



The
Federal Government



Operations Manual

Interministerial Approach to Preventing Crises,
Resolving Conflicts and Building Peace



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1. Introduction

In the “Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace” dated 14 June 2017 (hereinafter referred to as “the Guidelines”), the Federal Government committed to bolstering its strategic and operative capacities in crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding by developing an interministerial Operations Manual. This document fulfils that commitment.

The objective of the Operations Manual is to present tried and tested procedures for interministerial contextual analysis and strategy development, coordinated planning and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation processes that contribute to the pursuit of the Federal Government’s common values and goals. This manual does not supplant or modify the “Guidelines for bilateral Financial and Technical Cooperation with cooperation partners of German development cooperation”, which have been agreed by the ministries.

With the aim of promoting coherence and quality in interministerial cooperation, the Operations Manual will give examples of formats and procedures within each ministry’s varied structures and practices. This approach should make it easier to harness synergies more extensively between different policy areas. The Operations Manual will describe reliable and efficient procedures for prompt and comprehensive mutual participation and coordination between ministries.

What drives the actions specified in the Operations Manual is the ministries’ desire to deepen their cooperation so as to strengthen Germany’s joint engagement in fragile contexts. The principle of ministries, as enshrined in the Basic Law, remains intact. In other words, each federal minister self-sufficiently directs and is accountable for his or her own area of operations.

The formats and procedures illustrated in this Operations Manual provide guidance for interministerial cooperation in crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. They apply to countries and regions where:

- More than two ministries are active or are likely to become active with significant operations of this sort, and
- There is concurrently a special need to take action to prevent a crisis, or an acute crisis is already under way

In the event that two ministries require more coordination beyond this, further discussions between those ministries may be held in the spirit of this Operations Manual. One such example is the Concept for Joint Analysis and Coordinated Planning between the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

All formats and procedures outlined here are to be situated within established international norms and quality standards for crisis contexts (such as the “Do No Harm” principle).

After three years, this Operations Manual will be reviewed and, as appropriate, amended with insights from practical experiences.

The Operations Manual in the Guidelines

“With the aim of acting even faster, more strategically and better coordinated in the future, **the Federal Government of Germany will review and revise its existing mechanisms for interministerial coordination.** ... To strengthen its strategic and operative capabilities, the Federal Government will ... develop an interministerial Operations Manual on best practices for interministerial context analysis, planning, strategy development, and the implementation of measures, with the aim of assuring coherence and quality.” *(Guidelines, p. 113)*

“The Federal Government will also review and revise its existing mechanisms for interministerial coordination. The Federal Government will standardise tried and tested methods and procedures as well as the implementation of its principles of action in crisis contexts such as the Do-No-Harm principle in an interministerial Operations Manual on best practices and work to ensure that all departments of the Federal Government will systematically apply international quality standards in their analysis and planning tools.” *(Guidelines, p. 116)*

2. Interministerial early warning

At an early stage, regularly and as warranted, the interministerial Horizon Scanning working group identifies, analyses and prioritises potential crises in states and regions around the world, taking into account Germany's interests and possible instruments of leverage. All participating ministries as well as the Federal Intelligence Service engage their available analytical (quantitative and qualitative) resources to this end. The aligned results are presented to the interministerial coordinating group on "Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace" at the Director-General level (referred to hereinafter as the "coordinating group") with recommendations for action to be decided upon. For example, the recommendations for action might involve appointing a regularly convening task force or conducting workshops for a strategic realignment, but cannot involve concrete initiation or adjustment of activities on the ground. The fixed participants in the Horizon Scanning working group are the Federal Foreign Office with the lead responsibility, the Federal Chancellery or Federal Intelligence Service (BND), the Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI). Other ministries may request to participate in the Horizon Scanning working group or may be called upon to participate by the chair.

