Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

State Secretariat
Peace and Human Rights Division

June 2022

Management Response
to the Evaluation Report on the Geneva Centres GCSP, GICHD and DCAF

Introduction

1. The Comité de Pilotage for the Geneva Centres (CdP)[1] welcomes the submission of the evaluation report and expresses its appreciation for the work done by the evaluation team under the leadership by Mr. Mark Keen (IOD PARC). The evaluation was conducted as mandated. The CdP highly values the evaluation process and appreciates the regular, frank and open dialogue and interaction with the evaluation team.

2. The Swiss Confederation supports the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) (hereafter: the [three] Geneva Centres) through both core and project funding and is a member of the respective governing boards of the Centres. Core funding is provided on the basis of the decision by the Federal Parliament of December 19, 2019.

3. The Parliament decided that, *inter alia*, an evaluation shall be undertaken, focussing on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the work executed by the three Geneva Centres. The CdP initiated this evaluation in April 2021, with a view to contribute to the development of a next report and dispatch of the Federal Council to the Federal Parliament for the 2024-2027 period. Subsequently, the evaluation was managed by a technical Steering Group (StG).

Overall appreciation of the evaluation report

4. The CdP is of the opinion that the evaluation report on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Geneva Centres addresses all the issues and questions as agreed in the Terms of Reference published on 27 May 2021. The CdP confirms that the methodology applied is based on both the ToR and regular exchanges between the evaluation team and the StG.

5. The CdP further confirms that the recommendations emanating from the evaluation report are of strategic relevance, tangible and concrete, and directly informative for the forthcoming dispatch and the definition of tasks at hand for the 2024-2027 period. It particularly appreciates that the report focused on the relevance of the centres, with particular consideration of the perceptions by external stakeholder and end users or customers, who make up roughly half of the interviewees.

6. The CdP is pleased to read that "the work of all three Centres is seen as highly relevant by all external stakeholders. They are seen as not just Centres of Excellence but 'the' Centres of Excellence in their fields." All Centres have a strong track record in reaching their stated

---

[1] The CdP is the body designated by the Parliament for the management and steering of the Swiss Contributions to the Geneva Centres and the Swiss Confederation's representation in the Centres' governance bodies.

objectives. The CdP notes that certain improvements are required in terms of efficiency of the management. Finally, the CdP appreciates that the evaluation gives once again strong evidence that the Centres are important tools of Switzerland's soft power and reputation, and indeed strongly linked to values Switzerland stands for, such as impartiality or humanitarian principles.

## Remarks on selected recommendations

7. The CdP has taken note of the Centres' assessment of the recommendations and is pleased that all Centres have identified measures to tackle existing shortcomings and have started implementing it. The assessment of the centres is in line with the assessment by the CdP. Annex 1 shows both the assessment by the centres as well as the position of the CdP, incl. possible action to be taken by the CdP. The recommendations have been integrated in the drafting of the new dispatch to parliament. Specific objectives for each Centre have been defined to ensure progress towards implementation of the recommendations. This relates in particular to the consolidation of management structures, results based management and strategy development.

8. The CdP will be monitoring and supporting the implementation of the recommendations. From the recommendations specifically directed to each Center, the CdP will emphasize on the following:

GCSP: The CdP requests GCSP to define a comprehensive RBM for all Impact Lines (recommendation 1.1 and 1.2). It will contribute to the review of the functions of the Foundation Council (3.1 and 3.2). The CdP does not recommend academic accreditation of GCSP courses (2.3).

DCAF: The CdP will, where appropriate, provide substantive guidance on strategic questions (1.2, 5.1). It will facilitate exchanges with representatives of the Swiss Confederation where needed (1.3).

GICHD: The CdP will support the re-invigoration of the Advisory Board and requests GICHD to further consolidate its organizational structures as per objectives in the new dispatch (2.1-2.4).

