



Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law Mid-Term Review – Terms of Reference

1. Project background information

The Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law (KPSRL) was established by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 2012 to strengthen the evidence base for security and rule of law (SRoL) policies and programs. As of January 2017, the Platform has been led and managed by a Secretariat of four staff. A Consortium comprised of the Clingendael Institute's Conflict Research Unit, Saferworld, and the International Development Law Organization manage the contract, provide management oversight and financial accountability. The project is supported by an Advisory Committee of nine people, drawn from the Platform participants and selected experts in the field.

The primary objective of the Knowledge Platform is to improve the quality and impact of SRoL policy and programs. This is contingent upon the ability of those who shape SRoL policy and programs to generate and incorporate new evidence into their work and decisions. This requires a robust learning capacity among these actors. Strengthening that learning capacity is, thus, a key outcome that the Knowledge Platform seeks to achieve. In order to fulfill its stated role in enhancing the learning capacity of the network, the Secretariat of the KPSRL explicitly extends its focus to understanding of how learning, or 'knowledge uptake', happens within the network, and pursues a strategy of 'knowledge brokering' as a practical and applied activity, which takes existing processes as a starting point.

The Secretariat works towards the following three intermediate outcomes:

- 1) The Platform network is strengthened, more sustainable and more focused on learning
- 2) Knowledge generated within the network is increasingly relevant to policy and programming
- 3) Knowledge is brokered in a more pro-active way, tailored to programming and policy needs.

It is expected that these will lead to the enhanced learning capacity of the Platform community. To achieve this the Secretariat is committed to three main categories of activities:

- Networking, by:
 - maintaining a well-equipped Secretariat,
 - organizing an Annual Conference bringing together individuals from across the Platform's professional spectrum,
 - organizing innovative thematic meetings, and
 - sharing research findings and Platform activities outcomes according to a concrete and pro-active communication strategy;
- Knowledge Brokering, by:
 - maintaining close ties with the MFA through a Liaison Officer.

- connecting the Platform’s learning agenda to MFA programs, particularly the Addressing the Root Causes of Conflict Fund,
- linking meetings to processes by deploying new methods for uptake and involving new participants, and
- maintaining an accessible online knowledge base and a stimulating website;
- Research, by:
 - developing and setting the agenda for NWO-WOTRO research calls,
 - funding initiatives that have a high potential to generate innovative knowledge through the KPSRL’s Knowledge Management Fund (KMF).

2. Purpose of the Independent Mid-Term Review

The independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) is intended to assess progress towards the project’s goal and outcomes as specified in the KPSRL’s project documents (with a focus on the Theory of Change [ToC] and the Results Framework). It should highlight early signs of project success and/or failure and any unexpected outcomes. The MTR will also focus on process, aiming to establish how and why certain results have been achieved (or not been achieved), aiming to pinpoint specific learning about what works and what does not.

The Review will cover the duration of the second iteration of the KPSRL, from its starting date in January 2017 to the estimated MTR date in May 2019. The MTR will serve as a management tool to provide the KPSRL Secretariat team, the Consortium Partners and the Advisory Committee with an account of results achieved at the time of reporting, and to provide guidance for the remaining period of the project.

3. Scope of work

The MTR will use the criteria of *relevance*, *effectiveness* and *sustainability* to review the KPSRL project and develop a first perspective on project *impact*, or *signs of longer-term change*. It will recommend ideas and changes for the final one and a half years of the project, to allow the project to achieve its intended results. This should include recommendations for the KPSRL Secretariat and the Consortium Partners on their strategy and positioning during the second half of the project and the period beyond to ensure the continued and increasing relevance and impact of the KPSRL, taking into account relevant policy dynamics at the level of the MFA and globally.

Relevance

Assess the relevance of the project to the context – its concepts, its Theory of Change, activities, and results framework.

- Assess the continued relevance of the rationale provided in the original project proposal for the framing of the main problem addressed by the KPSRL. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context on achieving these results, and whether the Secretariat is able to learn and adapt in response to those changes.
- Assess how well-founded the project Theory of Change is – how knowledge generation, learning and uptake occurs within the network (at the level of individual participants, within their organizations, and between network participants) and offer suggestions for improving and innovating.

- Assess the relevance of the intervention logic in the original project proposal and as applied in practice by the KPSRL Secretariat – review the adequacy of the instruments at the disposal of the KPSRL Secretariat to foster learning and broker and generate knowledge. In addition, consider whether learning from other relevant projects have been properly incorporated.
- Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s results framework (including the relation between intermediate outcomes), and its monitoring and learning framework. Assess the Secretariat and Consortium Partners’ commitment to monitoring results and to continuously question assumptions and test the relevance of approaches.

Effectiveness

Assess the results of the project at mid-term at intermediate outcome and output levels, identifying any remaining and potential barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project, and highlighting successes that can be built on.

