

# Conflict analysis

## Purpose of chapter

This chapter explains:

- what conflict analysis is and why it matters
- how to undertake an analysis

## Who should read it

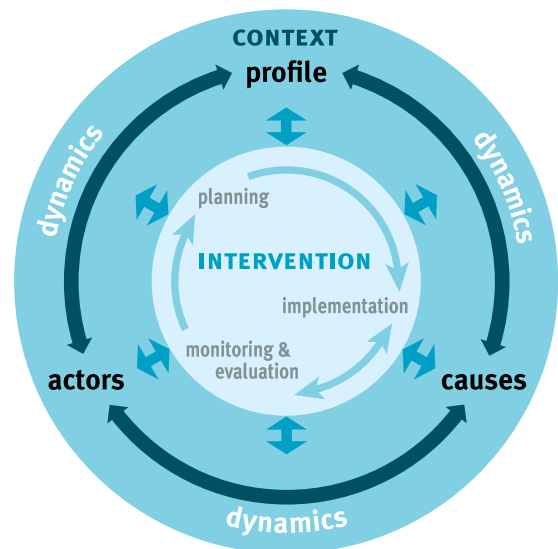
The chapter is aimed at practitioners in governments, civil society (local and international) and donor organisations concerned with development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding. The chapter may also be of interest to others (eg in the private sector, the diplomatic field, etc).

## Why they should read it

Because conflict analysis is the foundation of conflict sensitivity and without a good understanding of the context in which interventions are situated, organisations that support or directly implement them may unintentionally help to fuel violent conflict or to exacerbate existing tensions. Conflict analysis helps organisations towards a better understanding of the context in which they work, and a conflict sensitive approach.

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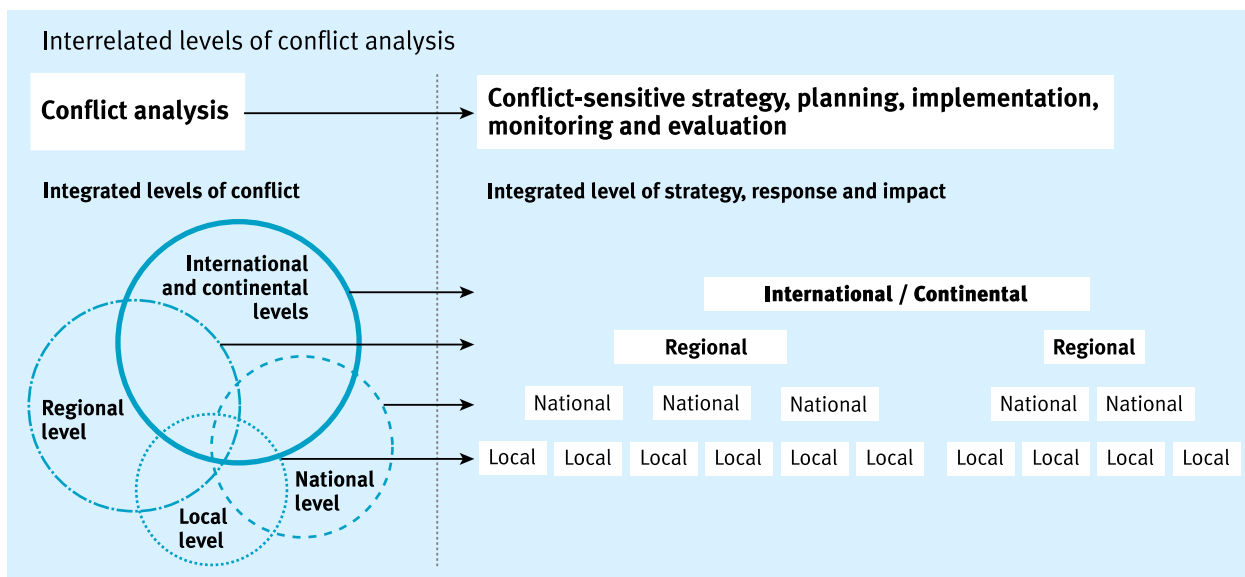
1. What is conflict analysis and why is it important?
  2. Key elements of conflict analysis
  3. Working with indicators
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## 1. What is conflict analysis and why is it important?

Conflict analysis is the systematic study of the profile, causes, actors, and dynamics of conflict (see **Section 2**). It helps development, humanitarian and peacebuilding organisations to gain a better understanding of the context in which they work and their role in that context.

Conflict analysis can be carried out at various levels (eg local, regional, national, etc) and seeks to establish the linkages between these levels (see Fig 1). Identifying the appropriate focus for the conflict analysis is crucial: the issues and dynamics at the national level may be different from those at the grassroots. But while linking the level of conflict analysis (eg community, district, region or national) with the level of intervention (eg project, sector, policy), it is also important to establish systematic linkages with other interrelated levels of conflict dynamics. These linkages are important, as all of these different levels impact on each other.



For example, when operating at the project level, it is important to understand the context at the level at which the project is operating (eg local level), so the focus of the analysis should be at that level; but the analysis should also take account of the linkages with other levels (eg regional and national). And similarly when operating at the regional, sector or national levels.

As discussed in **Chapter 1**, conflict sensitivity is about:

- understanding the *context* in which you operate
- understanding the *interaction* between *your intervention* and *the context*
- *acting* upon the understanding of this interaction, in order to avoid *negative impacts* and maximise *positive impacts*.

Conflict analysis is thus a central component of conflict-sensitive practice, as it provides the foundation to inform conflict sensitive programming, in particular in terms of an understanding of the interaction between the intervention and the context. This applies to all forms of intervention – development, humanitarian, peacebuilding – and to all levels – project, programme, and sectoral.

In other words, conflict analysis will help:

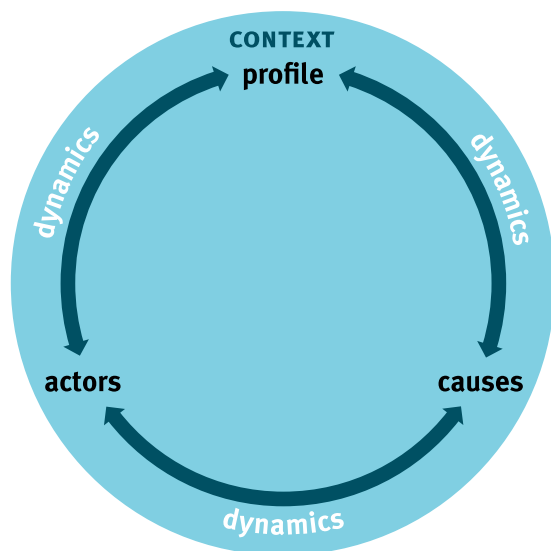
- to define new interventions and to conflict-sensitise both new and pre-defined interventions (eg selection of areas of operation, beneficiaries, partners, staff, time frame). (Planning stage)
- to monitor the interaction between the context and the intervention and inform project set-up and day-to-day decision-making. (Implementation stage)
- to measure the interaction of the interventions and the conflict dynamics in which they are situated. (Monitoring and evaluation stage)

## 2. Key elements of conflict analysis

This section synthesises the key elements of conflict analysis as they emerge from the various conflict analysis tools documented in **Annex 1**. Looking at each of these elements will help to develop a comprehensive picture of the context in which you operate. Depending on your specific interest, however, you may want to emphasise particular aspects of key importance. For example, if the emphasis is on the identification of project partners and beneficiaries, a good understanding of conflict actors and how potential partners and beneficiaries relate to them will be the primary requirement. (See **Box 2** in this chapter).

Generally, “good enough” thinking is required. This means accepting that the analysis can never be exhaustive, nor provide absolute certainty. Conflict dynamics are simply too complex and volatile for any single conflict analysis process to do them justice. Nevertheless, you should trust your findings, even though some aspects may remain unclear. Do not be discouraged; some analysis, no matter how imperfect, is better than no analysis at all.

The following diagram highlights the common key features of conflict analysis, which will contribute to understanding the interaction between the context and future/current interventions (see Chapters **3** and **4** for the project and sectoral (sector wide) levels respectively). The common features are the conflict profile, actors, causes and dynamics. Each is further described below.



## 2.1 Profile

A conflict profile provides a brief characterisation of the context within which the intervention will be situated.

### BOX 1

#### Key questions for a conflict profile

What is the political, economic, and socio-cultural context?

*eg physical geography, population make-up, recent history, political and economic structure, social composition, environment, geo-strategic position.*

What are emergent political, economic, ecological, and social issues?

*eg elections, reform processes, decentralisation, new infrastructure, disruption of social networks, mistrust, return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), military and civilian deaths, presence of armed forces, mined areas, HIV/AIDS.*

What specific conflict prone/affected areas can be situated within this context?

*eg, areas of influence of specific actors, frontlines around the location of natural resources, important infrastructure and lines of communication, pockets of socially marginalised or excluded populations.*

Is there a history of conflict?

*eg critical events, mediation efforts, external intervention.*

*Note: this list is not exhaustive and the examples may differ according to the context*

## 2.2 Causes of conflict

In order to understand a given context it is fundamental to identify potential and existing conflict causes, as well as possible factors contributing to peace. Conflict causes can be defined as those factors which contribute to people's grievances; and can be further described as:

- *structural causes* – pervasive factors that have become built into the policies, structures and fabric of a society and may create the pre-conditions for violent conflict
- *proximate causes* – factors contributing to a climate conducive to violent conflict or its further escalation, sometimes apparently symptomatic of a deeper problem
- *triggers* – single key acts, events, or their anticipation that will set off or escalate violent conflict.

Protracted conflicts also tend to generate *new causes* (eg weapons circulation, war economy, culture of violence), which help to prolong them further.

As the main causes and factors contributing to conflict and to peace are identified, it is important to acknowledge that conflicts are multi-dimensional and multi-causal phenomena – that there is no single cause of conflict. It is also essential to establish linkages and synergies between causes and factors, in order to identify potential areas for intervention and further prioritise them. Some of the tools in **Annex 1** – eg Clingendael / Fund for Peace, RTC – offer methods to assess the relative importance of different factors. Many tools developed for conflict analysis also categorise conflict causes or issues by governance, economics, security and socio-cultural factors.

### BOX 2

#### Key questions for an analysis of conflict causes

What are structural causes of conflict?

*eg illegitimate government, lack of political participation, lack of equal economic and social opportunities, inequitable access to natural resources, poor governance.*

What issues can be considered as proximate causes of conflict?

*eg uncontrolled security sector, light weapons proliferation, human rights abuses, destabilising role of neighbouring countries, role of diasporas.*

What triggers can contribute to the outbreak / further escalation of conflict?

*eg elections, arrest / assassination of key leader or political figure, drought, sudden collapse of local currency, military coup, rapid change in unemployment, flood, increased price/scarcity of basic commodities, capital flight.*

What new factors contribute to prolonging conflict dynamics?

*eg radicalisation of conflict parties, establishment of paramilitaries, development of a war economy, increased human rights violations, weapons availability, development of a culture of fear.*

What factors can contribute to peace?

*eg communication channels between opposing parties, demobilisation process, reform programmes, civil society commitment to peace, anti-discrimination policies.*

*Note: This list is not exhaustive and the examples may differ according to the context.*

## 2.3 Actors

People are central when thinking about conflict analysis. The Resource Pack uses the term “actors” to refer to all those engaged in or being affected by conflict. This includes individuals, groups and institutions contributing to conflict or being affected by it in a positive or negative manner, as well as those engaged in dealing with conflict. Actors differ as to their goals and interests, their positions, capacities to realise their interests, and relationships with other actors (see Box 3).

### BOX 3

#### Interests, goals, positions, capacities and relationships

- **Interests:** the underlying motivations of the actors (concerns, goals, hopes and fears).
- **Goals:** the strategies that actors use to pursue their interests.
- **Positions:** the solution presented by actors on key and emerging issues in a given context, irrespective of the interests and goals of others.
- **Capacities:** the actors’ potential to affect the context, positively or negatively. Potential can be defined in terms of resources, access, social networks and constituencies, other support and alliances, etc.
- **Relationships:** the interactions between actors at various levels, and their perception of these interactions.

