in October 2017. This implies a lack of consensus on the continuation of the former, while the latter is supported by the EU but *de facto* staffed and equipped by a single MS, Germany.[81]

The third mandate for EUTM **Mali** has incorporated an intensification of EU efforts in the region. A sustainable SSR needs not only training, but also a comprehensive DDR programme including all conflicting parties. With its 3rd mandate, EUTM has recognized this approach and broadened its narrow focus on training and advice towards a (1) a geographical extension up north to the river Niger loop, including the particularly affected and largely unstable northern areas of Gao and Timbuktu, (2) a contribution to the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process (DDR) as outlined in the Algiers peace agreement of 2015, thus responding to a pledge made by the Malian government, (3) the intensification of regional/international cooperation and interoperability with the newly created G5 Sahel and (4) the aim of decentralization of the Malian government in four phases.[82] This intensification of EU engagement indicates high actor unity for EU CSDP engagement in the country. In general, there has been a strong shift towards the regional and trans-boundary dimension of the EU engagement on Mali and a stronger focus on security, including migration. The inclusion of migration also in Council documents could serve as an indicator for a shift towards securitisation of the migration issue.

EU conflict and crisis-management policy is dominated by intergovernmental policy-making with national approaches often diverging during (policy formulation and) policy implementation. Hence,

[79] See again for these MS' initiatives Korski 2010, 234.
[80] See ibid., 235; Council of the European Union 2010 (2010/330/CFSP).
[81] See Council of the European Union 2013, 14; Council of the European Union 2017.
[82] See Council of the European Union 2016.

a*ctor coherence* (contributing to outcome effectiveness) depends on policy coordination in search for compromises – internally across EU institutions and MS, externally with host authorities and other international actors. Concerning EU-internal policy coordination, EUPOL **Afghanistan** had to permanently coordinate its engagement within the EU and international counterparts. Empirical evidence to a number of challenges for horizontal and vertical coherence concerning MS compromises, Council and Commission activities as much as lines of policy-making with these institutions. Internal coordination between the MS, EUPOL, the EU Special Representative (EUSR) and the EU Delegation was weak and detrimental to the SSR efforts. EU efforts initially suffered from fragmentation, and due to turf wars between the Commission, MS and CSDP Mission policy coordination and oversight in LOTFA and IPCB suffered. Furthermore, in spite of the declarative comprehensive approach CSDP/SSR efforts often ran in parallel or in effect countering the Commission and MS efforts. While the EU Delegation/Commission lacked expertise in SSR it still refused to involve EUPOL in LOTFA affairs. Political coordination of the Mission in SSR therefore proved difficult. On the other hand training tangible results of this cooperation extend to security arrangements for EUPOL staff and the agreement to jointly set up the Professional Training Board for the development and accreditation of police training curricula.[83] Additionally, "EU Member States also continued their own parallel individual efforts in police reform instead of seconding their staff exclusively to EUPOL".[84] All this, however, does not come as surprise in a politically loaded policy-field like SSR and crisis response and within a complex institution like the EU.

In the Iraq case, the empirical investigation of EU policy output also revealed issues with actor and institutional coherence for the implementation concerning EUJUST LEX. During Solana's time of duty as HR (until 2009), for example, tensions reportedly existed between the role of the HR and the Political and Security Committee (PSC) regarding coordination with other key players. Moreover, In view of the mission's narrow mandate and due to the instable security situation the limited in-country presence rendered the Brussels office of the mission in the driver's seat whereas the actual activities in Iraq itself were limited until 2012.[85]

However, in terms of coordination between **EUTM Mali** and other European policies, several projects have been designed in the framework of the 'Sahel Window' of the European Trust Fund, through a "combined analysis and knowledge of DG DEVCO at its headquarters and in EU Delegations and of CSDP missions operating in the same area."[86] Thus, coordination between different EU policies seems to work well on the ground. Besides, the European Commission emphasises that the EUSR "has played a very active role in the Malian peace process, participating in high-level meetings in Algiers and sessions of the follow-up committee in Bamako, in close coordination with EU Delegations".[87]

In sum, coordination between the European policies might work well and lead to high internal coherence and effectiveness, but regarding the external dimension of cooperation and coordination (or competition) with domestic authorities and international actors was also a challenge across all three cases. EUPOL's **Afghanistan** tried to or improve coordination by establishing mechanisms and ensure a greater coherence of the international engagement with their

[83] See European Court of Auditors 2015, 19.
[84] Murray 2007, 124.
[85] See Korski 2010, 236.
[86] A programme to strengthen security in the Mopti and Gao regions of Mali and to improve the management of border areas (PARSEC Mopti-Gao) was drawn up in close cooperation with the EUCAP and EUTM missions. See Boutillier 2017, 190.
[87] European Commission 2016a.

Afghan counterparts were only partially successful. The International Police Coordination Board (IPCB) (at the end of EUPOL's mandate, under Afghan ownership) never managed to establish itself as a credible coordinator of international support. Hence, a comprehensive analysis of the operating environment was questionable. Policy coordination between international actors remained problematic also with other donors in the justice and security sectors in consequence preventing the Commission from assuming a coordination function among international actors as mandated.[88]

In **Iraq**, the EU's support for the regional dimension found its expression in efforts on dialogue & socialisation: Support for the regional dimension, for example by participating in the respective international conference in *Sharm El Sheikh* in November 20014 and May 2007 which served also for launching the Compact for organizing international development aid.[89] Early on, gradual increase of EU assistance for reconstruction and development rendered coordination with the UN and the World Bank which acquired a growing role in the Donor Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) which the EU supported. Brussels dissatisfaction with the IRFFI performance being accused as to technical, led to policy adjustment when EU funds were shifted towards civil society groups. Additionally, the Commission organized seminars and projects cutting across and bridging ethnic divisions (on media freedom and women's rights etc.).[90]

According to **Malian** government representatives, the international partners 'do what they want' without consulting local authorities which then increases resentments against the international actors and might, eventually, lead to accusations such as international tutelage or loss of national sovereignty, decreasing the legitimacy and effectiveness also of EU engagement.[91] Cooperation with other international actors (ECOWAS and UN) has been considered crucial for an effective engagement of EUTM Mali.[92] According to the Annual 2014 CSDP Lessons Report, "the new EU-UN planning coordination guidelines work and are good practice"[93], even though the cooperation with the African Union (AU) remains to be developed, especially regarding lessons and best practice.[94] At the beginning of 2017, international donors implemented more than 70 projects designated to improve the Malian Security Sector, which are not based on a common approach or strategy. This lack of coordination between all international partners – not solely the EU – leads to overlapping and doubling of efforts.

2.2.2 Outcome effectiveness as *process coherence*

Effective policy implementation is – according to our analytical framework – about resonance of EU policy practice in Brussels and inside the respective 'country of concern' with policy output *(process coherence)*. In all three cases, the EU missed opportunities and lost credibility due to limited budgets and respective negative consequences for all kinds of resources required for the missions in

[88] See Gross 2009.
[89] See Council of the European Union 2008a, 19; European Commission 2010, 5, 21f, 46; European Commission 2014a, 4.
[90] See Youngs 2004, 12f.
[91] See Tull December 2017.
[92] See Council of the European Union 2013, 5.
[93] European External Action Service (EEAS) 2015a.
[94] See ibid., 33.

question.[95] Shortages of material and equipment limits the quality of the training and operational readiness prior to deployment, raising the question of aid effectiveness.[96]

EUPOL **Afghanistan** throughout its lifecycle had problems with the procurement of equipment for the Mission and difficulties to provide equipment pledged through its own (albeit small) projects budget.[97] Often institutions like the MoI and AGO and trainings at the Staff College suffered due to slow procedures or EU inability to provide equipment. In **Mali,** a lack of communication equipment prevents the MAF from providing protection to the population in the north. Equipment often arrives with delay or is "too technical for people to use and ends up just being stashed away".[98] Even more, disagreement between Malian stakeholders and EUTM persists what regards the very character of the mission. While the Malian side laments shortages in weaponry and an overall tactical approach of EUTM training procedures, which poorly resemble real world conditions and barely allow for concerted operations between different units, the EUTM mandate explicitly invokes the non-combat character of the mission.[99] This example illustrates that, far more than only constituting a material deficiency, it is political disunity between Mali and the EU that hampers effectiveness on the process level. In this context, the European Parliament concludes that due to insufficient equipment resulting in insufficient training, the soldiers that are and will be involved in combat operations in the future are – after three years of EUTM on the ground – not even approximately ready to be deployed.[100]

Regarding personnel, similar patterns marked our three cases. Promises made in terms of staff deployment – the speed of deployments as much as numbers and quality – undermine legitimacy and effectiveness of the missions if not followed up in practice. A high number of EU Member States contributed to all three missions considered in this study. **In Afghanistan**, up to 25 MS provided staff but EUPOL's impact was limited partly due to a lack of resources/equipment (Commission) and staff, which had to be seconded by EU Member States. The mission strength was authorized 400, but the highest staffing reached had been 340 in 2012. EUJUST LEX **Iraq** was – due to security concerns – almost entirely taking place outside Iraq until 2009, as *Korski* asserted "an innovative and cost-efficient mission concept, creating from scratch a network of training providers across Europe."[101] Until then, merely four staff members were deployed inside Iraq, absorbed by travel arrangements for course participants.[102] Only with the amended mandate of 2009, the number of staff in Baghdad rose to eight in 2010 and ultimately 66 (including 13 locals and 40% female) until the end of mission in Dec. 2013.[103] **In Mali**, 23 participating MS engage in providing personnel for EUTM Mali during the second and 22 countries contributing to the third mandate phase, which is a remarkable exception of general contribution to CSDP missions.[104] With a staff of 581 personnel, EUTM is a relatively big mission. However, compared to a mission-strength of 4,000 French military personnel deployed in the context of its parallel military intervention force *Opération Barkhane* in

[95] See Ibid. See also European Commission/DEVCO 2013.
[96] See Barea 2013.
[97] See European Court of Auditors 2015, 46.
[98] Bøås et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.4), 17. See also European External Action Service (EEAS) 2015a.
[99] See Malijet 2017; European External Action Service (EEAS) 2015b; Skeppström, Wiklund, and Jonsson 2015, 357.
[100] See Ibid; European Commission/DEVCO 2013.
[101] Korski 2010, 237.
[102] See Troszczynska-van Genderen 2010, 19.
[103] See European External Action Service (EEAS) 2014a.
[104] See European External Action Service (EEAS) July 2016; European Parliament 2017.

the Sahel, the relevance of EU numbers are modest and its possible impact may become questionable.

The focus of EU capacity building had/ has been on training Civil Justice personnel, police officers, judiciary, and prison services or -- in the case of Mali – on military personnel and course work, the core operational tool of EU CSDP engagement across cases the EU missions *delivered*, though unsurprisingly ambitions had to be compromised in practice.