The interministerial **early warning process** is currently organised as follows:

On a quarterly basis, participating ministries may propose to the Horizon Scanning working group countries, regions or issues for which they have identified a significant risk of a crisis or crisis escalation in the coming 6–24 months.¹ They justify their proposal by specifying the risk factors structurally relevant to the prospective crisis along with possible trigger events in order to substantiate the choice to all participants. The Horizon Scanning working group prioritises the countries, regions or issues that will be the subject of expert discussions. Two determining factors for an investigation by the

1 Federal Ministry of Defence and Federal Intelligence Service: 6–18 months

coordinating group are that multiple ministries of the Federal Government are involved in a country and that the coordinating group's decisions could make a positive change in the Federal Government's strategic position.

The ministries summarise their findings in joint expert discussions at officer level, led by the Federal Foreign Office, in a brief early warning analysis. The Federal Foreign Office compiles a coordinated report on German interests and a proposal of possible instruments of leverage for political measures.

Based on the expert discussions, the Federal Foreign Office finalises the brief early warning analysis, which, after the ministries of the coordinating group sign off on it, serves as the basis for decision-making regarding future operations in a given country. If the expert discussions conclude that major changes to German strategy are currently unnecessary or impossible, the Horizon Scanning working group can simply notify the coordinating group of its recommendation.

This early warning process is usually set in motion by the participants in the Horizon Scanning working group, but can also be initiated by the coordinating group. The process aims to factor in enough remaining time to have a preventive impact on an impending crisis.

This has been launched as a pilot process and will be adapted by the participants as warranted.

Early warning in the Guidelines

“Early warning is a crucial basis for early and resolute crisis prevention measures.”

(Guidelines, p. 111)

“Early warning is the indicator-based, early-stage identification of political, economic and social developments which can potentially lead to the violent escalation of conflicts within states and societies. Early crisis detection is an essential prerequisite for crisis prevention in that it extends the range of options by identifying the latent risks in advance.” *(Guidelines, p. 110)*

3. Coordination among ministries for political planning and management

3.1. Interministerial analyses to determine needs

The reports of German missions abroad – with their subject-matter and local knowledge as well as their integration into donor coordination on the ground – contribute significantly to the development of an interministerial analysis of the situation abroad. Indeed, in most cases various ministries' perspectives are already reflected in them (because staff members of other ministries are also seconded to the foreign service and then posted to the missions abroad). Even so, the responsibility for final evaluations and decision-making remains in Berlin and Bonn.

The **existing analytical formats** of each ministry are generally **contingent on subject matter and context** and arise from their respective mandates and duties as well as from the structures of each cooperation or implementation partner, which may differ vastly even within a given country. Because of this, requirements for and access to information as well as the ministries' assessments of that information can vary widely.

Current established practice is for **specific ministries to exchange their own analyses** regarding countries in which German armed forces and security forces are deployed. With the Horizon Scanning working group, there is now an interministerial analytical format in place that provides an overview of the Federal Government's current status assessment for many countries. In some specific cases, joint analyses are already being compiled in cooperation with other bilateral and/or multilateral donors. One example is participation in the World Bank's Risk and Resilience Assessments, some of which takes place as part of the Sahel Alliance.

In future, specific ministries' internal analyses are to be shared by default with other ministries whose current or planned measures give them an interest in that information. Depending on the context, this information could be shared in writing and/or in regular joint working-level meetings regarding the current situation on the ground.

In cases where this discussion of analytic documents does not lead to an adequately unanimous view of the situation, **more frequent joint analyses should be commissioned in future**. These could lay the foundation for a comprehensive common understanding of a conflict situation and would help participating ministries to agree on a common strategic position in a region or country. Such analyses can be commissioned either directly, under the lead responsibility of an individual ministry, or in cooperation with other bilateral or multilateral donors.

Joint analysis in the Guidelines

“The Federal Government declared its intention to intensify the coherence and cooperation of all relevant policy areas and to embark on new ways of working for joint analysis, and strategic and operative planning.” (*Guidelines*, p. 112)

3.2. Joint strategy development

Both the Federal Government's 2017 “Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace” and the 2016 “White Paper: Strategic Review and Way Ahead on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr [Federal Armed Forces]” call for promoting and expanding **interministerial strategic capabilities** in order to guarantee **strategic precision, continuity and coherence**.

