

DCAF in 2023



In these times of conflict and violence, fluctuating geopolitics, and democratic backsliding, building and repairing trust is fundamental to achieving peace and setting the stage for development. Security sector reform and good governance are crucial in this regard, especially in fragile and conflict-affected places. Here are selected highlights from 2023, reflecting our efforts to put people at the centre of security sector reforms and build accountable and effective security and justice.

For a full overview of our results in 2023, please visit www.dcaf.ch/annual-report-2023



Defining security according to people's needs

DCAF promotes a people-centred approach to security and justice reform that requires a deep understanding of local realities and insecurities for all community members. Prior to the war in Gaza in 2023, we facilitated 54 dialogue sessions in the 16 governorates of the West Bank and Gaza and the 10 largest refugee camps in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. More than 1000 people shared their security and justice experiences, perceptions, and needs. DCAF also supported the development of people-centred security approaches in Libya by convening dialogues among security sector stakeholders to inform decision making on future security arrangements and SSG/R processes.



Ensuring effective oversight of soldiers at war

After the Russian invasion in 2022, the Ukrainian government shifted its focus from broader SSG/R initiatives to managing the armed forces during wartime and DCAF realigned its support to meet emerging needs. With the Ukrainian army numbering nearly one million personnel, Ukraine's parliament sought DCAF's guidance to establish an effective military justice system. We helped adjust the institutional and legal frameworks to enhance the accountability of army officers for battlefield compliance with International Humanitarian Law, and provided the National Police and State Emergency Services with special training on how to manage victims and gather evidence for the prosecution of crimes of sexual violence.



Adapting our approach in response to political change

In 2023, DCAF reviewed its programmes in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali to assess how best to proceed following coups d'état that deteriorated the political, security, and economic situation. Taking a "do no harm" approach, we shifted away from activities linked to defence and security forces, and refocused our efforts on institutional monitoring bodies and improving the capacity of civil society, local officials, and the media to conduct effective oversight. A DCAF-organized conference in Mali on Citizen Participation in Security Governance resulted in 20 recommendations, including the need to move away from a security-only approach and greater involvement of women and youth in security governance.

Photo: Nicolas Réméné

Resources



Military justice
An introduction to the fundamentals of an effective military justice system



Women in UN peace operations
Insights on how to increase equality and meaningful participation



Digitalization
How digitalization is changing SSG/R



Climate and environmental security
Lessons-learned from Brazil, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Philippines, and Sierra Leone



Peace, justice, and strong institutions
The role of ombuds institutions in achieving SDG 16



Fostering an international community of practice

DCAF provides expert analysis, advice, and training to our International Partners' Group which includes countries and multilateral organizations seeking to play an effective supporting role in preventing conflict and consolidating peace through nationally-led security sector reform processes. The Group comes together in a unique online resource called the Community of Practice, in which practitioners and policy makers share knowledge on what has been done, what works, and the common challenges they continue to face. In addition to developing their capacity and expertise on SSG/R through this Community, the Group also identifies opportunities to harmonize donor efforts for greater effectiveness of reform and good governance processes, especially in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.



Supporting multilateral efforts at peacebuilding

DCAF provides expertise and advice to multilateral institutions, such as supporting the United Nations to develop its practical guidance on SSG/R and climate change. In 2023, we helped the Principles for Peace Foundation with an adaptive learning workshop to gather evidence from people's experience on the ground and create a resource for security actors involved in peacemaking efforts. Closer to home, DCAF is a member of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform which organizes the annual Geneva Peace Week, an international forum on peacebuilding. We also partnered with the Platform to organize consultations on the New Agenda for Peace and provided input to the UN's call for submissions on this important global policy milestone.

Photo: Olivier Chamard



Improving policing through more gender equality

DCAF and the Honduran National Police have been working together for over five years to improve gender equality within the institution. The Police Gender Policy, approved in 2022, paved the way for the Police University to request that DCAF co-design its first Gender Equity Diploma. In 2023, the new diploma became part of the standard police curriculum and was used to train about 4000 officers in the 36 police districts across Honduras.



Working with the private sector to protect human rights

In Japan, Keidanren, a national business association of nearly 1500 companies and over 100 industrial associations, integrated the DCAF-ICRC Security and Human Rights Toolkit as a key reference for its members. In Asia-Pacific, Ipieca, the global oil and gas industry association, for the first time engaged with DCAF on responsible security management in conflict-affected areas. In Mozambique, DCAF and our partner visited Gemfields' ruby mine site. It was the first visit to a conflict-affected area to meet with the company and better understand how it manages security challenges with artisanal and small-scale miners.