In **Afghanistan** capacity building was implemented through the establishment of the *staff and criminal investigation colleges*, the train-the-trainer approach in management and criminal investigation structures of the ANP or civilian/institutional norm promotion through the build-up of key systemic elements/capacity building inside the Ministries of the Interior/Justice and Attorney General's Office. Moreover, the Kabul Staff College (built through EC funding worth € 7.3 Million), represents an important milestone for sustainability of EU engagement and the ANP and will likely continue to annually train hundreds of strategic level police staff.[105] The College has 324 staff and offers MA, BA studies in strategic leadership and is entirely under Afghan management since 2014. Based on EUPOL-developed curricula and trained trainers, it up to today trains police leaders and teachers providing a wide range of specialised courses in management and human rights awareness. As of July 2016, approximately 7,300 Afghan police officers have attended the various higher education courses offered by the Police Staff College.

The Female Police within the ANP started at 180 in 2007 to reach 3,200 by 2016 through targeted EUPOL support. The MoL targets 10,000 female police by 2025. Furthermore, EUPOL organised training of staff for the Human Rights, Gender and Children Directorate at the MoI and provided hundreds of monitoring, mentoring, advising and training sessions for the Attorney General's Office and Ministry of Justice during mission duration.[106] EUPOL AFG was marked by a progressive Mission's shift from delivering direct training or train-the-trainer activities to the creation and reinforcement of the capacities of the Afghan training institutions (sustainability) themselves.

The security situation in **Iraq** allowed only for out-of-county training courses to which almost all EU Member States (and Norway) contributed; some were also held in Jordan and Egypt. EU MS engagement covered different kinds of course for police, judiciary and penitentiary personnel. Training was covering, for example, seminars on judicial and juvenile justice, the rehabilitation of prisoners, or community policing. Moreover, work-experience secondments were offered by EU MS, following wishes form the Iraqi side to get more of a practical experience from practices inside the EU.[107] From 2009 onwards, with the improved security situation in Iraq and the extend mission mandate, training activities and seminars were moved to Iraq, three pilot policing seminars on crime-scene management and domestic violence in Baghdad and in the Kurdish region were held, as well as a high-level summit on the Iraqi Judicial Development Strategy Five Year Plan (2009-2013), and a seminar for female prison officers. In the more than 250 activities about 5,000 Iraqi CJS personnel was directly involved.[108]

[105] See Suroush 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.3), 16f.
[106] See ibid.
[107] See Christova 2013, 433f; Until 2010 reportedly 366 Iraqis had been "trained or been on secondments in Britain; 255 in Germany; 155 in Italy; 98 in the Netherlands; and 350 in France." Korski 2010, 235.
[108] See for details Christova 2013, 433f; for an EU documentation of measures and activities see European External Action Service (EEAS) 2011.

As of July 2018, **EUTM Mali** has received 11,956 MAF trainees in total. Eight Combined Arms Tactical Groups (GTIA, French Acronym) with battalions of 500-600 men have been trained, five of them retrained, and seven *Elément Tactique Interarmes* (ETIA) have been instructed.[109] In addition, EUTM has conducted several educational courses, inter alia Combined Mobile Advisory and Training Teams (CMATT, 10), Company Commanders' courses (6), Train the Trainers courses (11) Indirect Fire courses (14) and Engineer courses (7).

Furthermore, incoherence existed regarding understandings of civilian policing, mostly rooted in national domestic security cultures and practices, and quality of EU personnel. In **Afghanistan,** for example, the reform of the ANP towards a civilian policing remained a key element in the various EUPOL's mandates, EUPOL learned at an early stage that it was crucial to agree a Mission wide common understanding as incoming experts often expected to convey their ideas known from their home countries. In **Iraq**, another downside of training in Member States was the failure to implement one of the key IET recommendations: "to develop a common and detailed curriculum that all the training had to follow rather than only have a loose framework for EU governments to interpret – the mission could not ensure that Iraqi officials were given compatible instruction."[110] In **Mali**, staff at the EU Delegation with development background works on "unfamiliar aspects and collaborating with security experts in the Ministry of interior and police, something that has never been done before."[111] However, not only the skills and qualification of the trainers from participating European Member States differ, but it also occurs that these trainers do not follow the same training procedures or processes.[112]

Moreover, EU engagement in reforming the Civil Justice System in general and police reforms in particular – mostly due to security concerns and lack of resources – did not allow for evaluation of mandate implementation, quality assurance and monitoring missions' performance as the EU had formulated its ambitions. Hence, EU monitoring ambitions and EU MS reflections on Missions (in PSC and CivCom) were significantly constraint in practice. In **Afghanistan**, due to the security constraints monitoring of trained police was never an option in an open warfare environment. The lack of reliable data and security risks to evaluating the impact on the ground made it difficult to assess areas like criminal investigations, trainings or community policing in the provinces. As detailed feedback is difficult to obtain, missions have to work towards identifying "smart" indicators like assessments from actors present in the field that need to target a specific area, suggest an indicator of progress, specifying the actor for achievable goals with given available resources in a specific timeframe. The MIP, benchmarking and surveys are useful tools but an evaluation/impact assessment system must be embedded systematically in missions' guidelines and OPLANs.[113]

The EU made the claim that "(t)he Mission systematically follows-up on its alumni through evaluation workshops", and reconfirmed its commitment to "lessons learnt" from this endeavour shortly before the mission came to an end. This, however, could only partially be matched by the mission's practices until 2010 due to security restriction on travel to **Iraq**. Hence, some evaluation seminars happened with – reportedly – a high response rate to questionnaires and overall positive feedback on the training programmes. But until 2010/11 the effectiveness of the training could not systematically be tested by external post-training mentoring, and no systematic assessment of whether course

[109] For a detailed description of the GTIA trainings see Barea 2013.
[110] Korski 2010, 238.
[111] Bøås et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.4), 17.
[112] See Djiré et al. 2017, 42.
[113] See European Court of Auditors 2015, 20.

participants share their knowledge with colleagues in Iraq was implemented.[114] Additionally political constraints undermine the EU's ability to do so, most importantly, the EU got no access to Iraqi training establishments. Only with the new mission mandate of 2010 evaluation workshops with trainees occurred in several locations in Iraq as much as annual conferences for course organizers and trainers from EU MS and Mission staff were conducted.[115]

In **Mali**, training an army at war poses the problem of being unable to monitor and track the trained soldiers due to security reasons. Neither can they track the performance, nor the continuance or development of the soldiers, i.e. if trained soldiers desert from the army. How sustainable is training when the EU personnel do not have the possibility to evaluate the sustainability of their engagement? The inability of EUTM Mali to 'trace the trained' after their trainings hamper valuable follow-ups, evaluating and monitoring the trainings' appropriateness and effectiveness. This is moreover limiting the possibilities for any follow-up training.

In sum, hence, policy effectiveness in terms of *policy coherence* was limited due to the EU's failures to put 'resources where the mouth is' regarding money, equipment and personnel. Aside from other factors, this should have (had) negative implications for the EU achievements concerning SSR and crises response policy across cases and thus will be taken up when discussing causal factors of EU performance and effectiveness.

2.2.3 Outcome effectiveness as resonance of EU policy premises with policy practice

As reported earlier, the three core concepts – *conflict-sensitivity*, *local ownership, and comprehensive approach* – proclaimed by the EU as main features of crisis-response policy were continuously visible on the level of EU documents (that is output). However, unsurprisingly policy practices show some deficiencies when it comes to compare 'promises made with promises kept':

Conflict sensitivity

EU normative principles of crisis response policy match EU identity, but lack of conflict sensitivity lead to civilian policing standards being prioritized within an open conflict setting. In **Afghanistan**, for example, human rights were mainstreamed within training modules and a female policing core within the Afghan National Police had to be developed when local stakeholders fought an ever-stronger insurgency and had a differing set of priorities. In **Iraq**, *conflict sensitivity* was moreover a challenge when it came to EU awareness and equal treatment of minority groups. Following the proclamation of the *Clifat* in 2013, fighting the Da'esh especially in northern Iraq (Iraqi Kurdistan) was left to the Kurds and various Shi'a militia groups. European attention particular focused on the Yazidi, whereas other minority also suffering from the war – Christians, Kakais, Shabaks, Sabaias – were largely neglected.[116]

Conflict sensitivity was also deficient, since the legal systems of the countries of concern are not aptly understood. For example, in **Iraq** EU police professionals from countries with common law systems in charge of policy training, as again *Korski* reported, were unfamiliar with the central role Investigating Magistrate plays in Iraq's legal system for crime investigation.[117] Conflict sensitivity in sense of policies' responsiveness and adjustment to security conditions on the ground became questionable, for example, when the significant reduction of violence on the ground in Iraq occurred and the emerging more capable, democratically elected government came to power in 2007 was not

[114] See for a more critical assessment Korski 2010, 237; Troszczynska-van Genderen 2010, 17f.
[115] See Christova 2013, 435.
[116] See Manis 2016.
[117] See Korski 2010, 237.

matched by EU policy practice. EU adjustments, as to take advantage of the changed situation, did not lead to a significant upgraded of the mission engagement other than slowly moving the training programmes to Iraqi soil from 2009 onwards.[118]

Policy responsiveness to changing circumstance as much as to needs identified by local authorities is linking *conflict sensitivity* to *local ownership* requirements. While the Mission's initial focus in **Afghanistan** was on training, it proved to be insufficient in order to develop the required degree of sustainability within the Afghan institutions supported by the Mission. This approach was therefore progressively replaced by an advising approach.[119] For **Iraq**, for example, concerning the training of CJS-staff, adjustments encompassed a continuous amendment of course curricular and design, allegedly "in response to the needs of the Iraqi CJS."[120] Likewise, the incorporation of *Work Experience Secondments* as an element of EU police training occurred reportedly "in response to the Iraqi request for more practical learning experiences."[121] In **Mali**, however, local stakeholders claimed that the European trainers and experts teach something that is too abstract for the local people, which indicates lack of knowledge of the local reality and hence a lack of conflict sensitivity undermining local ownership.[122] Furthermore, the EU does not act conflict sensitive when training an army that does not represent the whole population, has very low reputation among the Malian people and is by wide parts not accepted. By strengthening the structures that are part of the roots for the conflict in Mali, EU engagement is far away from acting conflict sensitive.