To this end, there are already **round tables of State Secretaries** on various issues as well as a **coordinating group on “Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, and Building Peace”** at the **Director-General level**.

For **strategic processes specific to a given ministry**, the **other ministry affected** should be consulted promptly before those processes are finalised so that key points from their perspective can be taken into account early on with a view to coherence.

In future, **interministerial strategic processes** are to be more frequent and complement the strategic processes specific to ministries. Special attention will be given to regions and countries where action to prevent a crisis is particularly pressing or where acute crises are already under way.

The strategic processes for selected countries and regions as described here will prepare participating ministries of the Federal Government to act in a coordinated and targeted fashion **on the basis of an interministerial understanding of a given context**.

The selection of countries and regions for joint strategic processes by more than two ministries will be made by consensus at the working level. The lead responsibility within participating ministries lies with the country units or other work units responsible for the countries and regions in question. In keeping with the Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries (GGO), the Federal Foreign Office holds the lead responsibility overall.

A strategy process encompasses:

- Strategic discussions at the interministerial round table – conducted at least once per year if possible
- Joint working meetings between the respective country units and relevant sectoral and tool-specific divisions – supplementary, as needed and if requested by any of the ministries represented at the interministerial round table
- Scenario workshops and closed meetings to review the strategic direction of the Federal Government's engagement – situational

To prepare these elements of a strategic process, the ministries compile and send each other **outlines of their own programmes, revealing their political focuses and objectives**. For the sake of decision-making, the strategic meetings should be scheduled with adequate lead time before the conclusion of associated intraministerial planning processes.

At the core of each strategic process is the decision as to **whether and with which objective** the Federal Government will engage in a country as a joint, coordinated effort between ministries and their corresponding tools and programmes. The following **decision-making criteria** come into consideration:

- German interests (tied to values)
- Needs on the ground
- The Federal Government's leverage and scope of influence
- Security on the ground as an important prerequisite for development (and vice versa)
- International obligations (to allies)
- The benefit of German engagement to other international actors or the joint position with them
- Potential risks of a German engagement

Strategy development in the Guidelines

“In any given situation, the German Government will push for early strategy development and joint planning to ensure the concerted use of its various instruments. It will also call for close international coordination.” (*Guidelines, pp. 2–3, Foreword by Federal Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel*)

“Germany's involvement in crises and conflicts respects the **primacy of politics and the priority of prevention**. ... Only political solutions have the leverage to ensure lasting and viable peace. The Federal Government will therefore embed its crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding measures in political strategies which are context-specific, conflict-sensitive and internationally compatible.” (*Guidelines, p. 57*)

“Fragile contexts and complex conflicts require a comprehensive policy approach that bundles the contributions by the various government departments into a joint political strategy.” (*Guidelines, p. 110*)

“This will also involve methods of strategic forecasting, including scenario planning.” (*Guidelines, p. 111*)

One **important reference point for the needs on the ground** might be the objectives determined by the country in question. These may have been cemented in a National Development Strategy, for example, or in an agreement with the donor community regarding a certain sector. Moreover, EU Joint Programming Processes must be accounted for in interministerial strategy processes. Beyond these factors, peace treaties or political targets for the preparation or implementation of peace treaties or negotiations offer important reference points for providing external support to a country. Specifications made in the framework of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States also offer such reference points, as do – in the case of humanitarian assistance – the humanitarian requirement plans coordinated by the UN and the requirement plans of the International Committee of the Red Cross. **Taking these targets as a guide facilitates ministerial coherence** and makes it easier to coordinate with other donors and international actors.

Additionally, ministries cooperate to attain **internationally agreed targets**, first and foremost the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels (Paris Agreement).

Aside from these considerations, the Federal Government has **made joint commitments at the global and EU levels within existing frameworks**, especially on the issues of refugees and migration, health, climate and the environment, food security, education and the promotion of employment. To achieve these commitments and specified targets, the ministries will coordinate closely and incorporate these commitments and targets into their plans for fragile contexts to the greatest possible extent.

