FINAL REPORT

MID-TERM REVIEW:

KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM SECURITY & RULE OF LAW

May 2023

By

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law (KPSRL) has the goal of enhancing learning from SRL program implementation and program portfolios by practitioner organizations, Dutch embassy stakeholders in priority countries, DSH/MFA, and their knowledge partners. This is intended to inform knowledge uptake that improves the quality and impact of Security and Rule of Law (SRoL) work. In support of this KPSRL aims at increasing broad, diverse participation, intensifying exchange within its network and providing learning opportunities to its participants. These outcomes are to be reached via four output areas on: networking opportunities; early-stage development of new ideas (via a Knowledge Management Fund); programmatic learning to test ideas and approaches at scale; and learning agendas in support of the Dutch MFA at headquarters, embassy and programme levels.

KPSRL's independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) has three objectives: assess progress towards the KPSRL's current outcomes, goal and goal relevance, together with relevant gaps, and trace KPSRL's contribution to it and other positive or negative outcomes; assess whether KPSRL has the optimal governance and organisational set up to manage its efforts, learn and evolve; and provide recommendations on how positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL can best be maximised and sustained (both within the current strategy period and as KPSRL prepares for the post-2024 period). This executive summary outlines key findings and headline recommendations. More detailed recommendations are included, under each of the headline recommendations, within the main body of the report.

KPSRL's progress and contributions

Regarding **impact**, across the annual conference and events, the KMF, PLI, and support to DSH learning/policy processes, KPSRL is generating learning that is leading to SRoL policy and programme change. Two out of 5 survey respondents indicated some change as a result of engagement with KPSRL – often using related learning in their work. Roughly one third of respondents saw such changes as very or fairly significant. Case studies from Somalia, Nigeria, at policy level within DSH and among land governance stakeholders show examples of change linked to KPSRL's four output areas. Evidence shows KPSRL: influencing MFA learning and policy making; influencing programming and approaches; stimulating learning and influencing activities; and supporting learning that impacts others' knowledge, attitudes, relationships or behaviours via KMF/PLI.

By 'stitching together' efforts under different outputs, KPSRL creates synergies that create fairly good **coherence for goal fulfilment**. However, the connection to goal and goal relevance is clearer for some KPSRL activities and instruments than for others. For example, where the distance from activities or events FCAS and decision-makers is great, it could be important to examine how local and programme learning can produce takeaways, connect up to wider participatory learning and exchange processes, help solve the most urgent SRoL issues faced by people in FCAS, and inform change-writ-large.

KPSRL has taken a purposeful approach to adapting **engagement and communication**. KPSRL's efforts to involve, engage and collaborate with stakeholders are well perceived. It has markedly increased its social media reach and engagement opportunities for FCAS actors via events, in-country learning efforts and KMF reforms. Remaining centralised in the Hague is a slight barrier to taking this further. Participants encouraged KPSRL to take a more tailored communications approach, do more to broker relationships between those engaged on common themes, and improve the website (no longer the primary communications tool, but still underperforming).

KPSRL works hard to enhance its **relevance**, and the way it combines supply- and demand-driven engagement enables it to do so. MTR participants appreciate KPSRL events and participate in the platform to access learning/evidence, to network and to share what they know. KPSRL also remains relevant to the needs of the Dutch MFA. The main area for further work is PLI – whose initial design and outreach was not a perfect fit.

Participation in KPSRL remains strong, diverse, active and vibrant, and breadth of participation is fairly strong by type of organisation. The modest overall decline in participant numbers in 2022 during current purposive adaptations may mean KPSRL is technically not 'increasing' participation in line with its theory of change and may wish to consider how it responds. **Exchange** of knowledge between instruments, across contexts and to different levels, while significant, can be strengthened (for example, by doing more to distil learning from one process for other actors, or connecting those with common interests more routinely).

Survey responses and numerous examples show that KPSRL has contributed to **learning** by a range of network participants. It has supported MFA learning in several ways and contributed to learning: at programme level in particular countries; on programming or policy techniques (such as problem driven iterative adaptation (PDIA), and use of ToCs); and on key themes like the integration of mental health into SRoL work. On themes for the future, views varied but participants broadly favoured a 'less breadth – more depth and follow-up' approach.

Consistently high satisfaction with events suggests strong **learning methods** and healthy **learning relevance**. KPSRL has invested significantly in participants learning from and alongside each other and is pro-active in improving its methods. Participants suggested that events need a clear analytical framework within a structured strategy to enable learning and exchange on themes over time and key insights pulled out for interested groups. Where participants flagged disappointment, this related to limited relevance of or lack of follow up after some themes/events, limited practicability of learning, or abstract/jargon-heavy framing/language. Suggested improvements in Addressing Root Causes (ARC) fund learning process and PLI are reflected in the MTR recommendations.

KPSRL is succeeding in creating a **safe, conducive environment for learning** in which diverse types of knowledge can be valued. However, some participants noted scope for enabling more honesty and constructive challenge. Barriers to participants' learning include lack of time (sometimes linked to burdensome formal monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) requirements), resources and conducive internal processes.

Underpinning its progress towards outcomes and impact sits KPSRL's **delivery**. Although pace and scale of delivery varies across outputs, delivery of intended outputs is good overall. Purposeful adaptations – to focus on learning quality, collaboration, inclusive learning processes at the right levels, and engagement in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCAS) – caused a dip in overall numbers of events and participants during 2022, as well as some underspending. As long as underspend is managed, Programmatic Learning Instrument (PLI) implementation continues to accelerate and quality of outputs and accessibility reforms remains high, the MTR raises no significant delivery concerns.

To enhance KPSRL's progress and contributions, headline recommendations are to:

- Stay open to diverse interests but go deeper and follow through on key themes commanding broad interest, with a clear focus on getting to widely useful 'so what' outcomes and nudging organisations and governments towards significant changes and reforms.

- Keep participation healthy and vibrant – including via compelling content, tailored communications and knowledge brokering – but continue to see quality, structured learning processes with top-quality learning methods and uptake at scale as higher-order priorities.
- Keep strengthening KMF accessibility but consider ways to keep major learning questions in view, and to strengthen research quality.
- Aim to focus PLI more over time on generating lessons that can inform better programming at scale and the development and maintenance of constructive SRoL policies within and beyond the Netherlands.

Governance and set-up

KPSRL's **set-up**, governance, secretariat, planning processes and instruments appear to be functioning fairly efficiently, even if further inclusion of southern-based voices and options for decentralising will be worth revisiting in the future. While consortium partnerships function well, it may be valuable to explore how partners can further help internationalise platform engagement if mandated and resourced for this, today or post-2024. Areas for improvement include making timely decisions while avoiding over-consultation, finding a way to ensure thematic clarity underpins annual planning, mitigating risks of staff turnover and overload, reserving time for knowledge brokering and relationship building, and urgently rolling out a new Customer Relations Management (CRM) system. Implementation challenges beyond those noted include inflation, which is having a recognisable but manageable impact.

By dedicating greater capacity and attention to **internal learning and monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning** (MEAL), KPSRL has taken a very positive step up on this to date.

The headline recommendation on governance and set up is:

- Enhance internal processes in order to: mitigate risks related to staff turnover, ensure plans are in place to manage underspending and inflation, streamline MEAL to enhance reflection and adaptation in relation to harvested outcomes, and prioritise operationalisation of the CRM.

KPSRL's future

The **key challenge** confronting KPSRL is how to promote peace, democracy and cooperation (and support struggling CSOs) in a less cohesive, more securitised, authoritarian and unstable world. In this context, finding paths for confronting ecological and social pressures driving and interacting with conflict and instability will be critical. Localisation, decolonisation and effective support for locally driven change will remain a **key trend** for KPSRL to engage with. Amid a 'new Cold War' militarisation dynamic, and uncertainty over the political future for SRoL work, KPSRL can do more to help ensure effective approaches continue to enjoy policy support (and ineffective ones do not).

KPSRL has done little to diversify its **funding**, and it remains unclear whether it and the MFA are committed to doing so. Given the current relevance, alignment and flexibility in the relationship between KPSRL and the MFA, there is no urgent need for KPSRL to deviate from this close working relationship. Nonetheless, in terms of **who KPSRL serves** all stakeholders support further aligning KPSRL's focus with priorities in FCAS and engaging local actors. Survey responses suggest a focus on connecting local practitioners and activists with national and international policy, research and practitioner actors. Beyond serving the MFA and continuing to provide safe space for vital donor-implementing partner exchange, KPSRL should clearly articulate its value proposition for all other

stakeholder groups, and push for more diverse actors to participate (for example, state actors working on SRoL, and local actors involved in social contract struggle).

As it strategizes for **post-2024**, KPSRL may wish to consider how reviewing ToC outcome, goal and goal relevance definitions could help it focus on building from local knowledge towards solving conflict and security challenges, producing influential solutions to burning SRoL issues and de-emphasising issues that warrant less attention. Once objectives are clarified and refreshed, form should follow function, with options mapped, openly discussed and built into the new design. The overall recommendations on KPSRL's future are:

- Stay focused on supporting local learning and shifting power as a basis for grounded solutions to conflict, security and rule of law challenges.
- Given trends towards militarisation and securitisation, try to bring evidence on what really works to solve SRoL challenges – and what doesn't – to the policy table.
- Stay close to the MFA and other key partners such as INGOs, but diversify participation more, aim to inform a wider range of policy players, and strengthen support for connections between diverse mutual interest groups.
- If diversifying funding is an aim, be more proactive in pursuing this, making sure the MFA and Embassies support and engage with this process.
- Map strategic options for renewing KPSRL post-2024 thoroughly and ensure participatory consideration of them, including:

  - o Revisiting the ToC to ensure it keeps KPSRL focused on the most important goals and pathways for reaching them;
  - o Considering articulating KPSRL's offer to all targeted groups to ensure mutual benefits;
  - o Decentralising beyond the Hague into priority contexts/regions for learning in FCAS and informing grounded, effective policy-making beyond the Netherlands;
  - o Bringing southern voices into the future consortium / partnership;
  - o Rethinking the structure and approach of KMF and PLI to enhance their flexibility and quality;
  - o Connecting mutual interest groups more consistently; and
  - o Using tech creatively to serve participants' needs.

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ACRONYMS

ARC	Addressing Root Causes of Conflict (a Dutch MFA programme fund)
ARF	Advanced Research Fund
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CP	Consortium Partners
CRM	Customer Relation Management
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSPSS	Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
DCAF	Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance
DSH	Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid of the Dutch MFA
EKN	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
EoI	Expression of Interest
FCAS	Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings
GPPAC	Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
HSC	Human Security Collective
IDLO	International Development Law Organization
IFSH	Institute for Peace Research and Social Policy (University of Hamburg)
ISSAT	International Security Sector Advisory Team
KII	Key informant interview
KMF	Knowledge Management Fund
KPAC	Knowledge Platform Annual Conference
KPSRL	Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law
MACS	Multi-Annual Country Strategies
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MFA	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mini-WS	Mini-workshop
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
PDIA	Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation
PLI	Programmatic Learning Instrument
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism
RBF	Results Based Framework
SRoL	Security and Rule of Law
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TI	Transition International
TMZ	Tamazight Women Movement
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference

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In annexes

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   REPORT OVERVIEW

This introduction briefly describes the Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law's (KPSRL) work in the current phase and explains the objectives and methodology for its 2023 Mid-Term Review (MTR). The next three chapters consider the three objectives and subheadings set out in the MTR's inception report and evaluation framework, responding to the questions set out therein based on the data gathered. Chapter 2 explores and analyses the findings on KPSRL's progress and contributions; Chapter 3 provides findings on KPSRL's governance and organisational set up; Chapter 4 considers KPSRL's future with particular focus on potential directions from 2024. Chapters 2-4 each include conclusions and detailed recommendations on these three themes. Further information is included in annexes, including:

- Background on KPSRL's governance, theory of change (ToC), evolution, priorities, instruments and outputs
- The MTR's full methodology, including a masterlist of questions used in data gathering, definitions of key terms, and a selection of data from the survey, key informant interviews (KIIs) and mini-workshops (mini-WS) conducted.

1.2   KPSRL'S CURRENT PHASE

The KPSRL was established by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), specifically the Department for Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid (DSH), in 2012 to strengthen the evidence base for security and rule of law (SRoL) policies and programmes.

It is led by a Consortium comprised of the Clingendael Institute's Conflict Research Unit, Saferworld, and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and supported by an Advisory Committee drawn from the Platform participants and other relevant experts. Consortium Partners – Clingendael, IDLO, and Saferworld – play a strategic guiding and decision-making role.

Three elements make up the governing body.

1.   A **Management Committee** of the Consortium Partners and the Head of Secretariat. This is responsible for strategic guidance and decision-making, including via planning, accountability, evaluation and quarterly oversight, including via quarterly meetings. These are 'followed by a Policy Dialogue meeting with the MFA'.[1]

2.   An **Advisory Committee** formed by nine members including a Chair. Four members are selected by the Management Committee, and four members are selected through an open call to the Platform community. The ninth member is drawn from the MFA. The Committee advises on KPSRL's research agenda, annual thematic and conference headlines, and supports KPSRL with networking, diversification, internationalisation, sustainability and avoiding conflicts of interest. It includes a mix of academics, NGOs, practitioners, policymakers and advocates.

3.   The **MFA**, which holds the contract with KPSRL and has regular policy dialogue with the Management Committee through regularly scheduled policy dialogues.

KPSRL's **Secretariat** is based in its office in Den Haag, and has a Head of Secretariat, two Knowledge Brokers – on Programming and Practice, and Research and Policy, respectively – an Engagement and Grants Officer, a Learning Officer and an Operations Assistant.

The KPSRL's network includes all people and organisations that actively engage in its activities.

KPSRL's Theory of Change (ToC)

KP 3.0 - THEORY OF CHANGE

Goal relevance
- Enchanced learning contributes to more knowledge uptake in SRL programming and policy making and thereby to improving the quality and impact of such work in the SRL sector

Goal
Learning from SRL program implementation and program portfolios, by practitioner organizations, Dutch embassy stakeholders in priority countries, DSH/MFA, and their knowledge partners enhances

Outcome assumptions
- The internal learning cultures, systems and capacities of SRL organizations and their leadership's commitment to learning allow them to seize upon the opportunities provided by the KP
- The financial and other constraints within which SRL organizations operate (e.g. budgets and financial and programmatic reporting requirements) leave room for investments in learning
- SRL remains an important pillar of Dutch development assistance, both in terms of political support and funding support

Outcome 1 (Network strengthening)
The breadth and diversity of participation (by type of organization and geographic origin) and the intensity of exchange within the KP network increases

Outcome 2 (Learning environment)
Opportunities for learning by network participants (practitioner organizations, embassy stakeholders, DSH/MFA and knowledge partners) about SRL program implementation and portfolio learning increase

Output assumptions
- A DSH Learning agenda is adopted and implemented and receives support from leadership (including in relation to funding programs), knowledge questions (demand) are clearly articulated and participation of DSH/MFA and embassy staff in KP events and activities is encouraged
- [Internal assumption/responsibility Consortium Partners] The Consortium Partners are able to field a suitably experienced and stable Secretariat team capable of (1) provoking demand and identifying 'burning' applied knowledge questions (2) ensuring knowledge fits needs (3) enabling sharp-minded (not like-minded) people to find one another and (4) providing attractive learning experiences
- [Internal assumption/responsibility Consortium Partners] The Secretariat and Consortium Partners are able to maintain and strengthen the relationship built on trust and shared interests and allowing for proactive sharing of information relevant to the implementation, adaptation and positioning of the KP project, with DSH/MFA, embassy stakeholders, and other members of the KP community
- [Internal assumption/responsibility Consortium Partners] Involvement in the KP offers the Consortium Partners sufficient benefits beyond the financial compensation in the form of the management fee to mobilize the internal knowledge, experience, resources and presence in the field necessary for or contributing to the various KP activities

Output area 1 (Networking opportunities)
Network events organized, and online and direct exchange and interaction facilitated

Output area 2 (KMF)
Early-stage development of new ideas, insights and pilot approaches to SRL programming supported

Output area 3 (Programmatic learning)
Further development and testing at scale in multi-country settings of new ideas, insights and approaches to SRL programming and portfolio learning supported

Output area 4 (Learning agenda)
Development and implementation of DSH/MFA, embassy and program level learning agendas supported

Project approach
KP Secretariat facilitated knowledge generation and brokering

INPUTS / ACTIVITIES

RESULTS

INTEREST | **INFLUENCE** | **CONTROL**

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Problem
Knowledge gaps, of a practical and a more fundamental nature, stand in the way of progress in SRL programming and policy making. The strongest need for learning is located at the program implementation level and at the level of portfolio management.

Sub-problem
Network participants struggle to access information from new and/or diverse sources
- There is limited exchange between implementers, and between professional sectors (research, practitioners and policymakers) about real challenges faced in policy decisions and in programs, particularly at the working level of implementation.
- Implementers and policymakers find it difficult to access and apply new information unless it is tailored specifically to their policy or programming needs, operating assumptions and daily working realities.
- Many researchers, policy makers, and some program implementers work at a distance from, and have trouble accessing, insecure and volatile conflict and post-conflict settings where SRL programming and policy is applied.

Sub-problem
There are deficits in the internal learning cultures, systems and capacities of SRL organizations and their leadership's commitment to learning that stand in the way of evidence generated through programs being fed back into new programming and policymaking (e.g. organizational silos, rigid funding approaches, inappropriate ME&L approaches).

Sub-problem
More trust and honesty is needed between partners
- Strong competition over resources with very low margins put pressure on overheads and leaves little room for investing in learning or innovating when success is not guaranteed.
- There is a fear of backlash when reporting the results of projects that were not completely successful, or could be seen as a failure; thus important lessons are often not recorded

Sub-problem
Investments in generating research do not necessarily guarantee its uptake
- The language and complex messages of academic research is not often tailored to the SRL policy and practitioner audiences, making it difficult for their findings to permeate policy and programming discussions.
- SRL policy is a relatively new field, thus strategies and policy documents are often fairly general, and therefore cannot often be directly applied to policymakers specific questions.
- There is limited capacity among policymakers and program implementers to demand and verify program results at relevant levels in this relatively new field of SRL policy.
- Academic researchers are working along different funding and work cycles, making it difficult to time their research outputs for uptake in strategic policy moments or processes.

Sub-problem
Actors struggle to synchronize their efforts effectively
- Donors often place insufficient emphasis on reporting and improving outcome-level results, which fails to provide practitioners with compelling incentives to learn.
- Applied research is seen to have only limited relevance for academic career opportunities, lowering the incentives for many academic researcher to actively engage.
- There are a limited number of thematic SRL and Results Based Management experts at the MFA. Frequent staff rotation and heavy workload impede developing such capacity.
- Learning is often perceived as an add-on component of programs, associated with M&E at mid-term and project closure; it is seen as an HQ function that is often bothersome and not essential to implementation.
- Learning is often associated with (and resources used for) accountability and reporting rather than reflecting on ways to improve programming

KPSRL's **main instruments** are:

Thematic **learning events:** the creation and support of learning events are a substantial area of KPSRL activity to engage network participants and stimulate their learning and exchange in a safe space that overcomes problems identified in the ToC. KPSRL's flagship event is its annual conference (KPAC), but it typically convenes 20-30 events per year, including webinar, hybrid and in-person events in/on a variety of themes and locations.,

The **Knowledge Management Fund** (KMF) – a small grants mechanism (max. €20,000 per application) aimed at creating new knowledge on SRoL. KMF is KPSRL's instrument to financially support activities arising from its network. From its launch in 2017 up to 2020 81 KMF grants were awarded, 20 led by a partner from a FCAS.[2] KMF 'enables the KP to meet the objectives of network strengthening, knowledge generation and knowledge brokering, and brings all those three aspects together in an agile small grants facility that diversifies thinking and evidence in the SRoL field and stimulates innovation.'.[3] KMF grants 'offer a low barrier to entry for innovative, agile and experimental proposals' with the aim 'to diversify thinking and evidence in the [SRoL] field, particularly in [FCAS]'[4] and 'create a safe space for failure and learning'.[5] The €200,000 annual fund supports 9-month projects of up to €20,000 for events, research ideas and other initiatives that help improve 'knowledge generated by the SRoL field, and its subsequent uptake'.[6] Uptake is supported by 'brokering' the knowledge generated by KMF in various ways, and it is hoped that promising KMF results 'will feed through into expanded programmatic proposals for scaling or learning partnerships.'[7] It was KPSRL's intention in the current phase to seek financing from other donors to supplement the fund.[8]

The **Programmatic Learning Instrument** (PLI) – a larger fund (up to €200,000 per project) to support learning within and across programmes. For KPSRL, Programmatic Learning is defined as 'the process of capturing and distilling insights to drive adaptive programming and portfolio management, and doing so informing partners, donors and the wider SRoL sector through KPSRL's network'.[9] The PLI was conceived as a mechanism to 'complement the KMF and the support to learning agendas and enrich the learning environment'.[10] The **PLI** is taking shape under a design phase running from 2022-24. It offers 'a dedicated budget line to stimulate and facilitate programmatic learning' reflecting that 'the strongest need and potential for learning in the SRoL sector is located at the programme implementation level, primarily in the field, and at the portfolio management level'.[11] The PLI is designed to address challenges affecting the health of the learning culture within and between SRoL institutions, and the fact that learning culture is not embedded in programmes, does not drive adaptation, and is more concerned with results and accountability than with challenge, insight and genuine learning.[12] It aims to engage with programmes working on the same or aligned Theories of Change, possibly but not always within the same country or region.[13] The PLI's goal is 'to enable stakeholders working in the SRoL sector to enhance the quality and impact of their policymaking, programming, implementation, and learning by facilitating and incentivising the co-creation and collective implementation of improved approaches to programmatic learning.'[14] Organisations using PLI get: '(1) a budget for their learning agenda, (2) KPSRL expertise on designing a learning agenda and (3) access to KPSRL network for consulting expertise or communicating lessons learned.'[15] KPSRL provides help shaping learning trajectories, distilling lessons for wider audiences and for adapting the PLI.[16] The original aim of the pilots being established during PLI's design phase was to 'engage primarily with [DSH], embassies with a SRoL portfolio and their local and international implementing partners…. in the process of co-creating and embedding learning into programming'.[17] The 2021-2024 proposal suggested that one pilot would occur in 2021 and two in 2022.[18] A key feature of this piloting phase is KPSRL's own learning journey which has the explicit aim for the 2022-2024 period of refining the concept of programmatic learning, design processes, methodological approaches, and procedures with a view to implementing the PLI at scale in the post 2024 period.

Alongside efforts to develop the PLI, a closely related output area is supporting development and implementation of DSH/MFA, embassy and program level **learning agendas**. KPSRL also continues its

experimentation with 'practice labs'[19] (these are 'rooted in mutual learning, [and] offer partners who are "ahead of the curve" a space to showcase practices they have tested and deemed effective, to receive feedback from peers, and discuss engagement strategies that could be implemented more widely.'[20]

Both KMF and PLI are in the process of evolution: the 2022 Annual Plan thus flags the importance of KPSRL's 'ambition to reform the KMF and establish the programmatic learning instrument, as both require setting strategic, foundational thinking and building up or reforming processes and procedures for the long-term rather than focusing on immediate results.'[21]

1.3   MTR OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This MTR is designed to deliver the following **objectives**.

Objective 1: To assess progress towards the KPSRL's current outcomes, goal and goal relevance, together with relevant gaps, and trace KPSRL's contribution to it and other positive or negative outcomes.

Objective 2: To assess whether KPSRL has the optimal governance and organisational set up to manage its efforts, learn and evolve.

Objective 3: To provide recommendations on how positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL can best be maximised and sustained through:
- The KPSRL's approaches, processes and positioning for remainder of the current strategy period (including via the revision of KPSRL's Theory of Change and Results-Based Framework (RBF).
- The KPSRL's preparations for the post-2024 period.

The MTR's **evaluation framework** organises research questions under the three MTR objectives as shown in the table below.

MTR questions	Key DAC Criteria
Objective 1: To assess the nature and extent of progress towards the KPSRL's current outcomes and goal, together with relevant gaps, and trace KPSRL's contribution to it and other positive or negative outcomes.	
Delivery: To what extent is the current set of KPSRL interventions achieving desired outputs in support of ToC results? Have adaptations taken place since the project began and if so are they helping achieve desired outputs in support of ToC results?	Relevance Effectiveness Efficiency
Engagement and communication: Are the current interventions and approach involving, engaging and communicating with current and potential network participants purposefully and effectively? Does the Knowledge Management Fund (KMF) approach including grant structure and application procedure match the needs of the grantees and potential grantees? Are the current interventions and approach involving, engaging and communicating with current and potential network participants purposefully and effectively in Conflict Affected Settings (FCAS) in particular? Is this improving? Has the KPSRL managed to expand access to the KMF effectively for FCAS actors in particular?	Relevance and effectiveness (of reach / engagement strategy and processes)
Relevance: To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments responsive to the needs and demands of network participants? To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments responsive to the evolving needs and demands of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)?	Relevance
Participation: How broad, balanced and diverse is participation within the KPSRL network? Is participation increasing? How active and meaningful is participation in KPSRL by relevant groups?	Effectiveness
Exchange: How intense is the exchange within the KPSRL Network?	Effectiveness

Is the intensity of exchange increasing?	
Learning and learning relevance: Are network participants learning through their engagement with the KPSRL?	Effectiveness
How relevant are learning themes to the needs of current and potential network participants and to wider trends?	Relevance
Learning methods: How effective are the learning methodologies deployed by the KPSRL?	Effectiveness Efficiency
Safe space: Is the network providing a 'safe' and conducive environment for learning among network participants?	Effectiveness
Impact: What are network participants doing differently as a result of their KPSRL-influenced learning? Did KPSRL contribute to changes in policies, programming, behaviours, capacities or relationships? What other factors and/or actors have contributed to identified learning and/or changes in policies, programming, behaviours, capacities or relationships?	Effectiveness Impact / signs of longer-term change
Other outcomes: Are there positive or negative outcomes to which KPSRL has contributed in any other areas, or gaps in expected outcomes under the ToC, that need to be considered when assessing KPSRL's relevance and effectiveness?	Relevance Effectiveness
Coherent goal fulfilment: Are the range of existing activities, outputs and outcomes contributing coherently to progress towards the TOC goal and goal relevance?	Relevance Effectiveness Coherence
Objective 2: To assess whether KPSRL has the optimal governance and organisational set up to manage its efforts, learn and evolve.	
Set up: How efficient and fit-for-purpose is the set-up of the KPSRL (e.g. its governance, consortium, secretariat, network model and instruments)?	Efficiency
Challenges: What challenges (whether related to ToC assumptions, problem statements or other factors) constrain KPSRL from effectively delivering interventions and outputs in support of ToC results? What challenges or potential scenarios may become important for KPSRL in the medium-long term? What impact has inflation had on the KPSRL capacity to deliver its expected results?	Sustainability Efficiency
Internal learning: Are KPSRL's internal monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning approaches and tools adequate to its needs? Are KPSRL's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning MEAL approaches resulting in internal learning and effective adaptation?	Efficiency Effectiveness
Objective 3: To provide recommendations on how positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL can best be sustained through: ▪ The KPSRL's approach, processes and positioning for remainder of the current strategy period (including via the revision of KPSRL's ToC and RBF). ▪ The KPSRL's preparations for the post-2024 period.	
Approach: How could the current set of interventions / expected outputs be adapted, in order to strengthen relevance and effectiveness?	Relevance Effectiveness
Positioning / participation: How could the KPSRL's engagement with network members be adapted, in order to ensure adequate breadth and diversity of participation?	Relevance Effectiveness
Maintaining relevance and coherence: How can KPSRL evolve to continue meeting and appropriately balancing the diverse priorities and learning needs of different network stakeholders and participants?	Relevance Coherence
Sustainability – addressing challenges: How can the network and learning within it best be sustained in the face of identified challenges?	Sustainability
Post 2024: How should the KPSRL prepare for the period post-2024?	Sustainability

The MTR covers the current contract of the KPSRL, from its starting date in January 2021 to December 2022, but considers where appropriate how KPSRL is adapting in response to past lessons. The MTR is based on gathering and analysing as much data as possible in the time available during January to March 2023:

- Review of 59 documents against the MTR questions
- 23 interviews or written responses to questions

- 7 mini workshops
- 70 survey responses
- inputs generated by an online sense-making workshop with KPSRL staff, the evaluation Reference Group and Advisory Committee members

The MTR is a two-phase process, as illustrated in **Error! Reference source not found.** below.
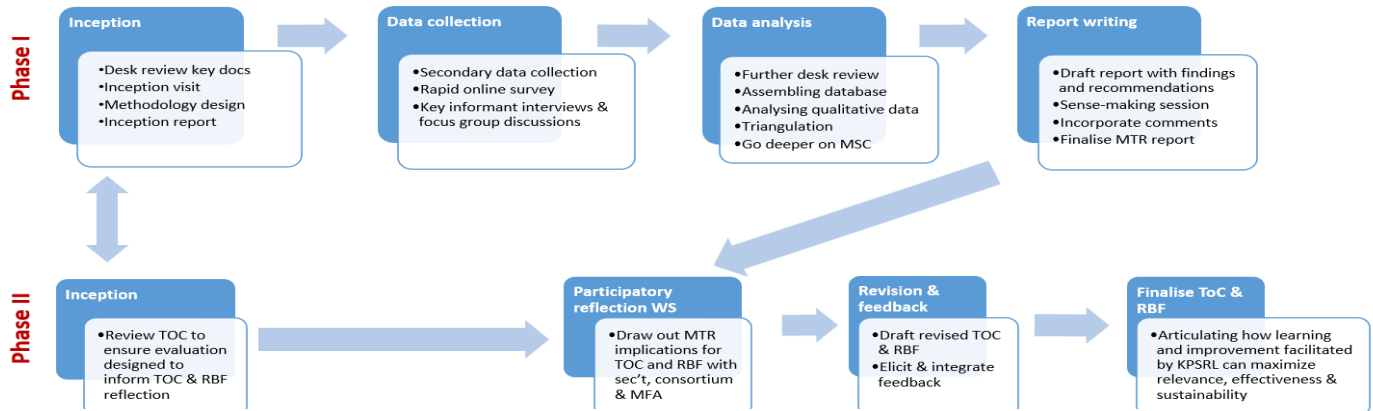
FIGURE 1: MTR PROCESS

The methodology was refined in close collaboration with the MTR Reference Group (which includes the KSPRL's Secretariat, Consortium Partners, Advisory Committee and the MFA representatives). Throughout the process, Transition International (TI) has maximised utility, inclusion and accountability, with an emphasis on consulting a diversity of stakeholders participating in the network as well as outside it, across the range of instruments, from different backgrounds and in diverse geographic settings, in particular in FCAS. The MTR integrated a range of best methodological practices used in the evaluation of peace, security and rule of law programmes and research and policy/practice influencing initiatives. It thus deployed mixed methods combining both qualitative and quantitative evidence. It also combined 'inside-out' elements – considering the quality of the ToC and whether it is being effectively delivered – with 'outside-in' elements – considering most significant changes or outcomes, whether expected or unexpected, and analysing these in relation to the KPSRL's ToC and its contribution.

The research process involved data gathering from the following stakeholder groups via bespoke data gathering tools containing questions adapted from a masterlist of questions correlating with the evaluation framework.

