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THE MULTISTAKEHOLDER INITIATIVE APPROACH TO EUROPEAN CRISIS MANAGEMENT. CIVILIAN CSDP AND ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL NON- STATE ACTORS

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Abstract: *The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions are deployed in complex operational environments, where a plethora of national, regional and international actors are present. These present circumstances enable the existence of an - either direct or indirect - but inexorable engagement between all stakeholders involved in similar activities. While the vast majority of current debates and research focus solely on the cooperative dimension of the CSDP in the framework of multilateralism and regionalism, the topic of the EU's engagement with local stakeholders is scarcely explored. Therefore, drawing on the multistakeholder initiative approach (MSI) in economic theory, this paper assesses the engagement of CSDP missions with civil societies and private sector entities in theatres of operations. Employing a single case study approach of inquiry, consisting of the EUCAP Somalia mission this paper aims at answering the research questions: how does EUCAP Somalia engage with local non-state actors, what are the opportunities associated with this engagement and to what extent can a MSI approach be implemented by EUCAP Somalia? By deploying a qualitative research design, this paper uses document analysis within a single case study approach of inquiry. The results of this approach show two distinct tendencies. While EUCAP Somalia informally engages with local non-state actors, this engagement is rather insufficient. Results of this research further show that CSDP missions represent an important tool of EU diplomacy and their engagement with local non-state actors positively impacts the implementation of two of their core principles: local ownership and human security.*

Keywords: CSDP, crisis management, multistakeholder approach, civil society, public-private sector partnership.

1. Introduction

EU's crisis management domain encompasses all civilian and military missions and operations and is the most visible element of the European Union's external action (Koenig, 2016). Moreover, the EU crisis management domain has nevertheless an evolutive character, marked by institutional reforms and based on significant practical experience (Smith M. , 2017). However, there are some core elements of the CSDP action which not only shape its distinct identity, but also help achieving its outcome, namely being an effective peacebuilding tool. Among these, ensuring local ownership while fostering a human security approach is paramount in all CSDP missions. While these are embedded in the EU rhetoric, how to practically implement these principles in the ever-complex operational environments in which CSDP missions are deployed remains the main challenge.

Moreover, challenging environments, particularly on the African continent, are attracting the attention and interest of a plethora of international and regional actors. In the context of major power competition's return, with the ongoing war in Ukraine and in its pursuit of becoming a more strategic and autonomous actor in the field of security and defence, the EU needs an even more consistent capacity to act and deliver in the security field globally. While a vast number of elements contribute to the EU's capacity to deliver efficient solutions in the crisis management domain, local ownership holds a central place, given the per se contested nature of peacebuilding activities.

In these circumstances, assessing the EU crisis management domain from various perspectives and disciplines becomes a priority for the EU to adapt to new challenges and to be an efficient security provider. Drawing on the EU's highly effective economic model, the connection between a policy which deals with "high politics" issues - the CSDP - and economic theory is not nevertheless surprising. It is a very useful perspective in assessing the main challenge that all CSDP missions face: the practical dimension of their mandate implementation. Given the complexity of their operational environment and the multitude of actors involved in related activities, CSDP missions can be analysed through the multi-stakeholder initiative approach (MSI). Since MSIs are mostly an instrument characterised by pragmatism, they can be a valuable tool for better understanding the nature of CSDP activities and challenges at the operational level, as well as contributing to finding tailor-made solutions to these.

Therefore, this paper aims to assess the European crisis management domain through the lens of MSI approach, to deeply understand its practical dimensions. Moreover, a case study is the most appropriate method of inquiry of such a topic, being intrinsically connected to the terms of complexity, particularity, uniqueness and particular interest (Stake, 1995). In this regard, a clear establishment of the research's delimitations is necessary. To this end, the case of the civilian CSDP mission deployed in Somalia - EUCAP Somalia - has been selected as a case study, due to its complex and particular nature. Thus, the paper envisages the assessment of the interaction between EUCAP Somalia and local stakeholders, namely non-state actors such as civil society organisations (CSOs) and the private business sector involved in civic action. Furthermore, the paper advances two hypotheses: there is a direct relation between a CSDP mission's engagement with local stakeholders and the mission's local ownership and CSDP engagement with local stakeholders positively affects the mission's effectiveness.

Consequently, the purpose of this paper is to understand what could be the potential benefits and challenges associated with the CSDP missions' engagement with local non-state stakeholders within the framework of the MSI approach. Although the strategic aspect will be assessed as well, the paper focuses on the operational one. Therefore, the first research question of the study is: how does EUCAP Somalia engage with local non-state actors? Moreover, since the security environment in Somalia is characterized by the presence of a vast number of actors, the current paper is considering a second research question: what are the opportunities associated with the engagement between the civilian CSDP mission in Somalia and local non-state actors for the overall missions' effectiveness?