UN Security Council briefing on SSR

In March 2023, Council members reviewed the 2022 Secretary-General's report on strengthening security sector reform in the UN system. The Swiss Permanent Representative to the UN, Pascale Baeriswyl, cited DCAF's work as the cornerstone of her country's commitment to SSG/R.

Photo: UN Photo/Manuel Elías



People-centred justice

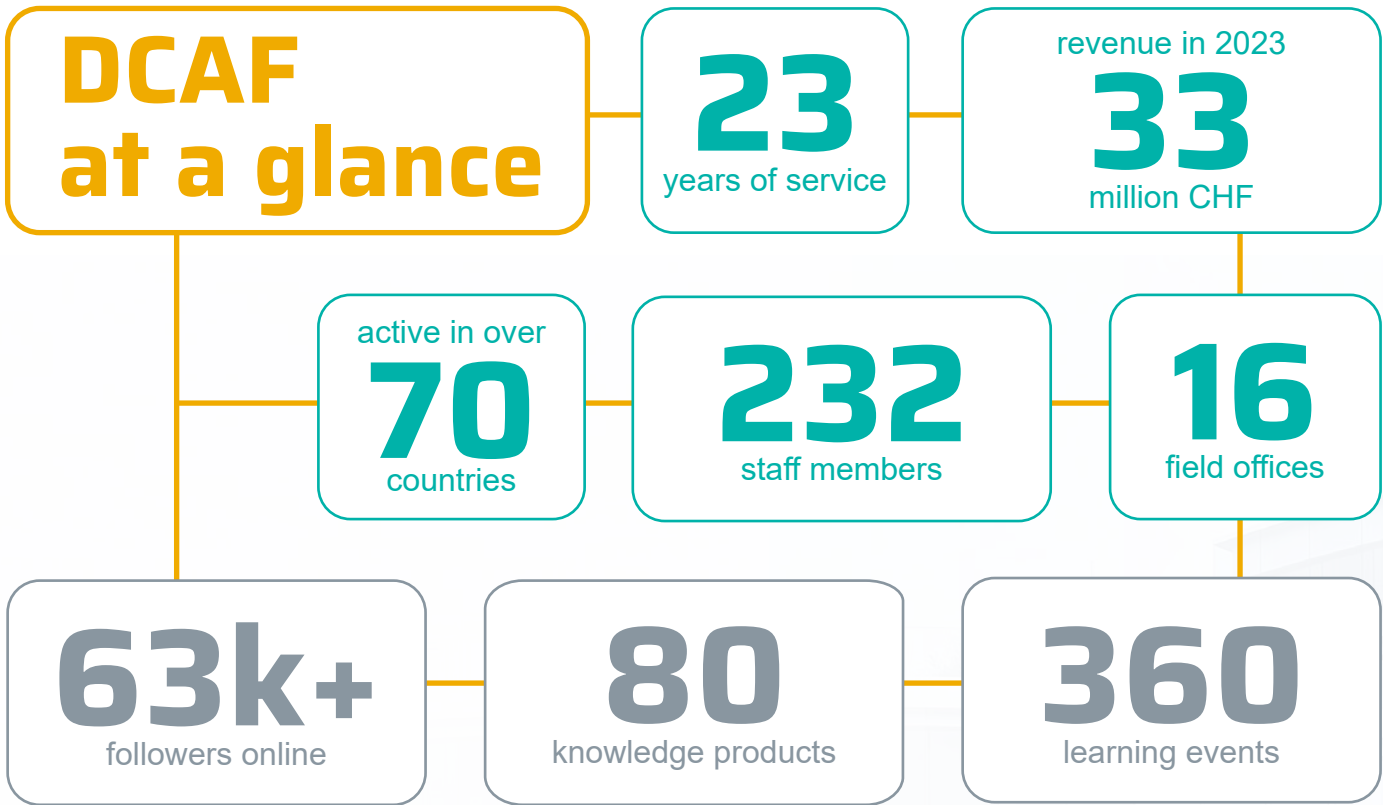
Recommendations for new justice ecosystems



Donors Talk podcast

Experts discuss issues of importance to donors supporting security and justice reforms





Thank you

We are grateful for the support and confidence of our core funders and other generous donors who make our work possible.



Learn more about how DCAF helps to make people more secure through accountable security and justice.

Visit www.dcaf.ch/annual-report-2023



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