State Secretariat
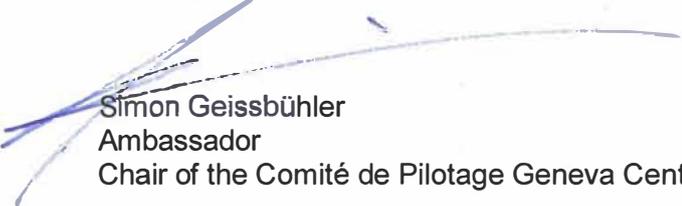
Simon Geissbühler
Ambassador
Chair of the Comité de Pilotage Geneva Centres

Annex 1: Compilation of recommendations with assessment by the Geneva Centres

External Evaluation

of the

Geneva Centres for Security Policy
Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance

Annex 1 to the Management Response by the Swiss Confederation

Geneva Centres for Security Policy GCSP

Recommendation	GCSP's Response	Comment by the CdP[1]
1.1 GCSP to consolidate all of its strategic thinking into one concise strategy document which includes its mission and values (the GCSP way) theory of change, a market analysis and how its activities and impact streams combine to deliver impact. 1.2 GCSP to further consolidate and embed its RBM approach, ensuring it is appropriate for the services it provides and has a learning and improvement focus with assessment processes that more clearly monitor whether it is on track to achieve its objectives.	GCSP has developed a new Medium-term Strategy until 2027 which includes objectives and KPIs for all its lines of activities. This strategy has been shared with the Bureau and the Foundation Council and subsequently approved by them. It is now being reviewed by the Steering Committee. As a next step, GCSP is working on an annual implementation plan for 2023. As part of the ISO and Eduqua certifications, GCSP has gone through its annual audit in May 2022 and is putting in place a consolidated operational planning, evaluation and reporting process, to support the translation of its new strategy into a thorough implementation and monitoring plan. For the Executive Education activities, the monitoring and evaluation process is already in place and has been positively validated by the Eduqua/ISO Auditor. For the newer impact lines, it is in the process of being set up.	Support the definition of a comprehensive RBM for all impact lines.
2.1 GCSP to prioritise the marketing function and to set out a clear marketing strategy including targets for 'brand awareness', income generation and potential partners and/or customers. 2.2 GCSP to further develop its customised course offering; to assess whether there are other partners who share a similar ethos and model who they could work with in other locations; and think through how to utilise the alumni hubs for business development 2.3 GCSP to investigate whether it could accredit its own programmes academically – for example the LISC could lead to its own Masters level programme which used assessment processes more in line with the course philosophy (such as Self-Managed or Action Learning) and aligned to the 'GCSP way'. Given there is an academic opportunity already available GCSP would need to consider whether the benefits outweigh the costs.	GCSP is currently recruiting a new Head of Marketing and Communication. The new Head will further develop the existing marketing strategy to align with the new Medium-Term Strategy, promote the Centre's activities and support business development by reaching new audiences and expanding our eco system. Additionally, Impact Line 5 (GCSP community) has been integrated to the Marketing and Communication department with the objective to better leverage our alumni community for business development. GCSP has also established a new Impact Line on Research and Policy Advice (IL4) which intends to streamline the respective field of activities. This shall also support GCSP's communication of its offerings in this field, which should enhance the respective business development. Regarding its customised courses, GCSP has been focusing on developing its offerings for the last 4 years. At the end of 2021, the percentage of customised education activities had already come back to the pre- covid level and with 37% of booked customised activities in March 2022, GCSP has had a strong start of the year and is extremely confident that it will this year again go above the 50% mark. The development of strategic key accounts has also been a sustained effort, existing key accounts continue to grow while at the same time we already are developing a healthy pipeline for new ones. Regarding the accreditation of its programmes, the GCSP is not an academic institution and thus in order to offer a Master of Advanced Studies (MAS), it needs to partner with a university, which is what it has already done successfully with UNIGE. It took IHEID 90 years to get the academic accreditation. Besides the heavy, expensive process they must have undergone, it needed agreement from all Swiss Universities to be accepted at the university level. Our participants come to us because of our policy focus, because of our emphasis on skills & networking - that's why they don't go to UNIGE or elsewhere.	Partial disagreement: While the CdP welcomes internationally recognized certifications for GCSP courses, it has doubts whether academic accreditation would add value to GCSP's offer and USP. The CdP agrees with the response by GCSP.

---

[1] Comments are only added, where the CdP **partially disagrees** with the recommendation and/or the Centre's response to it (marked in yellow), or where action is required by the CdP. Full agreement is marked green.