To this end, the paper envisages the operationalization of two concepts: European crisis management and local non-state actors. The overall approach follows the framework of the multistakeholders initiative one derived from business and economy theories within the wider umbrella of constructivism in security studies. It is against this theoretical backdrop that a qualitative case study approach to inquiry is being deployed in this paper, together with a SWOT analysis. The research is being addressed both employing a descriptive content analysis of relevant policy documents (declarations, decisions, action plans, implementation reports), official press declarations, official social media posts, and informal conversations. The descriptive analysis is followed up by a single-case study, in which the functionality of the MSI

framework is assessed. This research employs qualitative primary and secondary data. Data will be collected via desk research.

Subsequently, this research has a diverse target audience: from academia interested in European security and peacebuilding to scholars, EU officials and the general European public. Nevertheless, Somali non-state actors' representatives are also part of the target audience of this paper. Since an assessment of the practical dimension of working through multiple frameworks in crisis management involving non-state actors in Somalia is scarcely assessed, this research aims at revealing the practice of this engagement. Moreover, the paper will assess whether higher levels of engagement between CSDP missions and local non-state actors can contribute to higher levels of missions' effectiveness.

Finally, the structure of the paper consists of five sections. The first one addresses the literature review, followed by the one depicting the conceptual map of the paper and the one describing the methodology pursued. The main section of the paper, namely CSDP in Somalia - engaging with local non-state actors, consists of two parts: the first one addresses the current state of affairs from a strategic perspective, while the second one consists of a SWOT analysis of the EUCAP Somalia's engagement with local non-state actors. This section is followed by one discussing the findings of the research, reduced to specific themes, with an emphasis on threats and opportunities associated with the MSI approach in the particular case of civilian CSDP in Somalia. The concluding section summarizes the central themes found and further opens the prospects of new ways of assessing CSDP through the lens of a multidisciplinary approach and the applicability of this approach to other contexts.

2. Literature review

While the topic of applying the MSI framework to CSDP is innovative, there are two current categories of literature which have a certain relevance to it. Firstly, there is a vast literature written on the topic of civil society organizations' implication in the EU's domestic policy fields (Greenwood, 2009); (Huller & Kohler-Koch, 2009). Furthermore, these have constituted the basis of other research focusing on the interaction between civil society and CSDP from a democratic theory's perspective, namely CSOs' democracy-enhancing effect over the CSDP (Dembinski & Joachim, 2014). However, this perspective takes into account civil

society and its influence on the CSDP referring to European CSOs, not CSOs from countries where CSDP missions are deployed. Secondly, there is another body of literature which focuses on the cooperation between CSDP missions and civil society on a case-by-case approach, emphasizing its informal character (Shapovalova, 2016). Nevertheless, these take into account the same European perspective over CSO's influence on the CSDP.

Assessing the interaction between CSDP missions and operations and local CSOs needs to be conducted on a case-by-case scenario, the status of CSOs being at times sensitive in particular countries where CSDP missions are being deployed. This statement holds a particular significance in a vast majority of countries from Sub-Saharan Africa where the environment for CSOs is often highly complex. Despite the fact that the EU acknowledges and supports the role that CSOs play in its policies, studies have pointed to a wide array of opinions on the matter in African countries (Misoiu & Petrica, 2023). In some countries where CSDP missions are present, such as Somalia, CSOs are viewed by government officials with hostility, at times being subject to intimidation or threats (Menkhaus, Sheikh, Quinn, & Farah, 2010). Therefore, the level of engagement between various CSDP missions and local CSOs can vary to a greater extent, being dependent on the social, political and legal context of the host country. Moreover, the situation changes in time, as these countries experience peacebuilding processes, transition processes or changes in the social and political spectrums.

For instance, in the case of EULEX Kosovo, CSOs became part of the mission's planning process, while several conferences with their members took place in various stages of the process (Palm, 2017). Moreover, if certain missions can have an official CSOs liaison officer, for others, an informally appointed staff member manages this task, as it was the case of EUPOL COPPS (Palm, 2017).

Another connected topic is the one assessing the interaction between local NGOs - mainly those from the African continent - and different EU bodies (such as the European Community Humanitarian Office) in the context of humanitarian aid (Irrera, 2016)

The engagement between CSDP missions and other local non-state actors, such as the business sector, remains largely underexplored in the existing literature. While the subject has been mentioned in passing, there is a noticeable lack of dedicated scholarly analysis on this specific aspect.