Local ownership

Undoubtedly, the EU's commitment to an inclusive approach regarding local ownership had been part of the policy output across cases. In practice, however, the EU missions on the ground encountered several challenges, in **Afghanistan,** for example, due to the lack of local ownership, civilian policing standards were prioritized by EUPOL within an open conflict setting. Similarly, Human Rights were mainstreamed and prominently placed within training modules and a female policing core within the Afghan National Police developed when the ANP was involved in the existential fight against the Insurgency.[123] However, EU-MS' preferences outweighed the local priorities in each case. In **Iraq**, by the EU delegation's undertook various efforts of involving locals, not just in and around Bagdad but also in the various regions and local levels of engagement; such efforts were also visible regarding the on-site dimension of reconstruction and development policy under the Commission's aegis. The significance of the CSO's role in stabilizing and reforming Iraq was additionally stressed by CSO being part of al "specific objectives" as a core element of the "sector intervention framework" of 2014.[124] In EU Council conclusions and decisions for **Mali**, 'local ownership' is mostly referred to as 'regional' or 'national' ownership, with *national* meaning the Malian government in Bamako.

The comprehensive approach

Attempts at living up to the often high aspirations formulated on the level of general objectives by respective choices of operational strategies and tools – including the *comprehensive approach*, has

[118] See Burke 2009, 1.
[119] See Tardy, 2017, 4.
[120] See European Parliament 2012, 56.
[121] Troszczynska-van Genderen 2010, 19; cf. White 2008.
[122] See Bøås et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.4).
[123] See Kempin and Steinicke 2009, 138.
[124] European Commission 2014a, 6, and specifically the overview tables regarding the sector intervention framework on pp.27-29, reprinted in D 7.1, Annex 3 (cf. fn 3).

been suffering significantly from the changing security situation on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq during policy implementation.[125]

The Joint Action establishing the EUPOL mission stipulated that: 'The Council and the Commission shall, each in accordance with its respective powers, ensure consistency between the implementation of this Joint Action and external activities of the Community in accordance with Article 3 of the Treaty. The Council and the Commission shall cooperate to this end'.[126] The **comprehensive approach in the field remained a challenge** as the EU Delegation/EUSR had neither the expertise in SSR nor the capacity to politically guide the Mission. Turf wars, lack of clarity over how the comprehensive approach should be applied proved burdensome for the duration of the mission. The **lack of prioritization and coordination between the Commission and CSDP/SSR Mission** activities lead to projects like the implementation of the staff college as well as the oversight function within LOTFA ineffective and coordination of policies in the IPCB burdensome.

Hence, for instance, it came as no surprise that operational strategies for **Iraq** changed in view of the rising levels of violence and the deteriorating security situation in the country. EU Commission policies – though the general commitment to the strategic objectives was ostensibly upheld – became re-oriented from an 'agenda for change' to an 'agenda for consolidating' with the redefined shortened list of operational aims and 'focal sectors' for future programming as conveyed in the 2014 Multiannual Indicative Programme. This *de facto* entailed a farewell to the ambitions of a comprehensive approach in favour of pragmatic adjustments in practice; simultaneously this corresponded with the end of the EUJUST-LEX Iraq mission in December 2013.[127] In combination, these policy adjustments are flagging the EU's successive disentanglement from Iraq. Likewise, Commission policies in **Mali** – taking the activities of Reconstruction and Development as focal point – reflect EU's strategic objectives and strategies of 'internationalization', 'dialogue and partnership', and 'ownership'; in addition, continuous references are made to the Union's normative foundations that is democracy, human rights and rule of law across cases. However, resembling the respective adjustment in the other cases, Commission problem definitions for Mali in its NIPs and RIPs have been witnessing a gradual qualitative shift towards stability and security, hence emphasizing the strong security-development-nexus.[128]

2.3 Evaluating the EU's crisis response impact effectiveness

In this section, impact effectiveness of the three CSDP missions is measured against the background of EU policy premises as defined in the respective mandates. *First*, following our (analytical) project categorisation of EU policy objectives, achievements and shortcomings regarding operational, intermediate and strategic goals are quantitatively assessed. *Second*, EU impact is measured qualitatively in comparison to EU ambitions of solving the problems on the ground across cases by

[125] Here we consider briefly policy adjustments which happened outside the CSDP missions that is in Commission policies since the comprehensive approach *per se* includes the broader 'inclusive' view of EU multiple-actor engagement.
[126] Council of the European Union 2007 (2007/369/CFSP).
[127] See European Commission 2014a, 6-12; see fn 81.
[128] In the RIP 2008-2013, security was still referred to as regional stability. However, in the RIP 2014-2020 'Peace, Security and Regional Stability' became the first focal sector thus emphasizing the security situation in Mali, encompassing its institutional and economic dimension. See European Commission 2008; European Commission 2015; European Commission 2014b.

SSR and CSDP missions. *Third*, the strategic concept of *local ownership* is evaluated connected to *local perceptions* of EU policy-making reaching from policy output, outcome and impact.[129]

2.3.1 Impact of *quantitative* achievements of mandated EU policy objectives

Concerning operational goals in terms of capacity building in the CJS, police forces in Afghanistan and Iraq as much as of armed forces in Mali, *capacities* refer to training of respective servicemen and women as much as more structural and institutional reforms for facilitating a lasting impact and sustained political changes possibly contributing to social and political stability in the countries of concern.

In **Afghanistan**, the mission budget was at € 43,6 mio.by the end of mission and € 457 mio. over the duration of the mission. By comparison, the EC commitment (under the DCI) to support the rule of law in Afghanistan is €319 million for the period 2014-2020. EUPOL's overall costs made it the second most expensive civilian mission ever after EULEX Kosovo.[130] However, the gap that emerged between civilian police development practised by EUPOL, on the one hand, and the Counter Insurgency approach favoured by the US/NATO, on the other hand, reflected a lack of integration between international partners. In particular, the dominant security sector player NTM-A, due to its $4 billion budget and thousands of trainers, pushed forward a militarised ANP force development after 2011.[131] EUPOL ambitious but time-consuming efforts, were further questioned by the short-term approach of the US/NATO training, and the inconsistent national approaches of Member States some of which pursued bilateral training projects and support to other actors active in SSR.

In **Iraq**, the Civil Justice System has been suffering from basic deficiencies regarding training, good governance standards, first and foremost human rights and gender, as well equipment.[132] Hence, every effort for improving this situation – from a state- and peace-building perspective – ought to be appreciated. Hence, the EU JUST LEX mission training of policy, judiciary and penitentiary services personnel, which after seven years amounted (according to official EU figures and self-assessment) to more than 7,000 mid- and high-level Iraqi officials generating significant improvements regarding prison management, prison security and prisoners' human rights.[133] As a downside, the selection process of course-goers was left to the Iraqi Interior Ministry, rendering it questionable, whether "the right officers, or even ones working in positions relevant to the training, attended. Corruption and mismanagement in the ministry meant it was also impossible to ensure selection was not made on the basis of patronage," as *Korski* reported.[134] Additionally, in relation to the overall number of police officers, (according to US sources) encompassing over 400,000 officers, the possible impact of EU efforts unavoidably remains modest at best.[135] Moreover, the balance sheet was further tipped to the negative since CJS personnel was facing violent attacks and suffered significant losses, figures

[129] The core concepts addressed earlier (the comprehensive approach, conflict sensitivity and local ownership) are all considered (intermediate) policy strategies that is as means to the end of contributing constructively to conflict management by facilitating changes of behaviour of conflict partners on the ground and thus to the de-escalation of social conflicts laying at the bottom of local, national and regional conflicts. Hence, all three concepts will also be considered facilitating factors influencing the achievements and shortcomings of EU policies. However, local ownership will be also treated in this sub-section since it is in terms of a critical understanding of state- and peacebuilding an 'end in itself'.
[130] See Tardy 2017, 1.
[131] See Burke 2014, 15.
[132] See Christova 2013, 430f.
[133] See European External Action Service (EEAS) 2014b.
[134] Korski 2010, 239.
[135] See Christova 2013, 427.

varying between 9,000 to 12.000 for the period 2003-2011.[136] In view of the EU's limited ability for post-training monitoring (due to the awkward security situation) the EU acquired merely limited data on "how many of the course-goers are alive, remain in their jobs or have been promoted, let alone whether they are applying their skills."[137] Hence, the EU efforts and contributions may be considered worthwhile but still merely a 'drop to a bottom-less barrel'.

Although experience in the field eventually showed an insufficient endowment with necessary resources, the budget for **EUTM Mali** is considerable compared to similar SSR missions: with €33.4 mio. (2016-2018), the training mission ranks ahead of EUBAM Rafah (€940,000), EUSSR Guinea Bissau (€5.6 mio. Euro), and even EUTM Somalia (€19.7 mio. Euro).[138] The almost doubling of the budget during the recently adopted fourth mandate (€59.7 mio. for 2018-2020) shows the high political willingness among EU MS to further increase EU engagement in the country.[139]

Currently (as of August 2018), no reliable numbers are publicly available concerning the present staffing of the **Malian** security forces, with numbers ranging from 10,000 to 30,000.[140] The lack of specific numbers again exemplifies the need for a reform of the Malian security structures and administrative practice. However, even taken the highest estimation of total Malian security forces, EUTM Mali has trained presumably a remarkable number of soldiers in only five years, hence accomplished its operational goal to contribute to the restoration of the Malian Armed Forces military capacity. However, it is not only about the quantity, but the quality of training. On the structural level, this refers to the Malian side, where EU efforts are seriously hampered by the fact that soldiers often work unpaid or face serious delays in the disbursement of their salaries.[141] Furthermore, the education and training level of Malian soldiers within a course vary. Although the trainee soldiers are highly motivated, what to accomplish within twelve-week courses in view of the challenges at hand?[142] As training and creating leadership skills need time, these short 'train the trainer' or 'train leaders' courses are likely to fall short of sustainable changes of the culture of security management.

2.3.2 Impact as *qualitative* achievements of mandated EU policy objectives

Good Governance indices[143]

The three cases from the extended neighbourhood show similar challenges of a weak central state plagued by inefficient civil services, strong corruption, weak coordination between institutions and lack of democratic accountability and oversight over the security sector. Hence, the global objectives of supporting peace, stability and prosperity in the case countries are in political practice based on

[136] See ibid., 430; Korski 2010, 238.
[137] See Korski 2010, 239.
[138] See Battiss, Luengo-Cabrera, and Morillas 2016, 9.
[139] See Council of the European Union 2018 (249/18).
[140] According to specialist Laurent Touchard, the army consists of around 13,000 regular army soldiers. See Lebovich 2017. AFISMA mentions a total number of 10,500 of which 8,000 are military and 2,500 security forces. However, these numbers do not include qualitative aspects such as the level of training, (under-)funding due to budgetary deficits or rates of desertion. See Pettke 2014.
[141] See Skeppström, Wiklund, and Jonsson 2015 362.
[142] The former mission commander Franz Xaver Pfrengle stated that in some cases the training had to begin at a relatively low level. See Fuhrmann 2016.
[143] Like statistics, indices have to be used with care since these 'objective' scores are actually resting on complex and sometimes politically-loaded premises. See Munck and Verkuilen 2002; Davis, Kingsbury, and Merry 2015.

policy strategies meant to improve Good Governance in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Mali for which various Good Governance indices might properly indicate.