- Annual Conference, event and / or podcast participants
- KMF grantees
- Programmatic Learning Instrument (PLI), Addressing Root Causes of Conflict (ARC) and/or other learning trajectory leads and participants
- MFA, Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid (DSH) and embassy interlocutors
- Non-participants (with relevant perspectives on Security and Rule of Law (SroL) programming, policy, learning and/or knowledge platforms)
- Secretariat staff
- Consortium partners
- Advisory Committee

Sample

Profiles of respondents			
Gender		**Type of respondents**	
Male	54%	Civil society/non-governmental organisation	39%
Female	45%	Research/academic institution	22%
Other	1%	Government/state-affiliated institution	17%

		Private sector / consultancy	10%
Age		Another civil society / activist	6%
Survey		Regional/International multilateral organisation	5%
Up to 25	1%	Secretariat Staff	5%
26-35	17%	Foundation	2%
36-45	33%	Student	2%
46-55	26%	Political party	1%
56+	23%	**Primary country of work**	
KIIs and mini-workshops		In the Netherlands	46%
21-30	9%	In a Fragile or Conflict-affected Situation	32%
31-40	24%	In another high-income country	17%
40+	67%	In another low-income country	7%
		In another middle-income country	6%
Nature of engagement with KPSRL*			
Audience member at annual conference / learning event			42%
Accessed website information			32%
Social media follower /accessed social media information			26%
Co-hosting or speaking at annual conference/a learning event			16%
Implementing a Knowledge Management Fund project			14%
Participating actively in a policy-related review or learning process			14%
Podcast listener			14%
Advisory committee member/consortium partner/donor			12%
Not yet participated			12%
Partnering in a learning trajectory or programmatic learning process			10%
Sharing research or uploading documents to the KPSRL repository,			7%
Appearing on a podcast episode			1%
Frequency of participation in KPSRL activities*			
1-4 times per year			46%
5+ times per year			4%
Once per year			29%
Did not participate			21%
Total number of respondents			**117**

*From survey respondents only

FIGURE 2: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

TI took an **ethical approach**, emphasising safeguarding and providing anonymity to respondents. **Limitations** included the need to strike a balance between the detailed questions that staff and the Reference Group wished to cover and the time respondents were prepared to make available. The MTR team found ways of abbreviating and bridging Masterlist questions during the survey, interviews and mini-WS, to allow participants opportunity to select questions where their experience equipped them to provide meaningful answers. This approach ensured good coverage of overall research questions from multiple stakeholder groups, but where the team only ascertained limited evidence, this is noted in our report. The MTR team invested additional time to ensure it covered stakeholder categories beyond what was committed in its proposal. The survey was proactively promoted on social media in collaboration with KPSRL and had more participants than the 2019 MTR. In the report, the number of respondents to each question is specified where relevant. While respondent numbers were maximised within available resources, with a larger sample size it would be possible to determine trends in stakeholders' views with greater confidence. Within the scope of this exercise it was not possible independently to verify all of the reported examples of learning and impact, and this is noted in the text where relevant. The **full MTR methodology is presented in annex E**.

2. KPSRL'S PROGRESS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

2.1 FINDINGS ON KPSRL'S PROGRESS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

This section of the report outlines findings based on the available evidence, including perceptions from network members regarding the performance of the KPSRL to date and how this might be strengthened going forwards.

Delivery

KPSRL is largely delivering as planned in its four output areas of: organising network events and facilitating exchange and interaction; early-stage development of new ideas, insights and approaches; supporting programme and portfolio learning at scale; and supporting the development and implementation of the DSH / MFA, Embassy and programme-level learning agenda.

The pace and scale of delivery varies across the outputs. For example, in 2021 the design of the PLI pilot fell behind and KPSRL is still catching up to where it hoped to be. Likewise the pace of events slowed to 15 in 2022 compared to 20 in 2021 and 30 in 2020,[22] even if emerging data suggests this dip will likely be reversed in 2023.[23] Awards for KMF Window II in 2022 were made in February 2023 due to taking extra time to implement accessibility reforms.[24] **Underspend in 2022 was €297,054, or 20% of the total budget, and PLI underspend represented 63% of the total. Although further commitments and disbursements were made early in 2023,[25] any PLI amounts not earmarked for spending down from this point could create pressure on KPSRL staff and the quality of outputs towards the end of the grant period.**[26]

Although the outputs themselves have not been adapted in this period, **there have been some purposeful adaptations in terms of how the outputs are delivered, the most significant of which has been to focus on reducing barriers to participation from FCAS stakeholders.**

- Regarding **events**, in 2021-22, amid the COVID pandemic,[27] the SRoL sector as a whole was significantly disrupted, and events had to be adapted to online participation, which required much effort. KPSRL chose to reduce event numbers to concentrate on reforming its instruments, relevance and quality.[28] However, if KPSRL stands by its commitment to see networking opportunities, participation and exchange as a key outcome, any repeat of such slowdowns may risk undermining results. At the same time, less KPSRL events reflects a move towards 'collaborative preparation and implementation of events and trajectories'.[29] Thus in 2022 KPSRL played 'a significant role' in convening 7 other events attracting in total over 284 participants.[30] It is also positive to note that more of the 2022 events were part of longer learning processes than in 2021 even if there were fewer events overall,[31] and also that KPSRL continues to push for more FCAS access to and involvement in events.[32] Likewise, it added some new activities, such as the 'Fragile Truths' podcast and wider social media reach.

- On **early-stage development** of new ideas, insights and approaches (and the KMF): by the end of 2022 KMF project implementation was generally on track.[33] KPSRL has been reforming KMF throughout the current phase, to support more locally produced knowledge and insight.[34] It has been thorough in considering issues to address to grow accessibility via the KMF Accessibility Plan of Action – with several of the proposed reforms being implemented by end 2022 but more to follow in 2023.[35]

- On **supporting programme and portfolio learning,** although building buy in and establishing partnerships and pilots took time, in the Annual Report 2022 KPSRL reported that 5 pilot initiatives had been identified – a significant improvement in 12 months.[36] Given limited initial uptake by

embassies and others, co-creation of the PLI and its pilots has been time-intensive, requiring flexible adaptation by KPSRL to develop the initiative and build on both partner needs and ongoing lessons. By the Annual Report 2022, 3 PLI pilots were at contracting stage (Somalia and two on demining) and two others were in preparation/consultation phases (in Sudan and South Sudan, where KPSRL already features in the Multi-Annual Country Strategies (MACS) as a partner).[37] KPSRL had committed €422,808 of the €700,000 budgeted for the period 2021-2024 and contracted €222,808. Thus there is still much work ahead to plan further PLI initiatives by end 2024.[38]

- On supporting the development and implementation of the **DSH / MFA, Embassy and programme-level learning** agenda: KPSRL has been active and responsive at both policy and programme levels, balancing supply- and demand-driven activities, including support for ToC revision, the rollout of adaptive programming, ARC global learning, the Somalia and demining learning trajectories and emerging work with other embassies, as well as support for DSH's *terugkomdag*.

Overall, delivery of intended outputs is good. In order to sustain and strengthen delivery, KPSRL needs to maintain a focus on **quality, collaboration, inclusive learning processes and PLI success.** Further feedback on possible improvements is provided below.

Engagement and communication

KPSRL has taken a purposeful approach to adapting engagement and communication in this period. While maintaining its website and newsletter channels, **it has markedly increased its social media outreach** (via LinkedIn and, with video content, YouTube) and introduced a podcast (now in its third season). **It has also opened up more engagement opportunities for FCAS stakeholders both at events and via in-country learning efforts and reformed the KMF to make it more accessible.**

On the below scale, how would you rate KPSRL's efforts to involve, engage and collaborate with you and other stakeholders within the platform?
According to survey respondents (N=59)
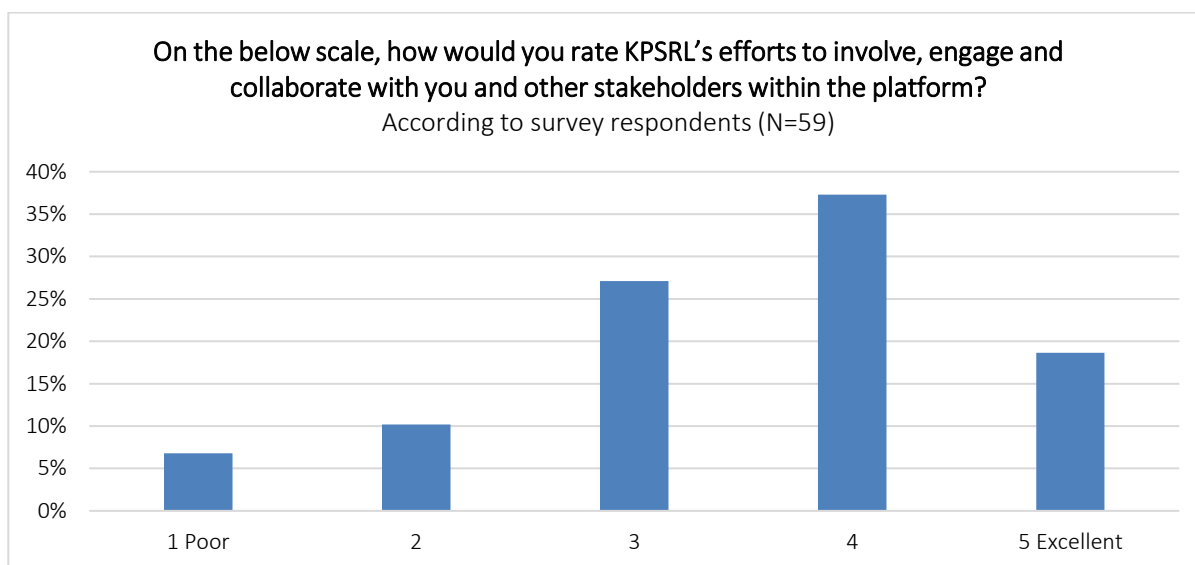
FIGURE 3: KPSRL'S PERCEIVED INVOLVEMENT, ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION EFFORTS

The evidence suggests that KPSRL's emphasis on approaching communications with a view to listening to participants as well as disseminating information is healthy.[39] **Over 50% of respondents rated KPSRL's efforts to involve, engage and collaborate with stakeholders as 4 or 5 out of 5** (average response was 3.51; see figure 3). Trends in podcast listening, social media engagement, and newsletter subscriptions are positive.

However, **stakeholders would value more tailored communications**; efforts to bring together select groups of participants who can learn from each other over time, distilling takeaways, exploring these by further programme level learning processes; **and better 'brokering' of relationships between those engaged on common themes for mutually beneficial learning**. The survey also suggested a slight preference among participants for engaging them via learning events than joint project implementation / evaluation.

One area for improvement is the website. Downloads from KPSRL's extensive archive are down, likely due to under promotion and poor signposting. Other comments highlighted that the site is dated, cumbersome, topics ill-defined, some content is stale or inactive, and could pinpoint takeaways of learning processes more clearly.

Social media practices enabling stakeholders to amplify KPSRL communications are a positive step, but as the 2019 MTR flagged, **there is room for consortium and advisory committee members to be more involved in growing prominence and attractiveness of the platform** including by allocating resources for this purpose.

Beyond this, there is a need to continue prioritising further efforts to better engage with FCAS countries. On this, **KMF accessibility reforms are showing early signs of encouraging more applications from FCAS.**[40] Staff also feel reforms are working. 25% of KMF funds have gone to FCAS lead applicants, and it is clear there is more global south co-ownership of KMF initiatives in 2022 than previously.[41] In their reports and mini-WS, **KMF grantees warmly endorsed the KPSRL for providing accessible resources for knowledge generation in the global south in a flexible way and with ease of communication**.

Overall, consortium partners and staff feel KPSRL has 'made concrete and structural changes to move away from the notion that it's a platform for those from Dutch Civil Society Organisational (CSO) space to engage with the government' and has successfully created 'more room for participants from sub-Saharan Africa and other regions'.[42] PLI has made a conscious drive to move away from supporting learning dominated by agencies from the global north and their international staff so that people in contexts in focus have decision-making power over learning processes and how the funds are allocated.[43] ARC in-country learning and other events have been appreciated, as has greater global south inclusion in the advisory committee. **For now, remaining centralised in the Hague is a slight barrier to taking this further.**

Relevance

KPSRL activities need to remain alive to changing priorities and learning needs of the diverse stakeholders. Plans and reports display KPSRL's focus on adapting to how different stakeholders learn and adapt,[44] learning from successes and failures of past learning exercises and instruments,[45] and considering how to drive meaningful engagement and deepen relationships.[46] **The mix of supply driven activities (events, KMF and PLI) with more demand driven and flexible support for learning agendas enables KPSRL to enhance its relevance to supported partners' needs.**[47] Overall satisfaction with events is broadly encouraging (4.2 in 2021, 4 in 2022, with further encouraging feedback emerging for early 2023).[48] Interviewees fed back positively on how KPSRL compares to providers of similar activities – it is unique in the Netherlands and compares well internationally, even if it has scope to build out more international links.[49]

There are several examples of KPSRL attracting new stakeholders into useful research and learning partnerships.[50] However, as KPSRL was trying to set up PLI initiatives, it struggled to demonstrate their relevance. Initial scoping for PLI partners during 2021 brought limited results. KPSRL relaxed criteria for PLI

support in response, but clearly **initial PLI design and outreach was not a perfect fit for the needs of stakeholders** it targeted. There is still work to reduce its perceived rigidity/abstractness[51] and ensure it supports members' needs while also producing valued generalizable learning.
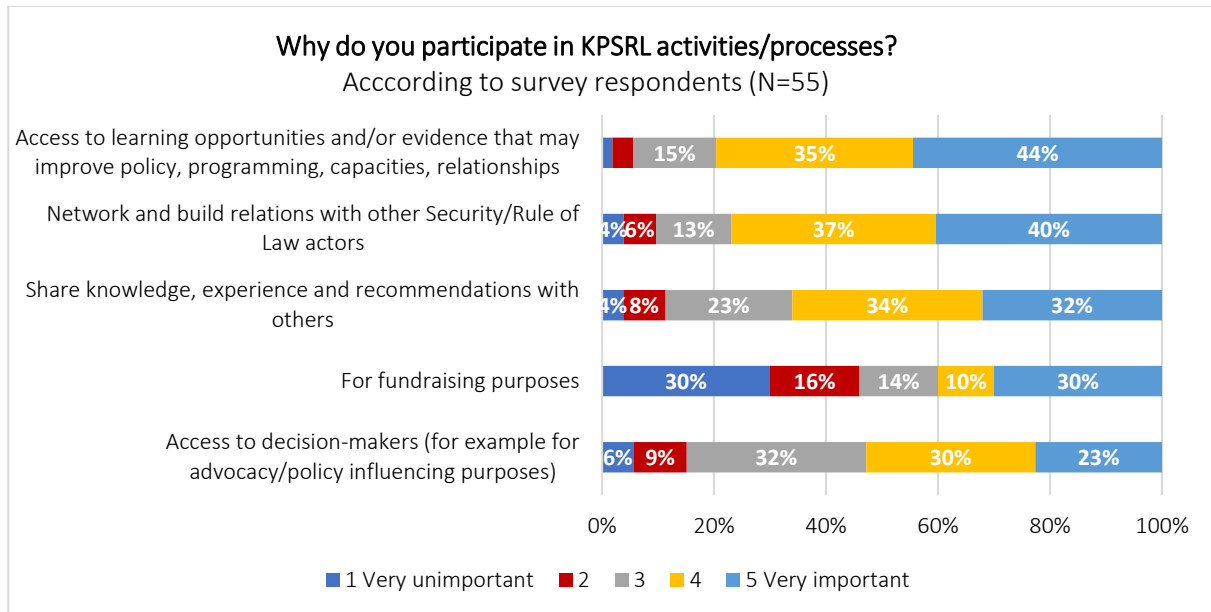
FIGURE 4: MOTIVATIONS TO PARTICIPATE

Network members engage with the KPSRL primarily to access helpful learning/evidence (4.2 average) and network with SRoL actors (4.0 average), as well as to share what they know (figure 4).[52] Perhaps related to this, the Annual Conference and learning events – which provide both knowledge and network opportunities - are rated most highly in terms of their relevance to SRoL agendas in survey respondents' contexts (figure 5). According to some MTR participants, KPSRL can also strengthen relevance by ensuring learning trajectories and events fulfil their potential better. As one MTR participant cogently argued, SRoL actors are getting better at Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL), but 'Innovations remain ad hoc and limited in scope and there has been little taking to scale […] KPSRL is now engaging on a huge array of thematics all of which are of course interesting but I am less clear about how the KPSRL is supporting the drawing together of lessons coherently and meaningfully to inform the field writ large (beyond ad hoc approaches)'.[53]
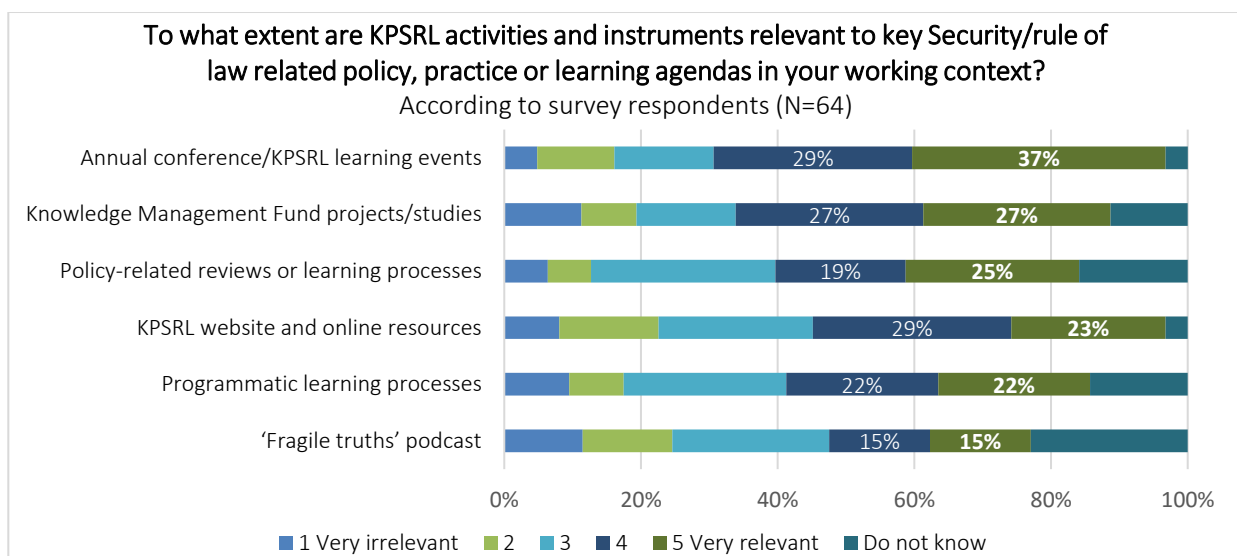
FIGURE 5: RELEVANCE OF KPSRL ACTIVITIES AND INSTRUMENTS

11

KPSRL remains relevant to the needs of the Dutch MFA, providing a flexible model of support which responds to emerging MFA needs and priorities and which focuses on issues which are seen as highly relevant by the MFA. MFA/DSH and Embassy staff appreciate KPSRL's support, partnership and learning methods,[54] and themes of localisation and the social contract are seen as highly relevant by the MFA. Changes to MFA focal points – who have changed 4 times in roughly one year, from senior to junior staff – do not reflect a shift in MFA interest in KPSRL. Although some MTR participants would like to see the MFA yet more engaged and open, DSH joined 15 of the KPSRL's events in 2021 – the largest number of any participating organisation.[55] Several senior MFA staff remain actively engaged in KPSRL's integration into MFA policy/programme development and learning processes.[56]

Network strengthening: participation and exchange

Findings in this area provide the MTR assessment of performance against the ToC outcome 1 ('Network strengthening: The breadth and diversity of participation (by type of organization and geographic origin) and the intensity of exchange within the KP network increase'). Overall, **participation in KPSRL remains strong, diverse and vibrant**.[57] In 2021, KPSRL's 20 events attracted 929 non-unique participants from 245 entities;[58] in 2022 this figure fell to 706 from 176 unique organisations.[59] KPAC 2021 alone attracted 436 participants from national and international governments and governmental bodies, think thanks, journalists, INGO practitioners, activists, diplomats, and field researchers;[60] this fell to 274 participants for KPAC 2022.[61] At the same time, participation via social media/subscription has been growing, via LinkedIn, Twitter and newsletter subscriptions.[62]

Breadth of participation is fairly strong by type of organisation with presence strongest in the targeted area of programming/implementing organisations.[63]

Participation from FCAS stakeholders has started to increase as a result of adaptations to the KPSRL model, though there is scope to increase this further. Only 8% of participants in 2021 were from organisations established in FCAS. At the same time, over half came neither from DAC countries nor FCAS – which suggests an interesting element of diversity.[64] By Q2 of 2022 KPSRL monitoring data suggested that over half of the 202 participants so far were from FCAS countries.[65] The proportion of KMF Expressions of Interests (EoIs) from FCAS went from 14% in 2021 to 40% in 2022.[66]

Given the importance the ToC places on participation increasing,[67] depending on how 'breadth and diversity of participation' are defined and analysed, **the modest dip in participation in 2022 as KPSRL recruited new staff and began reforming its learning instruments and processes was an area where KPSRL risked not fully living up to its ambition in the ToC.** If emerging 2023 trends are maintained, this dip may already have been addressed, but of course the ideal will be for KPSRL to combine healthy participation with a primary focus on quality learning by selected participants and policy/programme uptake.

Regarding exchange, trends in active participation in KPSRL over time are unclear.[68] Still In 2022, the rating for level and intensity of participation at events was 4.1 for the 3 events where it was recorded.[69] While not conclusive, the evidence available to **the MTR corroborates annual report findings, that 'All indicators point to an active, vibrant community, with healthy and active participation** [in] events, many KMF proposals, and a functioning social network.'[70]

Some evidence suggests exchange of knowledge between instruments, across contexts and to different levels, while significant, can be strengthened. KPSRL supports knowledge brokering and uptake: there are several examples of KMF grantees making impressively broad dissemination efforts.[71] The podcast also aims to 'break silos between on the one hand policy makers, practitioners, and researchers, and on the

other hand between those living in FCAS and donor countries.'[72] Yet several MTR participants called for more interconnections and exchange to be supported. As one KMF grantee highlighted:

> 'I would have liked to know also the other projects that got an award in the same year, and exchange how they were doing halfway through the year, and also at the closure. As project leader, the journey felt a bit lonely.'[73]

In 2021 and 2022 KPSRL reported that **the most frequently and actively engaged participants in the platform remain Dutch and international INGOs**.[74] Some of these reported appreciating learning from one another and that they 'got to know a range of other actors working on security and justice' via KPSRL, including universities and researchers they were rarely connected with.[75]

ARC learning trajectory participants noted their disappointment with the level of engagement in learning processes, as it was 'almost impossible for those involved to make time for this'.[76] This was not an issue KPSRL could directly remedy, as it was suggested donors would need to build resources for learning into grants, reduce rigid, labour-intensive formal MEL requirements and be more engaged themselves in learning processes.[77]

KPSRL aims to build strong feedback loops from implementation to policy levels and 'iterative conversations between implementing actors, knowledge partners and policy makers'. At this stage, it is difficult to discern what kind of learning may emerge from PLI pilots and how well this will be shared across countries and at different levels. It is clear that specific PLI processes are getting partners and consortia involved exchanging with one another in a positive way.[78] However, some interviewees noted the risks. If insights remain with a more closed group, they will do little to inform wider programming and policy work – thus sharing across contexts or with thematic communities (and from field to policy levels) will be useful when these come to fruition.[79] **In the case of ARC, there was frustration among participants that useful learning and messaging had not been distilled and fed back**, and that linkages across partners and countries had not been accessible enough[80] (even if staff perceptions differed on these points and flagged important challenges).[81] **In current PLI pilots, it is not yet clear whether or not emerging insights will have very wide utility on 'burning questions' for the wider network**.[82]

Learning and learning relevance

Findings in the following three subsections, on 'Learning and learning relevance', 'Learning methods', and 'Learning environment and safe space' provide the MTR's assessment of performance against ToC outcome 2 ('Learning environment: Opportunities for learning by network participants (practitioner organisations, embassy stakeholders, DSH/MFA and knowledge partners) about SRoL programme implementation and portfolio learning increase').

In terms of KPSRL's efforts to increase opportunities for learning by network participants about SRoL program implementation and portfolio learning, these include events aligned with network members' needs, KMF grants, support and dissemination activities and support for learning agendas (in DSH, via PLI and elsewhere).

The MTR found examples of KPSRL contributions to MFA learning, at embassy level and in headquarters.[83] Although none is hugely influential, taken alongside evidence of impacts on MFA SRoL policy and programming examined below, it is clear that **KPSRL has supported MFA learning**, a view corroborated by one MFA official, who shared the view that at the May 2022 'comeback days' it was observable that 'learning has become part and parcel of colleagues' approaches' and this 'ha[d] been a result of the platform'.[84]

There are also examples of KPSRL contributing to learning by network participants. For example:

- Learning among the project audience is very often reported by KMF grantees.[85]
- ARC event participants reported learning about what works in different contexts and systems approaches to programming.[86] Others reported that insights on community-based peacebuilding, inclusion of women, social cohesion and the connections between peacebuilding and economic activities shared by partners in learning events had been 'really useful'.[87]
- Further feedback suggests learning had taken place within Cordaid, CARE, ZOA, NIMD and Somalia trajectory partners.[88]

Encouragingly, **over 50% of MTR survey respondents answered 4 or 5 out of 5 (average 3.4) to the question 'To what extent has engagement with KPSRL enabled you to learn** (e.g. enabled changes in your knowledge, skills or attitude)?' (figure 6) KPSRL data also suggests its participants often learn something that challenged their previously held assumptions**.[89]
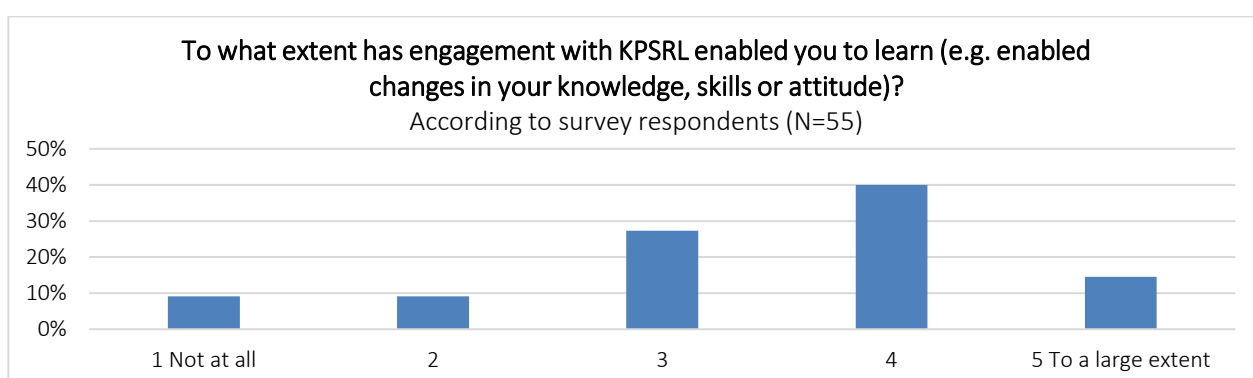
FIGURE 6: ENGAGEMENT WITH KPSRL LEADING TO LEARNING

2022 indicators do suggest some success in increasing the engagement of FCAS actors in learning processes and opportunities.[90] While this is encouraging, grantees' research and/or capacity to translate their knowledge into policy/practice influence capacities can be weak, reducing the quality and uptake potential from initiatives.[91]

Overall, the evidence gathered for the MTR suggests that **KPSRL is supporting useful learning at programme level in particular countries, as well as on certain programming or policy development techniques (Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA), use of ToCs), as well as on key themes like the integration of mental health into SRoL work, implementation of localisation or demining (on which PLI learning is anticipated).** However, some sources highlight reduced (MFA) energy behind portfolio learning as prioritised in KPSRL's ToC.

When it comes to the relevance of KPSRL-supported learning, monitoring data attests to the **overall relevance of KPSRL events and knowledge generation activities** to the problems that the KPSRL community faces.[92] As noted, overall satisfaction with events has remained broadly encouraging from 2021 to mid-2023.[93]Overall satisfaction with events seems encouraging if declining slightly from 4.2 in 2021 to 4 in 2022.[94]

How interested are you in the following security and rule-of-law related learning themes KPSRL has been covering?
According to survey respondents (N=57)
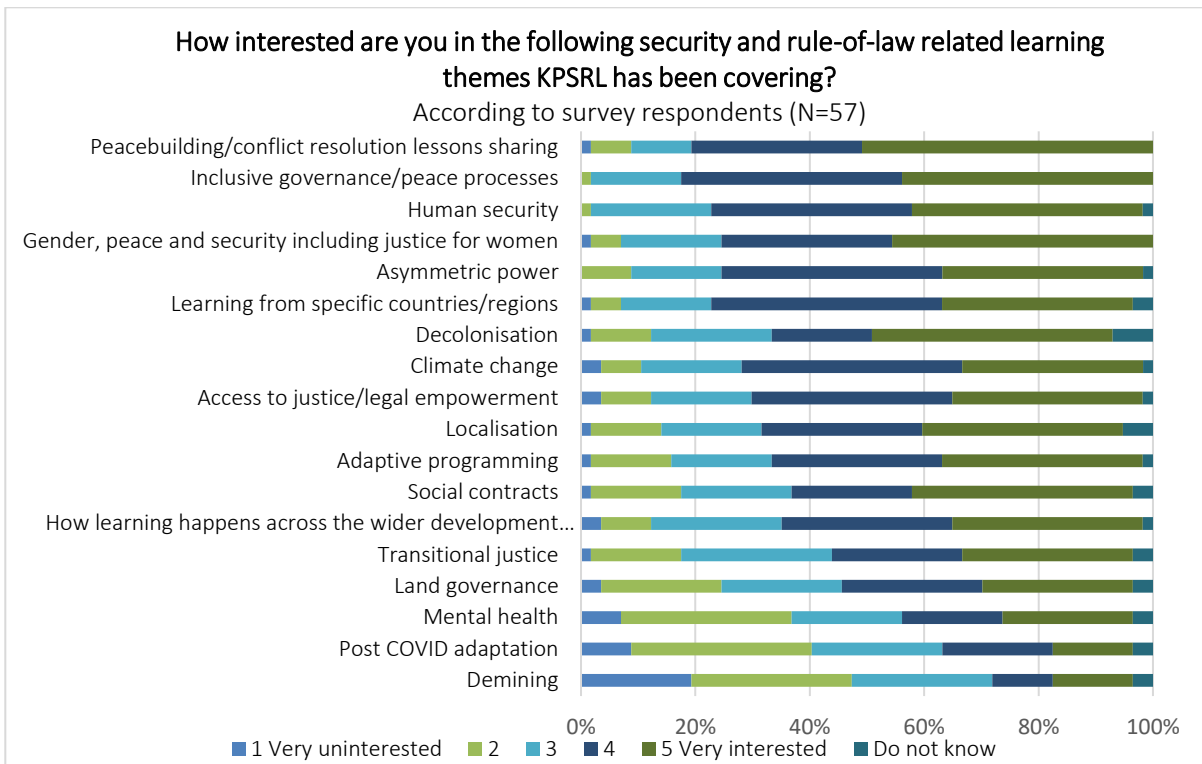
FIGURE 7: INTEREST IN DIFFERENT THEMES

There is a dilemma for KPSRL to decide whether it prefers thematic breadth or depth. Survey responses (figure 7) suggest a spread of interest by network participants across themes KPSRL is working on, with greatest interest in peacebuilding lessons sharing, inclusive governance/peace processes, gender, peace and security, asymmetric power and learning from specific contexts. However, several interviewees argued that **KPSRL needs to go deeper into clear learning trajectories on themes broad enough to have a wide audience and applicability but specific and defined enough to lead to useable learning outcomes**.[95] Yet dropping a pre-set theme has been one way to boost KMF accessibility, and others argued for KPSRL backing the best quality research proposals regardless of themes. While setting predetermined themes may narrow the field of applicants, the cumulative value of producing quickly fading sparks of insight in unconnected areas was also questioned by many participants.[96] As one MTR participant put it: **'Themes need to be the product of shared interests, but it could be good to make an argument about priorities** rather than have a long list.'[97]

Learning methods

KPSRL has invested significantly in its participants learning from and alongside each other, rather than supporting more passive learning led by researchers.[98] **KPSRL events are highly rated:** overall, perceptions that events are a safe space, that learning has taken place, and that intensity of interaction is positively perceived – all 4 out 5 or higher across 2021-2022 – is very encouraging.[99] Qualitative data gathered by the MTR[100] and KPSRL[101] reinforced these numbers.