Thus, the topic of CSDP missions' engagement with local non-state actors in host countries from a MSI approach represents a gap within the literature written. Moreover, due to its innovative character, it advances a plethora of questions. Among these, how CSDP missions engage with local non-state actors in the framework of MSI approach and what are the opportunities associated with this engagement relative to a CSDP mission's effectiveness are the two research questions that this paper is focusing on.

Nevertheless, to provide an answer to the above-mentioned research questions, several conceptual delimitations, together with the limits of this paper need to be addressed in the upcoming sections of the paper.

3. Theoretical framework

Having as a general background security studies theories and the philosophical assumptions of social constructivism, this paper applies the MSI approach to CSDP missions.

Derived from sociology, the argumentation and the constructivist ideas make their appearance in the 1980s (Agius, 2019). Consequently, by emphasising the social dimension as opposed to the material one, constructivists advance the idea that security can be socially constructed (McDonald, 2018).

In terms of security, constructivist authors assume that security threats vary over time, thus being the product of social interactions between actors. By summarising the main concepts employed within the constructivist theory argumentation, it is observed that the concept of ideas, followed by that of identity and finally by the interaction between actors are the central ones. Constructivists have taken from social theories the idea that identity is formed by the interaction of political actors (Berger & Luckman, 1991). Consequently, security is a social construct, with emphasis on the interaction between actors involved in the same type of activities.

Therefore, it's within this philosophical framework that this paper is further assessing the interaction between CSDP missions and local stakeholders within the framework of MSI approach. Thus, this section further explores what is a MSI, what is its connection to the security field and European crisis management. Subsequently, the next step is to operationalize the concept of a local non-state actor in the context of CSDP.

MSIs have appeared as a natural consequence of pragmatically tackling complex issues in the international business environment. Consequently, they have a considerably pragmatic character, oriented towards problem-solving. While there is no universal definition of a MSI, most authors in the economic/business realm refer to it as being "an interactive process in which business, CSOs and possibly other stakeholder groups interact to make business processes more socially and/or environmentally sustainable" (Van Huijstee, 2012). The name itself - MSI - is nevertheless suggestive: more than two key entities need to be involved, while they all share a particular interest or are involved in the same type of activity.

Apart from the business sector, MSIs have been employed in various settings to tackle complex problems, most notably in the areas of humanitarian aid or, more recently in addressing cyber security concerns (Ciglic & Hering, 2021). Within the security domain, engaging MSIs has been a valuable strategy in various peacebuilding processes, fostering a space for dialogue, negotiation or debate (GPPAC's Preventive Action Working Group, 2017).

Further connecting the MSIs and CSDP requires a conceptualisation of the European crisis management domain. Encompassing all civilian missions and military missions and operations, the CSDP is thus seen as a *sui generis* instrument, designed to address complex global security challenges (Koenig, 2016). Moreover, by implementing its integrated approach to external conflicts and crises, the EU depicts itself as a security actor in the overall broad peacebuilding arena, addressing both immediate consequences and root causes of a conflict. The peacebuilding dimension of the CSDP is further emphasized by its continuous institutional evolution and practical experience (Kmec, 2022); (Smith M. , 2017). This dimension is even more evident in the case of capacity-building and training CSDP missions.

Lastly, establishing a connection between MSIs and CSDP missions requires the conceptualisation of local non-state actors. While this conceptualisation of non-state actors has as a general background the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement, which has been replaced by the Samoa Agreement, it also takes into account the specificity of the selected case study. Therefore, in this paper, local non-state actors refer to CSOs and business entities within the private sector which have been involved in civic actions.

Consequently, this section introduces the concepts and the theoretical lenses through which their interaction is being assessed. This approach has its limitations to particular case

studies, characterised by an articulated civil society and bustling business sector. Since CSDP missions are usually deployed in challenging operational environments, this approach has been the subject of critics as not being applicable in settings where democratic dialogue cannot be fostered (Faysse, 2006). While introducing the paper's methodological approach to inquiry, the next section further elaborates on this matter.

4. Methodology

Researching the topic of CSDP from a business theory perspective requires the use of methodological approaches specific to both domains: security studies and business. Taking into account this aspect, it becomes thus imperative that the selected approach to inquiry has to respond to the main research aim while being viable from a practical perspective. If one refers to the practical aspect, the researcher should make use of methods, techniques, theories and approaches which best serve the main research question, in what Chernoff (2006) describes as analytic eclecticism. Therefore, this paper is deploying qualitative research, "understanding" being the main aim of the research. To this end, it employs the case study approach of inquiry, exploring the topic in-depth and utilising multiple sources of information to answer the research questions (Yin, 2018) (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The main characteristic of this approach is the context's specificity, this being the main parameter for bounding the case study. The context refers not only to the presence of three CSDP missions and operations in Somalia but also to its specificity in social, economic, political and cultural terms.