Orientation towards international goals

“The Federal Government is wholeheartedly committed to the ambitious implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both at national and at global level[s]. It will remain steadfast in its efforts to strengthen international capabilities for crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and it will work towards improved coordination.”

(Guidelines, p. 134)

“To do this, it will strive for a closer linkage of relevant mechanisms of the European Union and its member states, using existing approaches like Joint Programming.” (*Guidelines, p. 134*)

“The task for the upcoming years will be to integrate climate issues even more systematically into Germany’s crisis engagement, and to strengthen potentially affected regions’ resilience.” (*Guidelines, p. 133*)

3.3. Coordinated planning between ministries in the Guidelines

In future, there is to be a greater focus on **coordinated planning of measures based on a common strategy**.

If a strategy process as described in Section 3.2. is under way for a particular country or region, the political significance and the scope of the project budget are considered. This provides the basis for deciding whether it is sensible to compile a more detailed planning document that presents the Federal Government’s foreign, security and development policy measures as a comprehensive concept.

The optimum combination of measures depends on the nature of the fragile context at hand, the needs on the ground and Germany’s scope of action.

These coordination processes pay particular attention to the interministerial sectoral strategies on the Promotion of the Rule of Law, Security Sector Reform and Dealing with the Past and Reconciliation (Transitional Justice).

Depending on the type of fragile context, **each ministry can contribute in its own way to promoting security, peace and development**.

The Guidelines emphasise that every conflict has different causes, different dynamics and a specific course. However, for reasons of simplification and schematic representation, a distinction can be made between **three phases into which various approaches can be categorised** (see the Guidelines p. 66 et seqq. for more details):

- **Latent conflict** (The situation is volatile, and there is a distinct crisis potential, but the situation has not [yet] escalated into violence). In this case, **crisis prevention measures** address the structural political and social causes and drivers of conflict, while attempting to prevent escalation and outbreaks of violence and making long-term contributions to peaceful coexistence. Different approaches and instruments will be required, depending on the degree of fragility. In this area, the Guidelines draw a distinction between measures in “weak states”, “challenged states”, and “illegitimate states”.
- **Violent conflict** (Existing conflicts have escalated and turned violent): In addition to providing humanitarian assistance to ease human suffering, the **search for political solutions** to end the violence and the negotiation of sustainable peace solutions through active crisis diplomacy, mediation and the support of negotiating processes are of paramount importance. Stabilisation measures serve to bolster these political processes by allowing people on the ground to experience a “peace dividend”. The guidelines point to the role of development-oriented and structural transitional development assistance and the need to start as early as possible to support social transformation processes, which can help consolidate an initially fragile peace while promoting a country’s sustainable development.
- **Post-conflict situations** (Armed hostilities have ceased, ceasefire agreements have been concluded, and a more long-term reconstruction and reconciliation process has been initiated). **Peacebuilding measures** resemble the approaches of crisis prevention; they also have to deal with the affected societies’ often prolonged experience of violence and the realities of post-conflict situations (destroyed infrastructure, markedly weakened state institutions, a deeply fragmented society, etc.). Certain circumstances may also require the use of military measures in order to contain violence and to restore a secure environment which is the basic prerequisite for political processes.

Planning of joint programmes in the Guidelines

“[Stabilisation] requires a comprehensive approach: Stabilisation measures specifically serve to create a secure environment, to improve living conditions in the short term, and to offer alternatives to economies of war and violence. Depending on the requirements in the individual case, this approach requires the flexible and coordinated use of diplomatic, development-policy and security-policy measures. Certain circumstances may also require the use of military measures in order to contain violence and to restore a secure environment which is the basic prerequisite for political processes.” (*Guidelines, p. 69*)

“Local partners are involved in the planning and decision-making processes right from the outset.” (*Guidelines, p. 69*)