In Afghanistan, support to the MoI, the ANP and judicial authorities focused on key systemic elements (**SSR institution building approach**) required for any sustainable approach. Amongst others, the revision of the relevant regulatory frameworks, the improvement of the administrative and planning structures and a clearer definition of their respective responsibilities, the establishment/revision of operational SOPs, the development of oversight, accountability and inspection/control mechanisms and structures. This approach contributed to some extent to mitigate the negative impact of frequent MoI/ANP reshuffling.

However, considering major 'quantitative' governance indicators for Afghanistan the impact seems less positive. Afghanistan has been categorized as chronically fragile and has appeared in every OECD report on fragile states since 2008.[144] The Democracy Index score for Afghanistan has even slightly deteriorated from 3.06 in 2006 to 2.55 in 2017.[145] However, the corruption perception index has considerably improved since 2007 from 1.8 to 15 in 2017, though this rank is still one of the lowest (177 out of 180).[146] Similarly, the Worldwide Governance Indicators show a positive tendency as well.[147]

In Iraq, the EU stated aim was the contribution to a secure, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq from the very beginning of EUJUST LEX in 2005.[148] According to EU self-assessment, the mission has enhanced the judiciary, Iraqi judges' and prosecutors' comprehension of international judicial cooperation and promoted links with regional and European judicial agencies.[149] However, overall governance indicators suggest that Iraq has been a chronically fragile state and has appeared in every OECD report since 2008.[150] The perceived level of public sector corruption remained on a low level throughout the time of the mission and today Iraq still ranks 169 out of 180 countries.[151] Similarly, the Democracy Index has been stuck on a low level since 2006 with a score of around 4 (on a scale of 0 to10) with hardly any fluctuations.[152] The impact effectiveness of EU efforts including Council and Commission programmes, thus, seems to be overshadowed by the poor results when looking at general indexes.

In Mali, the EU's stated goal is the contribution to the restoration of state authority. Governance has improved since the crisis in 2012, as the Worldwide Governance Indicators by the World Bank show.[153] However, in none of the dimensions has Mali achieved the same or better governance scores it has received before the outbreak of the crisis. *Government Effectiveness* remained the same while *Regulatory Quality* and *Rule of Law* decreased. In spite of the improvements, Mali has remained within the extremely fragile category from 2014 onwards and continues to perform poorly

[144] OECD 2018, 26.
[145] The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited 2018, 15.
[146] See Transparency International 2018.
[147] See The World Bank Group 2018; this index comprises six dimensions of governance: voice and accountability; political stability and absence of violence/ terrorism; government effectiveness; regulatory quality; rule of law; control of corruption.
[148] Council of the European Union 2005 (2005/190/CFSP).
[149] European External Action Service (EEAS) 2014b.
[150] OECD 2018, 26.
[151] See Transparency International 2018.
[152] The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited 2018, 16.
[153] The country has increased its score in *Voice and Accountability*, *Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism* and *Control of Corruption*. See The World Bank Group 2018.

on indicators in the security dimension and on perception of corruption.[154] Corruption is the biggest challenge that characterizes the Malian state as it pervades all levels of the state institutions, including the justice system. The current Corruption Perception Index for Mali underpins this argument. In 2017, Mali was the 122 least corrupt nation out of 180 countries, the score even slightly dropped over time from 34 in 2012 to 31 in 2017.[155] The Malian state currently has only limited legitimacy and the declaration of independence of the state of Azawad, reflects "an underlying disagreement on who makes up the state and who governs it."[156] When looking at the UNDP Human Development Index, Mali's index increased from rank 182 in year 2012 to 175 out of 188 countries. However, it has to be noted that these numbers only show the tendency that the country still is in an overall poor state.[157] The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index tells a similar story. With an index that fell from 6.36 prior to the unrest (2011) to 5.12 in 2012, then increasing toward 5.90 again in 2013 before steadily decreasing until 5.64 in 2017, Mali has lost its status of one of the few 'flawed democracies' in Sub-Saharan Africa.[158]

Human Rights and Gender are according to EU policy premises mainstreamed throughout EU SSR activities in the three cases. However, these good governance dimensions remain difficult endeavours as all three countries have diverse religious and ethnic communities with differing traditions and perceptions of human rights and gender.

In Afghanistan, EU commitment in protecting human rights and gender mirrored in extensive training of Afghan police to respect human rights was a key element of EUPOL engagement. This is exemplified by the fact that the Gender Department of the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoI) established in 2007 has been elevated to the Directorate of Human Rights, Child Rights and Gender. In this vein, EUPOL has mainstreamed Human Rights within its training modules. Female Policing was one of the EUPOL flagships and with the MoI decision to raise the number of policewomen to 10,000 within ten years a respectable level of local ownership over this issue was reached. The number of policewomen in the spring of 2006, prior to the EUPOL mission, was around 180 and increased to 3,200 in 2018.[159] This is still only 2 percent of 150,000 Afghan police but a considerable achievement nevertheless. Even though the Afghan policewomen are still facing serious cultural challenges and there are many reports of sexual harassment of female members of Afghan Security Forces, **Afghanistan** "never had this amount of women in police in its history".[160] However, in terms of Human Rights, allegations that "the national police has been responsible for incommunicado detention, enforced disappearances, mass arbitrary detention and extrajudicial killings during counter-insurgency operations"[161] persisted. Thus, impact effectiveness for the human rights indicator can be considered moderate as efforts have been visible but human rights violations continued. The impact effectiveness for the gender dimension is quite high considering the extensive female police programme, which was launched under EUPOL.

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[154] OECD 2018, 86.
[155] See Transparency International 2018.
[156] Bøås et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.4).
[157] The methodology of the Human Development Index has changed over time and thus the numbers are not comparable without reservation. For example, the HDI of 2011 for Mali was on rank 175 while with the methods used in 2012, its index would have been on rank 181. See UNDP 2016.
[158] See The Economist Intelligence Unit 2017.
[159] See Perzad 2017.
[160] Interview with a former Afghan minster, 7 December 2017, Kabul. See Suroush 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.3), 16.
[161] Committee against Torture 2017, 4.

In Iraq, EUJUST LEX has put the strengthening of rule of law as its central objective encompassing human rights and gender. According to EU self-assessment, the mission accomplished significant improvements regarding prison management, prison security and prisoners' human rights as well as local capacities for fighting domestic violence and trafficking-in-persons with positive feedback from the Iraqi participants.[162] In contrast, EU self-assessment was much more critical at a later stage when a Commission statement came to the sobering conclusion that Iraq still lacks a stable system of rule of law, which was supported by the Human Rights report UNAMI pointing to persisting "multiple problems of Iraq's criminal justice system."[163] For example, the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations referred to allegations of human rights violations committed by Iraqi Security Forces and affiliated armed groups against civilians in their efforts to defeat ISIL.[164] Though the EU self-assessment has been rather positive, human rights violations by Iraqi security forces may if not altogether question then at least show the necessity to put this positive self-assessment of impact into perspective.

In Mali, "Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law are included in all courses" of EUTM capacity building.[165] The mission provides training to all ranks in the Malian military forces, including the "humanitarian situation in Mali; human rights; civil-military co-ordination with UN agencies and NGOs; protection of women in conflict; protection of children in conflict; and protection of displaced persons and the return of refugees".[166] However, a report by Human Rights Watch from September 2017 claims serious human rights violation by Malian military counter-terrorism operations against Islamist armed groups. Malian forces allegedly "committed extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary arrests against men accused of supporting Islamist armed groups".[167] In addition, it should be pointed out that in the course of the 2018 elections ethical tensions between different Malian groups intensified yet again. Adding to the fight against terrorist activities, these conflicts demonstrate one of the most serious factors fostering instability, in particular in the central regions of the country[168] which are covered by the third EUTM mandate. Most alarming is the fact that, according to media coverage, the Malian Army itself has been allegedly infringed in some of these disputes, which in the first half of 2018 already led to around 300 casualties.[169] Furthermore, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women refers to reports of sexual and gender-based violence committed by members of the military against women residing in conflict-affected areas.[170] Against this background, it is imperative to appropriate the right amount of influence to EUTM Mali trainings and not be ambitious taking in particular when considering the severe training conditions for the Malian soldiers (lack of medical support, protective equipment or even food), being themselves subject to human rights violations.[171]

[162] See European External Action Service (EEAS) 2014b.
[163] See European Commission 2014a, 7.
[164] Human Rights Committee 2015.
[165] European External Action Service (EEAS) February 2018 The factsheet provides a full list of courses that have been offered by EUTM Mali.
[166] Carrasco, Muguruza, and Sánchez 2016, 137.
[167] Human Rights Watch 2017.
[168] See MaliActu 2018.
[169] See Arte.tv 2018.
[170] Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 2016.
[171] See Carrasco, Muguruza, and Sánchez 2016, 138.

2.3.3 Impact as *local ownership* and *local perceptions* of EU CSDP/ SSR engagement

In its documents and policy statements, the EU has persistently conveyed its ambitions to facilitate social and political reforms in the interests of establishing stability, security and prosperity, but not to impose its policy preferences on the 'partner country'. In consequence, 'local ownership' has been a continuous intermediate goal as to empower the people and the country to take care of its concerns autonomously and hence to foster the legitimacy and sustainability of the EU's policy practices.

In Afghanistan, local ownership was a key principle within EUPOL's stated objective to contribute to the establishment of sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements. However, local ownership has not always been tangible. Insufficient impact of training can be traced back to a lack of including the Afghan context and topics such as Islamic law and local customs with practical examples into the training curricula.[172] Moreover, EUPOL was criticized by leading civil society activists for the lack of a relationship with Afghan civil society organizations.[173]

In Iraq, as elaborated above, local ownership was an intrinsic dimension of the overall objective to contribute to the reconstruction and emergence of a stable, secure and democratic state. According to EU self-assessment, EUJUST LEX Iraq has excellent relations with both local and international counterparts. Iraqi expert participated in the design of curricula for the course. However, as again *Korski* reported, it remained uncertain whether EU training practice became part of the Iraqi police's own training plan. In addition, the Iraq's political system in general and the legal system in particular was not well understood by EU police professionals. American military presence overshadowed the local reception of EU engagement in Iraq. As late as spring 2009, few people in the office of the US Commanding General, Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) were even aware of the EU's police mission.[174]

European solutions to the **Malian** crisis are built in Brussels and not with a bottom-up approach, which, consequently, limits the ability of EUTM Mali to effectively transform the security situation on the ground. Moreover, an exit strategy, as an indispensable part in aiming and achieving local ownership in the end, for the EU Training Mission in Mali is missing. This raises further questions: Does the EU have a 'real' plan about how and when the missions should be handed over to the Malian population? The current development towards regionalisation of EUTM, extending its trainings and courses to the G5 Sahel Force, could, however, indicate a possibility for the "long-desired Africanization of international efforts",[175] with the G5 joint force representing another level of the 'local'. However, favouring one regional actor (G5) instead or even at the expense of another (ECOWAS) could again bring (unintended) consequences in terms of conflict sensitivity.[176]

As complement to local ownership, the perception of EU conflict and crisis mechanisms by conflict-affected societies matters. Elite perception across levels of governance and government as much as of the common people – that is the perception of *locals* – matter since their buy-in and support for foreign interventions in favour of conflict management and settlement, state and peacebuilding is an indispensable precondition for success: Without local ownership, no legitimacy and no sustainable process of peaceful change!