However, lessons have been identified. In particular, **events need a clear analytical framework** to avoid being seen as 'more sharing than learning'.[102] **Events should also be 'part of a structured strategy and planning process**es contributing to larger learning campaigns (and feedback loops)'.[103] Ensuring clear pathways for locally-generated information and learning to reach the wider Platform community is still work in progress.[104]

ARC learning could have worked better: participants highlighted that **in ARC, better support to implementing partners' connectivity and self-organisation, and more timely harvesting and sharing of lessons could have assisted partners to share lessons with each other and ensure the MFA drew the right conclusions**.[105] At the same time, internal learning here did lead to improvements.[106]

Internal learning identified **other points for improvement**, including **trying to ensure more equal speaking authority, keeping online sessions short, fit-for-purpose venues, less presentation and more dialogue time,**[107] **methods to ensure interaction, not overburdening people (providing strategic points for input) and involving participants in developing recommendations.**[108]

In terms of areas to improve, many stakeholders argued that the **PLI needs to be simplified to be less formalised and jargon heavy.** This could strengthen outreach and inclusion – especially of those whose English is not perfect.[109] Co-creation can be a strength, but will remain difficult if partners lack motivation, find the learning offer unclear, or decide it does not meet them where they are. [110]

Learning insights need to be distilled for different stakeholder groups in a format they find digestible.[111] Many MTR **participants argued for more learning and exchange on a theme over time, with key learnings more assiduously pulled out, published/packaged and disseminated in an accessible, compelling way and follow up continuing beyond events and the annual conference**.[112]

Learning environment and safe space[113]

Literature review evidence suggests KPSRL is succeeding in creating a safe, conducive environment for learning. Overall perception of safety at 2022 events was 4.6 in KPSRL monitoring data,[114] and specific feedback on ARC Uganda and Burundi events, and the Somalia trajectory is very positive on this point.[115] Staff highlighted how KPSRL solicits questions that can be asked anonymously before and during events.[116] KPSRL has a clear and consistent focus on decolonising knowledge.[117]Openness to failure and learning from it is also supported by the flexibility and openness of KMF projects to provide a further space where it is considered acceptable for a project or innovation to fail or work out differently than intended. KMF participants' feedback indicates their appreciation of this space.[118] MFA *Terugkomdagen* participants also felt KPSRL helped by 'creating a space to learn from failures'.[119]

While maintaining this excellent performance on safety, **KPSRL may wish to focus on increasing scope for honesty**. 2021 event participants and ARC participants wish to see more candid and self-reflective contributions from MFA officials;[120] other MTR participants raised greater honesty as the last remaining challenge. Another question to consider is 'could KPSRL learning spaces be "too safe"?' **Greater learning might also be achieved if participants were more challenged**, and less in their 'comfort zone'.[121] At the same time, KPSRL should **keep fostering spaces where types of knowledge that are less valued than academic knowledge can be heard and valued.**

What barriers do you face applying learning from KPSRL-related processes in your own work? (N=32)	
None	28%
Not enough time	28%
Lack of means and capacities (resources, internal processes in organisations etc)	19%
Activities / learning are not always relevant (i,e issues with the social contract theme/narrow focus on RoL)	16%
There is a gap between the theory of learning and reality: Too abstract, normative or not empirical or evidence-based	9%
Insufficient knowledge on KPSRL and its opportunities that it offers	6%
Cross-learning is weak for implementation	3%
SRoL context in countries is not favourable	3%

FIGURE 8: BARRIERS FACED IN APPLYING KPSRL-RELATED LEARNING

According to survey respondents (figure 8), **barriers to applying KPSRL learning are not always a problem, but where they exist, they most often relate to lack of time, resources and conducive internal processes**. The few other MTR participants who commented on this stressed not being able to devote enough time to learning, especially given heavy workload and reporting requirements.[122] However, some participants would appreciate less abstract, more practical or evidence-based events/learning processes. To overcome ToC challenges and scale up learning, MTR participants' suggestions on how to **reduce formal MEL burdens and build in incentives for learning for grantees in future programmes similar to ARC** could be important.[123]

Impact

This section on 'Impact' and the next section on 'Coherence for goal fulfilment' assess how delivery on the four outputs and progress towards network strengthening and learning-related outcomes assessed above is translating into impact with reference to the ToC's goal ('learning from SRL program implementation and program portfolios, by practitioner organisations, Dutch embassy stakeholders in priority countries, DSH/MFA, and their knowledge partners enhances') and goal relevance 'Enhanced learning contributes to more knowledge uptake in SRL programming and policy making and thereby to improving the quality and impact of such work in the SRL sector'.

The MTR provides four short narrative case studies of the most striking changes to which KPSRL appears to have contributed through its outputs and related learning at Annex B. These cover how:

- The Somalia learning trajectory helped encourage flexible programme adaptation supporting relief and social contract development
- KPSRL helped introduce key concepts, and clarify shared principles, connections and learning priorities during a significant policy process (revising DSH's ToC)
- KPSRL learning collaboration appears to have helped participants and RVO reconceptualise their work on land governance.
- A KMF partner's innovative approach to helping detainees prepare for trials in Nigeria appears to have led to multiple positive impacts and opportunities.

The MTR cannot verify the latter two claimed outcomes from multiple sources. The four cases are examples of how, in many instances **across the annual conference and events, the KMF, PLI, and support to DSH learning/policy processes, KPSRL appears to be succeeding in generating learning that is leading to SRoL policy and programme change**. In Nigeria, it is claimed that this has even resulted in detainee releases.

There are several other examples of KPSRL influencing MFA learning and policy making,[124] as well as providing the MFA with appreciated inputs with every potential to influence policy.[125] KPSRL influence on MFA learning and policy making appears to be strong in situations where MFA needs to work through an issue but lacks capacity, skills, time or access to do so by itself. In such situations, KPSRL's ability to draw on existing evidence and dialogue outcomes, commission/conduct new research, convene events / bring voices, and distill insights into key messages in quick time solves a problem for the MFA while enabling KPSRL to fulfil its TOC (again, see annex B for a description). Other examples show how **KPSRL outputs and related learning appear to be:**

- **Influencing programming and approaches:** for example, possibly influencing DSH and other participants' uptake of the localisation agenda.[126]

- **Stimulating learning and influencing activities**, for example by assisting the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) to establish reputation and build dialogue with EU and UN interlocutors on how to finance local peacebuilders.[127]
- **Supporting learning that impacts others' knowledge, attitudes, relationships or behaviours** via KMF grantees: for example, according to a Nepali grantee, KMF support helped Dalit people overcome the culture of silence and become more confident – for example by making proposals to the provincial government.[128] Likewise, The Somalia trajectory has successfully helped create an emerging structure for exchanging learning between organisations in FCAS in practice.[129]

Overall, **roughly two-fifths of survey respondents** (figure 7) **indicated some change as a result of engagement with KPSRL**, primarily using learning in their work (figure 8).
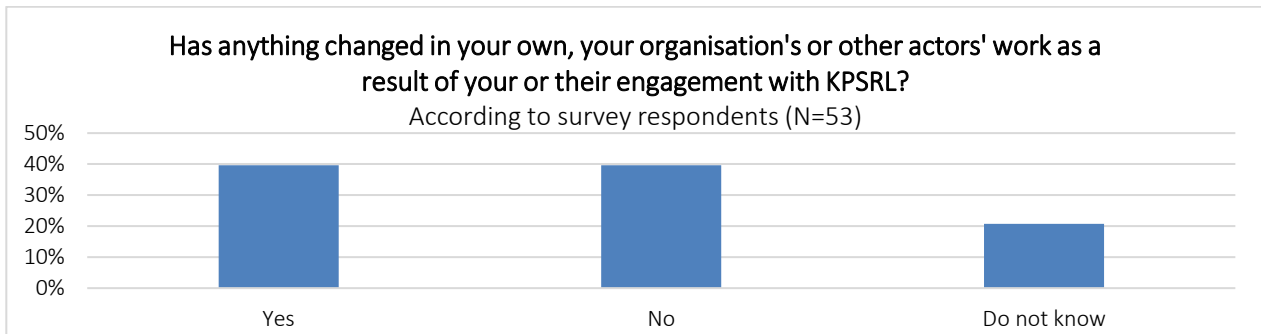
FIGURE 9: CHANGE ENDUCED BY ENAGEMENT WITH KPSRL

If anything has changed, please briefly describe the change you have made (N=21)	
Using learning acquired with KPSRL in my work (in advocacy or programming)	43%
Increased knowledge and awareness of possibilities to expand our activities	19%
Extended our network and using it to influence the work	14%
Improved the MEL system (we now focus on change, documenting the perception of beneficiaries)	14%
Benefited from the information shared in the periodic bulletin	5%
Have shared knowledge with other colleagues	5%
Information access and Security M&E on FCS	5%
Policymakers expressed interest in financing our activity	5%

FIGURE 10: EXAMPLES OF CHANGES MADE

Over 30% of survey participants felt changes as a result of engaging with KPSRL were very or fairly significant (N=53); Nearly 50% of survey respondents rated KPSRL's contribution to changes at 3-5 out of 5. Additional charts showing survey responses to change-related questions are presented in Annex F.

Regarding negative outcomes or disappointments, **more than one in four survey respondents reported areas where they had not learnt, experienced disappointment or a negative outcome.**
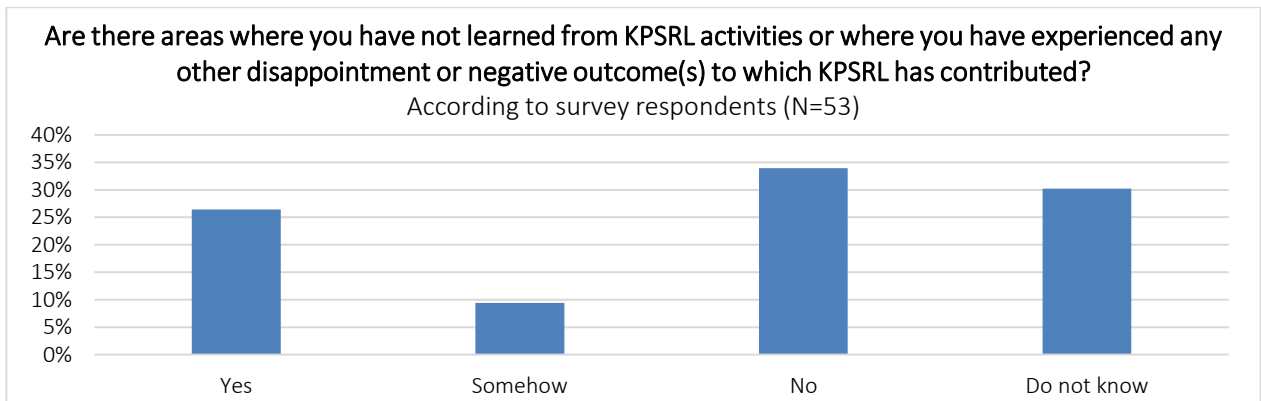
FIGURE 11: NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

What is your biggest disappointment with the project so far? (N=22)	
Limited relevance of learning themes and events (need to extend the areas/too superficial/lack of direction and focus)	32%
No feedback from projects after dropping off/recommendations are not incorporated	23%
Limited practicability of the learning	18%
Heavy influence of the MFA/lack of financial independence	9%
Insufficient evidence on how activities contribute to change	9%
No positive answers to many requests/inability to get grants for innovative projects	9%
Poor engagement of members/Some participants do not have enough time for using the material processes	9%
Heavy focus on technical approaches/processes (rather than themes)	5%
KSPRL is dominated by Northern organisations	5%
No systematic incorporation of learning in structures and setups	5%

FIGURE 12: BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT

Although not a representative sample, **the most frequent concerns raised** (figure 10) **included limited relevance of themes/events, lack of follow up, and limited practicability of learning** – all points that echo qualitative evidence shared in earlier sections of this report.

Overall, the MTR finds evidence that KPSRL is achieving participation and exchange and creating opportunities for learning that are leading to changes in SRoL policies and programmes.[130] Some of the policy contributions within the Netherlands are impressive and significant, although – perhaps reflecting the modest scale of KMF grants and the early stage of PLI work – there is limited evidence of other organisations shifting towards integrating learning culture or of inspiring practices that can help mitigate/overcome SRoL challenges at scale.

Coherent goal fulfilment

As well as succeeding reasonably well in connecting outputs to intended outcomes, goal and goal relevance as discussed, **KPSRL focuses on finding ways to 'stitch together' or create synergies** between activities with different stakeholders, via different instruments, **so that they support one another and maximise their impact**.[131] It shares KMF-generated knowledge in other strands of work and supports 'brokering activities… to connect KMF projects with programming and policymaking'.[132] It often communicates country-based learning elsewhere, and supports DSH 'in facilitating the connection from learning events and evaluations, reviews, and reports submitted from program level to the portfolio level', and so on.[133] The Somalia learning trajectory is designed to make links from country/programme learning to other levels, instruments and network participants.[134] KPSRL is following through on the localisation theme – considering how to finance in a localised way and whether localisation improves results: 'unpacking it in different ways throughout the year with events that are on sub themes or podcast episodes tied a bit more together.'[135]

However, linking outputs to goals can be tough: KMF supports learning about innovation, but it can be 'hard to find an audience' for this;[136] for one KPSRL staff member, **the connection to goal and goal relevance is clearer for some KPSRL activities and instruments than for others**, especially where the distance from activities or events to actual decision-makers is great.[137]

The orientation of PLI towards 'those learning activities that do not fall in the MEL paradigm',[138] and its focus on the specific priorities of individual partners, may mean it risks too weak a focus on whether programmes and portfolios are working effectively in mitigating SRL deteriorations and solving SRL related challenges – producing widely useable learning on this for horizontal/vertical learning. As discussed in section 3, this focus could be revisited to strengthen goal fulfilment.

Despite this, **many people valued the diversity of themes covered by KPSRL and its openness to supporting learning journeys whose destination is not always clear at the outset**.[139] But again, **it will be important for KPSRL to strengthen its approach to linking people and brokering mutual learning** between those involved in learning on common themes and theories of change from different geographies, disciplines and organisations (and capacity to do this more consistently may be constrained without limiting thematic breadth).[140]

2.2   CONCLUSIONS ON KPSRL'S PROGRESS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Building on the above findings, this subsection notes key conclusions regarding KPSRL's progress and contributions and elaborates on the subsequent recommendations on this set out in the executive summary.

Delivery of intended outputs is good. KPSRL supports an active, vibrant community, with healthy and active participation. PLI and KMF have concertedly pushed towards a focus on programme learning by SRoL actors in the global south in the intended way.

Ideally, numbers of events and participants should not drop further without clear added value being demonstrated from the renewed focus on high-quality, collaborative, inclusive learning processes at the right levels. KPSRL should keep building feedback into improved learning methods. Events need a clear analytical framework within a structured strategy to enable learning and exchange on themes over time, with key insights pulled out for interested groups; though 'safe', greater honesty and constructive challenge in events would be positive where possible.

KMF accessibility has been strengthened by reforms, but there is room for attention to research quality, and the questions of whether and how to provide a thematic focus, and whether to move to participatory grant-making warrant further thought. Although support for innovation and MFA/other learning processes appear to be working well, progress on PLI implementation needs to accelerate with further attention to quality (i.e. issues such as accessible language and framing and focus on solving SRoL problems and producing insights useful for the wider network).

While the progress made by KPSRL and its contribution to MFA learning and policy is clear and appreciated, and working level engagement is functioning well, strategic level engagement could be strengthened.

To reduce barriers to learning KPSRL needs to keep encouraging the structural changes needed to ensure partners have time and incentives to engage in future learning processes.

Overall, KPSRL is achieving participation and exchange and creating opportunities for learning that are leading to changes in SRoL policies and programmes. While it is positive that KPSRL is fulfilling outcomes 1 and 2 and the goal and goal relevance set out in its ToC in this regard, it may wish to aim higher – for example informing changes by more than two out of every five participants, seeking to impact policy beyond the Netherlands, supporting more integration of learning into organisations' structures and practices, or inspiring practices that can help mitigate/overcome SRoL challenges at scale. Likewise, while KPSRL makes good links between activities to strengthen outcomes and goal fulfilment, it may be worth redoubling its focus on this in areas where outcomes/goal fulfilment feel more remote.

For several reasons, aspiring to go further in influencing, and inserting learning into, policy debates makes sense. Fundamentally, having a knowledge and dialogue-based model for policy development and programme improvement is important for the democratic and legitimate character of Dutch SRoL efforts. Moreover, as militarisation intensifies within and beyond Europe, focusing more on learning to improve

major policies, programmes or change processes could be existentially important for KPSRL and the bottom-up human security approach its community comes together around. In order to engage in conversations that build policy consensus around effective SRoL approaches and challenges problematic approaches, more cross-consortium working to reach wider audiences may be fruitful where warranted. This is explored further in section 4 on KPSRL's future.

In terms of future focus, KPSRL needs to go deeper into clear learning trajectories on themes broad enough to have a wide audience and applicability but specific and defined enough to lead to useable learning outcomes. While flexibility to collaborate is positive, covering too many themes may reduce quality of learning and capacity for following up.

INGOs working on policy and practice are active participants well served by KPSRL at present. There may be a risk that focus on local and programme knowledge and learning in future leads active INGO members to feel less engaged. It is worth preserving the space for donor-partner exchange that gives the platform much energy at present, while building beyond it.

The current concentration of effort on PLI rollout and KMF reform could risk limiting numbers of those involved in learning supported by KPSRL unless it successfully ensures takeaway points connect up to wider participatory learning and exchange processes. PLI's current focus on behaviours and conversations within programmes about how the people involved behave and handle their inter-relations (and related efforts to reverse aid sector power imbalances) is valuable up to a point. Yet it can arguably result in too little focus on creative but practical ways to solve the public's most urgent SRoL problems. In this sense, there can be a tension between the kind of conversations partners may naturally incline towards – for example, solving practical problems as consortia and with donor relations, in the belief that aid programmes are powerful drivers of SRoL change – and the broader need to figure out what works and make the strategic and political case for backing and scaling up such work to the public and decision makers in Embassies, the Netherlands and beyond. For example, a strategic contribution for PLI could be plugging the gap in MEL across multiple programmes and their aggregate effects at country level.[141]

2.3   RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE KPSRL'S PROGRESS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- Stay open to diverse interests but go deeper and follow through on key themes commanding broad interest, with a clear focus on getting to widely useful 'so what' outcomes and nudging organisations and governments towards significant changes and reforms.

    o KPSRL should maximise its potential to inform more transformative organisational change (help organisations shift towards integrating learning culture) or to provide wider-implication programming insights (practices that can help mitigate/overcome SRoL challenges).[142]

    o Making it easier for partners to welcome the programmatic learning offer may require the Netherlands and other donors to change their structural approach to MEL (more resources for learning in grants, less rigid results frameworks, reporting requirements and contracts). KPSRL should keep encouraging such changes where possible.

    o Go deeper into clear learning trajectories on themes broad enough to have a wide audience and applicability but specific and defined enough to lead to useable learning outcomes, and consider what themes are well covered by competitors when deciding.

    o To strengthen broader relevance, learning and impact, when KPSRL steps into a given theme, such as MEL or social contracts, it needs to be clear how its learning processes will

move towards a clear, compelling focus that adds value, and then follow through to identify (perhaps together with clusters of interested participants) key learnings and 'so-what' outcomes to cap the process off.

  o While openness to new themes and collaborations is positive, keep discussing the right balance between breadth of themes covered and capacity needed to go in depth and follow up.

- Keep participation healthy and vibrant – including via compelling content, tailored communications and knowledge brokering – but continue to see quality, structured learning processes with top-quality learning methods and uptake at scale as higher-order priorities.

  o Tailor engagement approaches according to the specific objective and target in question,
  o While continuing to grow social media engagement, revamp the website, ensuring regular production of 'so what?' content emerging from PLI, KMF and other more collaborative learning processes and events so that this drives interest in engagement
  o Increase the proportion of events that form part of a structured strategy and planning process, with follow up continuing beyond individual events and the annual conference;
  o Keep building learning on learning methods into improved approaches;[143]
  o Strengthen approaches to linking people and brokering mutual learning between those involved in learning on common themes and theories of change but from different geographies, disciplines, organisations and so on. Distil learning outcomes in an accessible way for relevant groups.
  o Reserve staff time to follow through on these recommendations.

- Keep strengthening KMF accessibility but consider ways to keep major learning questions in view, and to strengthen research quality.

  o While continuing to support co-creation of learning and knowledge generation at local levels, there is a need to strengthen research outputs, to support learning and uptake of learning. One option here will be to provide, or help grantees to access, peer support, accompaniment and/or review to help improve the quality of knowledge, learning and uptake from these initiatives.[144]
  o Because thematic openness appears to strengthen KMF accessibility and proposal quality, but a focus on burning SRoL questions is also desirable, KPSRL should consider adopting a middle view: either setting a theme for one of the annual application windows while leaving the other open, or requiring proposals to relate to a set of themes, such as learning questions identified by a well-balanced group of stakeholders.

- Aim to focus PLI more over time on generating lessons that can inform better programming at scale and **the development and maintenance of constructive SRoL policies within and beyond the Netherlands.**

  o Make PLI terminology and aims more straightforward, with focus on delivering PLI activities that can contribute to ToC objectives (i.e. stimulating participation, exchange, learning and uptake at scale) in this phase, (as well as seeing current actions as experiments to refine a learning model for future rollout).

- o PLI initiatives should not be too focused on promoting better donor-consortia-partner relationships, but have a consistent focus on transferable, 'what works?/'so-what?' knowledge outcomes that are well harvested and effectively exchanged.[145]

- Consider:

  - o Ways to make development of PLI type collaborative learning initiatives more flexible to make it easier for collaborations with a clear 'so what' value for the wider KPSRL community to emerge
  - o Building in more connectivity between PLI pilots and other users of their learning in different countries and at different levels.
  - o Ensuring 'so what' insights are more persistently harvested and well disseminated out of all learning processes.
  - o Reserving some attention for learning beyond programme 'how to' level, and for exchange that supports a constructive SRoL policy consensus.

3. KPSRL'S GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL SET UP

3.1 FINDINGS ON KPSRL'S GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL SET UP

Set up

Overall, **KPSRL's set-up, governance, secretariat, planning processes and instruments appear to be functioning efficiently**, delivering KPSRL's outputs in a way that is relevant to results. Stakeholders involved generally feel the set-up works or is 'fit for purpose' – with some praising the 'amazing job… dynamism and drive' shown by the team.[146] Clearly, in 2021 and 2022 there were challenges covering all expectations and the related delay in operationalising PLI (see 'delivery', section 2.1) from which KPSRL is only now recovering, but 37 events were organised and four KMF windows were delivered more or less as planned.

There was underspending in both 2021 and 2022:[147] The 2021 budget was underspent by €226,347 out of €1,125,856 budgeted (20%). This was due to KMF committed budget payments not yet being transferred, PLI being delayed, and gaps in Secretariat posts. Nonetheless, setting aside the KMF payments not syncing well with the financial cycle, the underspend was modest (€42,808).[148] Underspend grew bigger in 2022 than in 2021,[149] largely due to being behind the curve on PLI (accounting for 63% of the underspend).[150] With PLI pilots in place and staff turnover addressed for the time being, **KPSRL hopes (and should take steps to ensure) expenditure will be on track during 2023-24**.[151]

Consortium partnership seems to function well overall, although partners feel KPSRL could be more selective on when to ask for inputs.[152] **Some interlocutors believe consortium partners could contribute more given their presence in many FCAS and policy centres – helping to strengthen the internationalisation of KPSRL** beyond the Netherlands.[153] For their part, whilst the potential is indeed there, IDLO and Saferworld's country offices and field-based operations depend on project funding, thus the two organizations cannot 'mobilize' to help KPSRL internationalise at current budget levels.

Despite the engagement of senior MFA officials in KPSRL, **the MFA focal point would ideally rotate less often, and have a good overview of the MFA's work and the seniority to keep attention on the knowledge and learning agenda** at all levels.[154]

Although it is necessary and positive for KPSRL to have governance and management structures that enable consultation and input at a range of levels, current arrangements for managing and monitoring KPSRL's work, while functional, feel to some stakeholders heavy on meetings and inefficient at making decisions.[155] There is a risk of over-consultation on minutiae, and it is sometimes unclear who will make decisions about proposed changes by when.[156] There is perhaps a dilemma here, as some staff feel network members should have more decision-making power within KPSRL (for example playing a role in KMF decision-making or for the diverse Advisory Committee to have a more formal role in KPSRL's decision making).[157]

Regarding **KPSRL's planning cycle**, annual plans are due at end October before the theme has been established for the coming year's work. This **risks making the annual plan an 'empty shell'**.[158] KPSRL was considering doing KPAC23 (Knowledge Platform Annual Conference 2023) earlier in the year to allow space for follow on activities thereafter.[159]

2021-22 **staff and focal point turnover has at times made delivery challenging**.[160] With relatively new Head of Secretariat, Learning Officer and Operations Assistant now in place, staffing levels are currently adequate, although secretariat staff clearly have a high workload.[161] Any **further staff turnover would**

likely create overload on remaining staff and undermine delivery/results.[162] To safeguard institutional memory, there may also be value in ensuring advisory committee members do not rotate in such large groups.[163] **On division of roles, responsibilities and portfolios in the Secretariat,[164] no issues emerged, except to reserve time for brokering knowledge effectively**.[165]

In the past, the Secretariat's tools for collaboration, data collection, project management and communication in the secretariat have been disparate, making information hard to marshal.[166] An overhaul of admin systems and **establishment of a Customer Relation Management (CRM)** planned for 2022[167] was still beginning in early 2023. While delays are an understandable consequence of high ambitions and workload across a small secretariat team with turnover taking place, establishing a viable system may prove transformative: it is vital that KPSRL can identify and connect network participants with mutually relevant interests and contributions to make, and engage them in more targeted, coherent and consequential learning processes.[168] A successful CRM **could be game changing,[169] and its successful development is now an urgent priority.**

Challenges affecting interventions and outputs

While challenges for the future are discussed in Section 2.3, this section considers challenges affecting interventions and outputs so far. **The most significant challenges identified were:**

- **Staying relevant** to diverse needs in the sector, including those of the MFA, and competing well versus alternative channels for knowledge exchange.
- **Striking a healthy balance between diverse priorities** of most engaged members and new, less engaged or FCAS members, and between the Netherlands community and those beyond.
- **Being flexible** to all these needs and inputs **while avoiding fragmentation** and still delivering a project with a fixed ToC. Unpredictability of partner-dependent strands of work.[170]
- **Constraints on willingness or scope to learn** in the SRoL sector, for example due to time pressures or COVID induced stresses, unwillingness to admit mistakes, lack of plans/resources to learn and limited interest in programmatic learning agendas.
- **Limited KPSRL capacity**, affecting e.g. timely KMF management, knowledge brokering, relationship building or partner support.
- **Challenges decentralising learning** to remote locations, e.g. with preventing corruption, overcoming barriers to connectivity/participation, and pivoting between in-person, hybrid and remote modes.
- **Getting from local to portfolio and policy levels**,[171] amid decreased interest in portfolio learning.[172]

Inflation caused some overspending on KPAC22. However, KPSRL may be able to absorb this given underspending in other areas.[173] Of more concern looking forward may be staff cost rises due to inflation.[174] **Overall, the impact of inflation is recognisable but if flexibly managed should not pose an existential threat** at this stage.

Internal learning and MEAL

KPSRL aims 'to become more adaptive and effective by continuously reflecting on its approach and results'.[175] Thus **MEAL processes have been given greater capacity and attention in the current KPSRL phase.** Efforts to 'fast charge the learning of the Secretariat'[176] include the arrival of a learning officer, plus monthly monitoring meetings, quarterly data collection and miro-board reflection sessions, annual reporting and learning processes as well as the MTR and end-line evaluations.[177] In 2023 this will continue

with MTR reflections, ToC/RBF revision and post-2024 strategy development.[178] Still, KPSRL appears mindful of striking the right balance between delivering research and knowledge that influences programmes and policies, and continually improving how it supports learning.[179]

Several documents point towards the central importance of KPSRL pushing for higher-level outcomes, goal and goal relevance[180] and looking for evidence of these in, for example, improved policies, programmes, organisational structures, skills, knowledge and attitudes among SRoL actors.[181] KPSRL's 'proposed MEL framework' sets out a fairly comprehensive framework for quarterly monitoring of its programme,[182] and this appears to be used during annual reporting and planning processes. KPSRL traces its contributions to outcomes and the goal, compiling evidence in the form of additional stakeholder interviews within resources available and is cautious about overclaiming unverified contributions.[183] It records both quantitative data (e.g. on event participation) and feedback (e.g. to surveys) alongside qualitative data. Annual reports reflect on successes and challenges to inform future action and adaptation.[184] Annual plans review the previous year's progress[185] set out priorities against ToC outcomes and define what success will look like.[186]

MEAL also features in KMF reforms and the emergence of the PLI. Regarding the KMF: 'actions undertaken in 2022 need evaluation to allow us to build on successful activities and adapt others where necessary'.[187] Such processes appear healthy: reflections on lessons from KPAC22 provided an open, holistic process for the team to explore what could have been improved;[188] in 2022 KPSRL reflected and adapted to improve learning outcomes related to ARC[189] – even if with tighter feedback loops it could have improved performance at an earlier stage.[190] KPSRL plans to learn in 2023 from the PLI piloting process – documenting the learning journey and distilling insights about criteria and contracting.[191] There are many other examples of KPSRL's active learning.[192]

Therefore, **overall, the evidence** from literature review, Secretariat, consortium partner, MFA and advisory committee feedback **demonstrates the very positive step up KPSRL has taken in terms of MEAL, with much in place that was not previously**.[193] MTR participants' **suggestions for improvement included: reducing the frequency of MEAL meetings; getting more quickly in reflection sessions to considering how significant outcomes are, rating KPSRL's contribution and considering how to adapt**;[194] and devoting slightly more attention to whether KPSRL is delivering outputs for which it is accountable.[195]

3.2   CONCLUSIONS ON KPSRL'S GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

Overall, KPSRL's set-up, governance, secretariat, planning processes and instruments function well. Yet it can better balance consultation and decision-making, improve systems for targeted engagement, improve the planning cycle and mitigate risks of staff turnover. MEAL processes are strong and there are only minor improvements to suggest.

3.3   RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE KPSRL'S GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

- **Enhance internal processes, in order to: mitigate risks related to staff turnover, ensure plans are in place to manage underspending and inflation, streamline MEAL to enhance reflection and adaptation in relation to harvested outcomes, and prioritise operationalisation of the CRM.**
- To minimise the potential for disruption related to future staff turnover, take steps to encourage staff retention, prioritise and expedite re-recruitment to the extent possible, put in place cover (such as from consultants or secondees from consortium partners), and ensure staff members understand each other's work well enough to handle departures.