Some approaches distinguish actors according to the level at which they are active (*grassroots, middle level, top level*). In particular, conflict transformation theory attaches great importance to middle level leaders, as they may assume a catalytic role through their linkages both to the top and the grassroots. In any case, it is important to consider the relationships between actors / groups at various levels and how they affect the conflict dynamics.

Particular attention should be paid to *spoilers*, ie specific groups with an interest in the maintenance of the negative status quo. If not adequately addressed within the framework of preventive strategies, they may become an obstacle to peace initiatives.

Similarly, it is important to identify existing *institutional capacities for peace*, in order to further define entry points to address causes of violent conflict. Capacities for peace typically refer to institutions, organisations, mechanisms and procedures in a society for dealing with conflict and differences of interest. In particular, such actors need to be assessed in relation to their capacity for conflict management, their legitimacy, the likelihood of their engagement, and the possible roles they can adopt.

### BOX 4

#### Key questions for an actor analysis

Who are the main actors?

*eg national government, security sector (military, police), local (military) leaders and armed groups, private sector/business (local, national, trans-national), donor agencies and foreign embassies, multilateral organisations, regional organisations (eg African Union), religious or political networks (local, national, global), independent mediators, civil society (local, national, international), peace groups, trade unions, political parties, neighbouring states, traditional authorities, diaspora groups, refugees / IDPs, all children, women and men living in a given context. (Do not forget to include your own organisation!)*

What are their main interests, goals, positions, capacities, and relationships?

*eg religious values, political ideologies, need for land, interest in political participation, economic resources, constituencies, access to information, political ties, global networks.*

What institutional capacities for peace can be identified?

*eg civil society, informal approaches to conflict resolution, traditional authorities, political institutions (eg head of state, parliament), judiciary, regional (eg African Union, IGAD, ASEAN) and multilateral bodies (eg International Court of Justice).*

What actors can be identified as spoilers? Why?

*eg groups benefiting from war economy (combatants, arms/drug dealers, etc), smugglers, “non conflict sensitive” organisations (see Chapter 1).*

*Note: This list is not exhaustive and the examples may differ according to the context.*

## 2.4 Dynamics

Conflict dynamics can be described as the resulting interaction between the conflict profile, the actors, and causes. Understanding conflict dynamics will help identify windows of opportunity, in particular through the use of scenario building, which aims to assess different possible developments and think through appropriate responses.

Scenarios basically provide an assessment of what may happen next in a given context according to a specific timeframe, building on the analysis of conflict profile, causes and actors. It is good practice to prepare three scenarios: (a) best case scenario (ie describing the optimal outcome of the current context); (b) middle case or *status quo* scenario (ie describing the continued evolution of current trends); and (c) worst case scenario (ie describing the worst possible outcome).

If history is the key to understanding conflict dynamics, it may be relevant to use the timeline to identify its main *phases*. Try to explain key events and assess their consequences. Temporal patterns (eg the four-year rotation of presidents or climatic changes) may be important in understanding the conflict dynamics. Undertaking this exercise with different actors and groups can bring out contrasting perspectives.

### BOX 5

#### Key questions for an analysis of conflict Dynamics

What are current conflict trends?

*eg escalation or de-escalation, changes in important framework conditions.*

What are windows of opportunity?

*eg are there positive developments? What factors support them? How can they be strengthened?*

What scenarios can be developed from the analysis of the conflict profile, causes and actors?

*eg best case, middle case and worst case scenarios.*

*Note: This list is not exhaustive and the examples may differ according to the context.*

## 2.5 Summary

### BOX 6

#### Key questions for conflict analysis

##### Profile

What is the political, economic, and socio-cultural context?

What are emergent political, economic and social issues?

What conflict prone/affected areas can be situated within the context?

Is there a history of conflict?

##### Causes

What are the structural causes of conflict?

What issues can be considered as proximate causes of conflict?

What triggers could contribute to the outbreak/ further escalation of conflict?

What new factors contribute to prolonging conflict dynamics?

What factors can contribute to peace?

##### Actors

Who are the main actors?

What are their interests, goals, positions, capacities and relationships?

What capacities for peace can be identified?

What actors can be identified as spoilers? Why? Are they inadvertent or intentional spoilers?

##### Dynamics

What are current conflict trends?

What are windows of opportunity?

What scenarios can be developed from the analysis of the conflict profile, causes and actors?

# 3. Working with indicators

In addition to traditional (eg project, sectoral) indicators, conflict sensitive approaches require conflict sensitive indicators to monitor and measure: (a) the context and its changes over time; and (b) the interaction between the context and the intervention. They have three elements:

- *Conflict indicators*

Used to monitor the progression of conflict factors against an appropriate baseline, and to provide targets against which to set contingency planning (see below).

- *Project indicators*

Monitor the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project (see **Chapter 3 Module 1, step 3**).

- *Interaction indicators*

Measure the interaction between the context and the project (see **Chapter 3 Module 1, step 2c**).

*Conflict indicators*

Conflict analysis provides just a snap-shot of a highly fluid situation. It is therefore important to combine an in-depth analysis with more dynamic and continuous forms of monitoring to provide up-to-date information from which to measure the interaction between the context and the intervention. Indicators are useful in this respect, as they help reduce a complex reality to a few concrete dimensions and represent valuable pointers to monitor change. The conflict

analysis will have looked at the relationship between specific actors, causes and profile, in order to gain an understanding of the conflict dynamics. Indicators can then be developed in order to reflect these relationships and how they evolve over time. It is important to have a mix of perception-based and objective indicators, each of which should reflect qualitative and quantitative elements. Good indicators reflect a variety of perspectives on the context. It is good practice to involve communities and other actors in identifying the indicators; not only should this produce better indicators but it is also an important opportunity to build a common understanding of the context, to ascertain joint priorities and to agree on benchmarks of progress.

Since each conflict is unique, there is no standard list of indicators applicable to all contexts. The following table provides some examples of sample perception-based and objective indicators for the four key elements.

**TABLE 1**

**Sample of conflict analysis indicators**

Key element	Example	Sample Indicators (a)objective and (b) perception-based
<b>Profile</b>	Geographic mobilisation around natural resources	(a) What is the price of timber? How has it evolved over time? (b) (In the view of the respondent) How has conflict intensity changed around this particular area?
<b>Causes</b>	Human rights abuses	(a) Has the number of political prisoners risen or fallen? (b) To what extent can you/others openly criticise the government?
<b>Actors</b>	Diaspora	(a) Have overseas remittances increased or decreased? (b) To what extent does the diaspora support or undermine the peace process?
<b>Dynamics</b>	Increased commitment to resolve conflict	(a) Has the frequency of negotiations increased or decreased among conflict parties? (b) Do you believe that party X is committed to the peace process?

*Note: the examples in Table 1 relate to each specific key element only (eg sample indicators for profile have no relation to the example or sample indicators for causes).*



## 4. Integrating conflict analysis and other forms of assessment

At all levels, humanitarian, development and peacebuilding organisations use some form of pre-intervention assessment of the context in which they operate in order to identify entry points and plan their work. This is usually called a needs assessment.

Needs assessment frameworks, such as sustainable livelihoods assessments, participatory poverty assessments, participatory rural appraisals, good governance assessments and gender analyses can usefully be complemented by conflict analyses, and vice versa as explained below:

- assumptions about context: livelihood, poverty and governance frameworks assume static situations and therefore provide little guidance on how to deal with changing and fluid contexts. Conflict analysis thus helps to better understand these environments
- focus: livelihood and poverty assessments take the individual household as a starting point, seeking to establish the economic, political, social and cultural factors affecting the lives and livelihoods of its members. This perspective is a valuable addition to the “top-down” view of conflict analysis. In practice, however, these approaches often describe rather than explain poverty and tend to neglect issues of politics and power. There is little scope, for example, for exploring competition and exploitation. There also tends to be a lack of attention to the implications of weak political systems, bad governance and instability for households’ livelihood strategies. Governance assessment frameworks deal with these issues, too, but usually under the assumption of peaceful political competition and willingness to reform. These assumptions might be questioned by a conflict analysis (see **section 2.5**)
- external / internal view: poverty and other participatory forms of assessment help understand people’s individual perspectives and experience. These are often missing from conflict analysis, which tends to place more emphasis on the interests and strategies of organised political actors. Not infrequently, conflict analyses are conducted from an outside perspective.

It is important to recognise the distinct frameworks underlying conflict analysis and other forms of needs assessment. In practice, however, there is a growing effort

and acknowledged need to carry out an integrated research and analytical process that takes account of both perspectives. The following table provides some preliminary entry points for integrating conflict analysis into needs assessments.

**TABLE 2**  
**Entry points for integrating conflict analysis into needs assessment**

- Beyond describing poverty, focus on its potential causes, examine the impact of power and powerlessness on poverty and establish the sources of power in the particular community.
- Refine the understanding of group membership and group identity and how they affect vulnerability (eg persecution, exploitation).
- Examine how the wider conflict dynamics impact on institutions and relations within the community, understand processes of dominance, alignment and exclusion.
- Link local processes (eg displacement) to political and economic interests and strategies at regional and national levels (eg land appropriation, war economy).

## 5. Good practice in conflict analysis

The following section addresses key concerns in relation to undertaking conflict analysis, as the conflict-analysis process itself needs to be conflict sensitive. This section offers examples of good practice based on consultations in Kenya, Uganda and Sri Lanka.

### Building capacity for conflict analysis

Conducting conflict analysis requires human and financial resources, which organisations may find hard to afford, especially if conflict sensitivity has not yet become a mainstreamed policy within the organisation (see **Chapter 5**). As a result, this may require systematically and sustainably building the need for conflict analysis into funding applications (for civil society organisations), budgets, planning guidelines, and human and organisational development plans. According to the level of awareness and capacity in your organisation, capacity building for conflict analysis may involve:

- helping staff to better understand the context in which they work. For example, in post-conflict contexts, staff

of international organisations often do not recognise the links between their work and possible violence. Local government or civil society staff, on the other hand, may be too involved at the micro level to see the larger picture

- making sure organisations give conflict analyses and their integration equal priority to other forms of assessment (governance, poverty, needs assessments, etc) (see **Section 4**)
- wherever possible, integrating conflict analyses into established procedures (eg strategic plans, needs assessments, etc), as well as into the contributions of service providers (eg terms of reference for short-term advisors, calls for proposals / tenders, etc). When preparing such processes, it is fundamental to make sufficient time to accommodate conflict analyses
- budgeting for conflict analysis in funding applications and operational budgets. Donors (and the tax payers to whom donors are accountable) may need to be sensitised to the importance of conflict analysis. NGOs often find that donors either (a) assume or even require that conflict analysis be conducted at the project proposal stage, without being aware of its costs for smaller organisations; or (b) do not prioritise conflict analysis at all
- supporting staff in acquiring conflict analysis skills on an ongoing basis, for example through staff development plans
- developing an external network of national and international experts on which to draw for specific tasks.

### Who conducts the analysis?

Conflict analysis can be undertaken for various purposes. The purpose will determine the specific process and will help to determine who should conduct the analysis. For example, if the purpose is to promote a participatory and transformative process within a community, the community should play a vital role in the planning, implementation (eg data collection) and assessment of the analysis. If the purpose is to develop a strategy for engagement in a given context, it may be that an internal team from within the organisation developing the strategy should lead the process. Some elements of the analysis may be highly sensitive, and thus may need to be confidential.

Local project staff typically conduct participatory conflict analysis exercises with communities to decide on further project activities. Conflict analysis, in the context of project monitoring by international NGOs, is frequently carried out by national and international staff, sometimes with the support of an external adviser. Donors tend to commission external experts or specialised institutes in their own countries for countrywide conflict analysis studies, while governments may have dedicated departments to deal with specific conflict issues. In any case, it is important to get the right mix of skills and

backgrounds, which can be summarised as follows:

- good conflict analysis skills
- good knowledge of the context and related history
- sensitivity to the local context
- local language skills
- sectoral / technical expertise as required
- sufficient status / credibility to see through recommendations
- good knowledge of the organisations involved
- representation of different perspectives within the context under consideration
- moderation skills, team work, possibly counselling
- facilitation skills.