“At the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the international community affirmed its commitment to future reforms of the humanitarian assistance system so as to prevent the emergence and aggravation of humanitarian crises, in conjunction with intensified development efforts and appropriate coordination, with a view to reducing the dependence on humanitarian assistance.” (*Guidelines, p. 71*)

“To support the ‘security sector’ in crisis regions, it is necessary to examine [every] single planned measure for the extent to which it will increase the security of the population in a partner country, support good governance and contribute to peacebuilding.” (*Guidelines, p. 83*)

3.4. Joint reflection on partner institutions as part of strategy development

The purpose of a joint reflection on the Federal Government’s partner institutions is to **support peacebuilding actors** while **avoiding duplicate funding of the same actors**. Dealings with potentially destructive actors should be shaped with special care and strategic reflection. In these cases, an exchange takes place between the ministries active in each country, with a particular

focus on **the integrity and goals of the partner institutions with which cooperation is planned**. This will result in a coherent way forward for the Federal Government.

In this approach, each ministry ultimately reaches a selection decision within the framework of its mandate.

Cooperation with partners and beneficiary groups in the Guidelines

“The support and protection of human rights defenders is an integral element of that policy.”
(*Guidelines, p. 50*)

“We therefore carefully assess the ideas, prospects and needs of the people in societies affected by conflict.” (*Guidelines, p. 52*)

“Even closer networking, also with the actors of local civil society and with other non-governmental actors – including pro-democracy and human rights activists as well as traditional and religious communities – can help to get a better view of their perspectives and their assessments, from situation analysis to operative involvement all the way to evaluation.”
(*Guidelines, p. 114*)

“The implementing and intermediary organisations are the Federal Government’s partners for realising the projects within the scope of Germany’s engagement in peacebuilding.”
(*Guidelines, p. 117*)

“In many cases, the implementing and intermediary organisations are able to build on many years of presence on the ground and on relationships with governmental and non-governmental partners based on trust.” (*Guidelines, p. 118*)

“Non-governmental organisations play an important role in the implementation on the ground of crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.” (*Guidelines, p. 118*)

“Non-governmental actors including civil society organisations and networks, academia, church organisations, political as well as private foundations, and the business sector are indispensable partners for Germany’s engagement.” (*Guidelines, p. 135*)

3.5. Prompt and comprehensive information-sharing and mutual participation in a ministry's internal planning

The ministries have established **various formal and informal formats at all levels** for notifying one another and coordinating in a prompt and comprehensive fashion. These include, but are not limited to:

- Meetings at the working level
- Thematic interministerial working groups
- The coordinating committee on humanitarian assistance led by the Federal Foreign Office and VENRO
- Coordination between the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development for the sake of designing the link between humanitarian assistance and transitional development assistance
- The interministerial round table for civilian crisis prevention at the Head of Division level
- National and regional task forces
- The coordinating group at Director-General level
- Coordination formats at the State Secretary level

These formats will be further solidified in future and will contribute not only to revealing ministries' positions and interests but also **to attaining a common understanding of the context, the action needed on the ground and Germany's possible courses of action.**

The Guidelines also specify that the ministries will strive for prompt and comprehensive mutual involvement in planned operational programmes and projects, thereby ensuring that the specialist expertise of the other ministries will be included in their planning (section 4.1.2.)

To this end, it is standard practice for ministries to share relevant planning documents about countries and regions for which joint strategic processes by more than two ministries will be conducted (see 3.2, above). Moreover, another

ministry should always be included in planning measures if the ministry's involvement is warranted for the sake of coherence or if this is requested by a third ministry.

In the event of involvement, feedback should generally be provided within two weeks.

In keeping with the Guidelines, the ministries are seeing to it that their measures are compatible with the approaches and programmes of German development policy and with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. When planning such measures, the involvement of the Federal Foreign Office will ensure that the measures are in line with the basic tenets of German foreign policy.