- While not hugely concerning, underspending risks should be managed to avoid spending pressure affecting quality by end 2024.
- It is recommended that KPSRL and the MFA reach an understanding on how inflation and lessons from efforts to deliver the programme to date feed into the need to adjust the budget for the remainder of the budget period, so that staff can be fairly remunerated and retained in the context of inflation, and spending on instruments can be calibrated to ensure quality (rather than volume) of delivery to maximise impacts in line with the ToC.
- For KPSRL to identify and connect network participants with mutually relevant interests and contributions to make, and to engage them in more targeted, coherent and consequential learning processes, a successful CRM could be game changing, and its successful operationalisation is now an urgent priority.
- To make KPSRL's efforts to generate knowledge, learning, exchange and uptake more coherent and impactful, change the timing of the annual conference or the annual planning cycle to ensure that plans can be set in light of a clear theme rather than before this has been decided.
- Keep feeding participant feedback into internal learning to inform better quality learning processes.
- Given time remaining to implement KMF reforms and PLI pilots, consider whether feedback loops and processes are light and efficient enough to achieve improvements on the right timescale.
- MEAL areas to explore for improvement included:
  - exploring whether MEL framework or annual plan indicators are seen as providing the most practical utility in ongoing MEAL processes;
  - reducing the frequency of MEAL meetings;
  - getting more quickly in reflection sessions to considering how significant outcomes are, rating KPSRL's contribution and considering how to adapt.[196]

4.   KPSRL'S FUTURE

While the MTR is able to offer more evidenced findings on progress, contributions, governance and set up in the current KPSRL phase, in this section on KPSRL's future, findings are more tentative given their basis in participants' opinions and projections. In line with the MTR objective of providing recommendations to support preparation for post-2024, the conclusions and recommendations regarding the future and post-2024 presented in this section are presented as directions to consider and explore further.

4.1   FINDINGS ON KPSRL'S FUTURE

Future challenges and trends

According to survey responses and qualitative inputs, **challenges and trends KPSRL may wish to factor in include:**

- How to promote peace, democracy and cooperation (and support struggling CSOs)[197] in a less cohesive, more securitised, authoritarian and unstable – world
- Localisation, decolonisation and effective support for locally driven change
- Confronting ecological and social pressures driving and interacting with conflict and instability
- Uncertainty over the political future for SRoL work
- Challenges concentrating efforts strategically (i.e. challenges of strategic fragmentation, incapacity, lacking funding, incoherence or poor coordination)
- Technical / best practice agendas (peacebuilding, the 'triple nexus', the 'new way of working', what will succeed the SDGs)
- Specific themes such as land governance, organised crime, resource extraction and how technology and conflict interact.

See Annex F for details of the responses given.

In terms of MFA priorities, these include localisation, decentralisation of funding, feminist foreign policy, climate-SRoL intersections and learning on management of adaptive programming.[198]

Addressing challenges and sustainability

At present, **the most challenging trend may prove to be the shift towards war-fighting and authoritarianism amid the 'new Cold War' dynamic between Western powers, Russia, China and others**. In such a space KPSRL is feeling pressure to support sides.[199] It may also find its geographic focus less relevant as conflict and governance challenges penetrate deeper into Europe and SRoL efforts gravitate towards Ukraine and war-fighting there. Meanwhile, **bandwidth, resources and appetite for SRoL efforts as currently defined could be dramatically transformed by conflict dynamics, economic pressures and political change** in the Netherlands, just as they have been elsewhere in Europe.

MFA officials and others have urged KPSRL to **devote some effort to questions such as 'why engage in SRoL work?', 'what works in addressing major challenges today?'**'[200] Given ongoing militarisation and decline in resources for developmental SRoL approaches among some donors, another key question is 'what are the pitfalls of abandoning constructive, inclusive SRoL approaches to addressing conflict and instability?'

Participants stressed the value of what KPSRL can offer here. It can help substantiate and articulate what *can* work, in contrast with less effective structural institution-building, whose shortcomings have been exposed in Afghanistan, Mali, Chad and elsewhere: 'IDLO, Cordaid and PAX folks can say "this isn't the kind

of work we do – it's about communities, rights, empowerment"… there's another narrative and model here"'.[201] Without attention to these questions, it is hard to see the SRoL field thriving and fulfilling its potential in the Netherlands, or the Netherlands having the committed state and multilateral partners it will need to promote these approaches effectively abroad in the medium to long term. Consortium partners may be well placed to facilitate some of the international policy exchange required on these questions.[202] KPSRL has engaged to some extent on these matters, for example in a podcast on 'Lack of evidence that learning leads to changes in policy'.[203] However, the MFA would appreciate greater KPSRL help in developing a clearer narrative regarding the contribution made by SRoL work.

No serious effort to diversify funding sources appears to have been made, despite this having been considered for some time.[204] According to a member of the MTR Reference Group: 'drawing in new donors would require changes to the platform's mode of working and substantive focus, so as to tailor these at least partly to other donors' priorities. This would inevitably have the effect of loosening, at least to an extent, the connection between the KP and DSH and its SRoL policy and programming portfolio. This conundrum, and the lack of clear signals from DSH that they see no problems with this, has been the principal reason why [KPSRL has] not more assertively explored opportunities with other donors'.[205] However, as long as its needs are being serviced, MFA respondents evinced no discomfort with the idea KPSRL growing more relevant to other governments and multilaterals. It remains likely also that supplementary funding by other donors at least to the KMF would be welcomed by the MFA (though the MFA does not seem to have taken a clear view on this yet, and in the case of other knowledge platforms such moves have met some MFA resistance).[206] The KMF strategy paper and other documents show that KPSRL has been interested in diversifying the donor base for KMF for over 4 years.[207] It is worth reflecting on whether it is now time to move ahead with diversifying elements of KPSRL's funding**.**

Adapting approach, engagement and participation

In addition to the findings above on existing instruments, looking forward MTR respondents also suggested improvements. One idea was de-emphasising the 'pilot' nature of the PLI, and focusing on delivering programme learning processes in the present. Another was to increase resources for the direct results being produced under KMF and reducing investment into PLI until it finds its feet.[208] There is clearly appetite among some for promising KMF initiatives to receive some follow on seed funding to enable them to take off.[209]

KPSRL is also considering moving towards 'participatory grant-making', a move that may need careful consideration given above findings on the balance between consultation and decisiveness.[210] While this could be a valuable option for decentralising control over learning resources away from the Hague, it will be important to reflect on whether there is sufficient appetite and time among the KPSRL community to help make decisions over these small grants. Low participation in setting annual conference themes suggests maybe not; likewise participatory grant making could further delay delivery; within a participatory model, thought may also be needed on how to focus funding on priorities that balance local, national/portfolio and policy/strategic level learning priorities.

The 2022 Annual report suggests **KPSRL's Hague based model is part of the engagement challenge**: 'Other Dutch knowledge platforms have adopted Secretariat structures that are organised through multiple hubs based in multiple countries.'[211] KPSRL's 2021 report notes that being responsive to community taking the lead sometimes results in less FCAS leadership as 'large, international organisations took more initiative'.[212]

As post-2024 issues, centralisation and northern domination are discussed more below, but as an interim measure, **the idea to 'host KPAC23 over two hubs, one as usual in the Hague, and one in a partner countr[y]' seems promising**.[213] The annual conference is clearly valued by senior MFA figures, who seem however to look afresh at timing of the conference and planning cycle. A KMF grantee argued for shifting from the annual conference towards smaller focused learning processes.[214] Secretariat staff too are open to the annual conference being split across two or more locations to achieve greater north-south balance.[215]

How could the KPSRL's engagement with network members be adapted, in order to ensure adequate breadth and diversity of participation? (N=19)	
Membership: extend the target audience, reach out to missing actors, allow members to bring their partners/open to local partners of members	37%
Events: more in person and digital events/events at national, local and regional levels	21%
Increase collaboration between members/connect members at local and national levels	11%
More focus on and with countries affected/ tailor support based on institutional needs of countries	11%
Setting priorities: based on applied research, policy papers and dialogues/Be more aligned with the NL policy/Diversify the objectives	11%
Constant monitoring	5%
Continue with the work	5%
Include more languages than English	5%
Involve participants in setting priorities/choice of topics and development of plans	5%

FIGURE 13: WAYS OF ENGAGEMENT TO INCREASE DIVERSITY OF PARTICIPANTS

As noted in figure 13, many MTR **participants would like to see greater engagement from a more diverse range of actors.** As one PLI participant put it: 'We are talking about the social contract, so the main aim is to build a connection between government and civil society. But how will you build this without considering government, civil society, vulnerable and marginalised communities - involving these actors, hearing their say and then build this into our programmes'.[216] Similarly, another participant stressed the **value of trying to feature in podcasts and events voices of those involved in social contract struggle at local levels** and in local languages.[217]

Other actors to consider include national and local governments and defence, security and justice ministries, agencies or providers, as well as more academics and the private sector (and donors from the private sector). Despite the problematic role of many governments in SRoL dynamics, in many contexts there are state-led, peace, security, justice, governance and development efforts. While KPSRL is unique as a safe space for non-governmental actors working on SRoL, **encouraging more state actor learning on SRoL could be worthwhile**.[218]

There were suggestions on how to engage such actors, for example: to focus on practical outcomes, as 'these people only come when it's something that helps them with their work';[219] to approach groups of FCAS governments active on relevant issues, and ask them to suggest and help engage participants;[220] and to focus on specific state actors with a proven interest in making change.[221] Multiple MTR participants noted the value of KPSRL being able to connect those who are interested in similar things. As noted, it will be important that the CRM is successfully developed to help accelerate this.[222]

Maintaining relevance and coherence

Thus there was **strong support overall for aligning KPSRL's focus with priorities in FCAS and engaging local actors in these settings effectively** (see also quantitative analysis of responses in Annex F).

If PLI risks overly focusing on power relations between Dutch embassies, INGOs and local CSOs, and on stakeholder management (PDIA just as administrative flexibility rather than in its true sense of how to

work thoughtfully through complex challenges of development or SRoL stagnation), **KPSRL could consider ways to ensure PLI touches more on how to change the reality of security and rule of law related lived realities of people in insecure settings**.[223]

Much of the energy in KPSRL comes from its function as a space where the sole donor and its partners can come for frank and constructive exchanges that go beyond their transactional relationships as donor and implementing partners. Fulfilling this function appears necessary – and indeed valuable – for both KPSRL, its main donor and most engaged partners for the foreseeable future,[224] and thus is something to keep building beyond rather than to dismantle.

The 2022 Annual Report also argues that 'The increase in collaboration with other learning entities is another new channel for participation, one that has the positive potential to provide added value to audiences that KPSRL events would not reach.' **The present openness to collaborations in which KPSRL does not necessarily lead does seem valuable as long as there is some tie back to better SRoL efforts**, as worked well with the land governance process.[225]

Preparing for post 2024

Purpose and the ToC

KPSRL plans to refine the ToC for the current strategy period and as part of this process should consider whether any of the below proposals on ToC revision may be appropriate to incorporate in the refinement of the current ToC, in advance of further revisions for the post-2024 period.

Most MTR participants valued KPSRL as it is, but encouraged it also to be creative in thinking about the future. For Secretariat staff, the ToC is 'so broadly defined that anything could fit',[226] and not very dynamic.[227] There is an 'ambition to innovate, bring different perspectives, voices and actors to the network and vary methodological approaches'.[228] Some participants questioned whether 'SRL' terminology does justice to the scope and values of the platform, arguing that it is tainted by neoliberalism and war on terror. For such actors, foregrounding positive terms such as peace and justice could help define the platform for the future.[229]

Most MTR **participants who shared a view on KPSRL's purpose favoured a focus on building from local knowledge towards solving conflict and security challenges, or to work through issues related to the social contract, policing and justice-related issues** (see quantitative analysis in annex F, as well as discussion on themes under 'learning' in Section 2.1). Similarly, for an MFA interviewee, KPSRL's added value would be tapping into the knowledge from the global south to help set the policy and programming agenda,[230] including by feeding into policies supporting effective localisation and local resilience.[231]

KPSRL's ToC goal is that 'learning from SRoL program implementation and program portfolios, by practitioner organizations, Dutch embassy stakeholders in priority countries, DSH/MFA, and their knowledge partners enhances'. Only at the level of 'Goal relevance' does the ToC spell out the purpose of the outcomes and goal, that 'Enhanced learning contributes to more knowledge uptake in SRoL programming and policy making and thereby to improving the quality and impact of such work in the SRoL sector'. This may be an issue for the MTR and ToC revision process to explore – i.e. should the KPSRL focus so much on participation, intense exchange and learning, or should it seek to focus more on brokering learning that helps tackle SRoL problems? While healthy participation will always remain important for KPSRL, overall, MTR **participants appeared sympathetic with KPSRL focusing more on quality learning, its exchange, and its use in programming and policy**.

The TOC's outcome-level focus on learning about 'SRoL program implementation and portfolio learning' may need to be broadened. Portfolio level learning does not seem to be happening, and so could be de-emphasised – while emphasis on informing strategic level policy discourse could be revisited as noted above.

Assuming SRoL efforts persist at scale into the future, others highlighted the importance of KPSRL helping drive a mainstream shift towards adaptive programming approaches.[232]

Definitions underpinning KPSRL goals see improvements as policies and programmes favouring equality, decolonisation, diversity and inclusion and aligning with people's needs.[233] This does support empowerment and opposition to power imbalances, and place value on human security (depending on how people's needs are defined) – but **it may be valuable to open up discussions on KPSRL's goal and goal relevance** – as well as the goals of SRoL efforts more widely – so that these reaffirmed definitions in turn give direction and focus to KPSRL's learning processes moving forward.

Who to serve?

In terms of who KPSRL should serve, as shown in the graph below, responses to the survey question as to what types of actors to engage at each level suggest KPSRL should be focusing on connecting local practitioners and activists with national and international policy, research and practitioner actors.

Who should KPSRL prioritise serving looking forward at each level?
According to survey respondents (N=62)

- Policymakers or policy communities
- Practitioners
- Academics or researchers
- Activists, rights defenders or volunteers
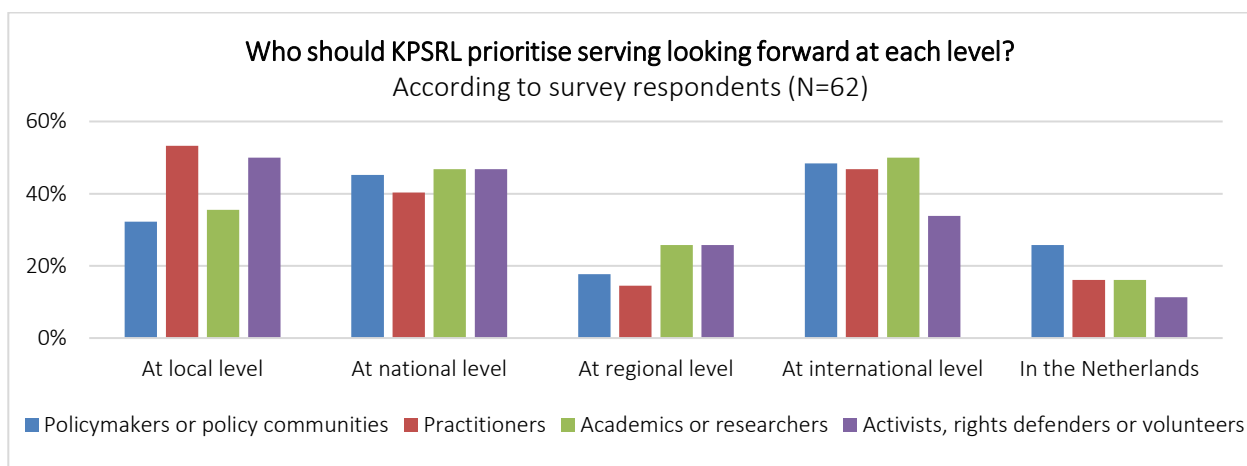
FIGURE 14: ACTORS KPSRL SHOULD PRIORITISE

While MTR participants appreciated the diversity of voices KPSRL brings into conversations, and its independence from the MFA,[234] **views were mixed on whether KPSRL should be less oriented to meeting Dutch MFA needs in future**, and how the MFA might respond to this. For some, more independence and efforts to serve a wider array of ministries and actors was overdue.[235] For others, given that while providing KPSRL with a resource base, the MFA supports KPSRL's independence, diversity and support for localization, but would not like to lose the ideas base the KPSRL provides it with, proximity to the MFA is not a significant problem for now.[236] Yet consortium partners persuasively articulated that **while serving the MFA, KPSRL must offer a win-win for all other participants**.[237]

Centralisation and southern representation

As KPSRL acknowledges in its Annual Plan 2023, '**Some elements of the KPSRL governance and approach are showing signs of aging** when seen in comparison with the most recent debates on decolonisation and localisation and with the changes implemented by other knowledge platforms'.[238] It is positive that the advisory committee provides a diverse group of network participants helping to steer KPSRL. However, the consortium members are all headquartered in the global North, while the MFA and major Dutch

implementing partners (many of them large INGOs) have significant influence; likewise, the secretariat is centred in the Hague (arguably at a distance from programme and policy contexts of interest). At the same time, the benefits of partnerships with INGOs can include their often laudable goals, extensive presence and supportive partnership/localisation approaches. Nonetheless, **in the post-2024 period, further reconfiguration of KPSRL's network model, Secretariat, consortium and governance arrangements should be considered**.

Model

KPSRL's 2022 Annual Report states that '**limitations in the KPSRL model are becoming clearer**',[239] signalling appetite to consider other models. With this in mind, in 2022 KPSRL has been looking at other Dutch Knowledge Platforms which face similar challenges and have tried different ways of meeting them.[240] Most MTR participants are keen to see activities and learning in FCAS and the global south continue to grow and to overcome the constraints posed by the current Hague-focused structure.[241]

Sharenet: a comparative model

A model of interest for KPSRL to draw on post-2024 may be ShareNet. Key features are:

- Focus is on knowledge generation, knowledge sharing, knowledge translation and knowledge uptake,
- Organised in country hubs – six country partners all have their own partners and steering committees,
- Functions as a paid membership organisation
- Members subscribe to the platform's core values
- Journalists, media representatives and private sector actors participate but are usually not full-fledged members.

Activities include:
- Grants for applied research,
- Annual conference,
- A structured action learning system to develop packages of tested interventions that have worked,
- A platform for match-making between practitioners, policymakers, the private sector and researchers
- Tailor-made services for its members, such as help with the launching of reports and the development of knowledge products.

Comparisons with other platforms may prove useful as KPSRL explores future models and adaptations. Options and MTR participant reactions are captured in the following table.

Option	MTR participant reactions
Decentralising beyond the Hague – with staff/units posted among consortium members, partners or embassies in and/or nearer to priority programming and/or policy contexts/regions.	- Widely supported by MTR participants - Broad support for a lean centre (likely still in the Hague and leveraging Dutch international reach and influence given the healthy existing relationship with the Dutch MFA) with the rest of the network growing more decentralised. - Uncertain whether it makes more sense to be focused on countries or regions.[242] - Uncertain whether to try to cover the globe or focus more decisively on a limited set of priority countries.[243] - Suggestion to aim both at getting closer to and more supportive of knowledge developed in FCAS shaping programmes and policies - Ensure at same time KPSRL is set up to access and influence policy/programme conversations internationally beyond the Netherlands MFA and MOJ – for example at the UN, EU and at other key regional or national policy centres.[244]

Varying its consortium, to include different or more members.	• Widely supported by MTR participants. • A strength of the current model is that a consortium approach can provide more equitable relations between partners than a lead-subcontractor style partnership.[245] • A future model that is networked between various partners and geographies could strengthen network representation in decision-making.[246] • International structure of existing consortium partners could be leveraged more to help internationalise KPSRL,[247] and/or networks such as EPLO in Europe and others in sub-Saharan Africa could be useful components of a new model.[248]
Investing in its digital hub, connectivity, translation tech etc, with greater levels of access for closer partners.	• It may be worth looking more closely at Sharenet's digital hub for inspiration – as well as to consider lessons of how to navigate the access and exclusion dynamics related to ever-improving digital platforms and recognise where in-person engagement still matters.[249]
Formalising membership – possibly with tiers for different levels and fees for most engaged members.	• For some Secretariat staff, there is a need to define better whether KPSRL is a platform, community or network, and consider having a more formal approach to membership. • This could bring some 'clarity among members on what being members and being part of this means', may help reduce the tendency to serve 'usual suspects who have interest, enthusiasm and a close relationship with the MFA', and possibly generate some non-MFA revenue.[250] • However, the suggestion to formalise membership was not widely favoured unless it could be clarified how it would strengthen relations with those opting in, help lessen dominance by 'usual suspects', and be done without creating barriers to more casual participation in processes and events, which already fell during 2022.
Developing communities of practice which link together those with common interests into open ended thematic learning processes.	• As noted, creating more sustained linkages for ongoing learning among those with shared interests came up often with MTR respondents of different types.

FIGURE 15: POSSIBLE FUTURE KPSRL MODELS AND MTR PARTICIPANT REACTIONS

Sustaining and growing outcomes

Some KMF grantees wanted flexibility to extend and grow their initial project further. Some PLI interviewees felt that the PLI model was too rigid and predetermined. A challenge to think through is that with PLI, offering funds has not proven the right incentive to garner the intended buy-in to the model, and contract modalities risk stymieing shared responsibility for the right kind of learning.[251] Options for KPSRL to consider that would provide more flexibility to support learners in different scenarios are set out in Sections 4.2 and 4.3.

4.2   CONCLUSIONS ON KPSRL'S FUTURE

Building on KPSRL's existing learning about learning is a strong argument in favour of some continuity in the post-2024 phase: a wholly new provider would likely struggle to pick this up.

As it strategizes for post-2024, KPSRL may wish to consider reviewing ToC outcome, goal and goal relevance definitions. These currently focus on equality, decolonisation, diversity, inclusion and aligning with people's needs. However, arguably, reduced violence, improved human security and justice outcomes for people, societies and states could be more explicitly foregrounded over power and equality considerations (which would arguably be more central in a purely developmentally focused knowledge platform programme). Peace, freedom from fear and access to justice need to be built at multiple not only local levels, at times catering to the needs of states as well as their populations. Revisiting definitions at

the top level of its theory of change, and the paths for reaching them, could help KPSRL focus on building from local knowledge towards solving conflict and security challenges and producing influential solutions to burning SRoL issues.

Feedback suggests the potential, given stakeholder buy-in, for decentralisation and representation of actors from FCAS to go further post-2024. Though KPSRL has made much more room for participation from beyond the Netherlands and in the global south, its consortium members are all headquartered in the global north, and its secretariat and staff remain based in the Hague. This is a slight barrier to taking participation and programme/portfolio level learning in FCAS further (at least until a new phase enables such fundamental design questions to be revisited).

Addressing this could require varying KPSRL's model: with a networked model where some staff were based in FCAS countries/regions, the potential for relationship building and co-creation with FCAS actors would surely increase.

Once clear objectives are affirmed, form should follow function, with highly promising options for decentralising beyond the Hague into priority contexts/regions, bringing southern voices into the future consortium / partnership, connecting mutual interest groups, using tech to serve participants' needs and innovating in other ways being mapped, openly discussed and built into the new design.

Exploring options to make KMF and PLI instruments less rigid and more flexible to support learning partners with different needs, in different configurations, and with varying resource levels could offer an opportunity to optimise incentives and partnership for knowledge generation, learning and better programmes and policies.

4.3   RECOMMENDATIONS ON KPSRL'S FUTURE

- Stay focused on supporting local learning and shifting power as a basis for grounded solutions to conflict, security and rule of law challenges.

  - o Decentralising activities further – or decentralising KPSRL's structure – could help open things more to FCAS participants. Explore what scope for this exists now – for example by experimenting with a new format for the conference, such as varying between global north and south venues on a biennial basis or having linked hubs in different locations – while discussing how to go further post-2024.

- Given trends towards militarisation and securitisation, try to bring evidence on what really works to solve SRoL challenges – and what doesn't – to the policy table.

  - o To help ensure bottom up, human security focused SRoL approaches offer a counterpoint to current trends in militarisation and securitisation, KPSRL should seek to inform policy thinking of other actors including both other Dutch actors such as parliament or other ministries and other governments/multilaterals.
  - o This could start now but intensify from 2024. It could focus on Brussels, other European capitals, Addis, New York and other policy centres, and be begun with modest resources, including by leveraging the reach of its current and future consortium partners and participants.
  - o Significant effort may be challenging for consortium partners at current budget levels, so resources would need to be made available; if not possible now, this could be further considered in post-2024 consortium, programme and budget design.

- Stay close to the MFA and other key partners such as INGOs, but diversify participation more, aim to inform a wider range of policy players, and strengthen support for connections between diverse mutual interest groups.

  o Maintain current approaches for contributing to MFA learning and policy development, but if possible seek to complement healthy working level engagement with greater MFA strategic level engagement. Encourage MFA recognition of the need for the MFA focal point to remain in place for longer periods in future and have a more senior profile in order to strengthen MFA engagement with knowledge and learning.
  o KPSRL should sustain and build on its support for learning and improved SRoL programming/policymaking within (I)NGOs – in particular those with potential to invest like KPSRL in learning and localisation efforts, as well as their partners – as well as continuing to provide safe space for dialogue between them, the Dutch MFA and other governments/multilaterals.
  o Look at how learning processes can additionally involve local actors engaged in trying to develop and shift the social contract as well as state actors engaged in tackling SRoL challenges.[252]

- **If diversifying funding is an aim,** be more proactive in pursuing this, making sure the MFA and Embassies support and engage with this process.

  o KPSRL should verify if the MFA is truly open to sharing KPSRL with other donors. If KPSRL decides diversity in funding is an aim it should put in place the sort of capacity similar organisations require to raise and manage funds from multiple sources and then move ahead.

- Map strategic options for renewing KPSRL post-2024 thoroughly and ensure participatory consideration of them.

- Offer clear opportunities and structures to input and change the network, whilst then ensuring the Secretariat, partners and members are empowered to move forward and deliver decisions and avoiding being held back by over-consultation.
  Options include but are not limited to:

  o Revisiting the ToC to ensure it keeps KPSRL focused on the most important goals and pathways for reaching them
  o Review and reaffirm definitions of desired goals/impacts to help focus outputs on building from local knowledge towards solving conflict and security challenges, producing influential solutions to burning SRoL issues, supporting transformative organisational change (helping organisations shift towards integrating learning culture) and providing wider implication programming insights;
  o Consider the level at which objectives sit in the theory of change – so that participation, exchange and learning opportunities are foundations for outcomes around improved SRoL policy and programming rather than sitting at outcome level themselves;
  o Discuss whether and in what sense 'portfolio learning' remains a priority, and consider adapting to focus on supporting learning and uptake at scale on what KPSRL participants see as most relevant.
  o Considering articulating KPSRL's offer to all targeted groups to ensure mutual benefits

o Embrace KPSRL's role as the knowledge and voices base for a more enlightened, effective and legitimate Dutch SRoL engagement,[253] and continue to value and build on the contribution, values, partnerships and connections brought to KPSRL by many INGOs and research, learning and policy institutes present in the global north.[254]

o At the same time, invest in ensuring its more localized, programmatically-informed and widely-owned approach to learning is a win-win engagement for all the stakeholders involved, while carefully avoiding the risk of becoming extractive. To enable this, articulate what KPSRL will offer to the key types of stakeholders it wants to engage to ensure its offer to each is compelling and beneficial (and then communicate this offer clearly externally).

o Decentralising beyond the Hague into priority contexts/regions for learning in FCAS and informing grounded, effective policy-making beyond the Netherlands

o Consider maintaining lighter presence in the Hague but posting some staff/units closer to priority programme/policy contexts, for example among consortium members, partners or embassies.

o Bringing southern voices into the future consortium / partnership

o Aim to achieve greater global south representation and include the organisations best placed to deliver the post-2024 strategy, ensuring budget allocates appropriate resources for fulfilling this potential;

o Rethinking the structure and approach of KMF and PLI to enhance their flexibility and quality

o Consider further options for revisiting the KMF and PLI models post-2024, with the aim of making KPSRL's support to individuals, organisations, embassies and consortia via successor instruments to KMF and PLI yet more flexible. For example, they could evolve into a single fund, supporting: individual initiatives (short duration and low grant ceiling); medium term organisational learning (medium term and mid-level grants); collaborative learning processes by 3 or more actors (longer term and higher grant ceiling). Under this kind of arrangement, KPSRL would gain flexibility to select and focus resources on the best quality initiatives with greatest 'so-what?' potential. Criteria and processes should continue to incentivise inter-organisational learning by diverse types of participant, equitable learning partnerships, and accessibility in FCAS. Alternatively, the distinct funds could continue but with additional tiers/flexibility built in.

o In addition to KMF, there may be value in the PLI being open to supporting learning amongst multi-donor groups, and supported by more than one donor – if it can accelerate success in the next 1.5 years.

o Participatory KMF grant making should be thought through carefully. Thus added value, enthusiasm to participate, and a way to keep focus on burning SRoL questions should be clearly established if proceeding with this idea.

o Whatever future form is taken by KMF and PLI style instruments, it will be vital as noted to strengthen the connect from local driven learning across to other countries and thematic interest groups, and crucially up to policy debates on why and how to engage in SRoL efforts successfully.

o **Connecting mutual interest groups more consistently –** considering appropriate techniques for doing this more effectively.

o **Using tech creatively to serve participants' needs** for example through an enhanced digital platform for meeting participants' needs and fostering connectivity, learning and exchange.

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[no author], 'Report on the Fifth Quarterly Meeting of Security and Rule of Law Programming partners of the Somalia Unit of the Embassy of the Netherlands', (7-8 Jun 2022)

[no author], 'Report on the Sixth Quarterly Meeting of Security and Rule of Law Programming partners of the Somalia Unit of the Embassy of the Netherlands', (16-24 Oct 2022)

Miroboards

Miroboard: A board where we worked on quarterly reflection sessions with the consortium partners and the MFA contact point. One frame was about a discussion on the cooperation between the Secretariat and the CPs, one frame on how we make sense to progress by Q2 of 2022, and one frame where in Q3 we discussed what future steps we should implement during Q4.

Miroboard: An internal reflection on how the Annual Conference 2022 went: https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVPGXvlSg=/

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A.   ABOUT THE KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM SECURITY & RULE OF LAW

The KPSRL was established by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), specifically the Department for Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid (DSH), in 2012 to strengthen the evidence base for security and rule of law (SRoL) policies and programmes.

It is led by a Consortium comprised of the Clingendael Institute's Conflict Research Unit, Saferworld, and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and supported by an Advisory Committee drawn from the Platform participants and other relevant experts. Consortium Partners – Clingendael, IDLO, and Saferworld – play a strategic guiding and decision-making role.

Three elements make up the governing body.

1.   A **Management Committee** of the Consortium Partners and the Head of Secretariat. This is responsible for strategic guidance and decision-making, including via planning, accountability, evaluation and quarterly oversight, including via quarterly meetings. These are 'followed by a Policy Dialogue meeting with the MFA'.[255]

2.   An **Advisory Committee** formed by nine members including a Chair. Four members are selected by the Management Committee, and four members are selected through an open call to the Platform community. The ninth member is drawn from the MFA. The Advisory Committee selects one of its members as Chair. The Committee advises on KPSRL's research agenda, annual thematic and conference headlines, and supports KPSRL with networking, diversification, internationalisation, sustainability and avoiding conflicts of interest. It includes a mix of academics, NGOs, practitioners, policymakers and advocates. The Advisory Committee and Consortium Partners meet biannually to offer advisory inputs.[256] The Advisory Group plays a role in shaping adaptation, and 'while the Advisory Committee does not have decision-making power, the Secretariat is expected to report back on how the Committee's advice was taken into account and explain the rationale for accepting the advice or not'.[257]

3.   The **MFA**, which holds the contract with KPSRL and has regular policy dialogue with the Management Committee through regularly scheduled policy dialogues.