The quality and relevance of the analysis mainly depends on the people involved. These include the person or team conducting the analysis, on the one hand, and other conflict actors, on the other. Conflict analysis consists of eliciting the views of the different groups and placing them into a larger analytical framework. The quality of the analysis will depend on how faithfully it reflects the views received – views may be distorted or given too much or too little weight during the filtering process, either inadvertently or deliberately. It will also be influenced by how the team is perceived by various actors within the context. For example, if the team is trusted by all actors, they are likely to get more and better information than if they are perceived to be too close to certain parties.

Every conflict analysis is highly political, and bias is a constant concern. It may be difficult to be objective, as personal sympathies develop and make it difficult to maintain an unbiased approach. Even a “fly-in” expert will be influenced by his / her values, previous knowledge of the country, the perspectives of his or her employer, and the people s / he is working with. It may therefore be more productive to spell out one’s own position and preconceptions and be clear about the conditions and restrictions under which the conflict analysis takes place. The collective basis of the conflict analysis team may also ensure higher levels of objectivity and impartiality.

### Selecting the appropriate framework for conflict analysis

When planning to use a specific framework to support conflict analysis, it is worth considering its strengths and weaknesses.

In general, organisations may find that tools do not necessarily offer new information, particularly if they have already developed strong linkages to institutions and communities in the area under consideration. Their main value lies in guiding the systematic search for this information and providing a framework for analysing it, thus prompting critical questions and offering new perspectives. Tools can also enhance internal



communication about conflict within an organisation, eg between provinces and the capital, or between field offices and headquarters. Similarly, conflict analysis tools can guide consultation with a range of communities and other stakeholders. Finally, international actors appreciate that standardised tools ensure a certain degree of comparability between different conflict analyses.

On the other hand, conflict analysis tools should not be mistaken for a substitute for detailed local knowledge and human judgement nor stifle creative thinking. Tools that offer pre-defined lists of structural causes or indicators may be too general to adequately capture a specific conflict. Tools may also be too comprehensive for an organisation with limited research capacities, or not focussed enough to answer specific questions. For these reasons, organisations will tend to customise existing tools to their own specific needs, objectives and capacities.

**BOX 7**

**Adapting tools for Northern Uganda**

In Uganda, a consortium of INGOs and government representatives consensually developed a hybrid conflict analysis tool that best met their needs and at the same time held maximum relevance in the Northern Uganda context. The hybrid tool developed by the consortium uses the profile-actors-context framework outlined in Figure 2 above, with components of tools developed by World Vision, ACORD and Oxfam in Uganda, the Local Capacities for Peace Project (Do No Harm), and various other tools. The consortium then used the tool they had developed to conduct a shared conflict analysis and to collectively build the capacity of their field staff to conduct and update similar analyses in the future. (The capacity building and field research work is still ongoing at the time of writing).

There are some further issues around tools that organisations should consider:

- visual aids (eg graphs) and indicator ratings used in some tools suggest a degree of precision and objectivity that usually does not stand up to reality. Participants in a conflict analysis should therefore be encouraged to reflect on the subjectivity of their assessments
- tools relying on some technical support (eg software) may appear intimidating to some participants. Similarly, extensive lists of indicators tend to make the analysis unmanageable
- in general, aim to create a “safe space” for extensive discussions.

**Collecting information for conflict analysis**

It is important to gather information from as wide a range of sources as possible and to listen to many different actors, in order to broaden the understanding of the context and to include a wide range of perspectives (see Box 3).

**BOX 8**

**FORED Sri Lanka**

FORED undertakes surveys with women in target communities (women are FORED’s main beneficiaries) to understand the socio-economic situation of the community. To gain the trust and confidence of the women, field staff visit the families and spend time with the women in the kitchen, helping them with their tasks. Information gathered in the questionnaire is thus complemented through indirect cross-referencing from these informal “chats”. Information is further triangulated (see Box 9) with knowledgeable community leaders.

Various techniques can be used to gather these perspectives, from surveys and interviews to group discussion and stakeholder consultations (see Box 4). In contexts where groups cannot openly and directly discuss conflict, it may be useful to consider having separate meetings. Meetings and interviews must be conducted in a language in which participants can confidently express their views.

**BOX 9**

**Stakeholder consultations**

International and government agencies now routinely use stakeholder meetings to collect information in preparation for certain policy decisions. They typically hold one or a series of workshops in the capital and large district towns, to which representatives of different interest groups (eg local government, private sector, civil society, etc) are invited, to discuss specific issues.

Although an improvement on former practices, this form of stakeholder consultation presents a number of difficulties:

- one-way communication: where “participation” is misunderstood to mean helping to implement political decisions rather than helping to shape them, meetings will be used to announce work plans and expected commitments, rather than to get feedback
- lack of capacity: grassroots representatives often do not fully grasp the context of the meeting or have difficulties in discussing certain issues
- power: people bring their power relations with them into the meeting room, and it is unrealistic to expect low-ranking people to speak up against their superiors/patrons in public. For the same reason, it is difficult to discuss conflict issues
- process fatigue: participants who have repeatedly undergone consultations tend to voice solutions, before going through the step-by-step process that leads to the identification of core issues
- marginalisation: women and other marginalised groups usually lack equal representation. Participants typically over-represent well-educated, relatively wealthy urban elites. Care therefore needs to be taken to include representation from both urban and rural communities as well as poor communities (whether urban or rural).

The information gathered will not all be reliable. Gatekeepers such as local leaders and interpreters may try to influence information. Ordinary people will rarely dare to speak up against them in public or even in private. Information is also largely determined by access. Aid agencies report restrictions of access by the national government, their own governments, or local strongmen, which limit the type of information they are able to gather. In certain contexts, when information is a scarce commodity, it tends to become highly political. There nonetheless exist some research methods, such as triangulation, which aim to reduce some of these limitations (see Box 10).

#### BOX 10

##### Triangulation

Given the difficulties of obtaining reliable information for undertaking conflict analysis, it is often useful to use a mix of data gathering methods (“triangulation”) – for example a desk study, quantitative surveys, expert interviews, stakeholder consultations, and feedback workshops to present and discuss conclusions.

The aim of triangulation is to verify each piece of information with at least two corroborative or complementary sources, to obtain data that eventually “matches up” and clarifies differing perspectives. (For more information about triangulation, see **Chapter 3, Module 1, section 3.2**).

### Conducting the analysis

Conflict analysis requires a great deal of care and sensitivity due to the highly political nature of the information gathered. A participatory process can become transformative by helping participants to define their own conflict – an important step towards addressing it. Because conflict analysis touches on sensitive issues such as power, ownership, and neutrality, however, it can also provoke conflict by bringing sensitive issues to the fore.

For this reason, the conflict analysis itself needs to be carried out in a conflict sensitive manner. It is thus good practice to get stakeholders on board early on and avoid antagonising potential spoilers (see **section 2.3**).

In particular, when undertaking the conflict analysis, it is important to show respect for people’s ownership and feelings, to include a wide range of actors and perspectives, to be transparent about the goals of the process and to link the analysis to demonstrable action. In many contexts, it is fundamental to ensure that staff, partners and communities are not at risk through the analysis process, for example as a result of insensitive questions being asked in public or researchers being sent to insecure areas. In such situations, the commitment to transparency may need to be restricted by the need to ensure security for some sensitive elements of the analysis.

The conflict analysis process can also help foster partnership and co-ordination, while promoting a shared understanding of the context. The joint donor government / civil society conflict assessment in Nigeria (see Box 11) may prove a valuable experience from which to learn.

#### BOX 11

##### Strategic Conflict Assessment in Nigeria: An inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach<sup>1</sup>

In Nigeria, a radically different approach has been taken to conducting a conflict assessment at the strategic level. First, the assessment has been country owned with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) taking the lead. The IPCR is linked directly to the Nigerian Presidency and was established by the Nigerian government in 2000. Second, the assessment has been supported by a multi-donor group consisting of four main donors – DFID, the World Bank, USAID and UNDP. Third, civil society actors have been involved in the process strategically from the outset.

##### Background and objectives

The inclusive and joint approach to undertaking the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) was adopted by both the Nigerian government and the supporting donors, in recognition of a number of issues which needed addressing. These were:

- a lack of coherent analysis of the causes and dynamics of conflict in Nigeria
- a lack of coordination in the analysis and responses to conflict by the government, civil society and donors (with civil society focusing mainly on local / micro conflict issues and responses, whilst at a more macro level the government found it difficult to understand the linkages between the different conflicts affecting the country)
- a recognition by donors that if any donor undertook such an assessment unilaterally, or even collectively, without the consent of the Nigerian government, it could result in considerable obstacles and high political risks, due to the sensitive nature of conflict in Nigeria. A joint approach would reap considerable benefits in reducing those risks.

The overall objective of the SCA was to provide an analysis of conflict in Nigeria which looked at all areas of national life and would feed into the strategic, or policy, level in order to inform national and international debates about possible responses and provide specific recommendations to government, the international community, the private sector and civil society. The study also aimed to develop and inform the IPCR’s own work and capacity.

##### Process and methodology

The process was initiated in May 2002 with an inclusive workshop of stakeholders including the donors, government and a broad range of civil society groups. The objectives of the workshop were to build knowledge of relevant activities being undertaken by different groups (who is doing what and where); to provide a basis for building awareness of the conflict assessment process, providing space for feedback from different stakeholders; and to strengthen the interaction and relationship between the different actors.

The methodology used in the SCA was based on the DFID Conflict Assessment Guidance (see **Annex 1**) but adapted through modifications by the IPCR and field teams (researchers). The SCA was undertaken by teams of IPCR and consultants in two phases:

*Phase one* involved desk-based research mapping the causes, actors and dynamics of conflict, based on written sources.

*Phase two* tested the findings of phase one through fieldwork carried out by research teams in all the Nigerian states which endeavoured to involve different stakeholders and interest groups.

Phase two also focused on considering responses and policy options. A team leader collaborated in the writing of a summary report for each phase. The phase two report was also scrutinised in a technical workshop in October 2002 involving a technical panel comprised of experts from the different stakeholder groups (government, donors and civil society).

### Outcome and next steps

In terms of future responses, the phase two report provides a detailed agenda for change on the political stage. Recommendations are directed at the different actors, including the federal government, state governments, local governments, civil society, the international community and the IPCR itself. They are divided into recommendations that need immediate, medium term and long-term action (those on which work can start now but where results are not expected for 8-10 years). In particular, the report recommends immediate attention to early warning and conflict prevention in recognition of the lack of Nigerian early warning systems and the absence of systematic provision for preventative responses. The report identifies an over reliance on and limited or even negative effect of military responses.

In order to share the research findings a further stakeholder workshop was held in March 2003 which considered the issue of 'what next' and the roles of different stakeholders in taking the findings forward. The discussion was centred on a number of themes – security sector reform and small arms, early warning and early response, political conflict, social and economic causes, the role of civil society and mainstreaming into donor and government action.

Following from the phase 2 report and stakeholder workshop, a National Action Plan (NAP) has been drafted which outlines a concrete agenda for taking forward the recommendations in the report, including a strategy for mainstreaming conflict sensitivity within government institutions. In terms of progress to date, the SCA process has produced a number of demonstrable steps forward in terms of promoting conflict sensitivity in the Nigerian context. These include:

- steps by the Nigerian government to integrate the findings of the SCA into the PRSP process
- steps taken by donors to review their strategies and approaches on the basis of the analysis
- an increased sense of awareness and empowerment by civil society of the role they can play in pushing the agenda forward.

## 6. Choosing the right framework for conflict analysis

This section aims to provide guidance on selecting a conflict analysis tool from **Annex 1**, which best corresponds to the needs and capacities of specific organisations. At this point, it is important to note that the tools included in the Resource Pack were selected according to the following criteria:

- sufficient documentation available to describe the tools adequately
- each tool was used by at least one organisation
- the tools cover both micro and macro-level conflict analysis
- the tools represent a wide range of approaches to conflict analysis (especially in terms of targeted audiences and fields of interventions).