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[172] European Court of Auditors 2015, 25.
[173] See Suroush 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.3), 19.
[174] Korski 2010, 238..
[175] Lebovich 2017; See also Sambe 2018.
[176] For an analysis about the possibilities, features and consequences of an enhanced cooperation between the EU and the G5 Joint Force in the future. See Lebovich 2017.

In **Afghanistan**, lack of conflict sensitivity and the focus of the EUPOL mission on civilian policing was criticized by the Afghan leadership of the MoI, the US and NTM-A.[177] NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) came to dominate the entire training effort and symbolize the in-effectiveness of the EU civilian approach. This is also why a former deputy minister at the MoI described EUPOL mission goals as unclear for Afghans.[178] Additionally, a leading civil-society activist criticized EUPOL for not having any relationship with Afghan civil society adding that the "civil society and Afghan police had no relationship and that is why the EU could not solve the problems of Afghan police."[179] This resulted in the shaping of a perception by locals that EUPOL served primarily the purpose of promoting EU foreign and security policy. The survey conducted for the first phase of the EUNPACK project found that the most well-known programme of the mission among Afghans was strengthening the gender and human rights within the Afghan National Police.[180] Along the same lines, EU MS and institutions did stress this part of the mission mandate as a priority and considered the mainstreaming of human rights and the build-up of the female police within the ANP to be successful legacies of the mission.

In **Iraq**, successive Iraqi governments welcomed EUJUST LEX in general and came to see the mission's value mainly as a political one, as an important sign of Europe's' overall Iraq engagement. However, from the US perspective the EU's performance looked differently: As late as spring 2009, as *Korski* reported, few people in the office of the US Commanding General, Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) were even aware of the EU's police mission.[181] The so-called 'Jones Commission', mandated by US Congress to study the Coalition's assistance to the Iraqi security forces, including the police, made only scant mention of the EU's mission, and the US military, which runs the majority of police training activities, allegedly considered the EU engagement as a professional, but ultimately tokenistic contribution. The Jones Commission's report, written two years after EUJUST LEX was established, said: "most if not all Iraqi police leaders … have no formal training nor experience in civil policing. The implication being that the US clearly did not think the EU mission had achieved much."[182] However, these sceptical or negative perception of the EU's EUJUST LEX Iraq mission were contrasted by several international awards it received also from the US: In 2008 by the International Association of Chiefs of Police the *Webber Seavey Award of Quality in Law Enforcement*, in 2010 the International Corrections and Prisons Association's President's Award 2009, and in 2011 the *US Flag to Law & Order Task Force ITAM/LAOTF*.[183]

Later perception studies conducted in the context of the EUNPACK project indicate, however, that the majority of interviewed local actors are aware of the EU's engagement in crisis response in Iraq albeit a comparatively low awareness became tangible regarding EU actions in the security sector. Moreover, the awareness of EU-funded agencies and other international actors is remarkably higher that the awareness of the EU. While the overall attitude of participants towards EU crisis response

[177] See Bayer Tygesen 2013.
[178] Interview with a then Deputy Minister for MOI, 20 December 2017, Kabul. See Suroush 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.3), 19.
[179] Interview with the head of a leading civil society organization, 18 November 2017. See ibid.
[180] See Echavez and Suroush 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.6) 10.
[181] See Korski 2010, 239.
[182] See ibid., 238.
[183] See European External Action Service (EEAS) 2011.

engagement in Iraq received a considerable positive score (39% partially satisfied, 30% satisfied), the valuation of EU assistance was considered "well targeted" (79%) and of the "right type" (70%).[184]

Looking at the perception of the EU by locals **in Mali**, there have been perceived shortcomings in the trainings courses as too short or concepts being too abstract for the local reality.[185]Furthermore, the lack of knowledge about the content of EU engagement among Malian population indicates a lack of a conflict sensitive communication strategy by the EU, as the EU is not able to 'translate' its policies to the people. Most interviewed people think that local rural communities as well as the police and the army are beneficiaries of EU engagement. Despite the information and perception gap, respondents still have a rather positive view of the EU being conflict sensitive (58%) and helping to mitigate the crisis (72%). This might seem strange in the context of a still continuing crisis in the country, but people might have adapted to it and as the research has been conducted in Bamako, the people there are not as intensively directly affected by the crisis as the population in central or northern Mali.[186]

3. Constraining and enabling factors, lessons to be learned and policy recommendation for EU crisis response policy

The evaluation of policy effectiveness allows to identify strengths and deficits of EU crisis response performance that is policy-making throughout EU policy formulation, implementation and impact in crisis responses drawn from the analysis of our three cases Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali. The ultimate objective, however, is to infer (that is generating inductively) from the evaluation factors possibly influencing (if not causing) EU SSR and CSDP missions' effectiveness. A direct leap from policy evaluation to policy recommendations would not achieve viable answers. Instead, policy evaluation and policy recommendations have to be linked via identifying influencing – enabling and constraining – factors, thus baring those 'adjustment screws' facilitating improvements of policy effectiveness and performance. We have to keep in mind, however, that twisting single 'causal factors' mostly may be 'necessary' but not 'sufficient' conditions for improving successful crisis response policy. In practice a combination of factors and their configuration are more conducive to better policy performance. The 'lessons to be learned' suggested here will ultimately translate into 'lessons learned' by the EU if, and only if the EU would take up our suggestions and adopt its policy accordingly.

Policy adjustments for improving policy performance legitimately and legally depend on decisions by EU Institutions – in foreign-policy making and crisis-response policy primarily the Council and the Commission – ultimately, however by the Member States. The following sub-sections are structured according to the location of the suggested factors – 'adjustment screws' – located on the Brussels level (policy output, 3.1), the intermediate level of policy implementation that is the relational processes between 'Brussels' and its delegation and mission in the field as well as the partner countries governments and people (implementation, 3.2), and factors regarding directly the implementation in the field (implementation by the EU delegation or missions, 3.3).

3.1 Factors and lessons to be learned on the output level of policy-making

Policy formulation regarding EU foreign policy actions occurs in Brussels; their actor unity (among EU institutions as much as between those and Member states), the mainstreaming of core

[184] See Mohammed, Ala´Aldeen, and Palani 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.5).
[185] See Djiré et al. 2017, 42.
[186] See Cissé et al. 2017 (EUNPACK D 7.7).

concepts (conflict sensitivity, local ownership, and the comprehensive approach), institutional coherence and coordination have been identified as major enabling or constraining factors.

Actor Unity among EU institutions and Member States plays a major role in successfully formulating a swift policy response to conflicts and crises – as a necessary but not sufficient precondition for policy effectiveness.[187] In foreign and security policy, the EU remains to a large extent an intergovernmental 'beast', and hence Member States have to acknowledge and bear the main responsibility for crisis response policy – not just in the intergovernmental realm of the CSDP component but for EU engagement overall.

- Member States are ultimately accountable – and should be held accountable – for what achievements and shortcomings are found in EU crisis-response policy. And Member States ought not be allowed to duck away and hide between EU institutions if it comes to political accountability!
- Actor unity cannot be ordered! However, a joint, inclusive and thorough analysis, resulting possibly – as consensus or compromise – in common objectives as well as on agreed policy strategies and tools has to become part of the EU's foreign policy culture!

What seems to further actor unity and policy determinacy 'technically', **the 'lead-nation' concept**, may politically be counterproductive as the Mali case shows, while in Afghanistan and Iraq colonial ties have not mattered to the same degree, if at all. Theoretically, the special regional and language expertise of some countries are *per se* conducive to success. Politically and practically, however, lead nations tend to follow their own agenda, which is not necessarily identical with the collective EU agenda. Hence, colonial ties of EU MS to regions, countries and people in crisis environments *may* provide a comparative advantage concerning expertise. But such ties are moreover informing these MS's agenda and engagement in the name of the EU, which could in turn infringe on the EU's legitimacy via negative impacts on 'local ownership'. In short, an inherent tension exists between, on the one hand, greater effectiveness due to political leadership by individual EU Member States and, on the other hand, representation of the EU family as a whole.

- Improve the balance between policy efficiency (and ultimately effectiveness) and internal representativeness for enhancing actor unity!
- Action is not a merit in itself and the EU interest in showing political resolve should not be compromised by allowing individual Member States – may it be the EU 3 (France, Germany, the UK) or any other MS – to put the EU 'horse' before predominantly unilateral/ national 'carts'!

Institutional coherence – closely related actor coherence -- remains a political and functional challenge for the EU's multi-actor foreign policy-making – not just in the extended neighbourhood. However, as the pertinent literature tells us, at a closer look this also holds true for other international actors, not least the United Nations, and even for state actors like the United States in terms of inter-agency policy coordination in the realm of conflict and crisis management.[188] The Council and the Commission as EU core institutions play a major role in policy-making, which sometimes is resulting in institutional conflicts undermining actor unity especially in CSDP missions. Thus, many players' positions and actions have to be coordinated principally always encompassing burdens for effectiveness –no just but especially inside the multi-actor EU – as 'many cooks may spoil the stew'. The institutional complexity represents many 'political deals' regarding checks and

[187] See Thomas 2012.
[188] See again also the results of many case studies in Peters 2016b.

balances, and thus cannot be expected to vanish altogether, but reforms for enhancing effectiveness and efficiency without compromising political legitimacy are possible.

- Hence, do not ascribed institutional policy-making features to be always due to the *sui-generis* character of the EU polity, but think comparatively about this dimension in order to provide less room for EU bashing!
- Continuously work towards streamlining the decision and policy-making process by incorporating only those actors and units, which are indispensable for doing a job without compromising the necessary expertise and political support for EU crisis response!

Moreover, the *comprehensive approach* inherently comes with enhanced **coordination requirements and challenges**. What the public as well as researches get to see in terms of lacking coherence, one might suspect without being unfair, are different sizes of the tip of the iceberg. Available evidence, however, suggests assessing this challenge being of moderate significance. Regarding EU institutions and Member States, the discrepancy between the norm-based approach of coordination and the particular unilateral or bilateral interests (Member States and Commission) must be more effectively coordinated in Brussels first before the coordination can succeed on the ground.