KPSRL's **Secretariat** is based in its office in Den Haag, and has a Head of Secretariat, two Knowledge Brokers – on Programming and Practice, and Research and Policy, respectively – an Engagement and Grants Officer, a Learning Officer and an Operations Assistant.

The KPSRL's network includes all people and organisations that actively engage in its activities.

KPSRL's Theory of Change (ToC)

According to the current third iteration of its ToC, KPSRL is designed to respond to a range of problems in how learning is generated, shared and translated into positive change in the SRoL arena. 'Knowledge gaps, of a practical and a more fundamental nature, stand in the way of progress in SRoL programming and policy making.'[258] The strongest learning needs lie 'at the program implementation' and 'portfolio management' levels. The ToC stresses lack of exchange between different types of actors, poor MEAL systems and weak outcome level reporting, the lack of trust and honesty between SRoL actors, gaps

between complex, slow academic research and its uptakes by practitioners and policymakers, as well as problems with staff turnover and institutional memory, as challenges to be overcome.

At the apex of the ToC are statements of KPSRL's goal and 'goal relevance'. KPSRL's **goal** is that 'learning from SRoL program implementation and program portfolios, by practitioner organisations, Dutch embassy stakeholders in priority countries, DSH/MFA, and their knowledge partners enhances'. The purpose of this is clarified at the level of **goal relevance**: ''Enhanced learning contributes to more knowledge uptake in SRoL programming and policy making and thereby to improving the quality and impact of such work in the SRoL sector'. KPSRL defines learning in its MEL framework as the 'process of developing competencies (skills, knowledge, and attitudes) with the aim of creating better policies and/or creating and implementing more effective, adaptable programmes'.[259]

To achieve its goal, KPSRL's Secretariat seeks to understand how learning and 'knowledge uptake' happens within the network, and pursues a *strategy of 'knowledge brokering'*, taking existing organisational processes of network participants as the starting point for support and collaboration.

The Secretariat works towards the following **outcomes**:

- The breadth and diversity of participation and the intensity of exchange within the KP network increase.
- Opportunities for learning by network participants about SRoL programme implementation and portfolio learning increase.

Given the focus on participation, intensity of exchange and learning opportunities at outcome level, this is a ToC in which links from outcomes to goal and goal relevance are important, and it will be important to examine how strong these are in this MTR.[260] To link outcomes successfully to the goal, **outcome assumptions** are that SRoL organisations' systems and leaders enable them to grasp KPSRL learning opportunities; SRoL organisations' budgets leave sufficient room for learning; and that the Netherlands remains politically and financially committed to SRoL.

To achieve these outcomes, the Secretariat focuses on **outputs** of four types:

Networking opportunities Organisation and facilitation of online and in-person network events, including:
- An Annual Conference, bringing together individuals from across the Platform's professional spectrum
- Innovative thematic meetings
- Sharing research findings and KP activity results

In the ToC, these networking opportunities build on and inform output areas 2-4.

KMF Early-stage development of new ideas, insights, and pilot approaches to SRoL programming, including:
- Funding initiatives that have a high potential to generate innovative knowledge through the KMF
- A podcast bringing together practitioners, policymakers and researchers into dialogue.

Programmatic learning Further development and testing at scale in multi-country settings of new ideas, insights, and approaches to SRoL programming and portfolio learning, including:
- Designing and implementing pilots of the PLI

- Implementing non-pilot learning activities useful for the design of the PLI.

Learning agendas Supporting development and implementation of DSH/MFA, embassy, and programme level learning agendas, including:
- Maintaining close ties with the MFA through a Liaison Officer
- Connecting the KP's learning agenda to MFA programmes, particularly the Addressing the Root Causes of Conflict (ARC) Fund and the Dutch bilateral rule of law programme in Somalia
- Linking meetings to processes by deploying new methods for uptake and involving new participants
- Maintaining an accessible online knowledge base and a stimulating website.

Assumptions related to outputs are that: leadership backs DSH's learning agenda and encourages DSH, MFA and embassy staff to engage; the Consortium can field a secretariat that is 'capable of (1) provoking demand and identifying 'burning' applied knowledge questions (2) ensuring knowledge fits needs (3) enabling sharp-minded (not like-minded) people to find one another and (4) providing attractive learning experiences'; that KPSRL can maintain trust and shared interests among all stakeholders; and that the KP sufficiently incentivises Consortium Partners to engage.

The current KPSRL phase (2021 – 2024)

The current phase of the KPSRL (2021 – 2024) built on the perceived 'need for continuity and no reasons to overhaul the Platform's governance or to significantly amend' the vision and approach.[261] At the same time, it would favour more participatory knowledge generation through exchange and interaction over more traditional research approaches,[262] and 'emphasize learning not for but by practitioner organizations, working… with knowledge partners (e.g. thematic and geographic experts and researchers) and policy makers'.[263] It would also 'focus on learning at the portfolio level (by DSH/MFA, but also by larger implementers or consortia)' and contribute to DSH's 'own learning agenda about SRoL programming and policy-making'.[264]

KPSRL 2021-2024 has a total budget of €5,529,999.[265]

	Output 1	Output 2	Output 3	Output 4	Management
Personnel	707,816	660,553	726,675	876,624	246,121
Out of pocket	279,207	119,487	126,747	242,907	43,862
Funding instruments	0	800,000	700,000	0	0
Total	987,023	1,580,040	1,553,422	1,119,531	289,983
Percentage	17.85%	28.57%	28.09%	20.24%	5.24%
Grand total					€ 5,529,999

TABLE 1: KPSRL BUDGET 2021-2024

In taking forward the TOC goal, outcomes and outputs noted above, alongside broad continuity from 2020, in 2021 adaptations were introduced such as:

- A hybrid approach to the Annual Conference;
- Improving the accessibility of the Knowledge Management Fund;
- Initiating internal learning activities;
- Introducing a podcast series;
- Forming a learning partnership with the Somalia Unit of the Embassy in Nairobi;

- Adding a Learning Officer and Operations Assistant from May 2021 (bringing Secretariat capacity up to six staff).[266]

The 2021 Annual Report identified a number of adaptations for 2022. To increase outreach, KPSRL would facilitate engagement with local researchers and programming organisations via KMF reform; research partners' learning approaches and needs with a view to strengthening relevance; reach beyond usual Dutch suspects; facilitate more FCAS participation in the Annual Conference; design and pilot the PLI; and continue support for structured learning with partners.[267] To strengthen impact-orientation, it also planned to: articulate the KMF's impact pathway, review Secretariat divisions of labour, help KMF grantees work towards follow on funding, and try to make events more impact-oriented in support of stakeholders' and internal learning.[268]

Table 2 provides an overview of KPSRL's priorities for 2022 and 2023 drawn from the respective Annual Plans.

KPSRL's priorities for 2022 and 2023 (source: C, D)

Outcome / strategic aim	2022		2023	
	Priority	**Signs of success**	**Strategic area**	**Signs of success**
Network Strengthening	**Deepening partnership and participation, with focus on 1-2 Embassies and learning trajectories**	• The collaboration with the Somalia Desk of EKN Nairobi continues with regular, participatory, and inclusive quarterly meetings that generate thematic learning for their participants and learning on the PDIA approach to be shared with the central level and other Embassies. • Collaboration with another Embassy starts. • Involvement of researchers, especially those based in FCAS or other developing countries, increases compared to previous years. • A core group of key stakeholders, such as DSH and DSH-funded Dutch NGOs participate to almost all events held by the KPSRL.	• Engagement with network participants	• An increased number of KPSRL learning events are conceived and developed (with Secretariat support) by actors based in FCAS. These events provide space for locally led discussions, reflections, and learning, and include more diverse perspectives • More active participation by network participants in KPSRL events and in other events that the KPSRL contributes to • Forms of sustained engagement are developed with key network participants • More responses to calls for action from the KPSRL (for thematic headline, event organisation, from the Advisory Committee, etc….) and more leadership demonstrated by network participants • A fully functioning CRM system
	Lowering barriers to participation	• 2022 change in newsletter subscriptions (within EU/N America and outside) continues in line with trend in recent years. • More applicants based in FCAS apply [to KMF] and their proposal[s] are of better quality, therefore being more likely to receive funding • Participants are actively engaged during and in follow up to learning events. • Average score of intensity of interactions in events is above 2.5 on 4-point scale.	**KMF reform process**	• KMF reform process is facilitated in a participatory manner, with meaningful participation of FCAS-based actors, and generates practical steps for reform • KMF reform process introduces additional changes to the KMF with window II of 2023 • KMF generates an increased number of applications and funds an increased share of projects conceived and developed by organisations rooted in FCAS communities. This in turn leads to more locally produced knowledge and new insights on programming and policy • A more diverse array of perspectives on SRoL, more rooted in the needs and conscious of impact at national and sub-national levels, is available to practitioners and policymakers, thereby expanding their opportunities for learning, further improving their programmes

Learning environment	Stronger foundations for learning	• At least two learning trajectories continue with regular meetings and co-created ideas identified by the stakeholders, during which the discussions and opinions change over time. • 2022 change in docs submitted to and retrieved from the online repository continues in line with trend in recent years • 2022 overall rating of the events (1-poor... 5-excellent) continues in line with trend in recent years • Users' experiences with the KMF are largely positive, and the Secretariat take action to reflect and meet the concerns raised by negative users' experiences.	Progress in the design of the Programmatic Learning Instrument (PLI)	• Co-created learning agendas that fully engage in-country partners • Learning activities conducted within at least two pilot projects • Solid knowledge about how to learn about learning based on cross-programmatic learning is created • Tried and tested PLI framework and mechanisms which could be scaled up (learning focused, participatory/inclusive, robust, focused on both results and partnerships) • Strengthened engagement with embassies and their partners, and with other network participants through the PLI pilots and non-pilots
			Streamlining, systematising, and reflecting on learning from different initiatives	• The KPSRL systematically weaves together individual learning sessions under coherent learning framework that span and connect multiple levels, from programming, to portfolio management, to policy making and adaptation • The KPSRL has an expanded methodological toolbox, at the vanguard of methodologies for learning within the triple nexus (the intersection of peacebuilding – humanitarian – development sectors) • Network participants receive insights from a combination of lived experiences and indigenous knowledge, and the most recent academic evidence on the areas that they consider most relevant
Overarching strategy process			Strategic reflections and consultations	• The MTR is executed in a participatory way and produces insightful and actionable observations and recommendations The MTR reference group approves the MTR final report • The CPs and the MFA contact point approve a revised version of the TOC and RBF, which is development through a participatory process The plan for consulting network participants on the post-2024 future is in place • The KPSRL facilitated consultations through which the future of the KPSRL becomes clearer

TABLE 2: KPSRL'S PRIORITIES FOR 2022 AND 2023

Alongside priorities and activities aligned with ToC outcomes and outputs, the 2022 Annual plan also set out plans to ensure 'administrative systems are up to date for an expanded network and strengthened Secretariat' via the 'establishment of a Customer Relation Management' and 'rationalizing file management and automation'.[269] The idea was that this would help deliver on other areas of the TOC. Looking ahead, the 2023 Annual Plan highlights interest in following up on slow progress in updating the KPSRL's systems governance and approach, which it feels are 'showing signs of aging'.[270]

Today, KPSRL's **main instruments** are thus:

- Thematic **learning events:** the creation and support of learning events are a substantial area of KPSRL activity to engage network participants and stimulate their learning and exchange in a safe space that overcomes problems identified in the ToC. KPSRL's flagship event is its annual conference (KPAC), but it typically convenes 20-30 events per year, including webinar, hybrid and in-person events in/on a variety of themes and locations.,

- The **Knowledge Management Fund** (KMF) – a small grants mechanism (max. €20,000 per application) aimed at creating new knowledge on SRoL. KMF is KPSRL's instrument to financially support activities arising from its network. From its launch in 2017 up to 2020 81 KMF grants were awarded, 20 led by a partner from a FCAS.[271] KMF 'enables the KP to meet the objectives of network strengthening, knowledge generation and knowledge brokering, and brings all those three aspects together in an agile small grants facility that diversifies thinking and evidence in the SRoL field and stimulates innovation.'.[272] KMF grants 'offer a low barrier to entry for innovative, agile and experimental proposals' with the aim 'to diversify thinking and evidence in the [SRoL] field, particularly in [FCAS]'[273] and 'create a safe space for failure and learning'.[274] The €200,000 annual fund supports 9-month projects of up to €20,000 for events, research ideas and other initiatives that help improve 'knowledge generated by the SRoL field, and its subsequent uptake'.[275] Uptake is supported by 'brokering' the knowledge generated by KMF in various ways, and it is hoped that promising KMF results 'will feed through into expanded programmatic proposals for scaling or learning partnerships.'[276] It was KPSRL's intention in the current phase to seek financing from other donors to supplement the fund.[277]

- The **Programmatic Learning Instrument** (PLI) – a larger fund (up to €200,000 per project) to support learning within and across programmes. For KPSRL, Programmatic Learning is defined as 'the process of capturing and distilling insights to drive adaptive programming and portfolio management, and doing so informing partners, donors and the wider SRoL sector through KPSRL's network'.[278] The PLI was conceived as a mechanism to 'complement the KMF and the support to learning agendas and enrich the learning environment'.[279] The **PLI** is taking shape under a design phase running from 2022-24. It offers 'a dedicated budget line to stimulate and facilitate programmatic learning' reflecting that 'the strongest need and potential for learning in the SRoL sector is located at the programme implementation level, primarily in the field, and at the portfolio management level'.[280] The PLI is designed to address challenges affecting the health of the learning culture within and between SRoL institutions, and the fact that learning culture is not embedded in programmes, does not drive adaptation, and is more concerned with results and accountability than with challenge, insight and genuine learning.[281] It aims to engage with programmes working on the same or aligned Theories of Change, possibly but not always within the same country or region.[282] The PLI's goal is 'to enable

stakeholders working in the SRoL sector to enhance the quality and impact of their policymaking, programming, implementation, and learning by facilitating and incentivising the co-creation and collective implementation of improved approaches to programmatic learning.'[283] Organisations using PLI get: '(1) a budget for their learning agenda, (2) KPSRL expertise on designing a learning agenda and (3) access to KPSRL network for consulting expertise or communicating lessons learned.'[284] KPSRL provides help shaping learning trajectories, distilling lessons for wider audiences and for adapting the PLI.[285] The original aim of the pilots being established during PLI's design phase was to 'engage primarily with [DSH], embassies with a SRoL portfolio and their local and international implementing partners…. in the process of co-creating and embedding learning into programming'.[286] The 2021-2024 proposal suggested that one pilot would occur in 2021 and two in 2022.[287] A key feature of this piloting phase is KPSRL's own learning journey which has the explicit aim for the 2022-2024 period of refining the concept of programmatic learning, design processes, methodological approaches, and procedures with a view to implementing the PLI at scale in the post 2024 period.

Alongside efforts to develop the PLI, a closely related output area is supporting development and implementation of DSH/MFA, embassy and program level **learning agendas**. KPSRL also continues its experimentation with 'practice labs'[288] (these are 'rooted in mutual learning, [and] offer partners who are "ahead of the curve" a space to showcase practices they have tested and deemed effective, to receive feedback from peers, and discuss engagement strategies that could be implemented more widely.'[289]

Both KMF and PLI are in the process of evolution: the 2022 annual Plan thus flags the importance of KPSRL's 'ambition to reform the KMF and establish the programmatic learning instrument, as both require setting strategic, foundational thinking and building up or reforming processes and procedures for the long-term rather than focusing on immediate results.'[290] Amid these reform processes and the turnover of various posts, the 2021 budget was €223,347 or 20% underspent,[291] and the Annual Plan 2023 projected an underspend in 2022.[292]

ANNEX B.   OUTCOME/IMPACT CASE STUDIES

This annex provides brief case studies that offer narrative examples of how KPSRL contributed to learning that translated into behaviour, programme or policy change, based on MTR respondent feedback.

Conceptualising land governance

Land at scale is funded by MFA and executed by RVO, the Dutch Enterprise Agency. It rolls out 10-12 programmes on improving land governance in different parts of the world, including in insecure contexts such as Burundi, Chad, Palestine and Somalia. There are wider issues about politics, rule of law and so on that are relevant to bring into the land governance debate on which the SRoL community has knowledge. It and KPSRL saw potential to combine agendas on land governance and SRoL, so started coordinating activities. KPSRL co-led a session on do-no-harm at the land-at scale annual conference, which was seen as successful as it put do no harm more on the agenda for the participants at the conference. They had had limited ideas about this topic (they just thought they needed grievance mechanisms). The KPSRL session brought some relevant experts together and generated some lessons that broadened their perspective. It was therefore perceived that KPSRL helped bring in reflections and debates relevant to the land governance people.

Collaboration continued with Land-At-Scale running session in the KPSRL annual conference, which connected land issues to the social contract theme. Local government has big role on land governance and land administration, so they convened participants working on land at scale to reflect on their relations with the government. Land at Scale had not analysed land governance work through a social contract lens before. Partners in the land at scale programme thus learnt from the session and this learning has been 'very much been picked up by partners within the land at scale programme', who want to work with this social contract idea. Follow-up actions were not fully clear as yet, but the MTR participant stated that 'there's now a language and way of looking at it that is useful on top of the way RVO was doing things. RVO has adopted the idea and is working with it, for example, it submitted an abstract for a session in another conference on African land issues focusing on this. RVO incpoirpated this language in its own work: they picked it up, saw the relevance and applied it to things they are interested in and learning about. For her lang of social contract was not new but for other actors it was and through the activities were able to bring this issue to a broader range of people within land at scale.

More flexible programme adaptation supporting relief and social contract development in Somalia

A further example of KPSRL supporting learning that influenced programming was provided by the Somalia trajectory. As one participant explained:

> 'This context really demands flexible programmes, but a lot of donors in the past including the Dutch were very linear in their thinking. The discussion in the first few learning sessions was to what extent was this contracting mode allowing for flexibility – how does a donor become flexible itself – e.g. if we need to adjust activities and get approval from the donor – how do you do that? This was raised and embassy came back with "this is how you can do this, this is the process to follow".... KPSRL had an important role in this process.'[293]

According to another partner involved, this became useful in practice. Following a PDIA training:

> 'Drought was happening and when working with communities we couldn't ask them to come to early warning training. The same with government: we needed to focus on tangible activities on the ground. So we changed our concept note to support communities in dire need of water. With embassy we made a grant agreement with local government to participate in the water track, and they were contributing expenses for a driver, water and staff to deliver water in drought areas. So they were building the social contract between the community and the government – and when people saw the local municipality bringing water to them they were pleased and it built trust in authorities. Then they began testing:

if municipalities could take this role – and could develop soft and infrastructure components to be more accountable to communities, it helped a lot. The impact this made was enormous for trust in the municipality and municipality is maintaining this effort. KPSRL, as part of the learning agenda, gave us that kind of PDIA training and the embassy was also part of that. And thanks to the embassy, they were also keen to support the programme to be adapted with localisation during this changing environment. Both KPSRL and the embassy supported this'.[294]

Influencing the revision of DSH's theory of change to introduce key concepts, and clarify shared principles, connections and learning priorities

According to multiple MFA sources, KPSRL directly contributed to the revision of DSH's TOC, which was seen as 'a very good process to bring together the latest thinking and concepts into our new guiding document'.[295] There were specific evaluations and learning sessions which at the time 'fed into our new TOC' and 'had a big impact on the overall planning for the MFA'.[296] Likewise, discussions on localisation helped ensure the TOC was grounded in voices and knowledge from the global south rather than set in the Hague and imposed on 'contracted implementers', and helped the MFA understand the importance of decolonising assistance in its TOC and operations.[297] KPSRL helped the MFA tap into local knowledge to enable this and then help shape the TOC.[298]

As one MFA official put it, this 'was really a big deal'.[299]

- Before the TOC, 'there were v separate pillars we were working on and there was no coherence on the principles we were working from. Demining, security sector governance, peacebuilding, access to justice: we had no clear view on how all these things connected. So the TOC and adopting this concept helped us understand what have in common and what are the principles for each one of us – whether in demining or A2J.[…] The important principles: these were clearly added and this helped in our internal conversations. It led to much clearer cooperation between people working on security sector reform, rule of law, peacebuilding and stabilisation - to the extent now that we're thinking instead of having access to justice and security sector reform departments: "Shouldn't we look at it from a judicial chain approach". So the TOC really helped with coopertaion, knowing what each other was doing and how programmes are connected.'[300]
- In the TOC, the social contract was adopted as an important foundational concept. KPSRL then organised an Annual Conference on social contracts.
- Similarly with localisation – when DSH realised it had to do something on this, 'KPSRL set up meetings with partners in the global south which framed our thinking'.[301]
- The TOC is important in turn in giving prominence to learning and learning questions that will shape DSH learning 'for the coming two years', with KPSRL playing a direct role in ensuring this.[302]

KPSRL's contribution to these changes was clearly important. As one official described it:
'The thinking on what the TOC is clearly did come from KPSRL – together with the assumptions and learning questions. On the concept, at the level where it all came together: this was supported both by KPSRL and Clingendael as well as their experts. KPSRL were part of the team, and still it was DSH's product and DSH owned it. This is where you can have most influence in shaping policies.'[303]

Despite this positive outcome, in the view of one official, the MFA could be getting more out of its collaboration with KPSRL, but is held back by capacity constraints. 'We know it's important and need to set aside time for this but within the department it's still a bit scattered'.[304]

Tentative direct impacts on detainee backlogs in Nigeria

Although it was beyond the scope and resources for the MTR to verify this, one KMF grantee claimed the innovative approach piloted in their project had directly resulted in detainees on remand

learning how to engage with their trials in way that had resulted in their release from prison, along with a range of wider benefits, such as greater inmate awareness, community acceptance of former detainees, and support for the approach as a way to tackle prison overcrowding by Nigerian authorities.[305]

> 'We tackled prison congestion in an innovative, multidisciplinary way fusing law and art. […] We set up informal courts in prisons with participants playing roles in the court system. Participants learnt a lot about how the court system works. After spending years in prison, many remandees may not have spent a day in court. They also invite lawyers to use the process as informal learning. A number of inmates have been released as a result. We raised knowledge on the criminal justice system through the project, to people who wouldn't have had knowledge on it. It's a very complex system for Nigerians, so at the end of the project, having the average man or woman understand these complex legal systems was a great impact.[…] So many stakeholders were impacted by the project. Not only inmates but also govt officials were interested in it. We have had some efforts to rebrand Nigerian prisons to make them more rehabilitative not just punitive. So we presented what we did in the project to the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General, and one of the great outcomes has been that the government has created a restorative justice unit and their organisation [the grantee's] is now able to help identify cases that would work well to go via the non-custodial sentencing route. It is not new that in the country some prisoners have no business being in prison. So the project has been successful in that way. […] Some of the convicted inmates can guide new prisoners to the centre if they want to learn how to navigate court system. The government is keen on the project as way to tackle prison congestion. Law schools students were also able to learn about pro bono work and the theatre aspect was good in teaching many stakeholders including the general public. There was coverage on the news and[…] it was turned into a powerful theatre production. Theatre is a way to get audiences to drop down their guard – including officials and others. So things like judges not turning up, cases adjourned for years, inmates serving longer on remand than they would be sentenced for. We were also able to teach inmates that: […] for example, in some cases it is better to plead guilty if the remandee has already served the time they would be sentenced for, so it is best to do so. [This] enabled [remandees] to get discharged. Also the community benefited – with plays going round country and people able to watch, it helped communities understand and support inmates to be accepted back after discharge. Due to the pandemic, our KMF funded project led to the use of technology to interview pre-trial detainees. Lawyers and volunteers interviewed inmates via zoom during the lockdown, and we're hoping to push for this unplanned outcome to become permanent. It would greatly increase the number of indigent inmates who have access to legal advice.'[306]

Although KMF support in this connected into a wider effort that remains ongoing, the partner felt 'KPSRL's contribution enabled about 50% - 60% of the outcomes I've described'.[307]

ANNEX C. MASTERLIST OF QUESTIONS

The masterlist builds from the MTR framework to provide an overview of sub-questions that inform the development of research tools for each category of stakeholder. Sub-questions will be adapted for each tool, and relevant background information supplied, when posing each question. The final clustering of questions will be revisited prior to data gathering. 'How to improve…?' questions throughout will be used to develop findings under objective 3. While questions will provide the main focus of research tools, the MTR team will use judgment in specific KIIs/group sessions on which questions are most important for each data-gathering session, and when to follow an emerging narrative/most significant change story in preference to the predetermined structure/question list and when not.

MTR questions	#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
		Type of respondents (NGO, Ministry, academic institution etc):	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Sex:	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Country of work:	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		How often do you participate in KPSRL activities?	X									
Profiles		Organisation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		What is the nature of your participation in KPSRL? (Can choose multiple options) Active participant • Advisory committee member/consortium partner/donor	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

MTR questions	#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
		• Co-hosting or speaking at annual conference/learning event • Implementing a KMF project • Participating or partnering in a learning trajectory or programmatic learning process • Appearing on a podcast • Sharing research or uploading documents to the KPSRL repository. Listening participation • Audience member at annual conference / learning event • Access website information • Podcast listener • Social media follower /access social media information. Other (specify) Not participated yet										
		How often did you participate in KPSRL activities in 2021-22?	X									

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
			□ 5+ times per year □ 1-4 times per year □ Once per year □ Did not participate										
Objective 1: To assess the nature and extent of progress towards the KPSRL's current outcomes and goal, together with relevant gaps, and trace KPSRL's contribution to it and other positive or negative outcomes.													
Delivery: To what extent is the current set of KPSRL interventions achieving desired outputs in support of TOC results? Have adaptations taken place since the project began and if so are they helping achieve desired outputs in support of TOC results?	Relevance		To what extent are KPSRL interventions relevant for achieving desired results (set out in ToC)? Please explain		X	X				X		X	
	Effectiveness		Are interventions in line with the objectives set in the original proposal?		X	X							X
	Efficiency		Did adaptations take place since the project began? If yes, what and why?		X	X				X		X	X
			If yes, how did these adaptations affect progress towards results?		X	X				X		X	X
Engagement and communication: Are the current interventions and approach involving, engaging and communicating with current and potential network participants purposefully and effectively?	Relevance and effectiveness (of reach / engagement strategy and processes)		How would you rate KPSRL's efforts to involve, engage and collaborate with you or other stakeholders within the platform? What could be improved?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
			Is KPSRL engaging and communicating effectively with current and potential network participants in FCAS? If yes, how? What could be improved?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X

MTR questions	#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
Does the KMF approach including grant structure and application procedures match the needs of the grantees and potential grantees?		Has the KPSRL become more accessible and relevant for FCAS actors/you at multiple levels in the time that you have been involved with the KPSRL?	X		X	X		X	X	X		X
Are the current interventions and approach involving, engaging and communicating with current and potential network participants purposefully and effectively in FCAS in particular? Is this improving?		Does the KMF approach including grant structure and application procedure match the needs of the grantees and potential grantees? Please explain		X	X	X		X			X	X
Has the KPSRL managed to expand access to the KMF effectively for FCAS actors in particular?		Has the KPSRL expanded access to the KMF for FCAS actors? If no, what are the challenges? What could be improved?		X	X	X		X			X	X
Relevance: To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments responsive to the needs and demands of network participants? To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments responsive to the evolving needs and demands of the Dutch MFA?		• Why do you participate in KPSRL activities/processes? (on scale 1-10 for each): • access to learning opportunities that may improve policy, programming, capacities, relationships • network and build relations with other SRoL actors	X					X	X	X		

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
			• share knowledge, experience and recommendations with others • access to decision-makers • for fundraising purposes • Other (specify)										
	Relevance		To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments (KMF, PLI, learning events) relevant to your needs/those of network participants?	X	X	X			X	X	X		X
			To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments (KMF, PLI, learning events) relevant to key SRoL related policy, practice or learning agendas in your working context? Please explain	X			X		X	X	X		
			To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments (KMF, PLI, thematic learning) responsive to the evolving needs and demands of the Dutch MFA?		X	X	X						
Participation: How broad, balanced and diverse is participation within the KPSRL network? Is participation increasing?	Effectiveness		How do you rate the level of engagement of KPSRL participants in learning processes? How could it be improved?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X

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MTR questions	#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
How active and meaningful is participation in KPSRL by relevant groups?		Is KPSRL attracting the right balance of participants (from different professions, disciplines, stakeholder groups etc)? How could this be improved?	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
		How would you rate the diversity of participants (in terms of their background and where they work) in KPSRL learning processes? How could this be improved?	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
		Do you feel sufficiently consulted over the design, implementation and/or monitoring of KPSRL's strategies/learning processes?	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
Exchange: How intense is the exchange within the KPSRL Network? Is the intensity of exchange increasing?	Effectiveness	In your experience, what is KPSRL doing to intensify interaction and exchange?		X				X	X	X	X	X
		Have KPSRL learning processes led you to interact or share knowledge with other KPSRL participants or via KPSRL? Please give examples.	X		X		X	X	X	X		
		Is the intensity of exchange across the KPSRL network increasing? How could this be improved?		X	X			X	X	X	X	X

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MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
			Are you satisfied with the level and intensity of participation in activities you have been involved in?	X		X			X	X	X		
			To what extent did you gain access to decision makers and decision making moments through KPSRL learning activities ? Please explain	X							X	X		
Learning and learning relevance: Are network participants learning through their engagement with the KPSRL? How relevant are learning themes to the needs of current and prospective network participants and to wider trends?	Effectiveness Relevance		To what extent has engagement with KPSRL improved your skills? Please explain	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
			To what extent has engagement with KPSRL improved your knowledge? Please explain	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
			To what extent has engagement with KPSRL changed your attitude? Please explain	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
			How interested are you in the learning themes KPSRL has been covering? (List the learning themes, survey 1-5 scale)	X		X			X	X	X		
			Which learning themes would be relevant to your needs in future?	X		X	X		X	X	X		

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
			What evolving trends should KPSRL consider when shaping its agenda looking forward?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Learning methods: How effective are the learning methodologies deployed by the KPSRL?	Effectiveness Efficiency		In your experience, how effective are the learning methods deployed by the KPSRL? Please explain	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
			What improvements could be made to KPSRL's learning methods to support your learning, exchange and/or knowledge uptake?	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
			Were you satisfied with your experience of KPSRL learning events/processes? If so, why ? If not why not?	X						X	X		
Safe space: Is the network providing a 'safe' and conducive environment for learning among network participants?	Effectiveness		To what extent are network participants mutually respectful? Please explain	X					X	X	X		
			To what extent do KPSRL learning processes provide conducive environment to share, learn and exchange?			X			X	X	X		X
			If you have learnt from your engagement with KPSRL, how easy is it for you to put that learning into practice?			X			X	X	X		X

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
			What blockages do you face? Is there anything that KPSRL might do differently to help you overcome these hurdles??										
			Are you satisfied with the level of safety in the learning events?			X			X	X	X		X
			Overall, to what extent do you feel that KPSRL effectively provides a 'safe space' in which people can share their learning and learn from each other? Please explain	X		X			X	X	X		X
Impact: What are network participants doing differently as a result of their KPSRL-influenced learning? Did KPSRL contribute to changes in policies, programming, behaviours, capacities or relationships? What other factors and/or actors have contributed to identified learning and/or changes in policies, programming, behaviours, capacities or relationships?	Effectiveness Impact / signs of longer-term change		In the following questions, 'Changes' could relate to policies, programmes, behaviours, capacities or relationships. Please be as specific as you can about what has changed, when and to what extent it is significant										
			Has anything changed in your work as an individual (what are you doing differently) as a result of your engagement with KPSRL or learning from it? [If yes] • Please briefly describe the change you have made • How significant is this change? • To what extent has your engagement with KPSRL	X									

MTR questions			#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
				contributed to this change as compared to other factors?										
				Has anything changed in the work of your organisation (is your organisation doing anything differently) as a result of your engagement with KPSRL or learning from it? [If yes] - Please briefly describe the change in your organisation - How significant is this change? (1-10 scale) - To what extent has your engagement with KPSRL contributed to this change as compared to other factors?	X									
				Have you observed other actors - for instance individuals, organisations or institutions that you are working with or seeking to influence - making changes (doing anything differently) as a result of your or their engagement with KPSRL or learning from it? [If yes]	X									

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
			• Please briefly describe the change made by others • How significant is this change? • To what extent has your engagement with KPSRL contributed to this change as compared to other factors?										
			Our survey and literature review have identified the following possible outcome areas [share list]. a) Which do you feel is/are most significant? Why? b) How much has KPSRL contributed to these? 1.c) Can you provide any supporting evidence illustrating changes to which KPSRL may have contributed, their significance and/or the level of KPSRL's contribution?		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Other outcomes: Are there positive or negative outcomes to which KPSRL has contributed in any other areas, or gaps in expected outcomes under	Relevance Effectiveness		Are there positive or negative outcomes to which KPSRL has contributed in any other areas? If yes, which ones?	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
the TOC, that need to be considered when assessing KPSRL's relevance and effectiveness?			Are there any areas in which KPSRL has failed to contribute to expected outcomes under the TOC?		X	X						X	X
			What is your biggest disappointment with the project so far?	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
			Can you provide any supporting evidence illustrating changes to which KPSRL has/has not contributed, their significance and/or the level of KPSRL's contribution?	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Coherent goal fulfilment: Are the range of existing activities, outputs and outcomes contributing coherently to progress towards the TOC goal and goal relevance?	Relevance Effectiveness Coherence		Are KPSRL's range of existing outputs and outcomes contributing coherently ('adding up') to progress towards the TOC goal and goal relevance? Please explain		X	X						X	
			To what extent do you see KPSRL's interventions, instruments and learning processes as coherently combining or 'adding up' to impact?						X	X			X
			How could coherence be strengthened for greater impact?		X	X			X	X		X	X
Objective 2: To assess whether KPSRL has the optimal governance and organisational set up to manage its efforts, learn and evolve.													