The **missions abroad** contribute significantly to more than just the joint analysis. Proposals from the missions abroad in regard to interministerial strategy development and for the sake of designing productive, constructive and results-oriented handovers are also especially important for the ministry's coordinated planning. In any fragile context in which Germany cooperates as a partner with other national governments, those governments' concerns and concrete suggestions should be considered. The responsibility for final assessments, decisions and interministerial coordination remains in Berlin and Bonn.

For selected countries (such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali) there is also a **systematic record** of projects and activities funded by the Federal government. A "German Development Tracker" has been specially developed for Afghanistan. The web-based database is used to keep a record of all measures in Afghanistan by ministries, including details on project name and objective, financing sources (donor, co-financing arrangements), partner organisations and ministries, project time periods, locations, number of beneficiaries, target indicators and outputs.

For other countries where multiple ministries are active, a simpler presentation of similar details could be useful – meaningful lists of projects, for example. When appropriate for the quantity of projects, a **geographical map** showing current activities and participating actors can be created.

Interministerial coordination of planning in the Guidelines

“Germany’s engagement in crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding needs to become more political, more strategic and more visible. In concrete terms, ‘more strategy’ means: interministerial cooperation in the design of processes, the planning of goals and resources, the periodic adjustment, the collective development of a consistent strategic narrative and the adherence to this narrative through the vicissitudes of crisis engagement.”
(Guidelines, p. 112)

“The Federal Government declared its intention to intensify the coherence and cooperation of all relevant policy areas and to embark on new ways of working for joint analysis, and strategic and operative planning.” *(Guidelines, p. 112)*

“The government departments will strive for prompt and comprehensive mutual involvement, thereby ensuring that the specialist expertise of the other government departments will be included in their planning. In these efforts, they are making sure that their measures are compatible with the approaches and programmes of German development policy, and with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. When planning such measures, the involvement of the Federal Foreign Office will ensure that the measures are in line with the basic tenets of German foreign policy.” *(Guidelines, p. 113)*

3.6. Coordinated financial support of international funds and facilities

In some fragile contexts, multiple ministries jointly provide funding, as authorised by budgetary law, **to funds or facilities of International Organisations in order to finance components of the funds or facilities with various earmarked purposes corresponding to the ministries' mandates.** The ministry holding the lead responsibility for a given International Organisation is informed by any other ministry which is planning to provide any financial contributions to that international organisation.

Additionally, if ministries wish to **contribute financially to country-specific donor funds,** they must **notify and involve all potentially involved ministries in advance,** pursuant to the Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries (GGO).

Funds and financing facilities in the Guidelines

“Financing facilities and voluntary payments to international organisations, e.g. in the form of fund contributions, can be used throughout all phases of a crisis.” (*Guidelines, p. 132*)

“The Federal Government is also strongly supporting bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the donor community with a view to better donor coordination.” (*Guidelines, p. 134*)

3.7. Cooperation at government negotiations and important international conferences

It is already established practice among ministries to invite all other ministries that are substantially affected to negotiations with the partner government and to high-level donor meetings. There are a number of good examples of cases in which all ministries with ODA-creditable measures in the country have been included in government negotiations on development policy with the partner countries. The applicable procedures require **interministerial preparation** and, in general, the possibility of **other ministries participating in negotiations** as part of the German delegation led by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. **Measures and activities by all participating ministries can be listed in the protocol or an annex to the protocol.**

In the case of important international conferences (for example, about countries or regions experiencing acute crises), **the comprehensive inclusion of all affected ministries in the preparations for conferences and as participants in the German delegation** is indispensable. Commitments planned by one ministry in the name of the Federal Government should be cleared in advance with all potentially affected ministries.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

“The Federal Government is supporting the approach of joint planning and reporting.”
(*Guidelines*, p. 129)

“Assessing the results and experiences of Germany’s engagement in countries affected by crises and conflicts through monitoring and final evaluation is indispensable.” (*Guidelines*, p. 140)

“Monitoring and evaluation generally lie within the responsibility of the respective government department. They are developing suitable instruments best attuned to their area of operations.”
(*Guidelines*, p. 141)