- Improve coordination and information-sharing concerning the bilateral policies in order to ensure coherence of policies and the implementation of the comprehensive approach!
  - Improve information-sharing between Member States, Commission and EEAS!
  - Institutionalise cooperation in the field of SSR between the Commission and the EEAS!
  - Improve information-sharing between ECHO, DEVCO and CSDP missions in the field!
- Improve vertical and horizontal policy coordination by involving different levels of 'the chain of command' across policies: Think and plan comprehensively but act according to political priorities!

Guiding principles of EU foreign policy in general and conflict response policy in particular -- like conflict sensitivity, local ownership and a comprehensive approach for adequate responses to complex challenges – a continuous features EU policy statements and documents across our three cases (and beyond). First, it is important to realize these EU principles for policy-making have become deeply ingrained *causal beliefs* in terms of indispensable preconditions and features of EU policy-making.[189] Second, these principles are constitutive for EU foreign policy and are already coloured by the Unions identity as a pluralistic polity founded on the principle of 'unity in diversity', facilitated and legitimized by democratic institutions, based on the principles of human rights and the rule of law. By emphasising its constitutive set of social and political norms and practices, the EU once more in the cases and hand promoted, based on its own historical experience, itself as a role model in terms of externalizing and exporting its 'institutions' to the cases in question (and beyond).[190]

- Forego the ambitious goal of forging every state/ society in crisis according to the EU model unless true ownership exists on the partners' side.
- Where ownership has first to be 'produced' or enhanced limit your goals accordingly, since such a process requires long-time engagement, which is, however in view of policy experiences across cases rather politically cumbersome to achieve or maintain!

[189] See George 1979.
[190] See Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005.

The **do no harm approach, conflict sensitivity and local ownership** the EU considers indispensable for maintaining the EU's crisis response legitimacy and effectiveness. However, in practice EU normative concepts are mostly compromised already when cooperating with preferred parties to a conflict inside the partner country but not with others, most likely resulting in suspicion by excluded 'locals' about a bias of EU's engagement existing from the outset. Thus, what might be considered being functionally and practically unavoidable is often politically problematic – in view of the EU's normative principles as much as for a successful translation into political processes in the partner country.

- 'Conflict sensitivity' has to start at home, hence make sure that concepts propagated in EU documents do not remain public-relations efforts but become operational meaningful by mainstreaming involved policy actors' minds and work accordingly!
- 'Conflict sensitivity' and 'local ownership' for policy-making ought to be considered twin-principles, two principles, which are mutually constitutive!
- Choose your in-country partners carefully and avoid one-sided commitments to traditional power elites.
- Conflict sensitivity has to encompass 'cultural sensitivity' including a sober strategy avoiding overly demanding normative changes on the partner's side. What is supposedly standard in Europe often is overstretching the demanded changes of standards and behaviour of partners.

A recurring challenge, indicating varying degrees of **ownership**, is the varying lack of convergence between the interests and preferences of local actors, on the one hand, and international sponsors and donors, on the other hand. This implies a political divide, which requires long-term engagement for socializing local partners in favour of EU norms and values in order to maintain legitimacy, considered by the EU as an indispensable precondition for the EU's sustained effectiveness. However, whereas SSR reforms typically take a long time, the EU apparently mostly pursues a short- or mid-term approach with "limited potential to build legitimate, operational and sustainable police and army forces"[191] reforms.

- Peacebuilding and state-building is a long-term endeavour, thus only go beyond humanitarian aid and 'all-out' interventions if long-term commitment of MS is granted!

From a common-sense perspective, a complex and holistic response to complex challenges that is a **'comprehensive approach'** sounds plausible as a precondition for 'success'. However, the more we analyse practices and consequences of this approach, the bigger the frustrations becomes regarding limited policy effectiveness. The comprehensiveness of any policy over time tends to become limited in practice, thus suggesting that policy priorities have to be defined (sooner or later) anyway. While such a comprehensive approach appears *functional* reasonable, it *politically* demands a long-time engagement, which is difficult to sustain. In Afghanistan, for example, the EU-SSR efforts achieved more tangible success once reforms were focused and prioritized on key areas of EU expertise, available capacities and resources. More limited ambitions might enhance prospects for (limited) success by reducing frustration due to high expectations and demanding too much.

- A holistic awareness of challenges is never futile, but it ought not result in holistic ambitions of "making the world safe for democracy", which would ultimately lead to endless interventions. What would Edward Said say about this?

[191] Bøås et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.4), 15.

Moreover, the **comprehensive approach** inherently comes with enhanced coordination requirements and challenges. What the public as well as researches get to see in terms of lacking coherence, one might suspect without being unfair, are different sizes of the tip of the iceberg. Available evidence, suggests assessing this challenge being of moderate significance and its overall impact on EU effectiveness as moderately negative.

- Beware of the likely trade-off between comprehensiveness and controllability of policy-making: The more comprehensive a crisis response policy becomes, the more demanding policy coordination and the less manageable it gets!

Moreover, a truly **comprehensive approach** resembles a 'functional' approach to conflict and crisis response suggesting that peace-building could rely on a bottom-up strategy alone. This approach often comes with a trend towards *de-politicizing* conflict management policy. However, conflict response policy is "politics, stupid!", and relying on 'social engineering' is bound to fail, in our three cases not least due to the '**security first'** approach. Hence, without political settlements among conflicting parties in any given state or society, stabilizing bottom-up policies will mostly be in vain. For example, **Afghanistan and Iraq** provide evidence that the bottom-up and comprehensive approach takes years. However, mission engagements ended before a political settlement could be reached since the time-dimension of the approach primarily depends on the MS sustained commitment and some rapprochement of political parties to the conflict.

- Keep up the awareness that conflict-response policies are about "politics, stupid!"
- Think comprehensively but act according to political and functional priorities from the outset!
- Do not go beyond humanitarian engagement if you are not 'willing or able' to engage in conflict diplomacy for negotiating a basic agreement between conflicting parties!
- Define a proper exit-strategy early on as to avoid being forced – due to lack of commitment by the MS or due to unfavourable circumstances on the ground – to leave a country without having finished your 'businesses'!

EU crisis-response policy is based on an overwhelmingly **complex of policy premises** doing justice to all at once and equally may be asked to much for any multi-actor institution and 'government'. Ideal-typical premises can provide policy guidelines but in practice require creative and pragmatic adjustments in terms of 'the art of the possible'. Another case in point – aside from the aforementioned normative concepts – is the EU's conflict-cycle model allegedly guiding EU engagement. In order to do justice to the complexity of the conflicts under consideration while at the same time providing a minimum base for comparison, as part of this project, **the conflict cycle propagated by the EU** was re-constructed for capturing the conflict evolution of our cases by using the as quantitative indicators 'casualties', 'casualties caused by terrorist attacks' and 'refugees/IDPs'. Though on first glance merely an academic concern, this discussion leads to very relevant questions concerning policy response practices of the EU:

  - Are external conflict management interventions most promising when these are at first sight most needed that is when levels of violence are escalating? Or are such interventions more promising during phase of subdued, emerging or abating violence?
  - Taking the Iraq case as an example, why are concrete measures and instruments implemented when the level of violence is low and thus might seem to be secondary? Why

are phases of low conflict intensity (like 2008–11) not used for timely action re-enforcing existing dynamics towards state and societal reconstruction?[192]

- Why did it take three years for taking decisions to render the Iraq rule-of-law mission an in-country activity, finally implemented in 2012, when the level of conflicts and violence was turning up again and – as we now know on hindsight – just one year before the EU Council decided to pull out its CSDP mission from Iraq?
- On a similar note, the MS needed year to make the AFG mission operational but ultimately ran in deteriorated security environment due to rising insurgency rendering civilian policing programmes close to impossible.
- Possibly, our case studies merely provide another example of a pattern of policy-making well-known as the *conflict-prevention paradox*: Interventions are not occurring when it would be functionally most promising, but when they are considered politically appropriate!

Regarding conflict management in **Afghanistan** and **Iraq**, missions were closed before the mandate was fulfilled and thus before any prospects for political settlement. Nevertheless, in Afghanistan the EU devolved parts of the earlier mandate to the EU Delegation, and in Iraq a new police-reform mission was established (in October 2017) under continuously problematic conditions. What lessons learned have been applied, and what factors promise better prospects for success now than before?

- Be aware that functional rationality differs from political rationality and that in case of doubt the latter will most likely top the former!
- Define and implement a combination of bottom-up and top-down strategies to balance functional and political requirements!
- Combine modest ambitions with a strong resolve and focused efforts in priority areas!

Across cases we have seen **changing mandates**. This may be taken as positive indicators of an intrinsic lessons-learned approach and flexibility; but it could also be taken as indicating insufficient expertise and analysis prior to engagement requiring policy adjustments, especially if none of the possible 'intervening variables' mentioned above are discernible.

- In fact, 'lessons learned' and 'best practices' are institutionalized in the Brussels machinery; yet a meta-process and streamlining of lessons-learned guidelines are needed!

New security challenges may overshadow and affect SSR and CSDP efforts. As the most prominent example, following the Arab Spring (2011), **migration** as acute security challenge leaped to the top of the EU's and Member States' security agenda. This has implied an even more complex setting and new priority of SSR & crisis response. For example, in the realm of "fighting migration"**,** EU strategies and tools are mostly in line with its problem definitions, thus show (more or less) policy coherence over time. However, in turn, policy consistency is according to experts' analyses suffering due to lack of resources provided and competing with SSR efforts not considered directly relevant to tackle migration. Moreover, the tendency of the EU and its MS is manifest to 'securitize' migration policy possibly resulting in credibility and legitimacy deficits of EU foreign policy in general, and peacebuilding and SSR engagement in particular.[193]

[192] See Burke 2009.
[193] Information from background talk with EEAS official in Brussels, 6 March 2017.

- Beware that new security challenges might compete with previous security agendas and thus might conflict with the mandate and practices of ongoing SSR and CSDP missions!

3.2 Processual factors and lessons to be learned from policy implementation

After policy decisions about conflict response engagement are taken, the key challenge for the EU as a whole remains to live up to the promises made in core documents and missions' mandates alike when it comes to policy implementation. The capability-expectation gap of EU foreign and security policy is not confined to military resources,[194] but also extends to missions meant to support partner countries reforms and capacity building in respective Civil Justice System.

The **establishment of good governance principles in the CJS** – including the common elements of promoting democracy, rule of law, human rights and gender equality – on the ground, on the one hand depends on the EU's conflict sensitivity and the existence of local ownership by partners that is on relational factors. However, on the other hand, successful crisis response policy – as a necessary but not sufficient condition – depends on the Member States' commitment to EU decision in terms of a) funding, b) the provision of timely, sufficient and well-educated and trained personnel, and c) the required equipment. Across cases, these resources were at times problematic not just due to financial restrictions but moreover due to cultural difference at home that is among EU MS and societies. Thus, political and administrative coherence among the missions' personnel is highly important but remains a challenge.