Although the project team has gone to some lengths to document the practice and experience of smaller, particularly Southern, organisations (especially in Kenya, Uganda and Sri Lanka), a brief glance at the list of tools reveals that most have been developed by Northern NGOs and donor agencies. Their perspective on conflict is therefore largely external, thus reflecting the current state of play in the area of formal conflict analysis. In the context of North / South relations, it may therefore be important to enhance cross-fertilisation and shared learning on conflict analysis and the development of conflict analysis tools.

The checklist poses a number of questions that can help organisations think about the type of conflict analysis tool they need. It is not comprehensive and will need to be further adapted to each organisation.

### Checklist for selecting a conflict analysis tool

#### 1. Purpose

- Does the tool provide the information you need for your work?
- Is the proposed process of conflict analysis consistent with your aims?

#### 2. Assumptions

- Do you share the tool's specific understanding of conflict?
- Does this perspective correspond to the mandate and values of your organisation?

#### 3. Methodology

- Does the proposed methodology match the purpose of the analysis?
- Does the proposed methodology agree with the ways of working of your organisation?
- How long does it take to gain results?

#### 4. Resource implications

- What are the resource implications of the selected tool (staff time, travel, seminar costs, facilities, data management)?
- Is your organisation able to allocate the required resources?

#### 5. Availability

- Is the tool available at the time and cost that suit you?
- Can full documentation be accessed?

TABLE 3

### Summary of conflict analysis tools listed in Annex 1

Purpose	Level	Potential users	Assumptions	Methodology	Resources
<b>1. Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) - DFID - DEV*</b>					
Country/regional strategic planning, can also be applied to projects/programmes	Regional, national, local	DFID and partner bilateral / multilateral agencies desk officers	Combine political and economic dimensions; greed/grievance; structures and actors	Combination of desk study and field consultations	Assessment team (5 people). Consultation meetings in-country
<b>2. Benefits / harms handbook - CARE - DEV/HA</b>					
Analysis, impact assessment and project (re)design	Local – mainly project level	NGO project managers, field staff	Focus on rights-based approach	Desk-based and field research and possible workshop consultations	Varies – few hours in emergencies to more detailed workshops / consultations
<b>3. Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF) - World Bank - DEV</b>					
Country strategic planning	National, can also be adapted to (sub) regional	Multilateral organisation desk staff / planners	Focus on socio-economic dimensions of conflict	Checklist; Desk studies, workshops, stakeholder consultations, consultants	Full CAF analysis resource intensive (workshops, consultations, consultants); but can be simplified
<b>4. Conflict analysis and response definition - FEWER - PB</b>					
Early warning, country strategic planning	National, local	Diplomats, donor desk officers, NGOs	Focus on conflict dynamics	Ongoing analysis by local civil society organisations	Modest for desk study; more for training or workshops

Purpose	Level	Potential users	Assumptions	Methodology	Resources
<b>5. EC Checklist for root causes of conflict - European Commission - DEV</b>					
Early warning, strategic and programme planning	National, regional	Multi- and bilateral donor desk officers, diplomatic actors	Focus on structural root causes of conflict	Checklist; external research capacity	Limited as mainly desk-based
<b>6. Working with conflict: skills and strategies for action - Responding to conflict - PB</b>					
Conflict analysis, programme planning	Local, national	Local and INGO staff, field and headquarters	Focus on understanding conflicts	Collection of tools for participatory conflict analysis	Limited depending on format (workshop, consultation meetings etc)
<b>7. Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts (MSTC): Analysis tools for humanitarian actors - World Vision - DEV / HA</b>					
Conflict analysis, project planning	National, regional	NGO emergency response, development and advocacy staff	Focus on chronic political instability, dovetails with Do No Harm	Collection of tools, flexible application	Variable, depending on use of tools, desk study or consultations
<b>8. Do No Harm / Local capacities for peace project</b>					
Conflict analysis, project monitoring and impact assessment	Local	Donor, NGO (international and local) staff	Focus on dividers and connectors in conflict	Workshop, integration into standard procedures	Limited, for workshop
<b>9. Conflict and Policy Assessment Framework (CPAF) - Clingendael Institute - DEV / F</b>					
Conflict analysis, country strategic planning	National, sectoral	Donor and embassy staff	Focus on indicators of internal conflict and state failure	External research capacity, workshops	Costs of preparing for and holding workshops, can include external consultant involvement
<b>10. Early Warning and Preventive Measures - UN Staff College - ALL</b>					
Early warning, conflict analysis, design	National	UN staff (HQ and field), other donor agencies or NGOs	Focus on human security and human rights framework	Training/workshop setting	Training materials, facilitation, workshop / training costs
<b>11. Conflict assessment framework - USAID - DEV</b>					
Conflict analysis, country and project planning	National	Donor desk officers, implementing partners, other US government officials	Broad scope, synthesis of other tools	Desk study, workshop, follow up integration into programming strategy	For desk study, in country visit and follow-up work.
<b>12. Conflict analysis for project planning and implementation - GTZ - DEV</b>					
Conflict analysis, country and project planning	National, project	Donor, NGO desk officers, project managers	Broad scope, synthesis of other tools	Combination of desk study and empirical research, tools for participatory conflict analysis	Costs of organising workshops and consultation meetings

Purpose	Level	Potential users	Assumptions	Methodology	Resources
<b>13. FAST methodology - Swiss Peace - DEV / FP</b>					
Early warning, risk assessments	National, can be sub-regional	Government ministries, development agencies, NGOs, international organisations	Event data analysis (quantitative and qualitative)	Field information collection, desk-based analysis	Resource intensive for maintaining local information networks and specialist analysis network
<b>14. Conflict diagnostic handbook - CPR / CIDA - PB / DEV</b>					
Conflict and stakeholder assessment	Country, regional	Development practitioners	Devising evidence-based peacebuilding strategies	Mainly workshop setting analysis	Costs of organising and presenting workshop
<b>15. Better Programming Initiative - IFRC - HA</b>					
Conflict assessment, training	Programme; local, national, regional	Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies, delegation and other staff	Focus on aid fostering long-term reconciliation and recovery	Analysis and training	Depending on scope of assessment or length of training
<b>*Field of activity</b>					
DEV Development					
HA Humanitarian Assistance					
PB Peacebuilding					
FP Foreign Policy					

## 7. Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Programme team research. See also, Federal Government of Nigeria, “Strategic Conflict Assessment Nigeria: Consolidated report”, Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, October 2002.



# Annex 1: Tools for conflict analysis

## 1. Strategic Conflict Assessment

Version / Date of issue **January 2002**

Name of organisation **DFID**

Author(s)

**Jonathan Goodhand, Tony Vaux, Robert Walker**

### Primary purpose

Conflict analysis and planning tool (mainly to prepare country/regional strategies, also applicable to individual projects and programmes).

Suggested purposes are to assess:

- risks of negative effects of conflict on programmes
- risks of programmes or policies exacerbating conflict
- opportunities to improve the effectiveness of development interventions in contributing to conflict prevention and reduction.

### Intended users

Principally aimed at staff at DFID and partner bilateral and multilateral agencies. The methodology can be used as the basis for regional, national and local level analysis in order to map responses and their impacts to date, and to develop strategies and options for more conflict sensitive policies and programmes.

### Levels of application

Regional / country level and local level.

### Conceptual assumptions

The Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) methodology is intended as a flexible framework that can be adapted as needed, rather than a standardised approach. The conceptual basis for the SCA is the combined use of the following analytical 'lenses':

- the 'political economy' approach that focuses on the political and social interests of those engaged in conflict, drawing attention to those who may benefit from the continuation of the conflict
- analysis of the causes of conflict in terms of 'greed' (opportunities for accumulation or benefit from conflict) and 'grievance' (negative reactions of those who are disadvantaged)
- combined analysis of structures and actors and how they interact with one another
- identification of the different layers/dimensions of the conflict (international, regional, national and local)
- recognition of the dynamic character of conflicts, which may mean that root causes of violent conflict change and

are reshaped in protracted conflicts.

### Main steps and suggested process

The methodology is based on the following three analytical steps:



Within each step, the following areas are investigated:

### A. Conflict analysis

#### 1. Structures

Analysis of long-term factors underlying conflict: security, political, economic, social

#### 2. Actors

Analysis of conflict actors: interests, relations, capacities, peace agendas, incentives

#### 3. Dynamics

Analysis of long-term trends of conflict, triggers for increased violence, capacities (institutions, processes) for managing conflict, likely future conflict scenarios

### B. Analysis of international responses

#### 1. International actors

- Map interests and policies of international actors: military and security, diplomatic, trade, immigration, development
- Assess level of coherence
- Analyse impacts on conflict dynamics.

#### 2. Development actors

- Map magnitude and focus of development policy/programmes
- Analyse development actors' approaches to conflict: in, on or around?
- Assess capacities to work effectively 'in' and 'on' conflict
- Assess potential to influence conflict and peace dynamics.

#### 3. Interactions between development interventions and conflict

- Assess impact of conflict on development policy and programmes
- Assess impact of development interventions on dynamics of conflict and peace.

### C. Developing strategies and options

- Identify possible strategies in terms of:
  1. developing common donor approaches to better respond to conflict
  2. developing conflict sensitive individual donor approaches
  3. adjusting current activities – working 'in' or 'on' conflict, developing new initiatives.

The following process (for a donor country assessment) is suggested:

#### **Desk study**

- Review of relevant documents from a variety of sources
- Interviews with key stakeholders in the donor country.

#### **Field work**

- Internal consultation with donor staff (development agency, embassy)
- Stakeholder consultation (possibly series of workshops with range of stakeholders within and outside the capital)
- Debriefing workshop with donor staff and small expert group to feed back and discuss results.

#### **Drafting conflict assessment document**

#### **Guiding questions / indicators**

The tool provides useful examples of sources of conflict and tension, conflict actors, conflict triggers, conflict scenarios, donor policy instruments and possible conflict prevention strategies. The examples refer to specific countries; no general lists are provided.

#### **Required resources**

Suggested composition of a country-level conflict assessment team:

- team leader (18 working days)
- international consultant (25 working days, includes preparation of final report)
- two in-country project consultants (10 working days each)
- conflict adviser (10 working days)
- social development adviser (10 working days).

However, this will depend on the context in which the conflict assessment framework will be applied, the end users of the analysis, and their objectives.

#### **Current applications**

DFID has applied the conflict assessment methodology to a range of country studies, including Nepal, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Sri Lanka and the Caucasus. There has also been a multi-donor assessment in Nigeria, which included DFID, on the basis of the SCA framework.

#### **Lessons learnt**

The following methodological and practical lessons have been learned from applying the Strategic Conflict Assessments (SCAs):

- SCAs have improved the quality of analysis across UK government departments and encouraged a more joined-up approach. They have provided a framework within which to assess new proposals and have been useful in designing coherent, strategic interventions.
- there is a need to determine the SCAs' target audiences and purpose in the design phase. A limited audience enables a more critical analysis, whereas a wider audience necessitates more sensitivity and potential watering down. If other relevant ministries are involved and have a serious stake in the outcome of the process, a strongly worded analysis could limit efforts to engage in

subtle diplomatic pressure.

- there is a need to be clear about why and when to conduct SCAs; in particular, they should be timed to coincide with a natural pause or turning point in the programme cycle, or before launching a new programme.
- composition of the team is a crucial element in its success; it is important to encompass expertise from a number of different areas in order to widen and deepen the quality of the analysis. It is also good to have a combination of external and local consultants.
- there is a need to achieve the right balance between contextual analysis and programme design. In this sense, it is important to have as wide an analysis as possible so that the complexity of the conflict could be properly understood before converting it into programme ideas.
- precise recommendations on what action to take next bring added value to SCAs. They also help overcome the feeling that the process could be an extra burden, eg describing exactly what response needs to be taken, who should be responsible for taking it, which NGO to work with, and how much funding would be required.
- it is essential to have active participation of in-country staff to inform the purpose and approach and a staff member dedicated to the follow-up and implementation of recommendations.
- SCAs should be conducted in a timeframe of about six weeks up to two months, depending on the depth and scope of the study. A minimum of two weeks for field research and two weeks for the writing-up process is recommended. Reports should be published immediately after the assessment to guarantee timely relevance.
- the practical application of the SCA depends on the conflict expertise of the users and whether or not they 'ask the right questions'. Less experienced staff may require induction, training and support.