- Intermediate Outcome 1 – Network Strengthening: Assess how actively participants take part in and contribute to the Platform. In what ways does the Secretariat consult and engage the participants in the Platform? Does it have different strategies and instruments to engage different stakeholders (notably practitioners, academia and think tanks, and policy makers)? Could this be improved? In this regard it will be important to also look at the balance between the Secretariat’s efforts to respond to the MFA’s needs and to engage with other Platform constituencies and the extent to which the more traditional Hague-based SRoL actors feel involved in the Platform and consider its work directly relevant to theirs.
- Intermediate Outcome 2 – Knowledge Brokering: How well do the instruments the Secretariat uses to circulate knowledge and learning around the Platform work in practice? What evidence is there to indicate that the participants in the Platform share and/or use that knowledge and learning in their program or policy development and/or implementation? What do those participants do differently as a result of the brokering role that the Secretariat plays? Are there indications that network participants face obstacles to uptake knowledge that are not reflected in the KPSRL ToC?
- Intermediate Outcome 3 – Research: Assess the role that the KPSRL Secretariat plays in stimulating knowledge generation. What evidence exists to show that the KMF and NWO-WOTRO research calls are responding to the right questions and/or demand? How has the project opened up access to funds for knowledge generation and how successful has that been?

Sustainability

Assess the prospects for sustainability of the KPSRL and what the Secretariat and Consortium Partners would need to invest in to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

- Assess the existing level of stakeholder ownership (including from the Dutch MFA and other key stakeholders) and what recommendations the various key stakeholders would make to ensure the Platform continues to be both useful and sustainable.
- Assess if the appropriate governance arrangements, technical capacity, and mechanisms for transparency and accountability are in place. How adequate is the new governance structure of the

Platform? Does the membership and operation of the Governance structure reflect the goals of the Platform (i.e. is it fit for purpose)?

- Identify and suggest the preparations the Platform should make to ensure continued funding from both the current donor and other donors.

Signs of longer-term change

Provide any evidence or any early signs to suggest that the project is meeting its goal and outcome level results.

- What signs are there that the KPSRL is contributing to improved policy-making and programming in the SRoL field?
- What opportunities exist within the sector that the KPSRL could engage with more effectively?

4. MTR approach and method

MTR Reference Group

The KPSRL Secretariat and Consortium Partners will establish an MTR Reference Group to act as the key reference point for the Consultant(s). This group will provide guidance to the Consultant(s), and organize to validate the findings of the MTR through an appropriately inclusive process. The final MTR report will be shared with key stakeholders through this Group.

The Consultant(s)

The Consultant(s) is/are expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach, ensuring close engagement with the MTR Reference Group (which includes the KSPRL's Secretariat and Consortium partners).

The Consultant(s) will review all relevant sources of information as provided by the MTR including the original project proposal and Theory of Change, the results framework, inception report and annual reports, governance documents, website and survey data, Knowledge Management Fund documentation and learning reports, NWO-WOTRO Calls and documentation, and any other material that might be considered useful or relevant.

The Consultant(s) will hold stakeholder discussions with at least the following:

- Platform participants (from all relevant constituency groups – including practitioners, academics and policy makers – and from the Global North and South)
- KMF and NWO-WOTRO grantees
- Secretariat staff (current and previous)
- Consortium Partners
- MFA staff
- Advisory Committee members past and present
- NWO-WOTRO staff (including NWO-WOTRO Final Review consultant)
- Addressing the Root Causes of Conflict (ARC) Fund grantees (learning leads)

The Consultant(s) will produce recommendations for improvements that should be taken into account during the remainder of the project period (in order to allow the project to achieve its intended results).

5. Expected deliverables

The consultancy is for a period of approximately 25 working days, which is expected to start in May 2019.

The following deliverables will be expected:

- An inception report, with refined evaluation questions, work plan and timetable for the MTR to be approved by the MTR Reference Group;
- A draft report, including preliminary findings and recommendations, which will be validated through an appropriately inclusive process to be agreed by the MTR Reference Group and the Consultant(s);
- A final report of not more than 30 pages with findings and recommendations.

6. Expected timeline

Main tasks	Suggested timeline
Initial desk review of key project documentation and relevant background information	8 – 11 May 2019
Production of the inception report and Inception meeting with the MTR Reference Group	13 – 20 May 2019
Submission of revised inception report	20 May 2019
Conduct data collection (in the Netherlands; no field visits included)	20 – 31 May 2019
Prepare the draft MTR report according to the TOR and the agreed updated methodology	3 – 13 June 2019
Present preliminary findings and recommendations to the MTR Reference Group for validation	13 June 2019
Submission of draft MTR report	17 June 2019
Receive feedback and comments from MTR Reference Group, as well as selected peer reviewers	21 June 2019
Revise the draft MTR report based on comments and feedback received, and prepare a final consolidated version of the report	23 – 28 June 2019
Submission of final MTR report	30 June 2019

7. Application process

Please provide a professional CV, an Expression of Interest of no more than two pages, and a budget and daily fee rate (for an eight hour working day), accompanied by at least two example samples of written reports, on [the KPSRL website](#). The deadline for submission is **23:59 CEST on Tuesday 30 April 2019**.