- Member States must follow up on their pledges to fully staff and provide all the resources required to implement the mission mandate!
- EU Commission shall create a pool for SSR experts in order to provide reliable capacity for missions!
- EU institutions and Member States shall agree on a mission-wide common understanding of 'civilian policing', such as the communication on the EU concept on SSR (2016)!
- EU institutions shall provide concrete and standardized job descriptions for mission personnel, and Member States should select candidates based on those job descriptions!
- Member states shall train the national trainers and experts beforehand that is before going on mission and provide knowledge of the local context – in an EU-wide coherent process!

Due to **weak (external) coordination** (IPCB/LOTFA) of EUPOL **Afghanistan** that is coordination with other international policing efforts, the overall impact was limited. However, we can also note best practices, which should be used for lessons learned and improving effectiveness. For example, the *Professional Training Board* for the development and accreditation of police training curricula managed to coordinate training activities of the international actors efficiently.[195] Moreover, the civilian policing approach of EUPOL **Afghanistan**, for example, led to a build-up of training and leadership capacity like in the case of the staff and criminal investigation colleges or the 'train the trainers' approach in management and criminal investigation. In **Mali,** internal conditions hamper the meaning and importance of human rights and gender concepts to the MAF. The existing normative premises and standard operational procedures result in cleavages **among the instructors and among the soldiers participating in training exercises**. On the one hand, the content and methods of the courses highly depend on the skills and priorities of the instructors. On the other hand, soldiers

[194] See for the starting point of this debate Hill September 1993.
[195] See European Court of Auditors 2015, 19.

participating in the courses have different preconditions in terms of education and previous formation. Additionally, language barriers between the instructors and the trainees combined with a lack of knowledge of human rights terminology by the translators, pose further challenges to the EUTM Mali training activities in this field.[196]

- The train-the-trainer approach has significantly facilitated local ownership and promoted the sustainability of training activities, and should thus become standardized within SSR!
- Member states should standardize and exercise induction trainings / pre-deployment trainings for all EU staff deployed in the field!
- Member States shall ensure coherent training and coordination of trainers before sending them to the field!
- EU institutions shall include a selection of courses based on the level of the respective soldiers'/ trainees' education beforehand!
- EU institutions shall continue new programs such as 'trace the trained' being a valuable addition to the mandate in order to be able to monitor the effectiveness and sustainability of the training!
- EU institutions shall reconsider extending the length of courses or including possible re-trainings or follow-up trainings in the mandate!

Across cases due to **lack of monitoring and evaluating trainings'**, assessing their appropriateness and effectiveness and thus the efficiency/impact of the mission has proved difficult. A **lack of reliable data and the preponderant security risks** involved have hampered evaluating the impact of capacity-building efforts on the ground across cases. It remained difficult to assess progress made in areas like criminal investigations, trainings or community policing in the provinces. Semi-external evaluations like the European Court of Auditors audit of EUPOL AFG in 2015 are useful/helpful in this regard. Mostly due to security restrictions on the ground, detailed feedback is difficult to obtain, missions have/had to work towards identifying "**smart" indicators** like assessments from actors present in the field that need to target a specific area, suggest an indicator of progress, specifying the actor for achievable goals with given available resources in a specific timeframe.

- Device 'smart' indicators for policy performance in order to assess the mission's impact on the ground in view of lacking data and unfavourable security environments!
- The MIP, benchmarking and surveys are useful tools but an evaluation/impact assessment system must be embedded systematically in missions' guidelines and OPLANs.
- Evaluation / impact assessment system must systematically be embedded in missions' guidelines and OPLANs. Semi-external evaluations like the European Court of Auditors audit of EUPOL AFG in 2015 should become a standard practice!
- Early appropriation of the EU SSR role and admittance of limited capacity and influence in the initial stages of the intervention would be conducive to a more plural (multiple voices and approaches) and effective role!
- The *advanced systemic improvements approach* (capacity building) applied in Afghanistan could be replicated in other scenarios!

A **Security Sector Reform (SSR)** model assumes certain preconditions at the domestic level of the partner country and society to be effective. These preconditions are security and stability, some level of cooperation and coordination, and a high level of elite consensus on the structure, content and

[196] See Carrasco, Muguruza, and Sánchez 2016.

direction of the reform process. In all three cases the necessity to build up hard security capacity of the central government diminished strictly civilian approaches to SSR, however. Whether in Afghanistan, Iraq or Mali, EUPOL and EUAM where on a general level of foreign policy-making deployed as showcases for the European Union's ambition to become a 'global security actor'. The mostly pursued bottom-up approach by the missions were affected by overarching security concerns like the war on terror in general, or the war on specific terrorist groupings in the three cases under considerations. 'Security first' hence became the premise also of civilian EU missions as well as for the respective 'local' governments. Ambitions towards improving good governance premises and the EU's bottom-up approaches thus became undermined by securitization processes by the EU and even more by local governments and in elites significantly contradicting the original mission objectives and strategies. The capacity-building support of the Malian military is a case in point since the militaries prime challenge is fighting terrorist and not per se maintaining and supporting good governance principles – the end justifies the means!

- The EU support for security forces should be accompanied by "specific SSRs and general reforms in the field of good governance, like democratic and civilian control over armed and security forces, establishment of human rights standards and domestic supervision bodies."[197]
- 'Security first', also for EU personnel, is, on the one hand, indispensable but, on the other hand, tends to lead to a risk-averse policy approach contradicting and sometimes paralyzing engagement on the ground.

Across cases, though to different degrees and most pronouncedly in Afghanistan, EU capacity-building efforts have not been confined to direct training efforts and measure for enabling local staff and personnel, but moreover encompassed **structural reforms helping to institutionalize new practices** mitigating negative impact of frequent reshuffling in the respective ministries and command structures. In **Afghanistan**, for example, support to the MoI, the ANP and judicial authorities focused on key systemic elements (SSR institution building approach) required for any sustainable approach: amongst others, the revision of the relevant regulatory frameworks, the improvement of the administrative and planning structures and a clearer definition of their respective responsibilities, the establishment/revision of operational SOPs, the development of oversight, accountability and inspection/control mechanisms and structures. Moreover, EUPOL's focus on female policing and mainstreaming Human Rights throughout EU SSR activities/trainings left a permanent mark on the Afghan police. Nevertheless, the Islamic perception of the role of women in society as well as the anti-western Counter-insurgency created a non-conducive environment for progressive human rights and gender reforms. EU MS and institutions strong emphasis on this segment of SSR can be seen as a major normatively enabling, but culturally intrusive factor.

- The SSR institution building approach in Afghanistan can be seen as a blueprint for other civilian CSDP missions and can be considered a best practice enforcing good governance. This is identified as a clear-cut strength and comparative advantage of the EU as a civilian actor engaged in peace-building.

3.3 Factors and lessons to be learned from and for the field

The lessons to be learned in this subsection are addressing those factors inferred from policy implementation 'in the field' that is from the policy practices of SSR and CSDP missions on the

[197] Pettke 2014, 33.

ground, here in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali. EU actors. EU-actors addressed by this analysis and policy recommendations are thus again the MS, the EU institutions in Brussels, and moreover, the EU delegations and mission staff. Challenges addresses are such as coordination in the field, consideration and inclusion of minorities, the role of the national government of partner countries.

A **lack of coordination** in the field, especially concerning coordination and cooperation with local actors, is a central constraining factor for EU policy effectiveness in all three cases. For example, i**n Afghanistan**, a lack of coordination between Afghan institutions and accountability and oversight over the security sector undermined legitimacy. EU-supported or -led coordination through the *International Policing Coordination Board* and the *Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan* faced serious challenges due to MS and other international actors' unwillingness to coordinate bilateral policies (funding decisions, deployment of trainers or policing projects) on the ground. Within LOTFA, Commission staff treated EUPOL as a rival. Although the Afghan MoI staff may not have had skilled and professional experts on par with EU staff, their advantage was clearly in understanding local priorities pertaining to the security sector. Thus, involving and consulting the Afghan MoI staff from the planning process of SSR mandates or Commission projects onwards enhance 'local ownership' and have functioned as an enabling factor. Addresses are again EU actors in Brussels, but also the EU delegation in the countries of concern, as much as Heads of Mission and mission staff. In this regard the coordination function of the EU Special Representatives, especially in Mali, and to a lesser degree in Afghanistan and Iraq, set benchmarks for ongoing and upcoming missions.

- Consulting/involving locals down to the level of administrative staff is considered as enabling factor and therefore should become a standard exercise during planning and conducting SSR and mission or Commission projects to enhance local ownership, legitimacy and effectiveness of policies!
- The Operational Plan and any subsequent mandate reviews should be shared and consulted with key local stakeholders as a general rule. With such an approach, the EU can be confident that local priorities are reflected in the mission planning, and that the mission goals and objectives are realistic!

Limited legitimacy and negative perception of state institutions by local actors on all levels of political and social governance may be due to underlying tensions and political conflicts based on the **exclusion of ethno-religious minorities in the security sector.** For example, the historical tensions among **Afghanistan's** ethnic groups impacted on EU's efforts in SSR. The members of the ethnic group of *Tajiks* are second only to *Pashtuns* in numbers, and these two groups have traditionally struggled for control over the most powerful government positions. When they controlled the country in the years leading up to the U.S. invasion in 2001, the Taliban were largely made up of *Pashtuns*. Their opponents in the civil wars of the 1990s were mainly ethnic *Tajiks* and *Hazara*. The MoI was traditionally dominated by the *Pashtuns* who would attempt to sideline other minorities thus diminishing the legitimacy of the ANP within the Tajik and Hazara minorities. EUPOL had little to none influence nor leverage to counter such developments as a minor player and the EUSR/EU Delegation lacked detailed knowledge or capacity to be involved. In **Iraq**, major ethnic and religious dividing lines between Sunnis, Shias and Kurds have been political and social dividing lines form the national down to the local level of governance. Without massive efforts on reconciliation and establishing viable balances of power and checks and balances.

In **Mali**, this tension functions as a constraining factor when taking a look at the composition of the MAF.[198] People from the south and mainly from the Bambara ethnic group are a preponderant majority in the army. Thus, when the police try to settle a conflict in the central region, this is sometimes perceived as Bambara aggression.[199] Only an army that is representative of the population is likely to be considered legitimate by the population.[200] The EU works with Malian Armed Forces that are internally deeply divided between 'red berets' and 'green berets'. However, EUTM has already made advances on this path as it is integrating "red berets", formerly parachutists created by *Traoré* in the 1970s, as a sub-unit within the GTIA. In similar vein, the UN also criticizes low representation of ethno-religious minorities in security and police forces in **Iraq**.[201]

- EU Interventions should work towards enforcing inclusive ministries, administrations and armed forces. A more comprehensive human resource management could promote the integration of other ethnicities in a long-term solution for the country, fostering different ethnicities' integration. EUTM Mali and other missions could put more emphasis on the necessity of such integration on the ground.