(A different approach was followed in the Strategic Conflict Assessment in Nigeria in that an NGO led the process and support came from 4 different donors (including DFID). The lessons learned from that process are therefore different).

#### **Commentary on the tool**

- The tool presents a very comprehensive form of conflict analysis, but with a methodological basis that is designed to be tailored to suit specific contexts and end users.
- Some parts of the analysis outputs may become out of date quickly, and a higher level strategic assessment may not be appropriate as the basis for designing micro-level projects or sectoral interventions without further specific contextual analysis. It would therefore be ideal to complement the conflict assessment methodology with a lighter tool for more continuous monitoring of the programme and conflict situation.
- The tool can be used at any point in the programming cycle and at various points in the conflict cycle in a country (ie pre-conflict, post-conflict etc).

#### **Available reports**

The Strategic Conflict Assessment (*Conducting Conflict*

*Assessments: Guidance Notes* is available on the DFID website, under the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (<http://www.dfid.gov.uk>). Reports on conflict assessments on Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan, as well as a synthesis report on Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Nepal and Sri Lanka are also available on the above website.

A 'lessons learned' report on the Strategic Conflict Assessment in Nigeria (conducted by the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in the Nigerian Presidency, with support from DFID, the World Bank, USAID and UNDP) is available by contacting the address below.

#### Contact details

Department for International Development  
Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department  
20 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0NB  
Email: [chadenquiry@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:chadenquiry@dfid.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0044 (0)845 300 4100  
Fax: 0044 (0)20 7023 0502

## 2. Benefits / harms handbook

Version / Date of issue **September 2001**

Name of organisation **CARE**

Author(s)

**Paul O'Brien**

#### Primary purpose

To help humanitarian and development workers take responsibility for the impact of their work on people's human rights. It offers a set of *simple interrogative tools* that help staff think more deeply and effectively about the impacts of their work, and taking responsibility for both positive and negative impacts. It also provides a framework for monitoring potential negative or unintended impacts, as well as ways to mitigate these.

#### Intended users

NGO project managers and other field staff and consultants working in the areas of development and humanitarian assistance. The methodology may also be of interest to national government officials and possibly donors.

#### Levels of application

Project level, although the concepts could be applied at other levels as well.

#### Conceptual assumptions

##### 1. Human-rights approach

CARE's human rights-based approach to relief and development presupposes that all people are entitled to certain minimum conditions of living with dignity (human rights). Relief and development organisations aim to help people achieve these conditions, thereby acknowledging their human responsibility to do so. This implies they take responsibility for the human rights impact of their work – whether positive or negative. Human rights are therefore the central criteria for analysing the overall impact of a project.

##### 2. Analytical framework

The methodology is based on three categories of human rights and impacts:

- political rights and impacts (eg right to equality and recognition before the law, right to a fair trial, freedom of thought and expression, right to association and political participation)
- security rights and impacts (eg right to life, liberty, security of person, movement, freedom from torture, forced displacement, degrading treatment, sexual assault, arbitrary arrest)
- economic, social and cultural rights and impacts (eg livelihood security, nutrition, food security, water, health, education, clean environment, shelter, participation in one's culture).

### Main steps and suggested process

The benefits / harms handbook contains tools for situation analysis (profile tools), impact assessment (impact tools), and project (re)design (decision tools). In particular:

- profile tools help users gain a more comprehensive understanding of the contexts in which they work
- impact tools help users think about the unintended impacts of their work
- decision tools help users work through difficult decisions when there is a real danger of harming people with an intervention.

The handbook assumes that most of the information required to answer the tools' questions is already available from the organisation's field staff. Further information can be gathered from individuals familiar with the local situation, who are invited for consultation. If the organisation has been working in the area for some time already, it is recommended to hold a workshop inviting middle-level and field staff as well as local experts. For assessing a new project, the questions in the tools may be put to the local community in a sensitive way.

### Guiding questions / indicators

The profile, impact and decision tools are organised according to the three categories of human rights, namely: political, security and economic, social and cultural rights.

In addition, the profile tool also focuses on rights, responsibilities and underlying causes, in order to help users think about the underlying causes of any human rights problem. To this end, consideration is given to the actions, attitudes and artifices (eg systems and structures) that cause the rights problem.

### Required resources

Depends on the required research. A few hours talking through the profile tools with local staff are considered enough in emergency situations. Otherwise, workshops with field staff, decision makers and possibly additional experts are recommended.

### Current applications

Projects in East Africa must conduct a benefits / harms analysis before starting implementation. The intention is twofold:

- to conduct such an analysis prior to implementation
- to ensure that the benefits / harms thinking also pervades the project implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

### Lessons learnt

It is not possible to design a totally 'harm-free' project upfront, so that equal emphasis needs to be placed on the follow up, in the form of an ongoing benefits / harms analysis during the project implementation, and the identification of ways to mitigate potential negative impacts.

### Commentary on the tool

The benefits / harms tools themselves are fairly straightforward to use and capacity can be built quickly. But

it takes organisational commitment to make them work.

### Available reports

An electronic copy of the handbook is available on request.

### Contact details

Paul O'Brien

Afghanistan Policy Advisor, CARE International

E-mail: [pobrien@care.org](mailto:pobrien@care.org)

Dan Maxwell

East Africa Regional Programme Coordinator, CARE International

E-mail: [maxwell@care.org](mailto:maxwell@care.org)

### 3. Conflict Analysis Framework

Version / Date of issue <b>October 2002</b>
Name of organisation <b>World Bank</b>
Author(s)  <b>Per Wam, Shonali Sardesai</b>
<b>Primary purpose</b> Conflict analysis tool
<b>Intended users</b> Desk officers / planners in donor development organisations (World Bank staff).
<b>Levels of application</b> Country level, in preparation of country strategies, poverty reduction strategies, policies and individual programmes. It can also be adapted for use at the (sub) regional level.
<b>Conceptual assumptions</b> The contribution of development organisations, such as the World Bank, to conflict prevention is regarded as threefold: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>making countries more resilient to the eruption and escalation of violent conflict by strengthening participatory and inclusive social processes and institutions that may help manage conflicts in non-violent ways</li> <li>addressing factors related to conflict and determine their links with poverty - sources (including roots) of conflicts; opportunities for groups to engage in violent activities and the consequences of conflict</li> <li>determining the factors that can be addressed through World Bank assisted strategies, and the modalities through which they can best be managed.</li> </ul>
<b>Main steps and suggested process</b> The World Bank's methodology includes two stages, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a <i>screening process</i>, aimed to test whether it is (or not) appropriate to undertake a full conflict analysis in the country under consideration. The screening considers a set of nine indicators of potential violence</li> <li>a <i>full conflict analysis</i> process, on the basis of the Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF).</li> </ul> The following steps are recommended for conducting a CAF-based conflict analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reinterpretation of existing information on the conflict situation of a country along the lines of the CAF (brief desk study)</li> <li>workshops with country specialists to cover each of the six CAF categories and analysis of variables along a set of specific dimensions, that will help determine a country's overall position relative to conflict</li> <li>follow-up studies, as needed, on issues identified in the</li> </ul>

workshop and monitoring of issues identified as conflict-sensitive

- stakeholder analysis to identify and examine groups who have the ability to affect political and social change, including violence, and the main groups who are likely to be affected by such changes
- country consultation with different stakeholder groups, as needed
- concluding workshops to discuss integration of the above issues into the poverty reduction strategy, country strategy or other country programmes.

CAF can be conducted as a stand-alone analysis or integrated into a more comprehensive macro-social analysis (for more information, see [www.worldbank.org/socialanalysisresourcebook](http://www.worldbank.org/socialanalysisresourcebook)).

#### Guiding questions / indicators

##### A. Risk screening indicators

Although none of these factors alone is necessary or sufficient to determine the outbreak, escalation or resumption of violent conflict, they have been found to be statistically highly related to conflict.

##### B. Conflict Analysis Framework

Categories of variables

- Social and ethnic relations*, eg social cleavages, group identity-building, bridging social capital
- Governance and political institutions*, eg stability of political institutions, equity of law
- Human rights and security*, eg human rights status, militarisation of society, role of media
- Economic structure and performance*, eg income disparities, income changes
- Environment and natural resources*, eg availability of and access to natural resources
- External factors*, eg regional conflicts, role of diasporas.

Desk officers are encouraged to use their knowledge of the country to identify those variables which seem most relevant to the conflict in question.

These variables are analysed according to the following **dimensions**:

- History / changes*: how the variable has developed/changed over a relevant time span?
- Dynamics / trends*: what is determining the future path of the variable and how is it likely to develop?
- Public perceptions*: public attitudes and biases regarding the variable
- Politicization*: how the variable is used politically by groups and organizations;
- Organisation*: the extent to which the variable has led to the establishment of interest organisations, and / or influenced political parties and militant organisations
- Link to conflict and intensity*: how the variable contributes to conflict and the current level of intensity
- Link to poverty*: how the variable relates to poverty.

Based on the analysis of variables, desk officers are also

encouraged to examine linkages between variables.

#### Required resources

- Considerable resources are required to conduct a full CAF, including expert workshops, stakeholder consultations and the deployment of consultants.
- While a full CAF (desk and field work) may require considerable resources, this is not a necessity. It is possible to conduct a CAF via a simpler and less expensive process, including two to three-day workshops, desk studies, etc. It is also possible to adapt CAF to the country context by identifying a few conflict sensitive variables and monitoring them on a regular basis.

#### Current applications

CAF is being applied to Venezuela, Burundi (in co-operation with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)), Rwanda and Somalia.

#### Lessons learnt

A lessons learnt document on the above applications is being planned for the end of 2003.

#### Commentary on the tool

N/A

#### Available Reports

The CAF methodology can be obtained at:  
**cpr@worldbank.org**.

#### Contact details

Per Wam / Shonali Sardesai

Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit

World Bank

Email: **cpr@worldbank.org**

Website: **www.worldbank.org/conflict**

## 4. Conflict analysis and response definition

Version / Date of issue **April 2001**

Name of organisation **Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER), West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Centre for Conflict Research (CCR)**

Author(s)

### FEWER (adapted by WANEP)

#### Primary purpose

Conflict analysis. It provides an analytical and action framework, which will help plan preliminary responses to early warning.

#### Intended users

Diplomatic and development actors, mainly desk officers and policy makers in foreign policy and development departments. Indigenous and international NGOs engaged in early warning.

#### Levels of application

Country level, although an adaptation of the methodology to look at local conflicts has also proven useful.

#### Conceptual assumptions

The methodology is designed as a 'quick tool', which can provide insight into overall trends. It is not meant as a substitute for more sustained conflict analysis, monitoring and consultations.

The key assumption is:

"(a) Conflict trends – (b) peace trends +/- (c) stakeholder trends = overall trends."

#### Main steps and suggested process

Conflict analysis consists of four broad steps:

1. analysis of conflict indicators (root causes, proximate causes and conflict triggers in the areas of politics/security, economy and socio-culture)
2. analysis of peace indicators (systems, processes and tools sustaining peace in a given society, in the areas of politics/security, economy and socio-culture)
3. stakeholder analysis (agenda/power, needs and actions of stakeholders in areas of politics/security, economy and socio-culture)

*In each of these three areas, the analyst is asked to establish linkages and synergies between the indicators/stakeholders identified and build three scenarios (best-case, status-quo, worst-case)*

4. summary analysis: using the above formulae, the predominant trends in the areas of conflict and peace indicators as well as among stakeholders are brought together to determine overall conflict trends. Again, three overall scenarios are formulated.



The methodology can be used for a desk study or to facilitate a conflict analysis workshop. Participants mainly draw on their existing knowledge of the conflict, little new research is required.

#### Guiding questions / indicators

For illustrative purposes, the methodology contains an extensive list of conflict and peace indicators for the Caucasus and the Great Lakes Region, which were generated during FEWER's early warning activities.

#### Required resources

Modest resources are required for desk study, workshop or trainings based on the methodology.