Therefore, the case study is an intrinsic one, in which the context prevails and for which the researcher is reluctant to generalise its findings (Stake, 1995). From another perspective, the case study is an exploratory one, since the epistemological focus is to produce an in-depth understanding while exploring it through multiple sources of information. From a temporal perspective, the case study will be conducted in January-October 2022.

In terms of data collection, the paper employs two categories of data: data gathered through document analysis of official reports, documents and official social communication networks and secondary data from various articles written on the topic.

The next step within the methodological architecture consists of data analysis and representation strategy. To this aim, a tool mostly utilised in the business domain will be

employed: a SWOT analysis (Evaluation methodological approach SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats), 2015). This strategic analytical tool will assess the strengths, weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats associated with the interaction between EUCAP Somalia and local NSAs. This tool adds a layer of understanding of the researched topic and contributes to providing an answer to the research questions from a different perspective.

By deploying such an eclectic methodological design, this paper aims at emphasizing its innovative and multidisciplinary character. Nevertheless, the common and consistent characteristic of this research consists in the irrefutable commitment to the ethical conduct of the research during all of its stages.

5. CSDP and local NSAs: the strategic level.

The role of CSOs in the field of crisis management is well acknowledged by the EU. Moreover, European NGOs and think tanks that are committed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention are connected at the European level through the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO). Several programmes, action plans and frameworks of cooperation with NGOs and CSOs were adopted throughout the time. EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts was first proposed in 2001 and introduces the concept of effective partnership with civil society, without being very specific about it (Draft European Union Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, 2001). Subsequently, the European Council recommends a solid interaction between civilian CSDP missions and NGOs and CSOs in the Action Plan for Civilian Aspects of the European Security and Defence Policy, adopted three years later (Action Plan for Civilian Aspects of ESDP Adopted by the European Council (17-18 June 2004), 2004). Furthermore, the Council's Recommendations for Enhancing Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and CSOs in the Framework of EU Civilian Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention emphasizes for the first time the local dimension of NSAs, by promoting the enhanced cooperation between civilian missions and these through: "exchanges of views with and feedback from partners, local stakeholders and local populations, as appropriate, in view of mission evaluation/lessons learned processes" (Recommendations for Enhancing Co-operation with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the Framework of EU Civilian Crisis Management and Conflict

Prevention , 2006). Furthermore, in 2022 the European External Action Service (EEAS) published a guideline titled “Civilian Operations Commander Operational Guidelines on Civil Society Engagement” addressed to all CSDP civilian missions. The document highlights the people-centered approach of the missions and advances several principles that will guide the missions in their engagement with local CSOs (European External Action Service, 2022).

In terms of the engagement of CSDP missions and other local NSAs such as private sector entities involved in civic initiatives, the EU does not have a specific strategic framework.

6. Peacebuilding and Local Non-State Actors. The case of Somalia.

Somalia is an extremely complex case in security, social, economic and political terms. Somalia is part of the Horn of Africa region, a region where a vast majority of cross-border threats is encountered: the existence of different types of conflict, illegal migration, organized crime, violent extremism, forced displacement, climate change etc, all representing threats to the EU and global security.

Gaining worldwide recognition as the most failed state in the world for several years, Somalia is associated with the maritime piracy phenomenon, which appeared against the background of the extremely precarious socio-economic situation, characterized by poverty, extreme weather conditions and numerous waves of recurrent famines. Moreover, the political spectrum characterized by the clan system, warlords, the lack of a central state apparatus and the lack of the rule of law led to the creation of an environment conducive to corruption and organized crime (Lewis, 2002). However, after numerous international interventions within the area of crisis management, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, humanitarian aid or capacity building in the security sector, Somalia currently overcame its political crisis, concluding its lengthy election process in April 2022 (Mahmood, 2022). While Somalia's road to democracy is still an ongoing and challenging process, progress has been made in this domain. It is against this backdrop that a vast number of CSOs and a bustling business domain have emerged. It is precisely the state of crisis that Somalia has witnessed for more than 20 years that catalysed the emergence of non-state actors. Following the collapse of Siad Barre's regime in 1991, the Somali political spectrum has been characterised by a vast number of peace initiatives, mostly of international or regional origins. At the same time, Somali NSAs have attempted to establish

informal mechanisms for solving the perpetual state of conflict. Consequently, CSOs in the form of NGOs, professional associations, academics or women's groups have emerged. Moreover, the business sector has begun to play an active role in civic action initiatives related to peacebuilding and conflict resolution activities as is the case of the Somali Leadership Foundation (Mekuriyaw, 2017).