“Special approaches are required to support learning and accountability within the context of conflicts and fragility. Germany’s approaches are generally based on OECD DAC standards and directives, which take into account the complexity and volatility of crisis and conflict situations. These standards and directives include, in addition to the principles agreed within the OECD DAC community (1991), and the quality criteria for development evaluation (2010), in particular the guidelines for *Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility – Improving Learning for Results* (2012).” (*Guidelines*, p. 141)

“The Federal Government seeks to increase interministerial cooperation for these evaluation purposes. Common procedures have to reflect the objectives and needs of the government departments involved, and should allow the possibility of adjustment in appropriate cases. For interministerial involvement in prolonged crises and conflicts, the Federal Government aims to evaluate interministerial action at regular intervals.” (*Guidelines*, p. 142)

“The Federal Government advocates systematic, impact-oriented monitoring, and the corresponding evaluation of its involvement in crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building.” (*Guidelines*, p. 143)

Monitoring and evaluation generally lie within the remit of the ministry in charge of the measures in question.

In the course of the interministerial strategy development described above, the Federal Government will also be **bolstering approaches for interministerial monitoring**. For example, the Federal Government will review whether, in individual cases, multiple ministries might co-initiate interministerial monitoring missions.

The Federal Government has furthermore set the goal of **commissioning interministerial external evaluations** in suitable cases. Common procedures should reflect the objectives and needs of the ministries involved. That means that participating ministries should be incorporated equally from the beginning, including when selecting the subject of evaluation.

For example, the Federal Government can turn to the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), an internationally acclaimed specialist institute, for academically sound evaluations.

Some early interministerial evaluations have already been produced, which can serve as a starting point:

- Interministerial Evaluation of Humanitarian Assistance on behalf of the Federal Foreign Office and Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; country studies for Haiti, Uganda, Chad, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan/Darfur (published in 2011).
- In 2018, the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg) commissioned their first interministerial evaluation by an external consultancy – of five projects in Tunisia within the Federal Government's Enable and Enhance Initiative (E2I). Another interministerial evaluation is planned for 2019.
- In 2019, the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development intend to initiate an interministerial, independently conducted evaluation of the Iraq portfolio.

A good frame of reference for evaluations in crisis contexts is provided by the standards, criteria and guidelines of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and DeGEval – Evaluation Society (the standards may need to be adapted to the subject of the evaluation).

In 1991, the “DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance” established core principles, in particular:

- Creating an evaluation concurrently with the plan for an engagement
- Laying out clearly defined goals
- Reviewing the original goals afterwards using the predefined evaluation without bias, independently and transparently (foremost, by using an external agency)

The primary OECD DAC evaluation criteria, which remain standard internationally, are:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Impact
- Sustainability

The OECD plans to add “coherence” to the list of evaluation criteria.

Whereas the OECD DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation (2010) provide important general guidance for all stages of an evaluation (planning, implementation/reporting and follow-up, budget planning, etc.), the OECD DAC Guidelines on Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility (2012) are expressly dedicated to crisis contexts. These guidelines are a detailed, practical manual for planning and implementing conflict-sensitive evaluations. Some of their key substantive planks include:

- An outline of theories of change for crisis prevention and peacebuilding along with possibilities for their evaluation
- Indications of the significance of the OECD DAC evaluation criteria for contexts of crisis and/or conflict
- The role of conflict-sensitivity and conflict analysis in evaluations
- Principles and examples for dealing with the special challenges of conducting evaluations in conflict contexts

5. Other approaches to interministerial cooperation

“The structures and procedures propounded in these guidelines need to be put into practice. Interministerial basic and further training, specifically for jointly preparing all staff members concerned for their posts, will therefore be strengthened.” (*Guidelines, p. 143*)

“The Federal Government will also offer regional and interministerial training events to the diplomatic missions concerned, where necessary, with the involvement of international and implementing partners. Furthermore, the Federal Government will look into the possibility of developing joint training programmes with the European institutions and the other EU member states.” (*Guidelines, p. 143*)

“By strengthening exchange on best practices, the Federal Government aims to apply, in each case, the highest quality standards of the government departments and implementing partners involved, and to develop interministerial procedures. It is committed to promoting joint basic and further training, and to tailoring its relevant programmes even better to the challenging tasks in crisis countries. It will establish a learning platform for pooling and getting the most out of the experiences gained from its involvement.” (*Guidelines, p. 143*)

The Interministerial Circle on Civilian Crisis Prevention will refine additional approaches for interministerial cooperation.