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
Set up: How efficient and fit-for-purpose is the set-up of the KPSRL (e.g. its governance, consortium, secretariat, network model and instruments)?	Efficiency		How efficient and fit-for-purpose is the set-up of the KPSRL (e.g. its governance, consortium, secretariat, planning processes and instruments)?		X	X			X	X		X	X
			What improvements are needed in terms of network model, governance structure, leadership, planning processes, responsibilities and relations between the parties/with partners?		X	X						X	X
			Are staffing levels and divisions of responsibility in the Secretariat optimal? What could be improved?		X	X						X	X
			Are resources sufficient, well managed and being spent as expected? What could be improved?		X	X						X	X
			Are consortium partners optimally engaged and contributing to KPSRL? What could be improved?		X	X						X	X
			How are administrative/systems reforms progressing? What could be improved?		X							X	X

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
Challenges: What challenges (whether related to TOC assumptions, problem statements or other factors) constrain KPSRL from effectively delivering interventions and outputs in support of TOC results? What challenges or potential scenarios may become important for KPSRL in the medium-long term? What impact has inflation had on the KPSRL capacity to deliver its expected results?	Sustainability		What challenges constrain KPSRL from effectively delivering interventions and outputs in support of TOC results?		X					X		X	X
	Efficiency		What challenges or scenarios should KPSRL be prepared for in the medium-long term?	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
			What impact has inflation had on the KPSRL capacity to deliver its expected results?		X							X	
			What barriers do you face applying learning from KPSRL-related processes in your own work?	X		X			X	X	X		
Internal learning: Are KPSRL's internal monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning approaches and tools adequate to its needs? Are KPSRL's MEAL approaches resulting in internal learning and effective adaptation?	Efficiency Effectiveness		Are KPSRL's internal monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning approaches and tools adequate to its needs? Please explain		X	X						X	X
			Are KPSRL's MEAL approaches resulting in internal learning and effective adaptation? Please give examples		X	X						X	X

Objective 3: To provide recommendations on how positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL can best be sustained through:
- The KPSRL's approach, processes and positioning for remainder of the current strategy period (including via the revision of KPSRL's Theory of Change and Results-Based Framework).
- The KPSRL's preparations for the post-2024 period.

MTR questions		#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
Approach: How could the current set of interventions / expected outputs be adapted, in order to strengthen relevance and effectiveness?	Relevance Effectiveness		How could the current set of interventions / expected outputs be adapted, in order to strengthen relevance and effectiveness?		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Positioning / participation: How could the KPSRL's engagement with network members be adapted, in order to ensure adequate breadth and diversity of participation?	Relevance Effectiveness		Who should KPSRL prioritise serving looking forward?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
			How could the KPSRL's engagement with network members be adapted, in order to ensure adequate breadth and diversity of participation?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Maintaining relevance and coherence: How can KPSRL evolve to continue meeting and appropriately balancing the diverse priorities and learning needs of different network stakeholders and participants?	Relevance Coherence		What could KPSRL consider doing differently to meet the future priorities and needs of network participants? (Survey version)	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Sustainability – addressing challenges: How can the network and learning within it best be sustained in the face of identified challenges?	Sustainability		How can the network and learning within it best be sustained in the face of identified challenges?		X	X					X	X	X
Post 2024: How should the KPSRL prepare for the period post-2024?	Sustainability		How would you like to see the knowledge platform's purpose evolving in the mid-long term? (Survey: for the next 3-4 years)	Word cloud ?	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X

MTR questions	#	Tool questions	1. All KP participants (survey)	2a Secretariat staff (KII)	2b MFA/DSH personnel (KII/WS)	2c Non-participants (KII)	2d Narrative/outcome validation (KII)	3a KMF grantees (WS)	3b PLI/ learning trajectory leads/ participants (KII/WS)	3c Conf/ Learning event / podcast participants/ leads (WS)	3d Consortium partners (WS)	3e Advisory Committee (WS)
		Considering KPSRL's strategy, model and/or approach in any future phase post2024, what should it change? What should it maintain?		X	X			X	X	X	X	X
		What are your recommendations to scale-up the positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
		Do you have any suggestions for KPSRL's 'business model' in the post-2024 period?		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
		What themes would you like to see KPSRL covering in future?	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X

ANNEX D.   DEFINING KEY TERMS

For the purpose of this MTR, key terms will be defined in the following ways:

Learning is defined by KPSRL in its MEL framework as the 'process of developing competencies (skills, knowledge, and attitudes) with the aim of creating better policies and/or creating and implementing more effective, adaptable programmes'. Relevant examples of types of learning can therefore include becoming more skilful, correcting mistakes, identifying and implementing lessons learned, becoming better informed (for instance about global debates on SRoL or on how changes in SRoL policy or practice have come about in other contexts), improved abilities to comprehend and construct meaning, innovating and adapting. In the MTR, in line with the KPSRL MEL framework, improvements in network participants' skills and knowledge, and changes in attitudes, will be considered as aspects of their learning. Through the MTR framework and research tools, we will therefore explore whether the types of learning prioritised by KPSRL are occurring, the relevance of learning to the needs of current and prospective network participants and to wider trends, and connections from learning to other outcome and goal level impacts such as learning-related policy, programming, behaviour, capacities and relationship changes.

Effectiveness is defined as the extent to which KPSRL has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.

Purposefully is defined as 'in a way that supports fulfilment of TOC results and/or that aligns with network participants needs and demands and/or their views on how they would like to see KPSRL's purpose evolving in the mid-long term'.

Participation The MTR considers participation not only in relation to overall numbers of participants in KPSRL-led or -supported activities, but also, in line with KPSRL's MEL framework, in relation to **diversity** of participation (in terms of participants' background and where they work) and participant type/type of organisation (professions/disciplines/stakeholder groups). It also considers how participatory KPSRL planning and learning processes are for network participants.

Active and meaningful participation refers to and builds on the KPSRL MEL framework definitions of active vs listening participation: '"Active participation" is defined by: 1) hosting or speaking at an event, 2) sharing a research output 3) implementing a KPSRL project 4) being a PLI grantee, 5) speaking during a podcast, 6) provided inputs for the definition of the thematic headline, 7) uploading documents to the KPSRL repository. "Listening position" is defined by: 1) participating as the audience of an event, 2) downloading a document from the KPSRL database, 3) being in the audience of a podcast, 4) following the KPSRL social networks.'[308]

Meaningful participation refers also to the motivation for participation (for access to funding or access to learning, exchange and influencing opportunities that may improve policy, programming, capacities, relationships in line with the TOC outcomes and goal) as well as to the outcomes deriving from participation, such as whether participants continue to engage in learning processes over time, learn as a result of participation, follow up with other participants for dialogue, knowledge exchange or partnership, and/or report other outcome and goal level impacts stemming from participation in KPSRL activities such as events or learning processes.

Intensity of exchange/participation refers to the frequency of stakeholders' engagement in KPSRL activities and the intensity of interaction in meetings and learning processes as perceived by

stakeholders of different types. It may also consider trends in the overall number of events and learning processes convened by KPSRL, and perceptions regarding the quality of participation in them.

Safe space is defined in line with KPSRL's MEL framework as a space free from abuse where members listen to, welcome, respect and understand each other, where there are no consequences for exchange and constructive challenge The MTR will also consider whether KPSRL offers a conducive learning environment and a space where participants feel comfortable to talk about their failures as well as successes and to be open regarding gaps in their existing skills or knowledge. The MTR will also consider whether KPSRL's learning processes take into account, and seek to mitigate, potential barriers to learning and exchange (related to power, status, funding, reputation or other factors).

KPSRL network / network participants are defined in line with the ToR as all people and organisations that actively engage in KPSRL's activities. As such, Consortium Partners and the MFA are both part of KPSRL governance structures and part of the network and its participants.

ANNEX E. METHODOLOGY

Objectives

This MTR is designed to deliver the following objectives.

Objective 1: To assess progress towards the KPSRL's current outcomes, goal and goal relevance, together with relevant gaps, and trace KPSRL's contribution to it and other positive or negative outcomes.

Objective 2: To assess whether KPSRL has the optimal governance and organisational set up to manage its efforts, learn and evolve.

Objective 3: To provide recommendations on how positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL can best be maximised and sustained through:

- The KPSRL's approaches, processes and positioning for remainder of the current strategy period (including via the revision of KPSRL's Theory of Change and Results-Based Framework).
- The KPSRL's preparations for the post-2024 period.

As elaborated in Table 3, these objectives are built on the original ToR, close reading of the KPSRL ToC, and further feedback provided by the Secretariat.

MTR team suggested objectives	Key DAC criteria/issue	Corresponding TOR text for comparison
Objective 1: To assess progress towards the KPSRL's current outcomes, goal and goal relevance, together with relevant gaps, and trace KPSRL's contribution to it and other positive or negative outcomes.	**Relevance Effectiveness Coherence**	'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 Based Framework [RBF])' Later (p.3) 'The MTR should trace the KPSRL contribution from outputs to goal and goal relevance' 'highlight early signs of project success and/or failure and unexpected outcomes' 'focus on the process the Platform has followed, aiming to establish how and why certain results have been achieved (or not), and pinpointing specific learning about what has worked and what has not'
Objective 2: To assess whether KPSRL has the optimal governance and organisational set up to manage its efforts, learn and evolve.	**Efficiency Learning**	TOR questions: 11. Is the current set-up of the Secretariat and of its instruments (such as the KMF) efficient? 13. To what extent has the Secretariat become a learning organisation under the current contract? Is its approach to and tools for internal learning adequate to its needs? [This objective has also been clarified drawing on input from the secretariat.]
Objective 3: To provide recommendations on how positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL can best be maximised and sustained. through: • The KPSRL's approaches, processes and positioning for remainder of the current strategy period (including via the revision of KPSRL's Theory of Change and Results-Based Framework). • The KPSRL's preparations for the post-2024 period.	**Sustainability**	'to inform the Secretariat's implementation of the remainder of the current KPSRL contract (2021-2024) and the process of developing a post-2024 strategy for the KPSRL'

TABLE 3: MTR OBJECTIVES

Evaluation framework

The MTR's evaluation framework organises research questions (derived from the ToR and elaborated to test progress, challenges and assumptions in relation to the ToC) under the three MTR objectives as shown in Table 3. The table identifies the relevant basis for each question in relation to the ToR and ToC (full versions are reproduced at annexes F and G for reference; definitions of selected key terms are provided at Annex H). The stakeholders relevant for answering each question and the research tools to be used are further elaborated in section 3.7 and in annex B.

MTR team suggested questions	Criteria	Corresponding original TOR question / TOC component
Objective 1: To assess the nature and extent of progress towards the KPSRL's current outcomes and goal, together with relevant gaps, and trace KPSRL's contribution to it and other positive or negative outcomes.		
Delivery: To what extent is the current set of KPSRL interventions achieving desired outputs in support of TOC results? Have adaptations taken place since the project began and if so are they helping achieve desired outputs in support of TOC results?	Relevance Effectiveness Efficiency	1. 'Assess the relevance of the intervention logic for the objectives set in the original project proposal and as applied in practice by the KPSRL Secretariat. Did adaptations take place since the project began? Why, how and what impact did these adaptations have on project delivery? Are there other adaptations that the Secretariat should make?' [Last part is covered under objective 3] 10. 'Approach – output… does [the KPSRL portfolio of learning activities] … contribute adequately to the KPSRL outcomes?'
Engagement and communication: Are the current interventions and approach involving, engaging and communicating with current and potential network participants purposefully and effectively? Does the KMF approach including grant structure and application procedure match the needs of the grantees and potential grantees? Are the current interventions and approach involving, engaging and communicating with current and potential network participants purposefully and effectively in FCAS in particular? Is this improving? Has the KPSRL managed to expand access to the KMF effectively for FCAS actors in particular?	Relevance and effectiveness (of reach / engagement strategy and processes)	2. '…Does [KPSRL] involve and engage network members sufficiently and in a balanced way (including policymakers, practitioners, and researchers from within and outside of the Netherlands)? 3. Does it do so effectively? And to what purpose(s)? This question should be answered separately for the case of actors in Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings (FCAS). Has the KPSRL become more accessible and relevant for FCAS actors at multiple levels?' 5. Does the KMF grant structure match the needs of the grantees and potential grantees? 4. 'Has the KPSRL managed to expand access to the KMF for FCAS actors in particular?' Validating also TOC Output assumption 3: 'The Secretariat and Consortium Partners are able to maintain and strengthen the relationship built on trust and shared interests and allowing for proactive sharing of information relevant to the implementation, adaptation and positioning of the KP project, with DSH/MFA, embassy stakeholders, and other members of the KP community'
Relevance: To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments responsive to the needs and demands of network participants?	Relevance	3. 'To what extent is the KPSRL relevant to the needs of its network participants?' 10. 'Approach – output – Is the KPSRL portfolio of learning activities balanced by themes…?' 15. '… to what extent has the KPSRL become more coherent… externally to the demands of network members, main developments in the field, and with the MFA learning goals and efforts?

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To what extent are KPSRL activities and instruments responsive to the evolving needs and demands of the Dutch MFA?		[Validating also TOC Outcome assumption 3: 'SRL remains an important pillar of Dutch development assistance, both in terms of political support and funding support' Validating also TOC output assumption 1: 'A DSH Learning agenda is adopted and implemented and receives support from leadership (including in relation to funding programs), knowledge questions (demand) are clearly articulated and participation of DSH/MFA and embassy staff in KP events and activities is encouraged'
Participation: How broad, balanced and diverse is participation within the KPSRL network? Is participation increasing? How active and meaningful is participation in KPSRL by relevant groups?	Effectiveness	2 'To what extent has the KPSRL become participatory?' 8. 'Outcome 1 - Is participation, in its intensity and diversity, adequate given the purpose of the KPSRL?' 10. Approach – output – Is the KPSRL portfolio of learning activities balanced by […] type of participants? [Testing also TOC outcome 1 'The breadth and diversity of participation… increases']
Exchange: How intense is the exchange within the KPSRL Network? Is the intensity of exchange increasing?	Effectiveness	8. Outcome 1 - Is participation, in its intensity and diversity, adequate given the purpose of the KPSRL? [Testing also TOC outcome 1 'the intensity of exchange within the KP network increases']
Learning and learning relevance: Are network participants learning through their engagement with the KPSRL? How relevant are learning themes to the needs of current and potential network participants and to wider trends?	Effectiveness Relevance	7. 'Goal and goal relevance - What evidence is there to indicate that the participants in the Platform learn thanks to the KPSRL contribution?...' [Testing also TOC outcome 2: 'Opportunities for learning by network participants (practitioner organizations, embassy stakeholders, DSH/MFA and knowledge partners) about SRoL program implementation and portfolio learning increase'] [Validating also TOC Outcome assumptions 1 & 2: 'The internal learning cultures, systems and capacities of SRoL organizations and their leadership's commitment to learning allow them to seize upon the opportunities provided by the KP' 'The financial and other constraints within which SRoL organizations operate (e.g. budgets and financial and programmatic reporting requirements) leave room for investments in learning'] 10. '…Is the KPSRL portfolio of learning activities balanced by themes…?' 15. 'The MTR should explore coherence … from the point of view of… thematic content.'
Learning methods: How effective are the learning methodologies deployed by the KPSRL?	Effectiveness Efficiency	10. Approach – output – Is the KPSRL portfolio of learning activities balanced by… approach…? 15. '…The MTR should explore coherence… from the point of view of methodologies for learning…' [the quality of learning methodologies was also flagged as of interest during the 19 December meeting]
Safe space: Is the network providing a 'safe' and conducive environment for learning among network participants?	Effectiveness	9. Outcome 2 – Is the KPSRL approach to learning effectively contributing to creating a safe space for the learning of its network?

Impact: What are network participants doing differently as a result of their KPSRL-influenced learning? Did KPSRL contribute to changes in policies, programming, behaviours, capacities or relationships? What other factors and/or actors have contributed to identified learning and/or changes in policies, programming, behaviours, capacities or relationships?	Effectiveness Impact / signs of longer-term change	7. '…What do those participants do differently as a result of their learning?'
Other outcomes: Are there positive or negative outcomes to which KPSRL has contributed in any other areas, or gaps in expected outcomes under the TOC, that need to be considered when assessing KPSRL's relevance and effectiveness?	Relevance Effectiveness	[From TOR purpose paragraph:] 'highlight early signs of project success and/or failure and unexpected outcomes'
Coherent goal fulfilment: Are the range of existing activities, outputs and outcomes contributing coherently to progress towards the TOC goal and goal relevance?	Relevance Effectiveness Coherence	[TOR (p.3):] The MTR should trace the KPSRL contribution from outputs to goal and goal relevance. 1. 'Assess the relevance of the intervention logic for the objectives set in the original project proposal and as applied in practice by the KPSRL Secretariat. 14. It is not currently obvious that "coherence", interpreted as internal and external consistency in the KPSRL portfolio of learning activities, is a value compared to answering to the diverse needs of the KPSRL community. Building on both evidence and sense-making discussions, should the KPSRL consider coherence as a value for the KPSRL's work? And if so, in which way? 15. 'If so, to what extent has the KPSRL become more coherent both internally with respect to different strands of activities…'
Objective 2: To assess whether KPSRL has the optimal governance and organisational set up to manage its efforts, learn and evolve.		
Set up: How efficient and fit-for-purpose is the set-up of the KPSRL (e.g. its governance, consortium, secretariat, network model and instruments)?	Efficiency	11. Is the current set-up of the Secretariat and of its instruments (such as the KMF) efficient? Validating also TOC Output assumptions 2 & 4: 'The Consortium Partners are able to field a suitably experienced and stable Secretariat team capable of (1) provoking demand and identifying 'burning' applied knowledge questions (2) ensuring knowledge fits needs (3)enabling sharp-minded (not like-minded) people to find one another and (4) providing attractive learning experiences Involvement in the KP offers the Consortium Partners sufficient benefits beyond the financial compensation in the form of the management fee to mobilize the internal knowledge, experience, resources and presence in the field necessary for or contributing to the various KP activities
Challenges: What challenges (whether related to TOC assumptions, problem statements or other factors) constrain KPSRL from effectively delivering interventions and outputs in support of TOC results? What challenges or potential	Sustainability Efficiency	[Need to research current challenges to provide future recommendations under objective 3.] 16. […] what scenarios might await the KPSRL after December 2024?

scenarios may become important for KPSRL in the medium-long term? What impact has inflation had on the KPSRL capacity to deliver its expected results?		12. What impact has inflation had on the KPSRL capacity to deliver its expected results?
Internal learning: Are KPSRL's internal monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning approaches and tools adequate to its needs? Are KPSRL's MEAL approaches resulting in internal learning and effective adaptation?	Efficiency Effectiveness	13. To what extent has the Secretariat become a learning organisation under the current contract? Is its approach to and tools for internal learning adequate to its needs?
Objective 3: To provide recommendations on how positive outcomes and impacts of KPSRL can best be sustained through: • The KPSRL's approach, processes and positioning for remainder of the current strategy period (including via the revision of KPSRL's Theory of Change and Results-Based Framework). • The KPSRL's preparations for the post-2024 period.		
Approach: How could the current set of interventions / expected outputs be adapted, in order to strengthen relevance and effectiveness?	Relevance Effectiveness	1. '…Are there other adaptations that the Secretariat should make? [it is useful to break this big question down into different types of adaptation]
Positioning / participation: How could the KPSRL's engagement with network members be adapted, in order to ensure adequate breadth and diversity of participation?	Relevance Effectiveness	1. '…Are there other adaptations that the Secretariat should make? [it is useful to break this big question down into different types of adaptation]
Maintaining relevance and coherence: How can KPSRL evolve to continue meeting and appropriately balancing the diverse priorities and learning needs of different network stakeholders and participants?	Relevance Coherence	1. '…Are there other adaptations that the Secretariat should make? [it is useful to break this big question down into different types of adaptation]
Sustainability – addressing challenges: How can the network and learning within it best be sustained in the face of identified challenges?	Sustainability	17. How can the network and learning within it best be sustained in the medium and long term?
Post 2024: How should the KPSRL prepare for the period post-2024?	Sustainability	16. How should the KPSRL prepare for the period post-2024? Include suggestions that will inform the strategy process planned for Q3-4 of 2023: what scenarios might await the KPSRL after December 2024?

TABLE 4: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Scope

Time period assessed

The MTR will cover the duration of the current contract of the KPSRL, from its starting date in January 2021 to December 2022, but will also consider where appropriate how KPSRL under the current contract is adapting in response to past lessons, especially under the 2019 MTR.

Sample

The MTR will be based on the maximum amount of data the team can gather and analyse within the time and budget available. This will include findings of a comprehensive review of available literature, an online survey of network participants, and 20-25 key informant interviews and/or online workshops, plus inputs generated by an online sense-making workshop with the evaluation Reference Group and a ToC and RBF reflection session.

Locations

4 days' data gathering will take place in The Hague. The survey, other KIIs and mini-workshops will be administered online.

Approach

To maximise the utility of the process for KPSRL, and inclusion and accountability for all stakeholders, TI will adopt a **participatory** approach to the MTR, and ensure close collaboration with the MTR Reference Group (which includes the KSPRL's Secretariat, Consortium Partners, Advisory Committee and the MFA representatives). The MTR will adopt a range of best methodological practices used in the evaluation of peace, security and rule of law programmes and research and policy/practice influencing initiatives. It will thus deploy **mixed methods** and combine both **qualitative and quantitative evidence**. The approach will **combine 'inside-out' elements** – considering the quality of the TOC and whether it is being effectively delivered – **with 'outside-in' elements** – considering most significant changes or outcomes, whether expected or unexpected, and analysing these in relation to the KPSRL's TOC and its contribution.

The MTR will integrate a focus on decolonisation, equality and agency of potentially disadvantaged actors. The team will gather evidence that KPSRL activities support the agency of people from societies and communities where SRoL programming is ongoing, including by examining whether programme approaches and learning via the KMF and PLI have focus on integrating localisation effectively and appropriately into SRoL agendas, how priorities get defined, by who, and how participatory approaches are. The MTR will also consider evidence that KPSRL related knowledge generation supports policy and practice change to support access to security and rule of law for women, disadvantaged groups and LGBTQIA+ communities.

The MTR will highlight the perspectives of research participants from all gender backgrounds and seek where possible to ensure gender balance among participants overall (however, this will depend also on the gender balance among KPSRL stakeholders and participants). The MTR will also examine evidence that networks meaningfully include women, disadvantaged groups and LGBT+ communities. All data will be disaggregated by sex to support gendered analysis of findings.

The MTR will also pro-actively seek perspectives from those based in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS), especially countries in focus under ARC, Somalia SRoL or other activities under outputs 2-4. As suggested in the TOR, research with participants in these programmes will explore whether KPSRL is engaging them and responding to their knowledge and learning needs and priorities

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effectively. It will also ask whether grants are accessible and administered in a way that facilitates access to resources and the flexibility needed to ensure localisation. Inclusion will be maximised by keeping participation requests and tools succinct and offering opportunities for engagement at multiple steps in the process – e.g. data gathering, sense-making, TOC and RBF reflections.

Phases and deliverables

Phased approach
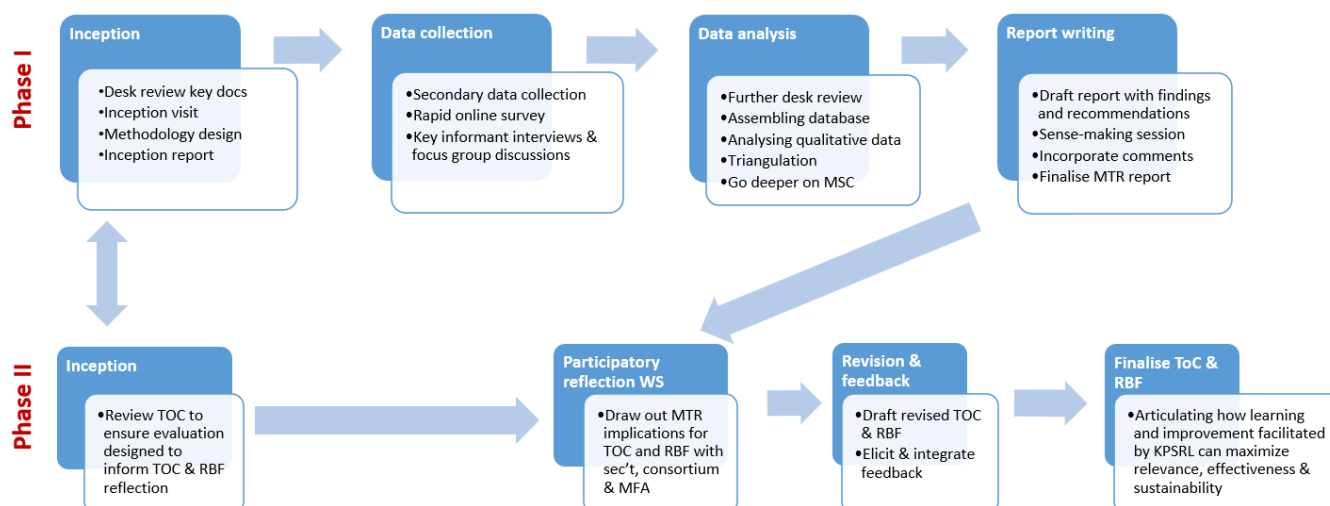
The MTR objectives will be delivered over two phases as illustrated in **Error! Reference source not found.** above; the key steps translate into deliverables as shown in Table 5 below.

Steps	Deliverables
Inception	An inception report, with refined evaluation questions, methodology, work plan and timetable for the MTR to be approved by the MTR Reference Group
Phase 1: Provide a report responding to the MTR objectives and questions	
Data collection	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)
Data analysis	
Report writing	
Sense making session	
Finalisation	A final report of not more than 30 pages with key findings and recommendations
	The raw data collected during the evaluation
Phase 2: Accompany the KPSRL Secretariat and its Consortium Partners in a process of revising the ToC and the RBF	
Participatory reflection workshop on ToC	
TOC and RBF drafting, revision and feedback	
Finalise TOC and RBF	Revised theory of change for the KPSRL
	Revised Result Based Framework

TABLE 5: DELIVERABLES

Phase 1

The present **inception** stage includes a systematic review of initial documentation and existing monitoring data shared by the Secretariat, plus a robust initial examination of the TOC to inform evaluation design and identify assumptions to test during data collection and analysis. This ensures a focus on utility and phase 2 outputs from the outset of Phase 1. It also draws on an inception meeting

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with the MTR reference group and meetings with other appropriate stakeholders in the Hague, as well as a second round of feedback if need be, to consult on the approach, decide where to place more emphasis within the criteria and refine the framework, research questions, tools, methodology and workplan set out in this report.

The **data collection** process will be comprehensive by design. A variety of secondary sources including monitoring data, documents provided by the MTR reference group (on the KPSRL, KMF and Programmatic Learning Instrument and their impact) and KII/ mini-workshops participants and other relevant sources (for example those showing knowledge uptake in policy/practice) will be reviewed. Data will be organised and synthesized against the evaluation questions, under Criteria headings, and outcomes will be harvested by the evaluation team, to be further explored and supplemented through the primary data collection phase.

Given the nature of the KPSRL and its goal and desired outcomes, the outcome harvesting exercise will include identifying outcomes related to: the breadth and diversity of participation in the Platform; the intensity of exchange; opportunities for learning; and changes among platform participants as a result of learning. Focus will also be put on identifying outcomes which demonstrate that new evidence, and new insights and solutions, are being incorporated within SRoL policy and programming.

The primary data collection will start with a rapid online survey, which will be designed and disseminated at an early stage to collect frank and nuanced views as well as challenges and recommendations from all stakeholders. This will help capture systematic, quantifiable data points that would be difficult to discern from a more limited subset of interviews. It will also surface additional outcomes. Based on the responses to the survey and the desk review, Key Informant Interview (KII) and mini-workshops tools will be refined to capture perspectives and observations from key stakeholders. A combination of individual interviews and group discussions will be organised; interviews with KPSRL staff partners, network participants and other relevant stakeholders will take place face-to-face in the Hague and online with those located elsewhere.

Building on existing outcome harvesting efforts by KPSRL, we will gather as much supporting evidence on causation and contribution as possible and explore alternative explanations of the outcome to qualify KPSRL's level of contribution. In addition, as far as possible within the time available to us, we will gather and triangulate what information we can to verify and validate outcomes we can from partners, stakeholders and desk review.

During data gathering, analysis and report writing, borrowing somewhat from the MSC approach, we will strengthen our analysis of causation and significance by honing in on particular clusters of outcomes or stories of change, uptake or impact that seem significant, and focus extra effort on establishing causality and looking at alternative explanations for those. Where possible we will use KII and mini-workshops time to go into depth on these most significant stories of change (derived from clusters of outcomes) - for example with particular partners who may be doing things differently as a result of their engagement/funding under the KMF and/or PLI. When possible, a narrative interviewing methodology will be applied in order to further assess the nature and motivations KPSRL stakeholders' participation (actively or not) in the platform, how meaningful and useful is or could the platform be for them. The **raw data** gathered in the MTR will be shared in an accessible, anonymised format at the end of the assignment.

The **analysis** phase will be conducted gradually throughout the evaluation process. Data will be processed and analysed in a database, and qualitative data will be (partly) coded and quantified to enable a comparative analysis of findings. TI has developed an innovative way to ensure triangulation, in the form of a master list, ensuring that each question is answered from different sources, and perspectives can be compared.