Currently, the vast majority of Somali CSOs are based in urban areas. In the areas controlled by al-Shabaab associations and assemblies are fully restricted, as any civic action is the principal target of the terrorist group's attacks (BTI 2022 Country Report Somalia, 2022). However, the Somali spectrum of community-based initiatives and organisations is a very dynamic one, mostly oriented towards peacebuilding, conflict resolution and humanitarian aid, despite their weak role in the political domain. Consequently, the civic society domain in Somalia has a prominently particular characteristic, in comparison with the Western meaning attributed to it, which is mostly focused on providing solutions to community issues (BTI 2022 Country Report Somalia, 2022). Although still in its infancy and under severe constraint, the role of CSOs in the act of governance in Somalia remains of particular importance.

The EU in Somalia: engagement in the security domain

Somalia represents a particular case in which the European Union has committed itself to an integrated approach, characterized by a multi-dimensional approach, a multi-phased approach, a multi-level approach and a multilateral approach. Therefore, the European Union has an articulated strategy for regional engagement which has been stipulated since 2011 in the document entitled "The EU Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa". According to this document, the EU has the following priorities in the Horn of Africa: conflict prevention and resolution, good governance, growth and cooperation (The EU Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa: a critical assessment of impact and opportunities, 2012). The entire approach of the European Union in the region follows the concept of human security, applied through an integrated approach. The multi-dimensional characteristic of the integrated approach brings together the application of all instruments and policies the European Union has at its disposal for the particular case of Somalia, structured in four areas of action: political engagement, security, development and humanitarian aid.

Thus, concerning the EU engagement in Somalia in the security domain, there are currently three CSDP missions and operations deployed. In December 2008, the first EU naval operation was launched, the EUNAVFOR Atalanta operation as part of a then comprehensive approach of the European Union to the Somali crisis, a crisis also including piracy. This operation was the Union's short-term response to the Somali crisis. Two other missions followed: EUTM Somalia launched in April 2010 to address the cause of the crisis by supporting and training SNA (Somali National Army), and later EUCAP Nestor, renamed EUCAP Somalia, launched in 2012 aimed at enhancing regional capabilities in the field of maritime security (Common Security and Defence Policy European Union Training Mission - Somalia, 2019; European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia EUCAP Somalia, 2019). In this sense, the purpose of the activities carried out within EUCAP Somalia mission is to support the rule of law and the judiciary and as well as the development of coastal police.

While the EU engagement with Somali NSAs is a central characteristic of the European Union's approach in the country, it has been thus far achieved and implemented through Commission's instruments and most notably through a long-term partnership between the EU Delegation in Somalia and CSOs (EU Roadmap for engagement with Civil Society in Somalia for the period 2021-2025, 2021). Moreover, the EU approach to local NSAs in Somalia is mostly oriented from the perspective of building its capacity within the Somali society. This current state of affairs advances the idea of whether and how civilian CSDP missions in Somalia engage with local NSAs, and what are the opportunities and threats associated with this approach, a question that will be addressed in the following section. Furthermore, while EUCAP Somalia doesn't have a current official public strategy for engaging with local NSAs, there are various ad-hoc instances in which there is an engagement with CSOs.

7. CSDP in Somalia and its engagement with local NSAs - a SWOT analysis

Strengths

EUCAP Somalia has a vast *experience* of 10 years in the support of the development of Somali maritime security and wider police capacity building. Currently, EUCAP Somalia is based in the Somali capital Mogadishu, having additional field offices in Hargeisa (Somaliland), Garowe (Puntland), Berbera (Somaliland) and a back-office in Nairobi, Kenya (European Union

Capacity Building Mission in Somalia, 2022). The mission, therefore, has its "*boots on the ground*" in three of the four targeted areas of action as stated in its mandate, the exception being Lower Juba (port of Kismayo).

From an internal perspective, EUCAP Somalia currently totals a number of 181 members, of which 35 are women, while 45 are local nationals (European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia, 2022). This contributes to the overall local ownership of the mission. Moreover, the mission has a human rights advisor who ensures the expertise on human rights mainstreaming throughout all the mission's activities and promotes human rights awareness and standards among Somali counterparts (How EUCAP promotes human rights and gender equality?, 2021). It is within this approach that EUCAP Somalia has engaged with authorities but also with various CSOs in promoting women in maritime security (Women in the Maritime Security project). Projects like beach cleaning are a common way of raising awareness on both the maritime environment and the potential of the Blue Economy, being thus successfully implemented by the mission in collaboration with its partners (Somali women want bigger roles in the maritime sector, 2019). Furthermore, within the mission, there is a Gender Adviser who not only provides expertise on the matter but is also actively involved in engaging with civil society on issues related to gender mainstreaming. A recent example of such an engagement consists of the meeting held with Plan International organisation regarding the project Champions for Change Program.