The **role of the affected government** can likewise be identified as an enabling or constraining factor in the field across cases. In **Afghanistan**, a **weak central state** plagued by inefficient civil services and strong corruption had limited outreach outside of Kabul during EUPOL's presence. In **Mali**, the role of the Malian government seems to be a constraining factor; even though the government has not been "actively seeking to undermine the political and human rights of its opponents",[202] it continues to ignore reported human rights abuses and does not seriously deal with the numerous conflict's actual causes. On the contrary, the government seems quite content to **transfer security issues to external partners** (such as MINUSMA or the French *Opération Barkhane*) while continuing their (legal and illicit) business deals. This significant factor 'from the field' influencing the effectiveness of EU political and security interventions in third countries point back to some earlier policy recommendations

- Conflict sensitivity' and 'local ownership' for policy-making ought to be considered twin-principles, two principles, which are mutually constitutive! (s. a.)
- Choose your in-country partners carefully and avoid one-sided commitments to traditional power elites. (s. a.)
- Do not go beyond humanitarian engagement if you are not 'willing or able' to engage in conflict diplomacy for negotiating a basic agreement between conflicting parties! (s. a.)

As has become obvious, policy evaluation of SSR efforts and specifically CSDP mission show some specific strengths and weakness but also mainstreamed challenges. Factors enabling or constraining EU policy effectiveness identified are located on all levels of policy making the output and outcome levels of policy formulation in 'Brussels' by Member States and EU institutions as much as the level of implementation in the field (or on the ground). Hence, policy recommendations are addressing EU actors on these levels, and – despite the admittedly complex policy-making process – allow everyone

[198] Historically, there has been deep-rooted problems and mistrust in the MAF chain of command due to a lack of appropriate capabilities to accomplish the missions and corruption, which is not yet settled. For a historical overview of the internal divisions within the MAF see Barea 2013.
[199] Bøås et al. 2018 (EUNPACK D 7.4).
[200] See Carrasco, Muguruza, and Sánchez 2016.
[201] Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2014.
[202] Bøås and Ba 2017, 31.

being part of EU peacebuilding and SSR efforts to contribute her and his share. However, ultimately political responsibility and accountability in a democratic polity like the EU have to lie with the 'government' and ultimately in the realms of intergovernmental foreign policy-making of the Member States.

4. Conclusions

This analysis contributes to a more encompassing EU-funded research project (EUNPACK), investigating EU crisis response policy on selected cases from the EU candidate states, the (Eastern and Southern) neighbourhood and the extended neighbourhood countries. This contribution focuses – as stated at the outset – on the following guiding research questions: 1) How effective is the EU's crisis response policy in terms of its CSDP missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Mali? 2) What are the constraining and enabling factors regarding EU policy formulation, implementation and impact in crisis response (SSR in the extended neighbourhood)? 3) What are lessons to be learned from the analysis of CSDP mission in the extend neighbourhood, and which policy recommendation to be inferred?

By evaluating policy effectiveness for the steps of the EU policy-making cycle we identified strengths and deficits of EU crisis response performance that is policy-making throughout EU policy formulation, implementation and impact in crisis responses drawn from the analysis of our three cases Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali (section 2). Next,), factors possibly influencing (if not causing) EU SSR and CSDP missions' effectiveness were inferred (that is generated inductively) from the evaluation (section 3. A direct leap from policy evaluation to policy recommendations would not achieve viable answers. Instead, policy evaluation and policy recommendations have to be linked via identifying influencing – enabling and constraining – factors, thus baring those 'adjustment screws' facilitating improvements of policy effectiveness and performance. We have to keep in mind, however, that twisting single 'causal factors' mostly may be 'necessary' but not 'sufficient' conditions for improving successful crisis response policy. In practice a combination of factors and their configuration are more conducive to better policy performance.

Beware that regular lessons learned and EU self-assessments are not always publicly accessible. In view of our own numerous findings and inferences across the policy cycle,[203] we will in this concluding section use those EU 'lessons learned' publicly available as the foundation for a comparison with those 'lessons to be learned'[204] springing from our case studies. The latter may support, question or complement the EU's own lessons. We hence ensure to focus a short-list of main concerns that is on the 'added value' provided by our project's research and building upon the 'state of the art'.

The following recommendations and lessons to be learned target the political, institutional and operational levels of EU crisis management.

On the political level the following findings and lessons to be learned are short-listed

[203] See Peters 2016a, 27f; Peters et al. 2018.

[204] Please note: If we address the EU's own lessons, we speak about 'lessons learned'; in contrast, our project findings we address as 'lessons to be learned'. Moreover, these lessons are mostly confined to first-order observations, while the second-order observation of whether and how the EU itself 'learns' from identified lessons is not the focus of this exercise but will merely be raised where relevant. See Luhmann 1995, 94f..

- The varying **lack of convergence** between the interests and preferences of local actors, on the one hand, and international sponsors and donors, on the other hand appear as recurring challenges of EU interventions.
- The (Commission/ HR FASC,2016:12) **insufficient flexibility and long-term orientation of EU SSR** thus requires long-term engagements to socialise local partners in favour of EU norms and values in order to generate legitimacy.
- L**ocal ownership** based on beneficiaries' ownership vs. human security (EU in all three cases elected to support the central government and established power structures) prolongs the conflict.
- **Another challenge faced is connecting the aspiration of comprehensiveness to the evolution of policies**. 'Policy of change' and adjusting priorities has proven more effective than a 'policy of consolidation' and coordination across the three cases.
- Prioritizing within the **comprehensive approach** and accepting the primacy of Mission staff expertise and political judgement within the hierarchy of the EU structures promises to steer the SSR process away from technical details and assist the political messaging (Commission/ HR FASC,2016:12). As SSR is a deeply political process securing a political buy-in from a wide range of partners/ local actors is essential.
- A bottom-up approach (**human security** based on **local ownership**) if not complemented by the appropriate top-down strategy (for settling basic political & societal conflicts) is unlikely to be effective.

As obvious from section 3 our own (as many other) evaluations of EU crisis-response policy, the analysis repeatedly addresses lack of commitment, solidarity, or contributions by MS as ultimate sources of deficiencies contributing to EU mission effectiveness. However, we cannot help but stress once more that SSR and CSDP missions are highly political endeavours regarding a) the preferences of MS and the challenge of reaching viable compromises, b) turf wars between institutional machinery in Brussels or their on-site engagement, and c) the preferences of partners in the respective country of concern. Policy recommendations urging MS to show more commitment and solidarity for common policy are to some degree 'naïve' that is cheap advise bound to fail unless the respective preferences either are given anyway, or converging over time in internal decision-making process. 'Turf wars' between institutional or mission units may gradually be overcome by improved implementation-control and monitoring-mechanisms by the political bodies ensuring procedural policy coherence and substantial consistency. Devising stringent *standard operational procedures* could also be a remedy for coordination deficits identified across levels of analysis.

Obviously, the previous argument is closely linked to the existing monitoring and lessons-learned process, which the EU has established and refined since 2005/6. However, a more refined analysis of the EU's lessons-learned practice shows that this involves many actors and units pursuing their own evaluations based on diverse categories, criteria and indicators for best practices and impact effectiveness. Hence, we come to the concluding recommendation that the EU monitoring and lessons-learned practices needs to be integrated to a coherent structure and common procedures to render these processes more efficient and effective.

Short-list of findings and lessons to be learned on the institutional level

- **The overlap of EU instruments and action** leads to frequent misinterpretations in the field on the roles of EU Delegations and CSDP Missions in regards to representation, reporting and donor coordination in the context of the **comprehensive approach** (Commission/ HR FASC,2016:14).

- These 'turf wars' within the SSR lead to delays and inefficiency of instruments. Institutional coherence remains a political and functional challenge for the EU's multi-actor foreign policy-making in the extended neighbourhood. However, as the pertinent literature tells us, at a closer look this also holds true for other international actors, not least the United Nations, and even for state actors like the United States in terms of inter-agency policy coordination in the realm of conflict and crisis management.

The aforementioned feature can hardly be ascribed to the *sui-generis* character of the EU polity. Moreover, the comprehensive approach inherently comes with enhanced coordination requirements and challenges. What the public as well as researches get to see in terms of lacking coherence, one might suspect without being unfair, are different sizes of the tip of the iceberg. Available evidence, however, suggests assessing this challenge being of moderate significance and its overall impact on EU effectiveness as moderately negative.

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Selected findings and lessons to be learned on the operational level

- The European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and its network institutions developed a specific **training curriculum** for staff to be deployed to CSDP missions and *de facto* started instructions in 2014. The EU should standardise this practise **but also provide modules on the mandates of every Mission**.
- MS failure to staff and equip Missions hampered implementation of mandates. **Staffing and resources (projects funding)** pledges required to implement the Mission Mandate should be realised with the inception Missions.
- Coordination mechanisms formal or informal when established early supported a comprehensive analysis of the operating environment and enhanced the chances of agreeing with other EU actors on the priorities. In particular, the experiences from Afghanistan and Mali show that

coordination had a positive impact on the delivery of the mandates. Nevertheless, p**arallelism and overlap of EU action** between the EU instruments and MS continue to negatively impact effectiveness of EU SSR (Commission/ HR FASC, 2016:14).

- Additionally **lack of reliable data and security risks** made it difficult to assess areas like criminal investigations, trainings or community policing. Missions should thus work towards identifying "smart" indicators in order to alleviate **weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation, including insufficient benchmarking** (Commission/ HR FASC, 2016:13). **MIPs, benchmarking and surveys** as useful but only if evaluation/impact assessment system **are systematically embedded in Missions' guidelines and OPLANs**.
- **The European Court of Auditors audit of EUPOL AFG in 2015** provided a helpful instrument to assess the mission mandate delivery and prepare the phasing out of Mission programs. **Semi-external evaluations** like the **European Court of Auditors audit of EUPOL AFG in 2015** should become a standard practice for CSDP Missions.

Another match of EU self-assessment and ENUPACK analysis and policy recommendation on the operational level points to an urgent need for **pre-deployment training adjusted to the mandate of every Mission**. Indeed, this seems to be a 'lesson learned' in EU terms that is a lesson, which has already resulted In consequence since the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and its network institutions developed a specific curriculum for staff to be deployed to CSDP missions and *de facto* started instructions in 2014. This curriculum could be standardised and constitute the required "common foundation of pre-deployment training." Hence, our (and other experts) findings and policy recommendation seems charging open doors. However, the continuous engagement in Mali shows an implementation gap between promises made and promises kept: Although the coherent training should have started in 2014, evidence in Mali shows that implementation remains deficient leaving room for improvement.

Finally, we have to be aware, that the 'lessons to be learned' suggested here will ultimately translate into 'lessons learned' by the EU *if, and only if* the EU would take up our suggestions and adopt its policy accordingly.

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