As well as drawing on outcome harvesting by KPSRL and exploring validity and contribution, TI will integrate an adapted form of the Most Significant Change tool to help collect and compare stakeholders' most significant stories of change related to the KPSRL. Focus will be placed on exploring how outcomes have been achieved, and on tracing the KPSRL contribution from outputs to outcomes and up to the goal level, as per the evaluation questions on effectiveness. The survey, KIIs and mini-workshops will also be key to exploring the questions around relevance, coherence and - particularly in relation to the KIIs with Secretariat staff - efficiency. The questions on sustainability – relating to how KPSRL positions itself in the period post-2024 – will be answered through a meta-analysis and the sense-making session.

During the **report writing** stage, findings and recommendations will be compiled in the first draft report and submitted to the MTR reference group and any agreed peer reviewers. Comments in writing and inputs generated via a sense-making session for the Secretariat and Reference Group will then be used to validate and refine the findings, implications and recommendations. Feedback will then be incorporated prior to submitting the **final report**.

Phase 2
After validation of the final report, the team will proceed with the **process to consult on and revise the TOC and RBF** under phase 2. The scope and objectives of Phase 2 will be refined during Phase 1, taking into account both the findings from Phase 1 and further guidance from the KPSRL Reference Group on how to ensure that Phase 2 feeds into the forthcoming KPSRL strategy process, which is currently being designed (and on the extent to which Phase 2 should focus on the current or post-2024 periods).

The specific questions to be explored, and process to be followed, will therefore be finetuned prior to commencing Phase 2, but is anticipated that they will include the following;

Questions to be explored (building on the findings of Phase 1):

- How strong is the evidence that the assumptions underpinning the ToC are valid? And what does this mean for the KPSRL?
- How strong is the evidence that outputs are being delivered and outcomes achieved, and is this contributing up to the goal and goal relevance level?
- What have we learnt about how change - at level of learning and policy / programming change - is or isn't happening? What are the different pathways through which change is happening? How can this be represented more clearly in the ToC?
- And how will we know this change is happening? What do we need to monitor and how best to capture that in a revised RBF?

Indicative process to be followed:

- Reflective and participatory in-person workshop indicatively including representatives from the Secretariat, Consortium Partners, MFA contact point and Advisory Committee members (Maximum of 15 participants).
- Online consultations with selected stakeholders unable to attend the in-person workshop (including selected network members from FCAS contexts).
- Drafting of a revised ToC by the MTR team.
- Process of coordinated feedback and strengthening of the ToC by a smaller group.
- Development of and consultation on the RBF.

At the conclusion of Phase 2, the **final ToC and final RBF** will be submitted.

Sampling methods

In selecting research participants, careful attention will be given to a valid and comparable sampling of informants, covering all type of stakeholders. . As such, TI proposes a combination of two sampling approaches:

1) Purposive sampling: This is a sampling method through which survey, interview and group respondents are intentionally selected based on their knowledge of the subject and/or their direct participation in the activities studied – drawing on suggestions from Secretariat staff and the MTR reference group.
2) Snowball sampling: This is a sampling method through which the initial respondents are used to identify additional informants relevant for responding to, triangulating or validating questions within the MTR framework.

The survey will be targeted via KPSRL both towards newsletter recipients and to a wider range of network participants and non-participants with views on the future of KPSRL, who will be reached by pushing out the MTR survey on web and social media (twitter, facebook and LinkedIn). The team will aim to reach a mix of senior and working level staff. Importantly, the team will ensure regional and gender sensitive targeting, and make concerted efforts to engage those from non-European/US contexts, with emphasis on fragile and conflict-affected contexts, including ARC programme settings, Representativeness will also be ensured by considering factors such as age, ethnic background, disability, level and type of participation in the platform, organisation and type of respondent (NGO, civil society, government etc).

Stakeholders and tools

Naturally, as a network seeking to maximise participation and exchange, KPSRL has a wide array and diversity of stakeholders. Stakeholders in the KPSRL's governance structure include:

- The Management Committee
- The **Advisory Committee** (overlapping with the Platform Community)
- The **MFA/DSH** (also an important focus of KPSRL's learning and exchange)
- Consortium partners
- The Secretariat

Their roles are already described in section 2.1.

Other stakeholders are '**network participants**' who are targeted as part of, engaged within or users of the learning processes and knowledge products delivered and/or supported by KPSRL and its network. These include:

- **Researchers**– whether activist researchers, academic or practitioner researchers
- **Practitioners** – including those working at the implementation of programmes or initiatives and those involved at other levels of programming, policy or learning work related to SRoL
- **Policy-makers** – whether working with the MFA/DSH or a wider array or governments, regional or multilateral organisations, whether in the Global North or South, and at various levels
- The **wider policy community** – such as advocates, influencers/opinion shapers, journalists, members and representatives of political parties, foundations etc.
- **Public and professional audiences** – interested in SRoL and related themes, such as students, young people/early career professionals, engaged members of the public, and so on.

Most of these types of participants engage with KPSRL via one or several of the outputs described in section 2.5 on the 'The current KPSRL phase' – i.e. via the Knowledge Management Fund, Programmatic Learning Instrument, Annual Conference, ARC global learning, MFA/DSH policy or programmatic learning, practice labs, the 'Fragile Truths' podcast, or by interacting with web or social-media-disseminated resources. In addition to the above, the MTR will seek feedback and suggestions from **non-participants**.

In this MTR, given the resources and time available, it thus makes sense to design research tools in a way that groups those involved in running KPSRL and the wider network participants to enable deeper exploration of insights into the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the specific outputs or learning processes they have been most engaged in, while seeking broader feedback from all on how KPSRL's interconnected learning processes are 'adding up' to higher level impacts from their perspective. While all participants may offer some feedback on efficiency, for those more involved in governance, more detailed questions will cover their feedback on KPSRL processes and their efficiency/purposefulness. All participants will be asked questions that invite their perspectives on sustainability and future adaptation.

Based on the overall objectives, question and criteria above, this approach to grouping stakeholders and elaborating tailored research tools for each group is summarised in Table 6 below, while more detail is provided in a masterlist of sub-questions to gather relevant insights at annex A (indicating the relevance of each question to each stakeholder group).

Target # participants	Tool	Duration	Stakeholders
50+	**Tool 1** Online survey	15-25 mins	All KPSRL network including: Annual Conference and event participants, KMF grantees, PLI grantees, ARC programme reps, Somalia programme representatives, MFA DSH and embassy interlocutors, other KP counterparts, other SROL sector actors
19	**Tool 2** KIIs (with 1-2 persons per interview)	60-90 mins	5 x Secretariat staff (in pairs or individuals) 1 x MFA/DSH individual

			4 x key PLI personnel (Somalia desk, Demining - HALO Trust Europe, Great Lakes Desk, Kigali, South Sudan Embassy) 6 x non participants (2 individuals with comparative perspectives on KPSRL vs alternative international platforms; 2 rejected KMF applicants; 2 SRoL actors not currently engaged) 3 x network participants (e.g. KMF grantees or others to be identified) - to explore emerging positive/negative outcome/impact areas in more depth
30-40	**Tool 3** Mini- workshops	90-120 mins	1 x KMF grantees (6 people - 2 from each window since window I of 2021) 1 x ARC trajectory learning leads (3 people) 1 x Somalia trajectory learning partners (3 people) 1 x MFA/DSH current/former leads (3-5 people) 1 x Other Annual Conference/Learning event/Podcast participants/leads (6-10 people) 1 x Consortium partners (3 people)[309] 1 x Advisory Committee (6-10 including current and former members)
10	**Tool 4** Sense making WS	180-240 mins	Secretariat staff MTR Reference Group [Additional selected stakeholders if appropriate]
109-129+	**Total target**		

TABLE 6: TOOLS

It is unlikely that interviews and focus groups will cover all suggested questions in all instances, which will vary depending on the type of stakeholder, the programme component being scrutinised, and the areas in which participants are best equipped to provide relevant evidence and opinions. Based upon the outcomes of the initial online survey and the emerging MEAL data available, tools for qualitative data gathering will be finetuned.

TI will highlight key questions in advance to enable interviewees and mini-workshop participants to consider their responses and supporting evidence in advance. They will also be asked to share supporting evidence with the MTR team both in advance and in follow up.

While TI will prepare and analyse the findings of the survey, in order to comply with data protection law, KPSRL will administer it and take responsibility to promote network participants' engagement with it via appropriate email and social media outreach.

Ethical considerations

Confidentiality and protection
Confidentiality refers to the protection of the informants and data collected. Throughout the evaluation, the team will respect the principles of voluntary participation and informed consent and work in line with the ICRC "Handbook on data protection in humanitarian action".[310] To the extent that the data collection process involves access to sensitive materials, confidentiality of that data will be respected, and precautions will be taken to guarantee the anonymity of the information and people in question. Sensitive information revealed in confidence will not be disclosed to others without

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expressed permission to do so. Individual names will not be attributed in the evaluation report and recording equipment will not be used during interviews. Further, all data that may be potentially useful for other research will only be obtained with the consent of relevant survey or interview respondents and the decision of respondents to participate will be fully voluntary. Throughout the evaluation, the team will respect the principles of voluntary participation and informed consent and work in line with the ICRC "Handbook on data protection in humanitarian action".[1]

With regards to data security and privacy protocols, TI will comply to MFA policies. TI applies safeguards through codes of conduct, and respect for privacy, as detailed in the Dutch *'Algemene Verordening Persoonsgegevens* (AVG), and the European 'General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)'. In line with the EU directive regarding data protection, TI adheres General Data Protection Regulation and ensures that, amongst others, the points 26, 29, 32, 33, 42, 52, 75 and 78 are always respected and applied by all consultants and partners TI guarantees the protection of the data gathered during its assignments. For example, TI uses the advanced and protected (complying to organizational confidentiality requirements) software 'Survey CTO' for phone surveys and online questionnaires.

Do no harm and safeguarding

Do no harm and safeguarding measures will be applied. TI provides maximum assurances regarding protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse through involvement, directly or indirectly. This includes sexual exploitation and abuse but should also be understood as all forms of physical or emotional violence or abuse and financial exploitation. All team members will sign the TI code of conduct, including the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the commitment to observe zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse (see annex D).

COVID-19 pandemic

At the time of writing, restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic no longer pose a significant challenge to in-person data gathering where relevant. However, TI will monitor the situation, and to prevent the transmission of the virus, all necessary precautions will be taken during the evaluation process in accordance with Dutch regulations and guidelines.
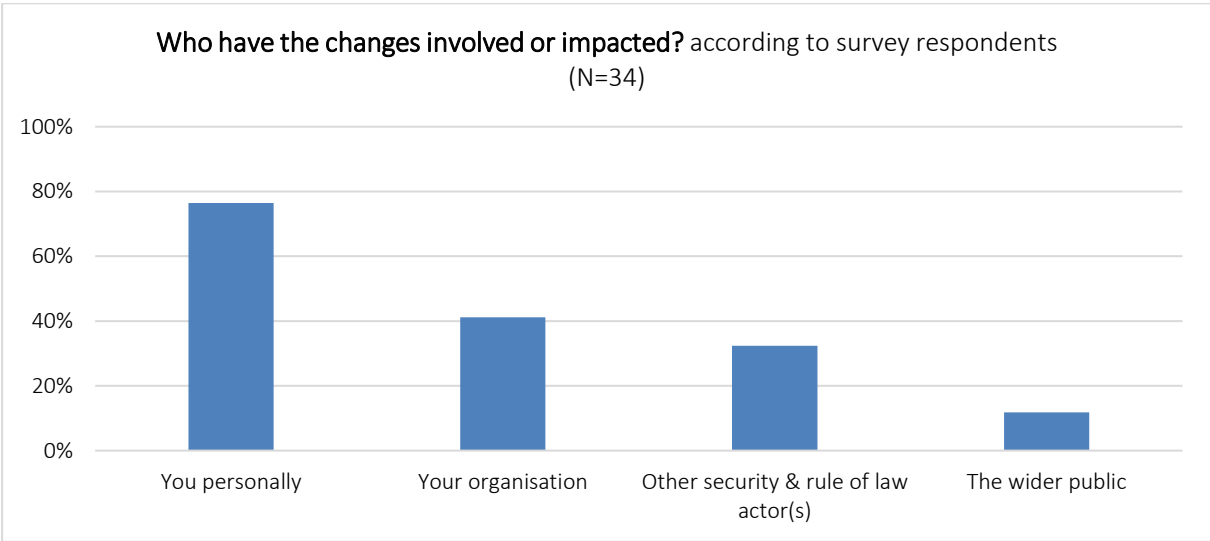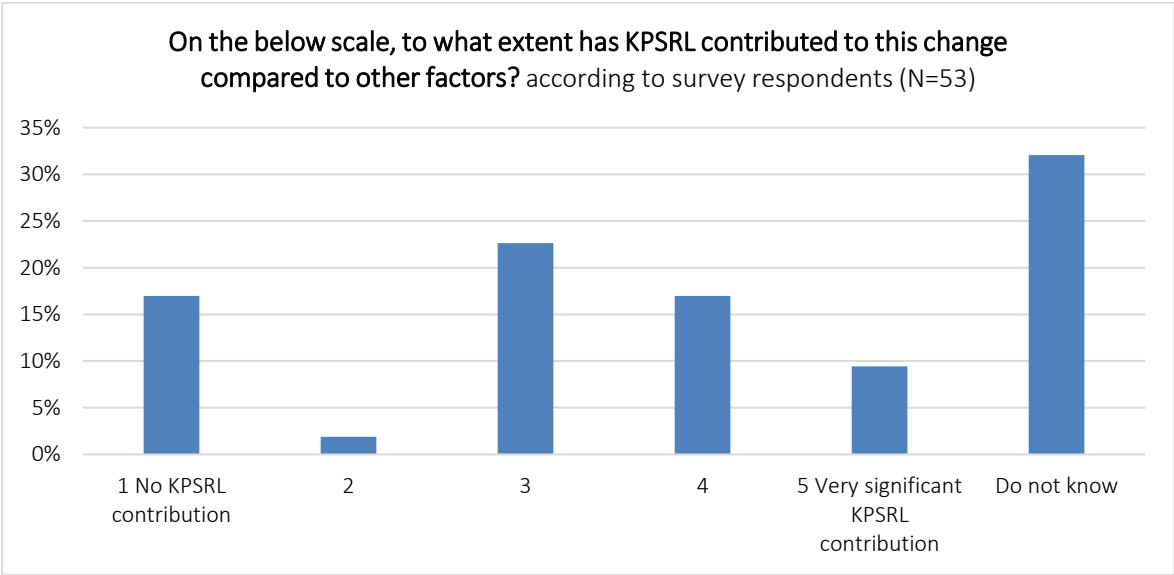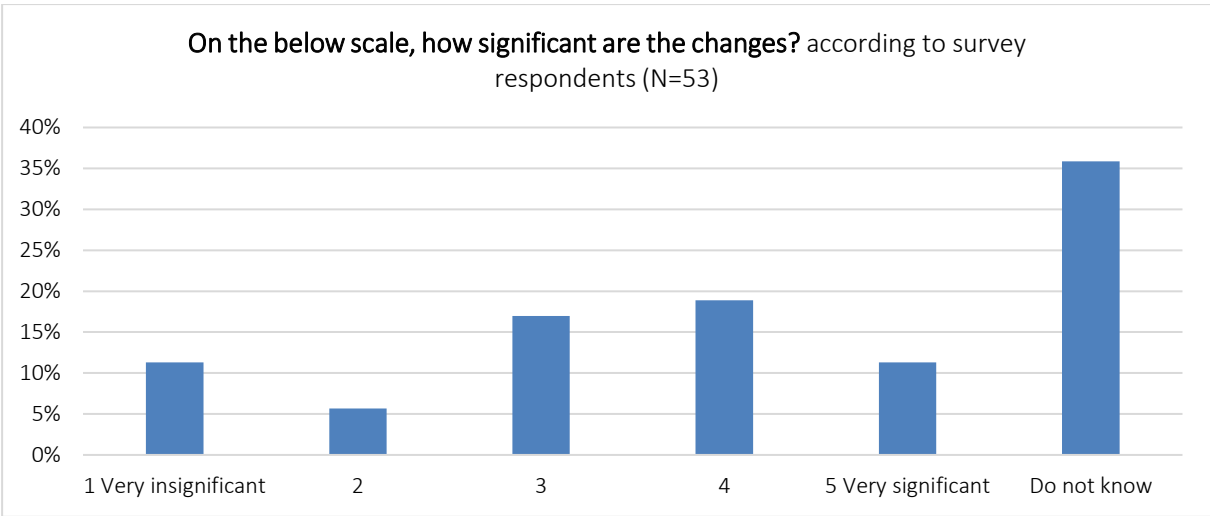
Challenges and mitigation measures

Challenge	Mitigation Measure
Possible COVID restrictions	• Where required, KIIs/mini-workshops to be done online.
Motivating stakeholders to provide feedback especially those in FCAS or with only tangential participation in KPSRL	• KPSRL/CP/AC/MFA help to encourage engagement. • Early requests and persistent reminders. • Streamlining requests and data-gathering tools. • Multiple opportunities for FCAS stakeholders to engage.
Time available for data-gathering, lit review and analysis is delimited by overall budget available.	• Maximising time efficiency • Clarifying limitations on comprehensiveness where unavoidable.

TABLE 7: CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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[1] Kuner, C. & and Marelli, M. P. (2017) Handbook on data protection in humanitarian action, p.46.

On the below scale, how significant are the changes? according to survey respondents (N=53)

On the below scale, to what extent has KPSRL contributed to this change compared to other factors? according to survey respondents (N=53)

Who have the changes involved or impacted? according to survey respondents (N=34)

What challenges or scenarios should KPSRL be prepared for in the medium-long term? According to survey respondents (N=30)	
Possible challenges	**Explanation**
A less cohesive and sustainable – and more authoritarian and unstable - world	- Eroding democracy and increase of totalitarianism and authoritarianism - Confrontational/polarised geopolitics and transformation of the multilateral system - Civic space being narrowed down (including limited funding for CSOs) or shrinking space and collapse of RoL in countries - Deterioration of RoL, securitization, and focus on national security - Demographic shifts - Digital conflicts - The impact of climate change on SRoL
Uncertainty over the political future for SRoL work	- Reliance on government funding is political and changes with the geo-political inclination of the government - Militarisation and defunding of aid and peacebuilding - Challenges with being more critical of the development industry - Need for an independent base for KPSRL - Being relevant to the way international community is approaching things - Collecting data and evidence on what works to provide justice and build peace
Localisation, decolonisation and effective support for local driven change	- Need for more tailored activities that directly contribute to effecting change at the national levels, focusing on local interests - Capitalising on more concrete results and advocacy efforts - Working to decolonize the development industry - Working closely with people that are making a direct contribution to achieving the SDGs in their local or national context - Catching up to the movement of people-centered justice and contribute to the work - Supporting the people who are really doing the work at the national and local level - Involving local governments, risk of collaboration with governments involved in corruption and in HR violations - Experience sharing between local KPSRL actors - Participation of new actors from different regions in setting policies and choosing topics
Challenges concentrating efforts strategically	- Focusing on too many things - Need for RoL capacity building in EU or EU candidates countries - Need for funding, human resources and coordination in countries - Not being strategic enough - Short timing - Supporting a variety of projects in fragile situations - Involving more civil society actors

What evolving trends should KPSRL consider when shaping its agenda looking forward? According to survey respondents (N=23)	
Securitisation versus peace, democracy and cooperation	Transformation of the multilateral system
	Securitisation of foreign and development policy
	The political economy of SRoL
	Erosion of the gains previously made by the liberal peace and democracy movements
	Democratic transition
	The concept of democracy in FCAS
	The political conditions in FCAS
Power, justice, localisation	The movement for people-centered justice
	Decolonisation/Economic colonisation of the world

	Global power relations and influence in security issues
	Financing for local actors
Confronting ecological and social pressures driving conflict and instability	Increase of uncertainties globally
	Increase in economic, social, political and environmental conflicts
	The intersection of ecosystems collapses with emerging insecurity at the local regional and global level
	Climate change
	Shortage of water
Technical / best practice agendas	Peacebuilding innovations
	Triple nexus HDP
	What should follow the SDGs?
	New way of working
Specific themes	Transnational organised crime
	Land governance
	The mining industry in developing countries
	Digitalisation: use of technology/digital conflict

What could KPSRL consider doing differently to meet the future priorities and needs of network participants? (N=20)	
Increase activities/make them more attractive and tailor them to the priorities of countries	25%
Be clear about the goals and reach them	15%
Engage more with actors in countries/share local experience	15%
Increase collaboration on the respective topics/Create more spaces for dialogue	10%
Learning themes: Address the gaps and constant updating	10%
Organise regional platforms/events	10%
Support members to become closer to KPSRL key topics/Promote the political education	10%
Support priority programmatic and policy advocacy efforts	5%
Support the NL MFA in building expertise and institutional memory in the field of SRoL	5%

What should the knowledge platform's purpose be for the next 3-4 years? (N=26)	
Work on a more local-led approach: bring more local knowledge into discussions/Strengthen local research and knowledge on solving conflict and security challenges	31%
Themes: Deepen the understanding of the social contract, focus on RoL and transitional justice, Revisit the RoL (more than A2J), Improve law enforcement	23%
Agenda: Use the FCACs as the starting point, Promote the political education in countries, more projects on mining industry impacts in developing countries, explore possibilities and challenging on working on system change	19%
Deepen collaboration and engagement of members/Continue the work/Consolidate learning	15%
Capacity development of participants in acquiring skills and writing projects/Balance critical and practitioner perspectives and inputs	8%
Continue the work/Consolidate learning	8%
Expand KPSRL to more countries	8%
Access to knowledge and educational materials online	4%
Develop KPSRL into a think tank	4%

ENDNOTES

[1] KPSRL, 'Governance structure' (2021), p.3

[2] KPSRL, 'Bijlage 2 behorend bij: Onderhandelingsprocedure zonder vooraankondiging: Management en beheer Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL)' (25 Sep 2020), p.10.

[3] Ibid., p.8.

[4] https://www.kpsrl.org/knowledge-management-fund, accessed 10 Jan 2023.

[5] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.8.

[6] https://www.kpsrl.org/knowledge-management-fund, accessed 10 Jan 2023.

[7] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.10.

[8] Ibid., p.9.

[9] [KPSRL], 'Introduction to KPSRL Programmatic Learning Instrument', (21 Jun 2022), p.1.

[10] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.11.

[11] [KPSRL], Introduction PLI, p.1.

[12] Ibid., p.1.

[13] Ibid., p.2.

[14] Ibid., p.1.

[15] Ibid., p.1.

[16] Ibid., p.2.

[17] Ibid., p.2.

[18] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.12.

[19] KPSRL, 'Annual Plan 2023: Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law' (31 Oct 2022), p.22.

[20] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.14.

[21] KPSRL, 'Annual Plan 2022: Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law' (30 Nov 2021), p. 6.

[22] [KPSRL], 'Preliminary 2022 monitoring data', (18 Jan 2023), p. 3.

[23] Staff feedback on draft MTR: 'this trend already reversed in Q1 and Q2 of 2023. Currently, it looks like we are on track to have more events (and also participation) that even in 2021.'.

[24] KPSRL, 'Annual Report 2022' [draft received 22 March 2023], p. 13.

[25] KPSRL, 'Annual Report 2022', (final submitted version), p.42: 'MoUs and contracts have been sign in the meantime and disbursement is expected to align with the planning in 2023.' Also noted in staff feedback to draft MTR.

[26] See KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.42-43.

[27] KPSRL, 'Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law: Annual Report 2021' (29 Apr 2022), p.7.

[28] Ibid., 20.

[29] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.5.

[30] Ibid., [KPSRL], 'Reporting on Q2 2022 activities', [undated internal activity and outcome report], p.2.

[31] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.12: thus in 2022 KPSRL hosted '17 events, 12 of which not stand alone but part of broader learning trajectories.'

[32] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.26.

[33] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.6-8. Tables showing status of 2021 and 2022 KMF projects as at end 2022. '9 of the 12 projects identified in window I and II of 2021 have been completed successfu6lly and on time. 1 has been completed but much later than expected (half a year later). 1 is on track to be completed but also substantially delayed. And 1 is delayed…. all 6 projects identified in window I of 2022 are on track to be achieved'.

[34] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.15.

[35] Ibid., p.10-11. Changes under consideration include 'allowing proposals to be submitted in languages other than English; covering at least some of the core costs of KMF grantees based in FCAS; conducting direct outreach in FCAS, and / or involving network participants in the selection of the KMF projects (Embassies, for example, might have a better view on the work of local partners)' (D14). See also D15: the 2023 KMF reform process will involve FCAS actors and KMF grantees in a Steering Group and consultations.

[36] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.9: whereas 'At the outset of 2022, the PLI was merely a grant budget line earmarked to stimulate and facilitate programmatic learning' by the Annual Report 2023, KPSRL had 'identified three promising pilot projects in partnership with DSH and the Dutch Embassy in Nairobi. The Secretariat has also extensively engaged with the Dutch embassies to Juba and Khartoum on two additional programmatic learning initiatives'.

[37] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.1-3, KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.31-35.

[38] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.31.

[39] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[40] Over 2022, 65 applications came from FCAS (compared to 28 in 2021) – a substantial increase from 14% to 40% of the total. [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.6

[41] For example, In the Semi-annual report 2022, of 6 projects selected, none had FCAS leads. However, the Dalit Welfare Association challenges the marginalisation of untouchables in Nepal, Jasmine Foundation is based in Tunisia – both global south countries with conflict and security issues. The ISI project had a co-applicant based in Myanmar, as did Institute for Law and Society in Afghanistan's project, with its focus on amplifying unheard voices within Afghanistan. Even with the Radboud University project 'Aiding the social contract', 'Global-South based partners (coming from Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone) are vital in the creation of this project and seem to carry ownership over its direction.' See KPSRL, 'Semi-annual report' (2022), p.2.

[42] KI/mini-WS with consortium partner.

[43] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[44] Planned research on organisational learning strategies in development/SROL was not completed in 2022, but KPSRL plans to cover the topic with Somalia and other PLI partners in 2023 (KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.28).

[45] See KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.27 on this point, and its identification of several agenda items for strengthening KPSRL learning methodologies – progress on which the MTR can review.

[46] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.27.

[47] Ibid., p.24. Ibid., p.20, 37-38 illustrates responsiveness to partners' needs further.

[48] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.11 and staff feedback on draft MTR.

[49] KII/mini-WS with non-participants.

[50] For example, in 2022 KPSRL still made 'substantial progress' in 'Deepening partnerships, particularly with Dutch embassies in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS) and Dutch-funded (I)NGOs' implementing SROL programmes, and also developed research partnerships: 'University of Utrecht became a partner in the Land-at-scale programme trajectory (funded by RVO). New research partners were awarded KMF grants, including the Jasmine Foundation and Radboud University. Researchers participated in the podcast and stand-alone webinars (Radboud, ECDPM, Berghof Foundation). Conducive Spaces for Peace participated in the Unboxing Localisation trajectory facilitated in collaboration with CSPPS and MFA. Students from the Leiden University College were engaged for research on the concept of the 'social contract'.

[51] For one interviewee, it was a problem that PLI was too rigid ('a project looking for a customer') and theoretical to appeal to busy programme implementers; another felt KPSRL should have been quicker to adapt to this.

[52] Average scores were: access to learning: 4.2; network and build relations: 4; share knowledge: 3.8; access to decision makers: 3.5; for fundraising: 2.9.

[53] KII/mini-WS with advisory committee.

[54] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.

[55] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.17.

[56] I.e. through a self-organising learning team meeting regularly with the liaison officer, as well as via the DSH Director sitting on the KPSRL Advisory Committee.

[57] See also KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.5, which concludes that ''The indicators tracking active and passive participation to KPSRL activities point to a fairly active, vibrant network, with healthy active and passive participation to events, ongoing collaborations with other learning entities, enthusiastic participation in KMF calls and initial success in expanding access to applicants based in partner countries, rising audience numbers for the podcast, and warming interest and relationships in the PLI activities. However, they also tracked instances where participation was less or slower than hoped for, including to KPSRL events, to the process for setting the thematic headline in a participatory way, and to the PLI.'

[58] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.15-16.

[59] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.18.

[60] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.21.

[61] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.4-5.

[62] in 2021: Newsletter subscriptions -5.74%; LinkedIn contacts +101%; Twitter followers +7.66%. In 2022: Newsletter subscriptions +30%.

[63] Strongest presence comes from programming/implementing organisations (50% in 2021), with 14.9% from policymaking organisations, 12% from research organisations, 1.3% from Dutch Embassies and 18.5% from organisations dedicated to other tasks. See E21, D26.

[64] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.16. This assumes the data is correct, and not simply for example that not everyone indicated in the global north has flagged their location when responding to KPSRL monitoring surveys.

[65] [KPSRL], Reporting on Q2 2022 activities, p.4.

[66] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.6: there were 161 KMF applications in 2022 (compared to 196 in 2021). However, 65 came from FCAS (compared to 28 in 2021) – a substantial increase from 14% to 40% of the total.

[67] Referring to the fact that one of two outcome areas in the TOC is 'The breadth and diversity of participation (by type of organization and geographic origin) and the intensity of exchange within the KP network increases'.

[68] There were 239 'active participants' in 2022, defined as hosting or speaking at an event, sharing a research output through website, implementing KMF projects, implementing PLI projects or speaking in the podcast series. No data before this. See KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.11, [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.10.

[69] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.11.

[70] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.26. 2022 Annual Report draws a similar conclusion (KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.5). So, for example, '74% [of 2021] event participants reported that they planned to collaborate more with other participants because of the event' (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.10); in Q2 2022 some KMF grantees noted that 'relationships established during the grant period have continued' ([KPSRL], Reporting on Q2 2022 activities, p.5); '98% of [ARC Uganda and Burundi learning event] participants agreed with the statement that they had made contacts with whom they planned to follow up' (Ferrari G, Manirakiza M, 'Addressing Root Causes – Regional Learning Sessions in Uganda and Burundi', (KPSRL, 13 Jun 2022), p.20); the evaluation of the third Somalia session suggests that the session enabled all Dutch SRoL country partners - from separate consortia – to exchange on risks and adaptations and collaborate together on learning ([no author], 'Report on the Third Quarterly Meeting of Security and Rule of Law Programming partners of the Somalia Unit of the Embassy of the Netherlands', (18 Jan 2022), p.10). 2022 monitoring reports contain bits of evidence of active participation during events, event participants later connecting, and of how KMF former grantees have kept engaging in new KPSRL events ([KPSRL], 'Reporting on Q3 2022 activities', [undated internal activity and outcome report], p.7).

[71] As with GRIP's KMF-supported book, shared in a hybrid event with 220 participants with further plans for pan-African dissemination; the video GPPAC shared at the UN High Level Meeting on Peacebuilding Financing; Tamazight Women's Movement and Human Security Collective (TMZ/HSC) also shared findings in an event and video; NIMD shared its learning on addressing power imbalances in an online dialogue session on 'local ownership and shifting power dynamics' for Dutch Strengthening Civil Society partners; Nigerian grantee PILP also planned to 'continue creating awareness for the project through presentations at various local and international forums'; Re:Orient also presented findings in multiple places both to network participants and decision-makers. See the respective KMF reports in the list of sources.

[72] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.27.

[73] Re:Orient, 'Mapping Madaniya', (KMF final report, no date).

[74] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.19: 'Comparing the organisations that attended the most KPSRL events and with the highest number of staff, there is a partial overlap between 2021 and 2022. The Dutch MFA was by far the organisation most present in both years, participating in almost all KPSRL events in both years. CARE, CORDAID, Clingendael, PAX and Saferworld are present in the top 12 for both years and constitute a core of Dutch / international INGOs whose interest in KPSRL activities has remained constant. Instead, IDLO, Interpeace, ZOA, Media INK, the Danish Refugee Council, Leiden University, and DCAF were organisations that emerged among the most present to KPSRL events in 2022.' E17: In 2021, **12 organisations were very actively engaged**, participating in five or more distinct KPSRL events

[75] KII/mini-WS with ARC participants.