#### Current applications

WANEP has been using this methodology internally for their own peace-building work, as well as training with other actors in most countries in West Africa (Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Senegal, Gambia) and ECOWAS. WANEP has developed numerous policy briefs including briefs on Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Liberia. Policy briefs are targeted broadly at various levels, including governments, the UN, ECOWAS, the EU and international NGOs. Their methodology has also been applied in the form of a training of trainers in East Africa.

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) also asked WANEP to work on the provision of training on conflict methodologies, based on the FEWER/WANEP/CCR approach and experiences.

#### Lessons learnt

- Good analysis is appreciated by stakeholders, including policy makers, and allows *track 1* at national level to be influenced in positive ways by *track 2* peace-building and conflict prevention activities. In Côte d'Ivoire, the policy briefs produced by the West Africa Early Warning and Response Network (WARN) impacted on the Makousis and Accra Accords.
- The conflict analysis tool provides a standard tool which facilitates the production of easily-digested policy briefs.
- The tool has served a useful purpose in supporting the engendering of early warning systems in West Africa.
- With the use of this approach, good conflict analysis enabled various assessments at various levels, from community to national levels. In turn, strategic programme planning and intervention processes were well facilitated. These valuable lessons emerged from civil society intervention programmes in Sierra Leone.
- In situations where violence had escalated, facilitating a conflict analysis amongst primary and secondary conflict stakeholders brought about clarity in terms of appreciating outstanding issues and working collaboratively to resolve the issues.
- Many conflicts in West Africa thrive on conflict systems that are located across national borders. Conflict analysis has influenced policy making to appreciate regional approaches to conflict prevention rather than limiting these approaches to what appear to be internal conflicts.

#### Commentary on the tool

Although primarily designed for country level conflict analysis, the experience of applying the methodology has shown that in countries such as Nigeria and Ghana conflicts are more localised, but with the potential for national destabilisation. The adaptation of the methodology to look at such local level communal conflicts has proved useful.

#### Available reports

The conflict analysis and response definition approach, as well as related policy briefs are available at [www.fewer.org](http://www.fewer.org) and [www.wanep.org](http://www.wanep.org).

#### Contact details

West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)

Tel: +233 (0) 21 221318; 221388; 256439; 258299

Fax: +233 (0) 21 221735

E-mail: [wanep@wanep.org](mailto:wanep@wanep.org)

Website: [www.wanep.org](http://www.wanep.org)

Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER)

Tel: +44 (0)20 7247 7022

Fax: +44 (0)20 7247 5290

Email: [secretariat@fewer.org](mailto:secretariat@fewer.org)

Website: [www.fewer.org](http://www.fewer.org)

## 5. EC checklist for root causes of conflict

Version / Date of issue **2001**

Name of organisation **European Commission**

Author(s)

**European Commission, based on the contribution of the Conflict Prevention Network (CPN).**

### Primary purpose

Awareness raising / early warning and pro-active agenda setting

### Intended users

Decision makers and desk officers in bilateral and multilateral donor organisations. It is most relevant to diplomatic and development actors

### Levels of application

Country and regional levels.

### Conceptual assumptions

N / A

### Main steps and suggested process

The checklist is filled in by European Commission desk officers and delegation staff, on the basis of their general knowledge of the country and other open sources of information. Subsequent statistical analysis allows the addition of other quantitative data (eg UNDP Human Development Index) and the clustering of results according to category.

### Guiding questions / indicators

The checklist uses the following root causes of conflict / early warning indicators:

1. *legitimacy of the state*: are there proper checks and balances in the political system? How inclusive is the political/administrative power? What is the overall level of respect for national authorities? Is corruption widespread?
2. *rule of law*: how strong is the judicial system? Does unlawful state violence exist? Does civilian power control security forces? Does organised crime undermine the country's stability?
3. *respect for fundamental rights*: are civil and political freedoms respected? Are religious and cultural rights respected? Are other basic human rights respected?
4. *civil society and media*: can civil society operate freely and efficiently? How independent and professional are the media?
5. *relations between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms*: how good are relations between identity groups? Does the state arbitrate over tensions and disputes between communities? Are there uncontrolled flows of migrants/refugees?
6. *sound economic management*: how robust is the

economy? Is the policy framework conducive to macro-economic stability? How sustainable is the state's environmental policy?

7. *social and regional inequalities*: how are social welfare policies addressed? How are social inequalities tackled? How are regional disparities tackled?

8. *geopolitical situation*: how stable is the region's geopolitical situation? Is the state affected by external threats? Is the state affecting regional stability?

In the original tool, each question is further specified by two to four sub-questions.

### Required resources

Mainly desk-based tool, limited resources required.

### Current applications

- In preparation for the January 2002 debate on potential conflict issues, conflict assessments were carried out by Commission desk officers and EC delegations for more than 120 countries, on the basis of the indicators. The objectives were:
  - to increase awareness, within the EU decision making forums, of the problems of those countries/regions with the highest assessed risk of an outbreak, continuation or re-emergence of conflict
  - to heighten efforts to ensure that EU policies (and in particular EC ones) contribute to conflict prevention/resolution.

Countries receiving highest scores were drawn to the attention of the General Affairs Council through a confidential 'watch list'. The watch list is subject to constant revision, on the basis of the above indicators.

- When drafting the political analysis section of the Commission's country and regional strategy papers, risk factors contained in the checklist are systematically reviewed by the Commission's geographical services and, on the basis of the conflict analysis, attention is drawn to conflict prevention focused activities that external aid should target.

### Lessons learnt

- Although the checklist is relatively new, generally EC desk officers and delegations are positive about the usefulness of the tool. It is regarded as an important step forward for mainstreaming conflict prevention and addressing structural causes of conflict through EU policies and programmes. In order to streamline the procedure further, a web-based platform is under development.
- In order to further improve the efficiency of the checklist, the following actions are being considered:
  - a review of the appropriateness of the indicators and the clusters, with a view to identifying whether more indicators should be added or whether indicators should be further adapted to specific geographical regions.
  - more specialised training for desk officers and delegations on the root causes checklist – using the checklist requires allocating a rating to each indicator

(from 0-4) and thus involves a certain measure of personal perception. The training would help ensure that the results of the analysis can be assessed consistently and comparatively.

- another possible use for the checklist would be to apply it, in the Commission's interactions with partners (eg EU member states, international organisations, NGOs, etc).

#### Commentary on the tool

- The checklist exercise needs to be placed in the context of the Communication from the Commission on conflict prevention and the EU programme for the prevention of violent conflicts, which highlighted the need to move the timescale for EU action forward, becoming progressively more pro-active and less reactive. It also promotes the notion that an early identification of risk factors increases the chances of timely and effective action to address the underlying causes of conflict.
- The checklist is only one of the tools that the Commission has at its disposal for monitoring and early warning. Others include regular reporting from Delegations and desk officers on issues related to the economic and political developments in concerned countries, open source information via the Commission's crisis room, and ECHO's disaster monitoring system, known as ICONS (Impeding Crisis Online New System).

#### Available reports

The checklist for root causes of conflict is available on the EC website ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/cpcm/cp/list.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cpcm/cp/list.htm)).

#### Contact details

Conflict Prevention Unit  
European Commission  
External Relations Directorate General  
Javier Niño Pérez  
Tel: +32 2 2964852  
E-mail: [javiernino-perez@cec.eu.int](mailto:javiernino-perez@cec.eu.int)  
Guy Banim  
Tel: +32 2 2996049  
E-mail: [guy.banim@cec.eu.int](mailto:guy.banim@cec.eu.int)

## 6. Working with conflict: skills and strategies for action

Version / Date of issue **2000**

Name of organisation **Responding to Conflict (RTC)**

Authors

**Simon Fisher, Dekha Ibrahim Abdi, Jawed Ludin, Richard Smith, Steve Williams, Sue Williams**

#### Primary purpose

Conflict analysis and intervention within the framework of conflict transformation (the handbook contains tools for analysis, planning, implementation and impact monitoring)

#### Intended users

Local and international NGOs, field and headquarters staff, mainly working on peacebuilding. Individual tools can be applied in a wide range of contexts, including development co-operation and humanitarian assistance. It is also used by national governments and donors.

#### Levels of application

Mainly project level and local conflicts, although it is also applicable to country-level analysis.

#### Conceptual assumptions

Conflict is complex, dynamic and a part of life. When it is violent it becomes destructive.

Conflict transformation is a holistic and multifaceted process of engaging with conflict. It aims to reduce violence and bring about sustainable justice and peace. It requires work in all spheres, at all levels and with all stakeholders.

The handbook contains an easily accessible introductory section on understanding conflict, which deals with different ways of making sense of conflict and violence, concepts of conflict transformation and the nature of peace processes. A further section is devoted to critical issues in conflict analysis, including power, culture, identity, gender and rights. Generally, the handbook takes a value-based approach to conflict, which is firmly grounded on the principles of active non-violence.

#### Main steps and suggested process

The handbook contains a series of tools for analysing conflict. The aim is to reach a multi-dimensional analysis of the conflict and find entry points for action. An important aspect is the inclusion of stakeholders in the analytical and decision-making process.

##### 1. Stages of conflict

- Identify stages of conflict
- Predict future patterns
- Select particular episode for further analysis

This tool identifies the different stages, levels and patterns of intensity of a conflict over a specific period of time. It assists in identifying indicators for different stages of

conflict and violence. Stages of conflict can be used to represent different perceptions of a conflict.

### 2. Timelines

- Clarify local conflict history
- Help people know and accept each other's understandings of history

This step provides graphic plotting of key conflict-related and other events against a particular timescale. It also highlights the different perceptions of the parties in the conflict.

### 3. Conflict mapping

- Identify actors, issues and relationships
- Identify potential allies and entry points for action

This tool helps visualising relationships between conflict actors (it can also include geographical mapping, mapping of issues or power alignments, mapping of needs and fears). The power relationships become evident through the relative size of actors in the diagram, lines between actors symbolise type of relationship (eg alliance, conflict over particular issue)

### 4. ABC (Attitudes, Behaviour and Context) Triangle

- Gain insight into motivations of conflict parties and the structures or systems in place that contribute to the conflict
- Identify the key needs of each party
- Find entry points.

For each conflict party, drawing an ABC triangle helps to understand the position from which each party is approaching conflict, the context within which conflict is taking place, and identifies key needs.

### 5. Onion

- Move beyond public positions of each party
- Prepare for facilitation, mediation or problem solving interventions.

For each conflict party, an 'onion' of three concentric circles is drawn. These represent, from inside to outside, needs ('what we must have'), interests ('what we really want'), and positions ('what we say we want'). It helps identify common ground between groups as basis for further discussions.

### 6. Conflict tree

- Relates causes and effects to each other, and helps to focus interventions
- Facilitates decision making on work priorities

A tree symbolises the core problem of the conflict (trunk), its underlying causes (roots) and effects (branches). It helps reaching agreement in groups on the core problem to be addressed, and shows the links between the underlying causes and the effects.

### 7. Force-field analysis (adapted)

- Clarify negative and positive forces that are working for or against the continuation of violent conflict
- Develop strategies for reducing/eliminating the negative and building on positive forces

It helps provide a visual analysis of positive and negative factors influencing a desired change or plan of action.

Positive and negative forces are listed in parallel columns with arrows symbolising their relative strength.

### 8. Pillars

- Find ways to weaken or remove factors supporting a negative situation.

Upside-down triangle symbolises a (negative) situation, which is upheld by 'pillars' representing the forces maintaining this situation. This step increases understanding of structures sustaining an undesirable situation.

### 9. Pyramid

- Find right approaches for working at different levels
- Position own work
- Identify potential allies.

Two to three levelled pyramids show stakeholders at different levels of the conflict (eg top, middle, grass roots). It helps identify key actors/leadership and links between levels.

Most tools are best used during a workshop or community meeting, or within a team. Users can select and combine tools according to their specific needs. Most tools are more effective when used with the active involvement of communities and are designed to deepen their understanding of conflict issues. They need to be used with sensitivity to local circumstances.

### Guiding questions / indicators

Refer to individual tools.

### Required resources

None, except a familiarity with the tools.