EUCAP Somalia is part of the EU integrated approach to external conflicts and crises in Somalia. Therefore, it works in close *cooperation and coordination* with other EU instruments in the security field such as EUTM Somalia and EUNAVFOR Atalanta. Moreover, the mission coordinates with EUDEL (European Delegation) Mogadishu as well as with other EU long-term instruments such as development aid, humanitarian aid, security aid, economic assistance etc. Furthermore, the cooperative dimension is emphasized by the systematic engagement that the mission has with all the major international actors that are present in Somalia such as bilateral donors (Member States or other countries), regional organisations (such as IGAD or African Union) or international organizations like the UN, within the framework of multilateralism. This extensive practice of cooperation and coordination in a challenging operational environment,

where various actors try to exert their influence represents a key factor in engaging with local NSAs as well.

Drawing upon its significant practical experience, EUCAP Somalia has undergone several mandates extensions. Even if the initial mandate proved to be too ambitious and not embedded in local realities, the following ones have been recalibrated according to the local context. Therefore, the latest mission's OPLAN was created upon consultations with the Federal Government of Somalia (Ejdus, 2017). This not only proved to be a serious contribution towards *local political buy-in* of the mission, but it also paved the road to future commitments. It is in this context that at the beginning of 2020, a "Status of Mission Agreement" (SOMA) for the EUCAP Somalia mission has been signed by both parties (EU and Federal Government of Somalia sign agreement on status of EUCAP Somalia, 2020). This milestone, along with EUCAP Somalia's achievements, emphasizes the mission's high degree of local political buy-in.

Consequently, EUCAP Somalia enjoys a series of strengths which can be summarized as follows: a significant presence in the field, a high degree of expertise in human rights and gender issues, a significant experience in cooperation and coordination with various entities, and high degree of local political buy-in. All these elements could positively impact the mission's engagement with local NSAs and have a role in implementing the local ownership dimension of the mission.

Weaknesses

The main weakness of EUCAP Somalia concerning its engagement with local NSAs is the lack of an official public strategy for such an engagement. Since other CSDP civilian missions in the same security sector reform area, such as EUAM Iraq, have an official public framework of engagement with the local civil society, it becomes thus notably important for EUCAP Somalia to develop a similar strategy (EUAM Iraq Strategy for engaging with civil society, 2022). Nevertheless, EUCAP Somalia engages with local civil society but in an ad-hoc manner. Furthermore, the impact of such an engagement in correlation with the force generation challenges and high rate of mission staff turnover count as weak points that can be addressed. It is estimated that seconded personnel spend on average of 1.5 years in the mission (Ejdus, 2017). Along with the short mandates (usually two years long), these circumstances work against two

aspects. Firstly, the mission's personnel need to gain a deep understanding of the state of affairs in the field. Secondly, they need to engage through a trustworthy relationship with local authorities and local NSAs to ensure the mission's local ownership. Both these aspects need time to be thoroughly implemented.

Moreover, some of the local NSAs are not aware of the mission's achievements, and the main way the mission disseminates this information is through its online presence on various social media platforms or the official website. With an internet penetration rate of just 13.7%, more than 85% of Somali people are offline, while Twitter users represent just 1% of eligible Somalis (Digital 2022: Somalia, 2022). These numbers show that the internet is not a channel to engage with either the local public, or with local NSAs.

Furthermore, with a plethora of actors involved in security sector reform activities, (most notably Turkey), the dissemination of the EUCAP Somalia's achievements and activities among local stakeholders becomes even more necessary.

Opportunities

There are several aspects concerning the opportunities associated with the engagement of EUCAP Somalia and local NSAs. They take into account two distinct directions: the opportunities associated with the mission's effectiveness and the improvement of the overall security and political situation in Somalia.

Firstly, engaging with local CSOs provides the mission with valuable input from the grassroots level, that can be of use in future mission strategic reviews and in implementing more effectively the human security and local ownership concepts. At the same time, while being better rooted in people's daily security concerns, the problem-solving capacity of the mission increases. Moreover, by disseminating its achievements and activities directly through CSOs, EUCAP Somalia's transparency and effectiveness as well as the overall EU actorness increase. Furthermore, the prospects of engaging with private sector associations can contribute to the implementation of the second pillar of the mission's mandate, namely "advocating for the importance of maritime security for the development of the Blue Economy (European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia, 2021).

Secondly, by engaging with local NSAs, EUCAP Somalia can actively contribute to strengthening the Somali civil society spectrum. This in its turn can promote local institutions' accountability and the overall democratisation process. By initiating a multi-stakeholders approach, mutual trust and understanding increase, as well as the problem-solving characteristic of the overall engagement. To a large extent, by raising awareness on human rights or gender mainstreaming through the engagement with CSOs promoting the same values, the overall Somali social dynamics could experience a positive change, by enhancing dialogue and openness within various clan leadership.