3.1 GCSP to facilitate a participative review of the Council function. It should focus on what the expectations of membership are; the expected competencies and level of engagement of Member representatives and to also ask Members how they can be more involved 3.2 GCSP to look at the possibility of creating specific sub-committees drawing from the Foundation Council Membership focused on providing support to the Director on specific Governance and technical areas. This approach is favoured over the creation of an Advisory Board. It is recommended that this process is led by GCSP Management working with the Bureau.	GCSP will review the responsibilities that come with a membership in the FC. The challenge is the high rotation of the people representing the countries in the FC. Organising sub committees on certain issues could be indeed something to explore further in the next two years. Given the recent politization of the FC, we need to move carefully in this area. The GCSP will organise a brainstorming session with the Bureau in this area and could conduct a survey among FC members. Meetings of the Foundation Council could be complemented by discussions on current security issues and challenges, including presentations and debates related to GCSP's research and analysis projects, to offer a substantial dimension to meetings of the Foundation Council. (Currently, there is no setting where representatives of missions can informally and regularly discuss current security issues in Geneva, so this would fill a gap.)	Action: Contribute to the review of the Council function. Use lessons for other two Centres, where appropriate.
4.1 GCSP to undertake a review of its current staff/expert make-up and to look to see how it might facilitate the employment/engagement of staff from less well-represented groups or different parts of the world. 4.2 GCSP to explore how it might do more regionally focused work across its portfolio in particular in areas which have not previously been given much attention. This would allow more reflection of the importance of context to technical issues, highlight potential issues of siloing as well as ensuring the Centre is not perceived as overly Eurocentric.	The GCSP has already a good global representation with 23 nationalities, especially in the Global Support Group. However, the GCSP will be even more attentive to diversity in all its future recruitments, within the limits of the restrictions that we encounter in Geneva around work permits. Additionally, the GCSP has already a very good global representation from all stakeholder groups; in its course participants, alumni community, fellows, and speakers of all its activities. The GCSP will continue to explore new opportunities, by identifying a limited number of regional engagements and building on some geographical expertise. In the education activities, the GCSP is already focusing on increasing further the inclusion of experts from the global south as well as female experts.	
5.1 GCSP to organise events which allow Alumni groups to meet up and reflect on their work, the resources they need to broaden GCSP's influence and support.	Through its 24 regional Alumni Community Hubs on 5 continents, over 50 events are organised around the world annually. Namely one which particularly connects the community in a global manner: the Global Alumni Networking Night (GANN) which was held in 30 capitals of the world in 2021 for its 5th edition. Not only networking events are organized. GCSP Alumni speak on pressing security topics with their knowledge as practitioners from the field in the event series Alumni Insights run on a monthly basis by the Community Engagement Office. The Community Engagement also created the Alumni Expert Pool, which is a database of Alumni who can be used as speakers, facilitators and moderators. Further the Alumni contribute with publications and write in our particular Alumni Notes series which is shared on the exclusive MyGCSP Alumni membership platform with the global Alumni Community. To further develop these activities and better leverage its community, the GCSP has decided to integrate alumni management into marketing and communication efforts for the Centre.	
6.1 To collectively review the provision of IT services and support provided by GCSP and how effectively the arrangement is working across all three centres and how it might be optimised.	The GCSP will discuss with the two other Centres in order to conduct a review of IT services to all three Centres.	

Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance DCAF

Recommendation	DCAF's Response	Comment by the CdP
1.1 Decide the extent to which DCAF needs to better understand, if not engage with, selected armed groups or **hybrid security** and justice providers.	Hybrid security and justice has been part of DCAF's research agenda and operational programming for several years. While DCAF thus agrees with the recommendation in principle, it will continue to make context-specific analyses of whether engagements with selected armed groups or hybrid security and justice providers are opportune, bearing in mind all relevant benefits and risks.	
1.2 Enable **citizens** to systematically have a say in how security is provided to them in countries of intervention and build on DCAF's current research on how to apply people-centred approaches to SSR.	The inclusion of people's perspectives has always been at the core of how DCAF designs, implements, and evaluates its programmatic, policy, and advisory work. While we therefore agree with the thrust of this recommendation in principle, experience has shown that it is not always possible or feasible to *systematically* include all people in a particular context. A partner state may also impose certain limitations as regards the inclusion of its people.	Action: support substantive reflections where needed.
1.3 Engage more often and at more (complementary) levels with **Swiss government** stakeholders	Fully agree.	Action: facilitate interaction where needed.
2.1 Redefine the focus and name of **ISSAT's** current "governing board" to avoid confusion and clarify its function	DCAF fully recognizes the need to align ISSAT's governance and steering structure to DCAF's overall governance framework. This matter is under active consideration.	The CdP recognizes the need to consolidate after years of important change processes.
3.1 Map out and delegate management related tasks that the **Head of Resources** Department has time and capabilities to oversee.	Fully agree.	Action: Upon request, support DCAF in the further consolidation of its organizational structures as per objectives in the new dispatch.
4.1 Seek ways to reduce the "**bureaucracy**" to its bare minimum. Following years of intense change management processes, the organisation may face a risk of change saturation (internally) and detrimental perception (externally). The organisation needs to retain agility to remain a valued partner in the field.	We disagree with the use of the term "bureaucracy". In recent years, DCAF has introduced and strengthened internal policies and procedures to address apparent deficits in this area, not least in response to the findings of the last external evaluation (2018). We confirm that all essential policies and procedures are now in place and no further policies are needed at this point. We agree that new policies or procedures should only be considered if they are critical to improving DCAF's performance.	
4.2 Bring coherence to **DCAF's branding.** In DCAF's publications, the acknowledgement section often reads like an exercise in attribution (e.g., "DCAF Division W, with inputs from DCAF Division X, DCAF division Y, and Operations Department/"). A simple and consistent mention that "This paper has been produced by the Geneva Centre for SSG/R" may add coherence to DCAF's external branding.	Fully agree.	
5.1 Conduct a **human centred evaluation** of DCAF's work at country level. As DCAF rolls out its new RBM framework, it would be useful to capture and analyse the perspectives of civilians in countries of intervention	DCAF embraces and intends to further develop people-centred approaches to the design and evaluation of its programmes, where appropriate.	Action: support substantive reflections where needed.

5.2 Display a deliberate intent to assess collaboration potential with others in the **international Geneva** ecosystem.	Fully agree.	
6.1 To collectively review the provision of **IT** services and support provided by GCSP and how effectively the arrangement is working across all three centres and how it might be optimised	Fully agree.	