### Current applications

The RTC approach is used extensively in countries in situations of crisis or in post-settlement peace-building, both by external interveners and by those taking action for change in their own situations. They have been, and are being, applied in a wide variety of contexts, from local government offices in the UK, through international NGOs such as World Vision and Oxfam (West India), to pastoralist communities in North-eastern Kenya.

### Lessons learnt

- Using and developing the tools assist people to express their perspectives and understanding of the situation, as all perspectives are seen as valuable. The debate is focused on the issue rather than the individuals. This gives a more complete picture to all involved and clarifies the understanding of all.
- It is important to use some or, indeed, all of the tools together, as a package, in order to gain full and nuanced understanding of complex conflict situations.
- Adaptation of the tools to make them more familiar to participants is helpful – for example in parts of Kenya the Conflict Stages diagram is referred to as the 'camel's hump'.

### Commentary on the tool

Analysis is not a one-off activity. Because conflict, violence and peace are dynamic, analysis needs to be regularly updated.

**Available reports**

Some reports can be obtained on application from Responding to Conflict and from various peace networks globally, such as ACTION for Conflict Transformation, Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA – South and East Africa), Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU – Afghanistan) and West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP).

**Contact details**

Responding to Conflict  
Tel. 44 121 415 5641  
Fax 44 121 415 4119  
Email: [enquiries@respond.org](mailto:enquiries@respond.org)  
Website: [www.respond.org](http://www.respond.org)

**7. Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts (MSTC): Analysis tools for humanitarian actors**

Version / Date of issue **January 2003**

Name of organisation **World Vision**

Authors  
**Stephen Jackson with Siobhan Calthrop**

**Primary purpose**  
Conflict analysis and planning

**Intended users**  
Initially designed for emergency response staff of international NGOs. It is also useful for staff involved in planning and design of development or advocacy programmes in countries experiencing instability.

**Levels of application**  
Country and regional levels.

**Conceptual assumptions**

**1. ‘Turbulent Contexts’**  
Refers to what the humanitarian sector is calling **Situations of Chronic Political Instability (SCPI)**. This term expands the notion of ‘complex humanitarian emergency’ to reflect the long-term, cyclical and political nature of many of these contexts. It covers phenomena such as cyclical conflict, violence against civilians, political unrest, extreme polarisation of wealth, natural disasters over a number of years, population displacement, and the need for humanitarian assistance. The emphasis is on the chronic and political nature of these contexts.

**2. MSTC Tools**  
These tools are based on recent research on the economy of war, but do not oppose ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’. Rather, the methodology aims at capturing both the economic agendas in war *and* the social dynamics (eg around class, gender, identity, history, belief systems) leading to violence. The MSTC analysis uses specially designed, practical tools to peel away the political, economic and socio-historic layers of complex conflicts.  
MSTC was designed to dovetail with the Do No Harm approach. It provides for detailed contextual information at the meso- and macro-level, on which Do No Harm can then build.

**Main steps and suggested process**  
MSTC analysis provides five tools to answer the following key questions:

1. What **phases** has the context moved through? (Rapid Historical Phase Analysis)
2. What are the **symptoms of instability**? (Symptoms of

Instability Analysis)

3. What kinds of **actors** are at play in the growing instability? (Actor Characteristics Analysis)

4. What struggles over **resources and power** have played a role in the growing instability? (Political Economy of Instability Analysis)

5. What **resentment and stereotypes** have played a role in the growing instability? (Inter-group Relationship Analysis)

There are two further tools, one to synthesise the analysis (SCPI Mapping) and the other to outline possible future scenarios (Scenario and Sensitivity Analysis).

Other tools are also available in the annex, including the iceberg method inspired by the UN Early Warning and Preventive Measures methodology (see *Survey of conflict causes as explained in tool 10*) that can be used to complement the 'Symptoms of Instability Analysis', in order to identify the structural causes that lie behind the immediate causes identified within the MSTC process.

#### Guiding questions / indicators

Refer to individual tools

#### Required resources

Variable, as modules can be combined in different ways.

#### Current applications

- It has recently been applied by World Vision Sudan and will be undertaken in Kosovo and Uganda (planned for July / August 2003). There are also plans to use these tools, combined with other tried and tested tools, for an inter-agency analysis of Iraq.
- Key World Vision humanitarian, policy and programme staff have been exposed to it.

#### Lessons learnt

Lessons learnt are yet to be gathered, as it is still early in the test stage. It is nonetheless planned that key practitioners involved in the test runs will be brought together by the end of 2004 for the review and revision of the tools.

However, key lessons learnt so far include:

- the need for flexibility in the choice of tools used
- the need for sensitivity and confidentiality in the dissemination of findings
- the usefulness of the tools for strategic planning in general
- the need to consider simplifying the tools.

#### Commentary on the tool

The tool is still in its infancy, and yet to be fully tested, but early indications are that it is very useful for conflict-sensitive programming (emergency or longer-term development) in areas where macro-level analysis has been neglected. It is also useful for the analysis of 'clusters of countries', i.e. regions, where causal factors are cross-border.

#### Available reports

Reports of MSTC analysis findings for the above countries

are not available owing to sensitivities.

#### Contact details

World Vision International

Siobhan Calthrop

Policy & Advocacy Capacity Building Co-ordinator

Email: [siobhan\\_calthrop@wvi.org](mailto:siobhan_calthrop@wvi.org)

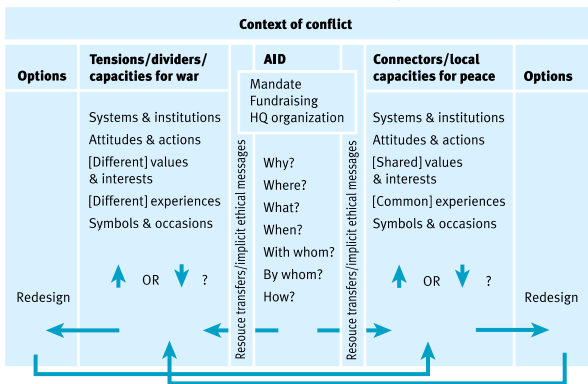


## 8. Do No Harm / Local capacities for peace project

Version / Date of issue <b>2001</b>
Name of organisation <b>Collaborative for Development Action (CDA)</b>
Author  <b>Mary Anderson</b>
<b>Primary purpose</b> Micro conflict analysis, project planning and programme quality, and impact assessment of programme on conflict
<b>Intended users</b> Field staff of international or local NGOs, also widespread among donor agencies (headquarters and field offices). It is primarily targeted at humanitarian organisations, but is also applicable to development co-operation and peacebuilding.
<b>Levels of application</b> Project level
<b>Conceptual assumptions</b> Aid is not neutral in the midst of conflict. Aid and how it is administered can cause harm or can strengthen peace capacities in the midst of conflicted communities. All aid programmes involve the transfer of resources (food, shelter, water, health care, training, etc.) into a resource-scarce environment. Where people are in conflict, these resources represent power and wealth and they become an element of the conflict. Some people attempt to control and use aid resources to support their side of the conflict and to weaken the other side. If they are successful or if aid staff fail to recognise the impact of their programming decisions, aid can cause harm. However, the transfer of resources and the manner in which staff conduct the programmes can strengthen local capacities for peace, build on connectors that bring communities together, and reduce the divisions and sources of tensions that can lead to destructive conflict.  To do no harm and to support local capacities for peace requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>careful analysis of the context of conflict and the aid programme, examining how aid interacts with the conflict, and a willingness to create options and redesign programmes to improve its quality</li> <li>careful reflection on staff conduct and organisational policies so that the ‘implicit ethical messages’ that are sent communicate congruent messages that strengthen local capacities for peace.</li> </ul>
<b>Main steps and suggested process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse <b>dividers</b> and sources of tensions between groups: Systems &amp; Institutions; Attitudes &amp; Actions; [Different] Values &amp; Interests; [Different] Experiences; Symbols &amp; Occasions.</li> </ul>

- Analyse **connectors** across subgroups and Local Capacities for Peace: Systems & Institutions; Attitudes & Actions; [Shared] Values & Interests; [Shared] Experiences; Symbols & Occasions.
  - Analyse the **aid programme**: mission, mandate, headquarters; describe the local programme in terms of why; where; what; when; with whom; by whom and how.
  - Analyse the aid programme’s **impact** on dividers/tensions and connectors / local capacities for peace: is the programme design, its activities, or its personnel increasing or decreasing dividers / tensions? Is it supporting or undercutting connectors / local capacities for peace?
  - Consider **options** for programming redesign and re-check the impact on dividers / tensions and connectors / local capacities for peace: how can the programme details be redesigned so it will ‘Do No Harm’ and strengthen local capacities for peace? Ensure the redesign options avoid negative impacts on the dividers or connectors.
- The Do No Harm framework is generally used by a group of practitioners familiar with the context and project. In this sense, most data is drawn from the participants. However, there are times when information gaps are identified and data is collected from other sources to improve the quality of the analysis.
- It does not include explicit conflict and peace indicators. However, there are many implicit indicators that can be made explicit, through a *community-based process of indicator development*. Such indicators could include a just distribution of resources, creating or strengthening networks of relationships across divisions, strengthening good governance, the use of participatory processes for decision making, supporting traditional or indigenous mechanisms for conflict resolution and reconciliation, inclusion of diversity of ethnic or religious groups, gender, or youth in programme activities and leadership structures.
- Guiding questions / indicators**

The Do No Harm Framework for considering the impact of aid on conflict



**Required resources**  
Limited, if conducted in workshop format.

**Current applications**  
The Do No Harm methodology is widely used among

international and increasingly local humanitarian and development organisations. In Germany, for example, a large group of NGOs has committed themselves to mainstreaming Do No Harm within their operations. While engaged in the early development of the tool in collaboration with CDA, World Vision has also moved toward a process of mainstreaming the use of the Do No Harm framework since 2001. To this end, workshops, training of trainers, programme assessments and case studies of the use of the above framework have been undertaken worldwide.

#### Lessons learnt

- The Do No Harm framework is an approach that is highly compatible with community-based participatory processes and may in fact help strengthen local capacities for peace, in the process of using it.
- The underlying concepts of the Do No Harm framework are relatively easy to grasp (this can be done in a one- to two-day workshop). It is nonetheless a longer process to integrate it into staff perspective in such a way that it becomes a conflict analysis lens for better assessing humanitarian and development work.
- It is descriptive in nature and therefore challenges the users to do their own analysis and apply problem-solving skills to the situation. When used well, it can improve the quality of programming, lowers the risks to staff and community, and lays a solid foundation on which peace-building can take place.
- After extensive application of the Do No Harm approach in a variety of contexts, a number of international NGOs, including World Vision, have found that it is very useful in both emergency and development settings.
- It is primarily focused on the micro situation, so that, if used without consideration of the macro context, it may create a false sense of security for staff.
- It is less suitable for an in-depth analysis of macro-level conflict. Some organisations, such as World Vision, have thus tried to address the above, by combining Do No Harm with other macro conflict analysis tools.

#### Commentary on the tool

- The Do No Harm framework has proved a very valuable tool for micro conflict analysis, in both relief and development contexts.
- It is also regarded as a flexible tool that can be further adapted to the various needs of the organisations applying the Do No Harm framework. For instance, World Vision found that the use of case study writing and the use of case studies in training help complement the LCPP framework.

#### Available reports

More information on the Do No Harm approach can be found on CDA's website (<http://www.cdainc.com/lcp/index.php>). Training materials are available in English, French and Spanish. The following publications are particularly useful:

- *Do No Harm: How Aid can Support Peace – or War*, Mary B. Anderson, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, February 1999.

- *Options for Aid in Conflict: Lessons from Field Experience*, Ed. by Mary B. Anderson, December 2000.