Some examples of suitable formats for **interministerial training**:

- The annual three-month core course and the three-week course for senior officials by the Federal Academy for Security Policy
- The annual three-day seminar for new ministerial staffmembers, “Interministerial Engagement in Fragile Contexts” (in cooperation with the Free University Berlin)
- Various courses at the Federal Armed Forces Command and Staff College; Federal Armed Forces safety training courses

- Advanced training courses by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Federal Foreign Office for economic cooperation officers

The ministries will continue to support their employees' participation in these interministerial basic and advanced training courses and, as necessary, will try out new innovative formats as listed in the Guidelines.

Moreover, the Interministerial Circle on Civilian Crisis Prevention will review the possibilities and requirements for a greater **exchange between the delegate officers** so that the ministries' perspectives and interests can be better taken into mutual consideration when performing internal tasks.

In addition to this, the Interministerial Circle on Civilian Crisis Prevention will review the possibilities and requirements for the interministerial use of pre-existing digital **document platforms** and draw up suitable action recommendations that meet all official requirements for data security. The goal of this project is to share documents such as project lists and create common documents on such a platform.

Moving forward, the possibilities and requirements for establishing an **inter-ministerial learning platform** will be investigated. Recommended courses of action in this area as well will be presented to the Interministerial Circle on Civilian Crisis Prevention.

6. International reference framework

Section 1.3 of the Guidelines presents the international reference framework that guides the Federal Government's actions (including but not limited to the UN's Sustaining Peace Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, UN Resolutions 1325 and 2230, the Paris Agreement, and the Global Strategy of the European Union).

This is in addition to the commitment to adhere to international quality standards and tried and tested principles of action (section 2.2.3). The **“Do No Harm” principle** plays a significant role here.

In regard to cooperation among all actors in crisis contexts, the OECD's Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus provides important impetus for cooperation among all actors in crisis contexts.

6.1. The “Do No Harm” principle

“Do No Harm” is the guiding international axiom for conflict sensitivity and the bedrock of all interventions by the Federal Government to prevent crises, resolve conflicts and build peace. This axiom acknowledges that any intervention in a crisis context can influence that context and produce unintended negative effects. For example, assistance efforts could strengthen or weaken the legitimacy of specific groups and, at worst, could prolong a conflict. With the “Do No Harm” principle, possible interactions between the conflict context and the intervention are taken into consideration in order to prevent or at least dampen any unintended negative effects. Additionally, a “Do No Harm” analysis reveals peace-enabling, connecting factors (“connectors”) and conflict-exacerbating, divisive factors (“dividers”). Then “connectors” can be reinforced and “dividers” can be avoided or at least mitigated. Thus, the “Do No Harm” principle also constitutes an important foundation for interministerial analysis.

6.2. Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus

At the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, numerous actors made commitments to improve the coordination of humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding efforts. Against the backdrop of ongoing and recurring crises and ever-expanding humanitarian needs, the UN's then Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, called for a paradigm shift. It is no longer about addressing humanitarian needs more efficiently and effectively but about the international system's capabilities to prevent crises from happening and to develop solutions promptly in order to reduce humanitarian needs and preserve development progress.

Partly at Germany's initiative, in February 2019 the OECD DAC released a Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus, which aims to generate an international understanding of key concepts and principles for implementing the HDP Nexus in crisis regions. At the core of this recommendation, and particularly relevant to this Operations Manual, is the section on better coordination, which centres on joint analysis and joined-up planning as well as the common pursuit of "collective outcomes". In its own actions and internationally, the Federal Government will make concerted efforts towards the implementation of this recommendation.

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