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining GICHD

Recommendation	GICHD's Response	Comments by the CdP
1. Re-establish the Advisory Board with a review of membership and operating modalities to ensure maximum effectiveness of the Board.	The GICHD agrees with the evaluator's recommendation. It is indeed an opportune moment to reinvigorate this group as the Centre moves into its next Strategy 2023-2026. In 2021, the GICHD had established a list of potential new members for a re-established Advisory Board and will review operating modalities by end of 2022.	Action: Support the re-invigoration of the Advisory Board.
2.1 Commission an independent, impartial review of leadership and management with a key objective of developing a strategy to address the ongoing issues reported by staff.	An independent external analysis of the internal working environment of the GICHD is ongoing at the time of writing (May 2022). The findings of the analysis will be incorporated into the institutional development pillar of our next strategy.	The CdP agrees with the recommendations and with the assessment by GICHD on recommendation 2.4.
2.2 Reconfigure the composition and operating modalities of the Management Board.	This recommendation is in line with the GICHD's own assessment. In December 2021, the composition of the Management Board was reconfigured to include Heads of all the GICHD's divisions. New Terms of Reference clarifying the objective and composition of the Management Board, as well as the frequency, timing, duration and documentation of meetings, were approved in March 2022 and have been distributed to all staff.	
2.3 Empower the Senior Managers to focus more on programmes and operations and less on internal processes, with more decision-making power over programmes.	The senior management team has been asked to devote time to internal processes in recent months. This focus has been part of a deliberate effort to strengthen and refine internal processes to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. The GICHD believes that this internal work is directly correlated to GICHD's ability to fulfil its role so effectively. It is also understood that the requirement is finite. Once appropriate internal processes have been reviewed and refined, the senior managers will be able to shift focus back to more externally oriented tasks.	
2.4 Streamline decision-making processes to make them more effective and efficient, whilst ensuring transparency to the greatest extent possible.	The GICHD believes that its decision-making architecture is well defined and clearly articulated. It has been shared with staff on various occasions. The GICHD understands that there may always be room for improvement and has started to review and refine specific decision-making processes, for example by further empowering Heads of Division around staffing of their respective teams. There may also be lessons to take from the ongoing independent external analysis mentioned above.	
3.1 Include a greater balance between qualitative and quantitative indicators in the next RBM, with a clear definition of what these mean and how they will be tracked.	This recommendation is in line with the GICHD's own assessment. The Centre's new Advisor on Monitoring and Evaluation has been tasked to help develop both qualitative and quantitative indicators as a means of measuring progress to support strategic decision making/steering during the implementation of the next GICHD Strategy 2023-2026. See response to recommendation below.	
3.2 Recruit a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning focal point to support programme staff.	This recommendation is in line with the GICHD's own assessment. The recruitment process was ongoing at the time of the evaluation and the new Advisor on Monitoring and Evaluation joined the Centre in May 2022.	
4. Develop a HR strategy to support the promotion of gender and diversity within the workplace, with a focus on senior management positions. A HR strategy would include an assessment of the institutional barriers to progression and a plan to mitigate them.	The GICHD has a longstanding commitment to gender and diversity which is encapsulated as one of the four main strategic objectives of the current strategy. Significant focus has been placed on ensuring that equal opportunities are afforded to all applicants during recruitment. GICHD's Gender Equality and Inclusion Action Plan 2022 commits to gender balance and increased representation of individuals from explosive ordnance-affected countries among its staff, with a particular focus on the management and expert level. This has not been achieved at senior management level yet, but it is anticipated that the monitoring of recruitment-related gender and diversity metrics	

	and the inclusion of more qualitative indicators will help management to identify any barriers that might be affecting recruitment of senior managers from diverse backgrounds. The institutional development pillar in our next Strategy 2023-2026 is expected to outline concrete ways in which the organization will support and promote gender balance, diversity and inclusion among employees.	
5. Review internal systems to ensure they are fit for purpose. This includes an assessment of current IT support resources to ensure adequate levels of support to staff, as well as access to IT services and packages. It also includes examining internal IT systems such as SharePoint to ensure this is being used effectively and staff are supported in its use. The finance system needs to be thoroughly reviewed to ensure this is accessible and user-friendly, supporting staff in their work and not diverting time and resources from core operations. HR systems such as recruitment processes need to be revised to make them more efficient, and general HR support needs to be reviewed to ensure support for staff at all levels.	The GICHD agrees with the evaluator's recommendation, several elements of which are in line with the Centre's own assessment. Ongoing initiatives include: • An assessment of IT systems is linked closely to the recommendation regarding a review of the IT provision across all three centers (see below). • In terms of the GICHD's internal IT systems, the new Advisor on Monitoring and Evaluation has been mandated to review the M&E tools available to project and programme managers with a view to supplementing and strengthening the existing Sharepoint-based platforms as the GICHD embarks on the next strategy. • In 2021, a new finance division was established specifically to strengthen existing systems and processes to meet the needs of the organization which has expanded significantly in recent years. The new Head of Finance was recruited in September 2021 and has been tasked with a comprehensive review of the system. • An HR roadmap was put in place following the discontinuation of the GICHD's so-called '10 years rule' in December 2020. The roadmap outlines several steps the Centre will follow to help address the complex and sensitive series of questions which resulted from this milestone decision, including on career development. • A new Safeguarding and Accountability framework was adopted by the management board in May 2022. The framework is a culmination of an inclusive process over 18 months. It defines the behaviour standards that are intended to foster a safe and respectful environment for all and establishes effective informal and formal reporting mechanisms for suspected cases of misconduct. • Additionally, the GICHD will continue regularly to assess the efficacy of internal systems in line with the principles that will be articulated in the next Strategy 2023-2026.	
6. To collectively review the provision of IT services and support provided by GCSP and how effectively the arrangement is working across all three centres and how it might be optimised.	The GICHD stands ready to contribute to this review in partnership with GCSP and DCAF.	