Moreover, engaging with the private sector associations involved in civic actions, such as diaspora associations can help fill in a financial gap. According to the United Nations, it is estimated that the Somali diaspora sends in the country annually 1.6 billion US dollars in remittances (Somali diaspora's remittances cast a lifeline, n.d.). By raising awareness of the activities and achievements of EUCAP Somalia, the active promotion of the Blue Economy development initiatives within the private sector can be achieved.

Subsequently, such an approach would be beneficial to both sides. However, a possible implementation of a multistakeholder initiative approach of EUCAP Somalia and local NSAs has to be carefully considered, due to the context sensitivity and challenges. Thus, the next section will assess what are the possible threats associated with such an approach.

Threats

The main threat to applying a multistakeholder initiative approach in the case of EUCAP Somalia and local NSAs is related to the volatility of the Somali socio-political spectrum and its particularly challenging context. Until recently, Somali politics have been in a crisis due to the overextension of the election date. Moreover, during the Gulf Crisis in 2018, the centre-periphery cleavage deepened, while the fragmentation trends present within the Somali society increased, with socio-economic consequences (Somalia and the Gulf Crisis, 2018). In such a context it is considerably difficult to engage with local NSAs, a thorough mapping of these actors being mandatory.

Moreover, despite the guaranteed freedom of assembly, speech and association, the Somali legal framework concerning NGOs activities are promoting the government's control

over CSOs activities and lacks clarity regarding several aspects (EU Roadmap for engagement with Civil Society in Somalia for the period 2021-2025, 2021) (IRIN, 2011).

Furthermore, the lack of public support for some local NSAs can represent a threat to a MSI approach. This happens primarily due to a perpetual climate of mistrust among different stakeholders. At the same time, while some CSOs compete with each other for funding, the clan system has a direct effect on the CSO spectrum. Therefore, the Somali civil society spectrum is a challenging one.

Consequently, although EUCAP Somalia engages with local CSOs on an informal basis, the findings of this analysis show that applying a MSI approach in this context can prove to be beneficial both to the mission's effectiveness and the overall security situation in Somalia. MSIs have been applied to every major global industry, becoming the "gold standard" for bringing different stakeholders together around a central interest. Moreover, MSI can foster a vast array of functions: from enhancing dialogue, creating mutual understanding, creating mutual trust, raising awareness and nevertheless informing, all of each being much needed for any CSDP mission. Although implementing a MSI approach in the case of EUCAP Somalia can prove to be beneficial to both the mission's effectiveness and local security spectrum, it is a signally challenging process. Conversely, applying a MSI approach can put an extra burden on the mission's already ambitious mandate, as well as on its budget and human resources. Therefore, such an approach requires careful planning and strategic support.

SWOT Matrix for EUCAP Somalia's Engagement with Local NSAs

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vast experience and presence in the field; • Expertise in human rights and gender issues; • Strong cooperation and coordination with various entities; • High degree of local political buy-in. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of an official public strategy for engagement with local NSAs; • Short mission mandates and high staff turnover; • Limited awareness of the mission's achievements among local NSAs; • Internet penetration and social media limitations in Somalia .
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with local CSOs for grassroots input and problem-solving capacity; • Increased transparency, effectiveness, and EU actorness through engagement with CSOs; • Engagement with private sector associations for promoting maritime security and Blue Economy development; • Strengthening Somali civil society spectrum for accountability and democratization. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volatility and challenging context of Somali socio-political spectrum; • Government control and lack of clarity in the legal framework for NGOs; • Lack of public support and mistrust among different stakeholders; • Competition and clan system's impact on the CSO spectrum.

8. Discussion

The SWOT analysis applied to EUCAP Somalia's engagement with local stakeholders provides insights that can impact the validation or invalidation of the two hypotheses: (1) there is a direct relation between a CSDP mission's engagement with local stakeholders and the mission's local ownership, and (2) CSDP engagement with local stakeholders positively affects the mission's effectiveness.

With regards to the first hypothesis, the SWOT analysis reveals the mission has an extensive presence on the ground, having offices in various cities of Somalia. Moreover, EUCAP Somalia has a close coordination and/or cooperation with different stakeholders, a trait which is embedded in its *modus operandi*. Although not having stated explicitly in its mandate the close collaboration with local NSAs, the mission collaborates with organizations such as Plan International and supports its initiative of promoting women in maritime security. This proves the mission's commitment to foster dialogue and to build ties with local NSAs, thus promoting the mission's local ownership dimension.