[76] KII/mini-WS with ARC participants.

[77] KII/mini-WS with ARC participants.

[78] KII/mini-WS with PLI participants.

[79] KI/mini-WS with PLI participants.

[80] KII/mini-WS with advisory committee also highlighted scope for more cross-country exchange.

[81] As staff feedback on a draft of the MTR noted: 'efforts to capture learnings via learning papers and reports which were disseminated and some learning for a (specific learning events, participation to different KPSRL Annual Conferences). There could have been more, but given the low level of interest of partners and the lack of resources[…] attempts to adapt and keep the learning conversation ongoing made a difference'.

[82] Although insights on the localisation of demining, how to programme in sanctioned contexts, and flexible contracting and programming may generate some interest, for several reasons the MTR suggests value in attention to ensuring PLI produces widely useful learning outcomes: survey and qualitative responses suggest

there is limited interest from the wider SRoL sector in innovative demining approaches per se; review of Somalia trajectory event reports raises concern that some of the generic learnings about flexibility to context and partner consultations may not resonate far; likewise ARC participants struggled to provide examples of widely applicable lessons learned from ARC programming. While it is important to remain optimistic, there is a risk to be engaged with here.

[83] KPSRL feedback shaping Somalia Unit's understanding of evidence creation and what to ask their implementing partners ([KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.13); Supporting translation by the Embassy of thematic justice learning questions to the Niger context (Ibid.); Contributing to 2-3 DSH staff members' skills in drafting policy-level ToCs (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.36); Learning from ARC on how to integrate learning processes into future fund/portfolio design (Ibid.) even if the ARC trajectory overall was felt to have been less successful in bringing about learning (Ibid., p.26).

[84] KII/mini-WS MFA.

[85] At least for 11 out of 12 KMF projects begun in 2020 (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.9).

[86] Ferrari G, Manirakiza M, Addressing Root Causes, p.20.

[87] KII/mini-WSs with ARC participants and secretariat staff.

[88] Cordaid felt more confident on the connection between COVID and conflict after hearing peer organisations at the KPSRL event (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.36); CARE and Cordaid reflected on the localisation agenda and their practices compared to their peers (Ibid.); CARE and ZOA learned about the adaptive programming approach and on their MEAL methods (Ibid.); NIMD reported that is KMF backed research helped address power imbalances in NIMD and its Power of Voices programme, and that this helped strengthen organisational cohesion and working relations with partners (NIMD, 'Subsidiarity Relationship and Managing Power Imbalance: NIMD Network', (KMF final report, no date); Somalia trajectory partners reportedly learnt about evidence gathering approaches, how to use outcome harvesting to detect changes that could inform adaptation, how to manage risks, the effectiveness of approaches and how to implement PDIA ([no author], 'Report on the Fourth Quarterly Meeting of Security and Rule of Law Programming partners of the Somalia Unit of the Embassy of the Netherlands', (4-5 Apr 2022), p.7, The Broker, 'Renewed Terms of Reference: Multi-DGIS Knowledge Platform learning project on knowledge brokering with LMIC partners', (27 Oct 2022), p. 10). MTR participants corroborated this, citing learning on PDIA methods, Sharia law and mutual learning between participating consortia on effective approaches (KII/mini-WS with Somalia trajectory participants).

[89] 4.3 average from survey respondents in 2021 (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.9). However, p. 13 of the annual report says this was 4.12 out of 5 rather than 4.3; 4.2 in 2022 up to Q3 ([KPSRL], 'Reporting on Q3 2022 activities', p.8).

[90] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.27.

[91] For one interviewee, although the move to support more knowledge by and for SRoL actors in FCAS was justified, there was a need to strengthen the quality of research outputs being produced under KMF grants. Review of some project outputs (for example, BD, AW or BB) does corroborate this view.

[92] 2021 annual report claims that: 'The KPSRL created relevant opportunities for learning. Events were in line with needs and interests of the network, … events and KMF experiences functioned as learning opportunities, and the KPSRL has provided additional, tailored support for the learning agenda of DSH and the Addressing Root Causes program.' (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.4).

[93] [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.11 and staff feedback on draft MTR.

[94] Ibid., KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.12.

[95] As one MTR participant put it: 'KPSRL is servicing a community in which many people have their own thematic fields. They should be an expert not on these themes but bringing something relevant to these various themes – so she can really benefit from looking at social contracts, how states develop – these big cross-cutting issues relevant whether you work on land governance, basic services, etc. The themes that help us engage with the kind of contexts we are in and push forward with that thinking.' KII/mini-WS with a non-participant. Others agreed with this, flagging inclusive governance/peace processes, the social contract, asymmetric power as examples of such broader themes, and noting that niche issues can work against strengthening a network.

[96] In a KII/mini-WS with a non-participant the view was expressed that KPSRL themes are too diffuse, fragmented, theoretical and captured by NGOs with a certain agenda. While this wasn't the general view, keeping a mix of perspectives and not overly centring on dynamics between donors, INGOs and local CSOs vs other topics that may be significant to SRoL and change processes would be important.

97 KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

98 KII/mini-WS with a consortium partner.

99 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.12.

100 For one MFA official, KPSRL events were 'always well done' (KII/Mini-WS MFA); a Somalia trajectory participant praised KPSRL's flexibility: 'they are there for us' (KII/mini-WS Somalia trajectory participants); another PLI partner was 'really encouraged to learn and find the time for learning and not to rush into something' (KII/mini-WS PLI participant); for another interviewee, 'The confrerence is unique in the way it's done so well' (KII/mini-WS with a non-participant).

101 According to KPSRL, 'participants particularly appreciated: practical recommendations and clarity of the presentation…. The quality of (and tools for) facilitation and presentation, the use of concrete examples to illustrate analytical findings, and the use of analytical frameworks to sustain reflection and explain experiences and findings…. Additionally, the relevance or connections with organisational reforms happening inside within participant's organisations, and the diversity of the audience, were seen as positive dimensions' (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.13).

102 Feedback on a practice lab on localisation, KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.13.

103 KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.14. This point was echoed by interviewees who had participated in podcasts/events.

104 See KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.15 on need for webinars, practice labs and KMF projects to have connectivity to wider learning processes and platform participants. See also KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.29. Corroborated also by interviewee feedback.

105 KII/mini-WS with ARC participants.

106 Such that in 2022 the three ARC learning events were (among the) most appreciated by participants (KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.6; echoed in a KII/mini-WS with ARC participants).

107 [KPSRL], Reporting on Q2 2022 activities, p.5. In detail: 'On the Somalia events, some participants find the online setting challenging, as well as having issues with the length of the format and the asymmetries in speaking authority between consortium leads and country partners. In the ARC event in Burundi, the quality of the venue brought down the scoring. Additionally, participants would have appreciated fewer frontal presentations about projects and more practical work or thematic discussions. For the online seminar on Afghanistan, the problem was poor timekeeping leading to cutting out the discussion part at the end… Best scored event was ARC Uganda regional event (4,5), with learning on learning, on systems approaches, and on the requirements of success of intervention strategies used by ARC. Likely, ARC Burundi had a similar or higher scoring… Second best event was the one on lessons learned in Afghanistan, which was researchers' and presentation based…. Somalia sessions have led to learning on how to do adaptation in practice and on good partnerships. The lower scores are due to the format that relies on implementing partners to generate evidence and insights in advance to the meeting. But their MEL systems are not necessarily suited to this. And therefore, sometimes the implementing partners' contributions have been less interesting than hoped for.

108 KII/mini WSs with Secretariat staff.

109 KII/mini WSs with Secretariat staff, MFA staff, consortium partners and PLI participants.

110 KII/mini WSs with Secretariat staff.

111 KII/mini-WS with PLI participants.

112 In addition and more specifically: Cross-programme and –country exchange is important: 'Iraq and Somalia can learn from each other' (KII/mini-WS with PLI participants). Several wish to see lead ups to or follow up from events such as the annual conference rather than a big bang and then implications and follow-up remaining unclear (E.g. KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff). One ARC participant also flagged the value of ensuring learning from programmes that have concluded lives on and gets considered when governments (Dutch or otherwise) embark on relevant new programmes in future (KII/mini-WS with ARC trajectory participants).

113 The MTR definition of safe space is at Annex D.

114 Even if the definition used in monitoring questions is unclear. [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.11.

115 The Uganda ARC event was rated 5 out of 5 by participants as a safe space for learning (J5); regarding the ARC Uganda and Burundi events, '100% of participants agreed with the statement that the event was an open and safe space where they could express themselves' (Ferrari G, Manirakiza M, Addressing Root Causes, p.20); in the 4th Somalia session, ''15 out of 16 respondents recognized that the quarterly session was an open space for dialogue' that 'included open reflections also on approaches that do not work well' (Report 4th Quarterly Meeting of SRoL Programming partners Somalia Unit of the Dutch Embassy, p.8).

116 KII/mini WS with Secretariat staff.

117 See, for example, [KPSRL], 'Reporting on Q3 2022 activities', p.7. Also KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.22 on joint multi-knowledge platform learning trajectory of approaches to localisation and decolonisation of knowledge.

118 See [no author], 'KMF Accessibility Reference Group', (5 Aug 2021), p.5.

119 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.24.

120 KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.5; KII/mini-WS with ARC trajectory participants.

121 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.21-22.

122 KII/mini-WS with ARC trajectory participants.

123 KII/mini-WS with ARC trajectory participants.

124 Including: Facilitating knowledge on COVID and conflict contributed to the DSH official stance (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.35); supporting DSH and its programming partners to learn about adaptive programming (Ibid.); assisting the MFA by 'creating a space to learn from failures' at the Terugkomdagen (KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.24); Encouraging the Juba Embassy to commit to learning in its MACS with KPSRL as a named learning partner (KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.8; [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.14); Somalia unit integrating changes to the methodology and learning questions in the MEL section of its MACS, (KII/mini-WS with PLI participants); learning processes and guidance on PDIA, flexible contracting, programme implementation, (I1) and the evidence it needs from partners (KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.25); [Tentative] Helping shape DSH's Afghanistan policy following the Taliban takeover; [Tentative] An evaluation on mental health and psychosocial programming 'definitely shifted our approach' towards integrating MHPSS into all crisis response and peace efforts (KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.).

125 Including inputs: into the 'climate part' of DSH's guidelines for conflict sensitivity ([KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.14); into the MFA/DAF's Africa Strategy (Ibid., although KII/mini-WS with an MFA official describes how the resulting strategy failed to integrate much of KPSRL's input); from a 'UNDP session' into the Ministry wide internal briefing on responses to coups (Ibid.).

126 KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.35: 'DSH, CARE, and Cordaid, among others, reported to have taken up the agenda. For example, localisation is directly mentioned in DSH's draft SRoL ToC (January 2022). CARE and CORDAID reported having made it a priority for 2022. Other learning actors have worked on the localisation agenda in 2021: by claiming contribution, the KPSRL does not claim that localisation would not have emerged as important reform theme without its efforts. It simply claims that it was a useful part of a package of discussions and reform processes that covered the topic. ' Other examples include contributing to a better access to justice programme in Burundi with Help a Child (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.35); and contributing to follow on programmes and approaches via KMF (Ibid., p.9, ibid., p. 11).

127 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.24, KII/mini-WS to validate outcome. Other tentative examples include: inspiring students to write a paper on social contracts in peacebuilding (I2); informing a DCAF ISSAT review of adoption of lessons on Afghanistan ([KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data); stimulating Berghof/IFSH to engage directly with German & Dutch policy makers on the notion of trust in SRoL policy & ToCs ([KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data); supporting local researchers to hold a stakeholder dialogue and reflect on local innovations in countering Covid disinformation at community level (Uganda) (KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.24).

128 KII/mini-WS with KMF grantees. Other tentative examples include: YAPAD getting local security forces on board with more nuanced PVE discussion ([KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data); for another grantee, a local covid task force in Northern Uganda was 'interested to read and learn from their report' and this led to a change in its composition and 'more attention to voices from below' (KII/mini-WS with KMF grantees).

129 Report 4th Quarterly Meeting of SRoL Programming partners Somalia Unit of the Dutch Embassy, p.7.

130 Similar finding to KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.26: 2021 annual report overall concluded both that the TOC is adequate and that: 'Outputs have been effective in influencing change at outcome level.' The Annual Report 2022 argues this also. MFA staff also felt that broadly the outcomes discussed were positive and illustrated KPSRL's coherence and goal relevance overall (KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.).

131 See, for example, KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.4, which sets out KPSRL's 'ambition to become more impact-driven in its events and structured partnerships, for instance by aligning with the thematic headline or systematically asking and evaluating how events and activities contribute to the simultaneous goals of learning in the community and learning about learning within the Secretariat'.'

132 KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.21.

133 KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.10. See also p. 15 and p. 17, which identify several ideas for improving learning methods and synergies between instruments and outputs.

134 KPSRL, 'Outline: Collaboration KPSRL and the Dutch Embassy to Somalia', (no date), p.2-3: 'ensuring attention is given (in cooperation with KPSRL Policy Officer) to linking agenda with larger strategies of the Somalia Embassy (e.g. MACS) and/or learning agenda of MFA-The Hague. Keeping Embassy and partners informed of and alert to upcoming learning and knowledge uptake opportunities: encourage and remind partners to share with the group any upcoming events or activities that are relevant to the learning agenda; share with the Embassy and partners

interesting and relevant findings from other Platform members as and when we see them; invite them to relevant KPSRL events; provide space for their learning in the Annual Conference and beyond; and encourage them to apply for KMF grants.'

[135] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[136] KII/miniWS with consortium partner.

[137] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[138] '[...] such as learning by doing, innovation, creative sense-making, and comparison with other experiences' KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.39-40.

[139] E.g. KII/miniWS with consortium partners.

[140] KII/miniWS with consortium partners.

[141] See also KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.41.

[142] Achieving this may involve advocacy for donors to support learning among partners, and then trying to establish close engagement over time with organisations most interested in a given theme.

[143] For example ensuring events feature where appropriate: a clear analytical framework (questions which can lead to useful answers); opportunities for those of all backgrounds, status and approaches to knowledge/learning to contribute equally to discussions; more equal speaking authority; a sense of safety but also a willingness to challenge and be challenged from different perspectives with an invitation to honesty; short online sessions; fit-for-purpose venues; less presentation and more dialogue time; methods to ensure interaction; participant involvement in developing recommendations; better support to implementing partners' connectivity and self-organisation; timely harvesting and sharing of lessons in a compelling way that is digestible for the stakeholder groups involved.

[144] If secretariat has limited capacity, it could identify relevant thematic or geographic experts within its network to act as sounding boards on KMF research design and peer review. Many experts are willing to offer limited amounts of input pro bono, but small pots of resources for an official peer review process could be set aside by KPSRL.

[145] For example, a strategic contribution for PLI could be plugging the gap in MEL across multiple programmes and their aggregate effects at country level. This could emulate, for example, the insightful, strategic and policy-relevant attempts to reflect across interventions in FCAS contexts, such as the OECD's multi donor peacebuilding evaluation series covering DRC, South Sudan and Sri Lanka. Such learning can contribute to the strategic and political case for backing and scaling up effective approaches to the public and decision makers in Embassies, the Netherlands and beyond, in a way that insights about individual programmes may struggle to do.

[146] As noted in KII/mini-WSs with MFA, consortium partners, advisory committee and secretariat staff. Positive quote from an MFA official.

[147] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.4, 5, 7.

[148] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.5.

[149] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.42: 'The overall expenditures for 2022 come to EUR 1.127.827 against the budget of EUR 1.424.881 (a difference of EUR 297.054). Broken down into the main sections of the KPSRL budget, there is an underspend of EUR 44.624 for the costs related to the Secretariat personnel, an underspend of EUR 23.907 for the operational costs, and underspend of EUR 228.523 related to pass-through instruments (KMF and PLI).'

[150] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.43.

[151] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.42: 'MoUs and contracts have been sign in the meantime and disbursement is expected to align with the planning in 2023.'

[152] KII/miniWS with consortium partners.

[153] For example in KII/mini-WSs with MFA.

[154] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[155] KII/mini-WSs with secretariat staff and consortium partners.

[156] KII/miniWS with secretariat and consortium partners.

[157] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[158] KII/miniWS with consortium partners. For example, the Annual Plan 2023 notes 'some issues are simply unforeseeable now. For example, the thematic headline for 2023 is yet to be defined, KMF projects will be selected in Spring and Winter, and many learning activities will emerge from the co-creation moments of the PLI pilots' (KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.21, KII/miniWS with consortium partners).

[159] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.20.

[160] The Secretariat expanded in 2021 with the arrival of two new team members, the Learning Officer and the Operations Assistant (KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.21); but turnover continued in 2022 such that 'With the on-

boarding of a new Operations Assistant in November 2022, the Secretariat will be at full capacity for the first time since December 2021' (KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.9); Likewise, 'By the end of 2022, all three CP representatives and the MFA contact point had also been replaced' (KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.9).

[161] Secretariat KII and MTR team observation. The recruitment of an intern in 2023 may help with this.

[162] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[163] As one Advisory Committee member noted: 'the last rotation had 4 members leave and 4 new members join which was seen as a challenge for institutional memory'. Feedback on draft MTR from MTR Reference Group.

[164] Due for review in 2023: KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.9.

[165] KII/miniWS with consortium partners and secretariat staff.

[166] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.21: In late 2021, KPSRL reported that 'the Secretariat has adopted, over time, a disparate set of tools for collaboration, data collection, and communication, the newest ones being Monday.com (project management) and Miro (online collaborative whiteboards). This creates a confusing situation where data sits in many different places, with challenges in converging data streams to inform action.'

[167] Ibid., p.4: 'Ensuring that administrative systems are up to date for an expanded network and strengthened Secretariat – particularly by prioritizing the establishment of a Customer Relation Management, as well as rationalizing file management and automation. This priority area contributes to strengthening the Secretariat internal organization, as a precondition to delivering on the other areas of the TOC.… The Secretariat will work with a service provider to extend the use of the existing software Monday.com to a CRM function. Preliminary reflection has led to a taxonomy of terms and concepts to be used for tagging KPSRL community members and products in the CRM for easy retrieval of information.… the Secretariat plans to establish practices for keeping the CRM updated over time and will conduct a communication campaign to encourage community members to self-populate the CRM with relevant information.… The Secretariat plans to review the administrative tools currently in use at the Secretariat, searching for redundancies and duplications and thereby simplifying the tools used for project management, communication, cooperation, and data collection.'

[168] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff: 'it's really going to sharpen KPSRL's engagement efforts. It will allow KP to be more targeted. It will show regional, thematic focus and so on. It will make these efforts a lot more successful. Right now outbound communications are way too wide of a net – and so can look generic to thousands of people. It will produce a very different result when things are targeted.'

[169] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff: 'To find participants was often looking through spreadsheets but expects this to get smoother and more systematised via the CRM. The same goes for processes for selecting panellists, participants, grantees and so on'; 'it's a core thing if they are a network and rely on contributions from people, then the first thing is to know who they are, where they are, what they need/expect, and what's their motivation'.

[170] For example the CRU-led learning trajectory on adaptive management reform.

[171] 'Connecting learning at multiple levels remains challenging, from policy to portfolio management to programming and back'.

[172] In 2021, DSH 'made limited progress on a better connection between programme level learning and portfolio management. The Secretariat has not yet agreed with DSH on a clear role, and the priority of this reform topic inside DSH also remained unclear, with attention diverted to other topics, such as the decentralisation of funding, the ToC revision, and adaptive programming.'

[173] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.42.

[174] On this: 'changes in expenditures took place due to the inflation and salary adjustments informed by the collective agreement taken on by the Clingendael Institute. While KPSRL still closed 2022 within the budget on these lines, this was primarily due to the Operations Assistant position not being filled for the most of the year. These structural salary changes, however, will have longer-term implications in the coming years. All things being equal, without any intervention, we would expect the deficit to amount to over EUR 50.000 by the end of the project in 2024. Discussion is needed on how to close this gap or adjust the approach and activities.' (KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.42).

[175] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.8.

[176] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.19.

[177] Ibid.

[178] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.32. There is openness to adjust the 2023 Annual Plan if MTR/ToC review necessitates doing so, which shows appropriate flexibility.

[179] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.11.

[180] KPSRL, 'Proposed revised MEL framework 2022', [Microsoft excel file], (no date). Such as Annual Reports and Plans, the 'proposed MEL framework', and the TOR for the present MTR. For example, the 2021 Annual Report

illustrates that the KPSRL is gathering information on outputs, outcomes achieved with KPSRL and network participants' contribution, and impacts to the level of goal and goal relevance.

[181] As specified in higher level indicators in the proposal revised MEL framework 2022.

[182] Ibid. This defines results and indicators for monitoring approach, outputs, outcomes, goal and goal relevance from 2021 through 2024, provides relevant definitions, specifies monitoring frequency and methods to be used. At outcome level, proposed MEL framework indicators look, among other things, at 'level of participation', 'safety', 'level of satisfaction' and 'intensity of participation' of learning events. At lower levels of the proposed MEL framework, indicators for each output consider qualities of what is being delivered that are relevant to KPSRL's achievement of outcomes, goal and goal relevance. For example: 'Agreement with the statement: "through the pilots and non-pilots activities, the KPSRL has gained important learning insights gathered for future running of the PLI"', or 'Qualitative overview of users' experience with the KMF'.

[183] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021.

[184] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021.

[185] See e.g. KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.25-30.

[186] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.10, 12, 15. KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.31-32. Annual Plan 2023 signs of success appear more qualitative than those for 2022. The 2022 Annual Plan lists also outcome and output level indicators and later draws them together in a monitoring framework. KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.13-15, 17-19, 21-24.

[187] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.14.

[188] Miroboard: An internal reflection on how the Annual Conference 2022 went: https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVPGXvlSg=/

[189] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.6. KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[190] See Ferrari G, Manirakiza M, Addressing Root Causes, p.20 on ARC: 'Participants reflected that it would have been useful to have similar events during the early months of ARC implementation'.

[191] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.16.

[192] Elsewhere, annual Reports and plans also indicate that KPSRL has: extracted lessons from ARC learning processes in support of improving cross-fund/portfolio learning processes in future; and 'directly conduct[ed] a meta-evaluation of five programming partners who had a Dialogue and Dissent partnership with DSH on how learning and partnerships enabled adaptive programming' and 'how adaptive programming in turn le[d] to better results'. (KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.7)

[193] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff, MFA, advisory committee and consortium partners. Respondents highlighted the processes for collecting monitoring data outcome focused evidence; monthly and quarterly reflection sessions enabling reflection on how things are going and results in real time and strengthening connectivity between secretariat, consortium partners and MFA; processes to collect annual planning to team workplans and calendars; and a positive process for contracting the MTR.

[194] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[195] KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

[196] To do this, KPSRL could, for example, ask leads on particular instruments to prepare lists of outcomes in advance of monitoring sessions, and present these on a grid with one axis for low-medium-high significance and another for low-medium-high KPSRL contribution, then focusing conversation on outcomes where most has been achieved or most adaptation is needed. It could also create 'evidence boxes' for teams to paste evidence for use during MEAL and outcome harvesting processes, or use outcome forms for this purpose – as a way to ensure all team members engage with the process of compile evidence substantiating outcomes.

[197] As two advisory committee members agreed, 'life for CSOs where KPSRL focuses is going to become more difficult'. Supporting learning and exchange on how to succeed in defending civic space and contributing to SRoL-related change in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian contexts could be very valuable in future. (KII/mini-WS with advisory committee.)

[198] These are not new agendas, and have already been the subject of the 2021 theme of 'Asymmetric Power and Partnerships' and an 'Unboxing Localisation trajectory facilitated in collaboration with CSPPS and MFA' (KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.6, 9).

[199] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[200] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff. The interview revealed some frustration that past efforts to raise this point had not been heeded. Also echoed in KII/mini-WS with a non-participant. Similarly, in the report on the 3rd Somalia trajectory learning session, it is noted that the 'MFA's leadership has expressed the wish, in the framework of its learning agenda, to become better at using the evidence from the field for policy making. The evidence from successes of PDIA type of programming for instance is particularly relevant. The Embassy team explained that they would like the implementing organizations to share information on the impact of program activities that

shows what works and what doesn't and test assumptions of their approaches.' (Report 3rd Quarterly Meeting of SRoL Programming partners Somalia Unit of the Dutch Embassy, p.8)

201 KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

202 KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.

203 [KPSRL], 'Reporting on Q1 activities 2022', [undated internal activity report]2, [KPSRL], Preliminary 2022 monitoring data, p.6.

204 KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

205 MTR reference Group feedback on a draft version of the MTR.

206 KII/mini-WSs with a non-participant and MFA staff.

207 Gouwenberg, A, 'Strategy Paper Knowledge Management Fund: Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law', (25 Apr 2018) .

208 KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.

209 KII/mini-WS with KMF grantees.

210 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.36-37: 'looking at the possibility to introduce more radical reforms, such as participatory grant making, which will further increase the network involvement in KPSRL decision making. Any moves in the directions of participatory grant making, however, will need to be based on reforms of the KPSRL governance structure because of the participation fatigue mentioned above. Being involved in decisions on KMF awards is a task that require considerable efforts from volunteers at specific points in time, and is therefore something that be discharged only if network participants have specifically agreed to put in the effort in a way that fit the KMF deadlines. It is a task that awards volunteer decision making power, and, therefore, it must be done in a way that is as representative of the broader KPSRL network as possible. This implies a careful consideration of the identity of the network participants that the Secretariat will seek to involve in this process.'

211 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p. 6; also echoed in KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

212 KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.27.

213 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.6.

214 Re:Orient, 'Mapping Madaniya', (KMF final report, no date).

215 KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

216 KII/mini-WS with PLI participants.

217 KII/mini-WS with conference/event/podcast participants/leads.

218 KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

219 KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

220 KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

221 KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

222 KII/mini-WS with a KMF grantee.

223 See e.g. Report 3rd Quarterly Meeting of SRoL Programming partners Somalia Unit of the Dutch Embassy, p.8. In this Somalia trajectory session, the Embassy's wish for grounded evidence on what does and doesn't work in SRoL programming to feed into policymaking is Important for KPSRL to reflect on. It needs to strike the right balance between looking at power relations between implementing partners in development projects and looking at how change can be supported on SRoL issues in the real world, and to remember localisation of development and learning can be part of the latter but not the whole conversation. Such issues do seem in focus in some activities, such as the Jasmine Foundation's Window I 2022 grant on 'Encountering the local state: Reimagining the social contract through security provision in Tunisia', for example. See KPSRL, Semi-annual report 2022, 3: 'The project contributes to reimagining social contracts through three main objectives: 1. Understanding citizen experiences; 2. Developing strategies for reframing citizen-state relations; and 3. Reimagining the social contract, starting at the local level in relation to security through discussions with local community representatives and municipal officials, tying this with existing decentralisation and security sector reform. The project focuses on local perspective and experiences in Tunisia, which challenge the State-centric and national level focus of SSR in the country. Besides being timely, it builds on already available data and draws on established relationships. While being implemented in Tunisia, the project seemed also relevant for other post-authoritarian transitions in MENA.'

224 KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

225 KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.37.

226 Two Secretariat KIIs.

227 Secretariat KII.

228 Secretariat KII.

229 KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff and non-participant.

230 KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.

[231] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.

[232] KII/mini-WS with advisory committee.

[233] KPSRL, Proposed revised MEL framework 2022.

[234] KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

[235] KII/mini-WS.

[236] KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

[237] KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

[238] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.19.

[239] KPSRL, Annual Report 2022, p.5.

[240] AS. Including for example via fees for memberships or other financing structures that allow more independence from the MFA, participatory grant-making, having a majority of Members from Africa, and devolving the structure to develop presence and decision-making authority in partner countries.

[241] E.g. KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

[242] KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

[243] KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

[244] KII/mini-WS with a KMF grantee. Also supported in KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[245] KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

[246] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[247] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.

[248] KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

[249] KII/mini-WS with a non-participant.

[250] KII/mini-WSs with secretariat staff.

[251] Secretariat KII.

[252] The MTR did not gather clear suggestions as to how this suggestion by participants could best be realised, but clearly there would be a range of ways to think about this: via PLI processes and partners; engaging directly to encourage such actors to engage with KP events or conferences– via social or appropriate media; KMF processes could also involve or engage such actors; if KPSRL's post-2024 structure had in country presence or partnerships, KPSRL might be more able to reach such actors directly; via partners' networks; podcasts or research processes could also involve such actors; and so on.

[253] KII/mini-WS with consortium partners.

[254] A view supported in one KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.

[255] KPSRL, Governance structure, p. 3.

[256] Ibid., Interview with KPSRL Head of Secretariat, 19 Jan 2023.

[257] Ibid., p. 3.

[258] See also Annex H – Defining key terms. For KPSRL, relevant examples of types of learning can include becoming more skilful, correcting mistakes, identifying and implementing lessons learned, becoming better informed, improved abilities to comprehend and construct meaning, innovating and adapting. KPSRL has updated this definition of learning from the one used in its 2021-24 proposal: 'the process through which knowledge generated through SRoL programming (within and outside the KP) is reflected upon and used to improve SRoL programming and related policy making'. See KPSRL, 'KP 3.0 – Theory of Change' (13 Dec 2022)

[259] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.4.

[260] See also KPSRL, Proposed revised MEL framework 2022. Comments in the Proposed MEL framework document note internal debates over whether outcomes should consider what changes as a result of learning, participation and intensity of exchange. During Phase 2 of the MTR, this could be a valuable discussion point – along with whether better outcomes from SROL policies and programmes could be incorporated more explicitly into goal or goal relevance.

[261] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.4.

[262] Ibid., p.6.

[263] Ibid.

[264] Ibid.

[265] Ibid., 19.

[266] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.4.

[267] Ibid., p.22.

[268] Ibid., p.28.

[269] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.4.

[270] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.19.

[271] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.10.

[272] Ibid., p.8.
[273] https://www.kpsrl.org/knowledge-management-fund, accessed 10 Jan 2023.
[274] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.8.
[275] https://www.kpsrl.org/knowledge-management-fund, accessed 10 Jan 2023.
[276] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.10.
[277] Ibid., p.9.
[278] [KPSRL], Introduction PLI, p.1.
[279] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.11.
[280] [KPSRL], Introduction PLI, p.1.
[281] Ibid.
[282] Ibid., p.2.
[283] Ibid., p.1.
[284] Ibid.
[285] Ibid., p.2.
[286] Ibid.
[287] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.12.
[288] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.22.
[289] KPSRL, Bijlage 2, p.14.
[290] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2022, p.6.
[291] KPSRL, Annual Report 2021, p.30-31 offers details.
[292] KPSRL, Annual Plan 2023, p.24.
[293] KII/mini-WS with PLI participants.
[294] KII/mini-WS with PLI participants.
[295] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[296] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[297] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[298] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[299] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[300] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[301] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[302] KII/mini-WS with secretariat staff.
[303] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[304] KII/mini-WS with MFA staff.
[305] PILP, 'Informal Justice Court 2.0: From Experiment to Model by rebalancing power asymmetries' (KMF final report, no date) and KII/mini-WS with KMF grantees.
[306] KII/mini-WS with KMF grantees.
[307] KII/mini-WS with KMF grantees.
[308] KPSRL, Proposed revised MEL framework 2022.
[309] Consortium partner staff not involved in KPSRL governance may also be interviewed as part of other stakeholder groups, for example in relation to ARC learning, or as participants in KMF/PLI.
[310] Kuner, C. & and Marelli, M. P. *Handbook on data protection in humanitarian action*., p.46.