04/09/2023
A&D Cluster meeting

New format for A&D cluster meeting:
- Rotating chair
    - Monday 4th Sep.: MILAP
    - Monday 2nd Oct.: DUAT
    - Monday 6th Nov.: WMD
    - Monday 4th Dec.: AT
- Meeting structure will be as follows:
    - Icebreaker
    - Questions on reporting (read beforehand MMM reporting points available here: 2023 MMM Reporting.docx)
    - Learning together and/or strategic thinking: e.g. someone from the programme chairing the meeting to present some ongoing research
    - Reporting from other clusters and teams

General: WMD saying thank you to everyone who took part in Summer School – lecturing and helping out.

Editorial: (John)
- Going forward Joey will provide +- 5min of short feedback on writing, hints and tips etc.
- "you need to have a point to what you are writing about", point are confused, not stated clearly.
- Too much introductory text before why the reader should be reading this. Bring up the point of the paper as early as possible.
- Writing circle: Join Joey at 12pm on Wednesday 6th September. Should take place every 2 weeks.

Learning together:
HR department - Lisa
Topic: Stress and mindfulness
Sharing some tips on mindfulness and how to deal with stress.

- Talk about how to handle other factors that affect stress
    - Mindfulness (Birds with 2 wings)
    - Being in the present, use sense to experience reality.
    - No judgment.
    - Try to be in the present
    - Most of the concerns are coming from the inside, what we are telling ourselves, how we analyze and plan.
    - Practice to stay in the present
- Mindfulness (meditate) is practicing being aware of your thoughts and taking yourself back to the present. "Calm the mind", helps with being relaxed and peaceful.
- Stress response curve, it is a non-linear curve where there is a optimal point of stress and performance. There is a "good stress", the problem is mostly how much stress one is exposed to. Stress can be seen as a positive since it can increase productivity. Multitasking can be a factor that increases stress or exposure to more factors.

- Stress response: (how ones react)
  - Fight – fight, 1st reaction
  - Flight – run, 1st reaction
  - Freeze – play dead, hiding away etc.
  - Fawn – overly people pleasing, avoid threats

Should try and recognize a stressful situation and work on a way to calm oneself down from the stressful situation.

- The cluster practised mindfulness for +-3-5min, with eyes open and eyes closed.
- 5 min of input by cluster members on how they felt about practising mindfulness
- Tips for mindfulness
  - Short moments of present awareness
  - Spend quiet time in nature every day
  - Write a grateful list
  - Sit in silence for 10min a day
  - Move your body
  - "Beginner mind" Curious investigation without judgement
- Went around the room and asked everyone their stress level between 1-5
- Lisa suggested a Swedish website to access ones stress: https://fbanken.se/form/220/perceived-stress-scale

Learning Together
MILAP: Diego – Improving Colombia transparency in military spending funded by OSF

- Colombia MoD want to promote transparency and asking assistance from SIPRI
  - Assess transparency of Colombian Ministry of Defense regarding its expenditure (Internal and external transparency).
  - Make recommendations to improve transparency in the short, medium and long-term.
- Created a framework of analysis at a country level, based on:
  - Public expenditure financial assessment (PEFA)
  - OECD best budget practices for budget transparency
  - IMF code for good practices on fiscal transparency
- Created 4 blocks of analysis and Diego explain and gave examples of specific details in each case:
  - Diego started by presenting an example on the methodology of how the project assesses some of the factors in the various analysis blocks. Scoring method roughly from PEFA framework.

  - 1. Policy-based expenditure – assess if spending is linked to policy and is it transparent?
  - 2. Availability of information – is the information available? (i.e disaggregation or ease of access)
  - 3. Audit – has linkages to accountability. i.e. Does MoD have internal office to audit financial expenditure?
  - 4. Legislative scrutiny – Assess the amount if information the legislature has when making decisions on the MoD budget. i.e. How much information does the legislature have about the budget when making decisions about approving the MoD budget?

- Next steps:
  - Deep dive into problematic areas
  - Case studies for benchmarking against good cases that Colombia compare to
  - Collaboration with TI in Colombia
  - Meet civil society, parliamentarians, MoD to include into the final report
  - There will be another work package on the Colombian arms companies

- Questions:

  Q: How to link the interest from government to funder to SIPRI?

  A: Coming together of factors, it was OSF that approached SIPRI since they got interest and were approached by the Colombia MoD.

  Q: Do you think that the Colombian government is using SIPRI's name to legitimize their transparency level or how well they are doing.

  A: Indeed this could be the case, an issue that the team that is working on the project has in mind.

Reporting from other clusters:

PD Cluster
- Wine and cheese – 21 September

Directors office
- Dan is in London Thursday and Friday
- 19th of September, SMT + Programme director on meeting on fundraising
- Dan in Abidjan sometime 3-5rd
- Entire October, A&D Cluster responsible for Coffee and tea for the MMM meetings.
  - Each programme has responsibility for each Monday

CPS Cluster
- Leaving:
  - Ryan from China programme
  - Louise from Sahel programme
  - Evelina from Sahel programme

- Arriving
  - 2x RA from Sahel
  - Guest researcher China
  - Gretchen, Peacekeeping operations
  - New EU security programme director
  - New China programme director

Finance
- Remind everyone that in the budgeting process, look at the nature of the project, and include money for time in the events team. Budget correctly for the outreach team. Think about budgeting for other teams as well.
- Approaching end of year, look at how best to cross-check spending on activities. Provided that the project budget can be used for other activities.
  - Vincent asking about a 'price list' from the outreach of events team would be useful. Asking for a cost of how much a specific event would cost (i.e. a round table, seminar etc.).

- Policy on assigning time to projects, How does projects with outreach get budgeted, under or overbudgeted? A: Hidden costs related to the project and speak to Steph on outreach budgets for their work.