However, the SWOT analysis identified several weaknesses of EUCAP Somalia's engagement with local NSAs. Among these, the lack of an official strategy of engagement with local NSAs along with the lack of effective communication channels could negatively impact the overall mission's full local ownership. Overall, the findings from the SWOT analysis partially support the first hypothesis, the fact that despite not having a formal engagement strategy with local NSAs, EUCAP Somalia engages in particular instances with local CSOs further supports the hypothesis.

Furthermore, by enhancing local participation, dissemination of information regarding its activities, fostering dialogue with different stakeholders, EUCAP Somalia's effectiveness can be enhanced. This opens up the discussion about the second hypothesis, namely, CSDP engagement with local stakeholders positively affects the mission's effectiveness. Not only do other CSDP missions have a formal strategy of engagement with local NSAs, but, as the SWOT analysis revealed, also EUCAP Somalia interacts in particular instances with local CSOs. These insights fully support the second hypothesis, emphasizing several opportunities associated with such an engagement with local NSAs: enhanced problem-solving capacity, delivering solutions embedded in local realities, promoting information-sharing, improving the relevance and impact

of its activities. These opportunities represent important pillars of the overall mission's effectiveness.

Consequently, the SWOT analysis reveal several strengths of EUCAP's Somalia's engagement with local stakeholders, along with opportunities. While the cooperation trait is embedded in the mission's modus operandi, as well as its adaptability and commitment to tailoring its actions to the local context, a MSI approach could be applied in this context. However, the SWOT analysis emphasizes weaknesses and threats associated with the mission's engagement with local NSAs. It is against this backdrop that the strategic dimension comes as a signally important aspect, especially in the form of strategic planning and resource allocation.

9. Conclusion

The EU engagement in Somalia consists of a unique combination of instruments which reflects the EU's commitment towards supporting world peace. Among these, CSDP missions and operations are the "boots on the ground" instrument, the instrument that is best understood in terms of actual achievements and problem-solving to actual stringent security issues.

EUCAP Somalia's achievements in building the capacities, establishing the Somali Coast Guard and reforming the Somali police sector are nevertheless remarkable. Despite the mission's high political buy-in, local ownership and fostering a human security approach are a continuous challenge. To be effective, one has to deliver not only solutions to specific issues, but these solutions have to be embedded in local realities. Furthermore, peacebuilding activities, including interventions in the security domain, especially in Africa, are a contested topic. In the context of a vast array of international actors involved in similar activities in Somalia, it becomes thus prominently important to prioritize the local ownership dimension of CSDP missions deployed.

While the vast majority of current research and debates around CSDP's local ownership dimension focus on the strategic aspect as well as on the general challenges associated with this approach, this paper is trying to fill a gap within the literature. Therefore, it applies a theory derived from economics and more precisely from the business domain, the multi-stakeholder initiative approach, on CSDP.

Drawing on document analysis and secondary data, this paper advances three arguments. Firstly, a MSI approach is a valuable tool to be used by civilian CSDP missions operating in the

security sector reform domain. Secondly, civilian CSDP missions have an important role in the diplomatic engagement of the EU in the country of deployment. They represent the Common Foreign and Security Policy at the action level. Therefore, through their cooperative nature of activities, they could serve as a bridge between different local stakeholders. Furthermore, their input from the field is of paramount importance for the overall EU strategic engagement in the specific context. Thirdly, in the particular Somali context, a MSI approach in the security sector reform domain is needed to raise the awareness of certain stakeholders (such as private sector business entities and diaspora associations) towards the importance of security in rebuilding the state.

Lastly, for the EU to become a global player in international security, not only solutions to security threats are needed, but also winning hearts and minds. Therefore, working towards a context-specific strategy towards local ownership implementation for civilian CSDP, working towards a mutual understanding between all stakeholders involved in common activities, as well as strengthening civilian CSDP are much needed.

The SWOT analysis provides a valuable insight into the opportunities and threats that EUCAP Somalia faces in its engagement with local NSAs. While the mission possesses a series of strengths that can be used in increasing its effectiveness, resource allocation, strategic planning and structured engagement strategies are equally important in leveraging these, as well as countering the weaknesses and mitigating the threats encountered. Moreover, this analysis emphasizes the importance of a thoughtful and adaptive approach through which EUCAP Somalia could enhance its effectiveness and substantially contribute to the overall maritime security and police capacity building in Somalia through its engagement with local NSAs.

While this analysis is limited to EUCAP Somalia and Somali NSAs, further research can explore engagement strategies in challenging contexts, thus providing a valuable tool on how to better understand such contexts, how to establish trust and cooperation among different stakeholders. Furthermore, by conducting comparative analyses of other CSDP missions' engagement with local NSAs, both similarities and differences in engagement strategies are being identified, thus establishing a set of best practices and lessons learnt that can positively impact the process of strategy development and the overall CSDP's effectiveness and local ownership.

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