#### Contact details

Collaborative for Development Action

Tel: +1 617 661 6310

Email: [lcp@cdainc.com](mailto:lcp@cdainc.com)

## 9. Conflict and Policy Assessment Framework

<b>Version / Date of issue</b> <b>summer 2000</b>
<b>Name of organisation</b> <b>Clingendael Institute</b>
<b>Author(s)</b> <b>Suzanne Versteegen, Luc van de Goor (together with Fund for Peace)</b>
<b>Primary purpose</b> Conflict analysis and early warning, with a view to developing conflict prevention policy strategy.
<b>Intended users</b> Donor desk officers, including embassy staff, it mainly addresses foreign policy and development issues.
<b>Levels of application</b> Country and sectoral levels.
<b>Conceptual assumptions</b> The Conflict and Policy Assessment Framework (CPAF) helps to analyse the conflict or stability sensitivity of countries by assessing the role of a number of specified indicators. The assessment will provide information on indicators that (potentially) have a destabilising effect or can put a country at risk. The use of trend lines per indicator will also emphasise whether certain indicators are areas of persistent difficulty, suggesting that more attention could/should have been devoted to these in the past. The assessment will also bring into focus the volatility of the situation and identify indicators and areas on which to focus from the perspective of limiting risks to the sustainability of peace or stability. Within the framework of the CPAF, Clingendael uses the 'Analytical Model of Internal Conflict and State Collapse' developed by the Fund for Peace (1998), for the conflict assessment part. This model uses indicators of internal conflict and state failure. In this approach, internal conflict is caused by state failure, not the other way round.
<b>Main steps and suggested process</b> Steps for conflict analysis 1. Trend analysis (Fund for Peace indicators) 2. Analysis of problem areas (ie priority areas for policy response) 3. Conflict analysis paper (to establish response-oriented warnings). Steps for policy analysis 1. Organisation's capacity assessment (eg mandate, operational framework) 2. Toolbox assessment (policy instruments) 3. Policy assessment and lessons learned (of ongoing policies, including ex-ante peace and conflict impact assessment)

4. Assessment of the overall security context (partnerships, coalitions)

5. Strategic policy paper.

In order to improve the aspect of shared analysis and co-operation with local partners, the CPAF works with a workshop format in which all participants (donor desk officers, embassy staff and local partners, both governmental and non-governmental) are guided through the first three steps of the CPAF. The participants assess the situation of a given country as regards the sustainability of peace and stability by applying the Fund for Peace methodology, develop the latest trend line, and assess the range of policy options for addressing the areas that are flagged on the basis of the analysis.

The workshop provides the participants with an opportunity to engage in a dialogue on the assessment of the situation, as well as the policy options.

During the workshop the participants are divided into several groups to assess the twelve indicator trend lines. The findings are discussed in a plenary session with a moderator. Based on this plenary session, the overall trend and problem indicators are established.

In the next step, participants are divided into working groups with particular expertise, in order to focus discussions and to come up with adequate suggestions for addressing the problems that were identified.

The workshop results in a warning dispatch that highlights the potentially destabilising trends, as well as a list of options to address or reverse these trends. The implications for specific donors are discussed in a separate meeting.

### Guiding questions / indicators

On the basis of the Fund for Peace's analytical model, top indicators on the national state level form a central part of the conflict trend analysis. These top indicators are:

- mounting demographic pressure
- massive movement of refugees or internally displaced persons
- legacy of vengeance-seeking group grievance or group paranoia
- chronic and sustained human flight
- uneven economic development along group lines
- sharp and/or severe economic decline
- criminalisation and/or delegitimation of the state
- progressive deterioration of public services
- suspension or arbitrary application of the rule of law and widespread violation of human rights
- security apparatus operates as a 'state within the state'
- rise of factionalised elites
- intervention of other states or external political and/or economic actors.

Each top indicator is further specified by three to six measures, which are linked to 'potential aspects of conflict' and 'problem areas'.

### Required resources

The main resources required relate to the organisation of the

workshop and include preparatory research and workshop material development, as well as the costs of travel, accommodation, etc for external participants/consultants.

#### Current applications

- In 2002 and 2003, the Clingendael Institute has run a number of test cases, in Rwanda and Mozambique, to further refine the tool. Its findings are used for policy purposes, and it is intended to mainstream the completed tool within the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Another application is planned for Kenya at the end of 2003.
- In the case of Rwanda, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs already used the CPAF to feed into its work plan for the country. In the planned Kenyan application, the CPAF will be used specifically as a basis for Dutch policy and practice.

#### Lessons learnt

- Carrying out the CPAF in a workshop format forced participants to be clear about developments and trends, and their potential implications and consequences if not addressed.
- Although participants were generally aware of this, the use of ratings was an added value, as it gave some sense of urgency that allowed for the visualisation of positive or negative trends over time. The ratings were explained by using examples, thus making them more concrete.
- In terms of policy, it became clear that some of the sectoral choices that have been made do not adequately relate to some of the identified trends – from a conflict prevention perspective, this clearly needed improvement. On the other hand, the projects and activities that were carried out and planned in the sectors of choice could be focused on conflict prevention.
- It was also clear that the overall political position of the Netherlands Embassy could be more critical in its political dialogue with the host governments.
- The findings were also shared with other agencies (USAID and DFID) and it was found that they coincided. This provided opportunities for joint approaches.
- In Rwanda, following this initial application, further follow-up is being planned with a view to basing future policies and programmes on the same CPAF analysis.

#### Commentary on the tool

The tool is currently being used in a field test phase by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It will be adapted to make it more easily applicable in the future. This mainly implies speeding up the analysis and the trend line development. It is considered to be flexible and adaptable and practical in a policy setting. The tool is not addressing the specifics of programmes or activities, but mainly focuses on strategic approaches for donors (overall programme development and policy approaches) from the perspective of conflict prevention. Its continued application for the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs is under consideration and will be decided upon in 2003.

#### Available reports

The CPAF report can be downloaded from the Clingendael website ([www.clingendael.nl/cru](http://www.clingendael.nl/cru)). The reports of the workshops are not available for wider distribution.

#### Contact details

Conflict Research Unit  
Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'  
Telephone: +31 (0)70 314 1950  
Fax: + 31 (0)70 314 960  
E-mail: [emuntinga@clingendael.nl](mailto:emuntinga@clingendael.nl)  
Website: [www.clingendael.nl/cru](http://www.clingendael.nl/cru)  
Luc van de Goor  
+31 (0)70 314 1956  
[lgoor@clingendael.nl](mailto:lgoor@clingendael.nl)  
Suzanne Verstegen  
+31 (0)70 347 6620  
[sverstegen@clingendael.nl](mailto:sverstegen@clingendael.nl)  
Fund for Peace (for their conflict analysis)  
Pauline H. Baker  
E-mail: [pbaker@fundforpeace.org](mailto:pbaker@fundforpeace.org)  
Website: [www.fundforpeace.org](http://www.fundforpeace.org)

## 10. Early Warning and Preventive Measures

Version / Date of issue **1999**

Name of organisation **UN System Staff College**

Author(s)

**United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC)**

### Primary purpose

Conflict analysis, early warning and response design

### Intended users

It is primarily targeted at United Nations staff (at both HQ and field level), to identify elements for potential preventive action strategies in their respective countries of assignment. It may also be used by national actors and other institutions (donors, civil society, etc) who can adopt the methodology, in order to design and develop national preventive action strategies to address home-grown issues with local solutions.

### Levels of application

Country level.

### Conceptual assumptions

Human security and human rights provide the conceptual framework for the UN conflict analysis methodology. In particular, human security refers to the safety for individuals and groups from both:

- violent threats, eg violent crime, gross violations of human rights, terrorism, etc
- non-violent threats, eg environmental degradation, illicit drugs, economic crises, infectious diseases, natural disasters.

### Main steps and suggested process

#### 1. Situation profile

Establish a shared understanding and broad picture of the country / region under consideration, including geography, history, current events, economy, political system, social structure, external issues, etc.

#### 2. Actors analysis matrix

Identify and assess key actors who can facilitate or undermine peace and stability in a society, in particular from the perspective of:

- their main characteristics
- their interests and underlying needs
- the resources that they currently have and those that they still need or hope to obtain.

#### 3. Survey of conflict causes

Identify possible causes of violent conflict, following two main dimensions:

- categorise possible causes of violent conflict, in terms of their potential threat to various aspects of human security. These include: governance and political stability, social and communal stability, economic and resource stability, personal security, military mobilisation and arms supply, external factors
- further distinguish between proximate and structural causes within each human security category.

Consider human rights as a cross-cutting issue and ensure that it is mainstreamed in all human security categories.

#### 4. Composite analysis

Explore the interaction between the structural causes of conflict in order to assess the resulting conflict dynamics and to identify the core issues which preventive action will need to address.

#### 5. Preventive measures matrix

Identify elements of a preventive action strategy in order to address the core issues highlighted through the conflict analysis. This will be based on the formulation of objectives, the generation of options for preventive action and the identification of recommended measures, through a triage process.

#### 6. Scenario building

Build a two-track scenario reflecting likely developments resulting from the implementation – or lack thereof – of the recommended preventive measures, in order to develop a convincing argument on the need to take preventive action.

The above steps are usually introduced through a five-day training workshop that combines plenary and country working groups.

#### Guiding questions / indicators

Context specific indicators are developed to measure the impact of the potential preventive action, using the SMART principle (ie Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Relevant; Time-bound). No specific list of available indicators is used.

#### Required resources

- Training materials (card and chart technique);
- Human resources to facilitate the process (eg facilitators);
- Limited financial resources unless external facilitation is required.

#### Current applications

From 1999 to 2003, 34 training workshops have been conducted at the country and regional level and targeted UN staff, national actors (eg Niger) and civil society (Washington; Bilbao).

#### Lessons learnt

On the basis of the external evaluation conducted in 2002/2003, key findings and recommendations can be summed up as follows:

- Overall, the Early Warning and Preventive Measures (EWPM) project has achieved a great deal in less than five years. The evaluators found a heightened awareness concerning areas of early warning and conflict prevention

and a determination to make early warning a cross-cutting issue throughout the UN.

- The course content needs to be continuously reviewed, in order to ensure it is in line with new developments emerging in the conflict prevention field.
- The pool of trainers that the United Nations System Staff College currently uses needs to be further expanded.
- Human rights issues need to be integrated better.
- Increased advocacy is needed to reach a larger audience beyond the UN system.

#### Commentary on the tool

- The EWPM methodology remains time consuming, if all steps are followed in an in-depth fashion.
- It does not require extensive financial resources, as long as no external facilitator is needed.
- It is a flexible methodology that can be adapted to a large variety of audiences beyond the UN system (eg civil society; donor agencies).

#### Available reports

All reports of the 34 trainings conducted (1999-2003), as well as the recently completed external evaluation, are available on the UN System Staff College website ([www.unssc.org](http://www.unssc.org)).

#### Contact person

Svenja Korth

Project Officer (EWPM)

United Nations System Staff College

Email: [s.korth@unssc.org](mailto:s.korth@unssc.org)

Website: [www.unssc.org](http://www.unssc.org)

## 11. Conflict assessment framework

Version / Date of issue **7 January 2002**

Name of organisation **USAID, Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation**

Author

**Sharon Morris**

#### Primary purpose

To integrate conflict sensitivity into the Mission strategy. It is mainly development focused.

#### Intended users

USAID desk officers, implementing partners, mission staff, US embassy staff and other US government participants.

#### Levels of application

Country / national, regional and sectoral levels (eg democracy and governance, health, natural resource management)

#### Conceptual assumptions

The framework aims to pull together the best research available on the causes of conflict and focuses on the way that the different variables interact. It does not aim to make predictions. It also does not explicitly weight variables, although it identifies a few categories of key causes of conflict, namely:

- ethnic and religious divisions
- economic causes of conflict
- environment and conflict
- population, migration and urbanisation
- institutional causes of conflict.

#### Main steps and suggested process

- Desk study on the country context and the main causes of conflict.
- Discussions with other US agencies (eg State Department, Department of Justice, etc.) on the planned engagement for that country and the planned conflict assessment.
- Assessment team goes to the country for a three to four week visit. This visit generally includes a workshop with the mission staff and partner organisations (ie partner organisations working on conflict, as well as from different sectors). The country visit leads to a conflict mapping, which is being compared to existing programmes to assess whether they addressing the conflict causes.
- The outcome of the assessment is a report with recommendations on how to address the conflict causes through development programmes. The recommendations focus specifically on examining the in-country organisational capacity to address the causes



of conflict that have been identified.

- The mission then takes forward the recommendations (with support from the original assessment team) within their programming strategy.

After the desk study has been conducted, specific sectoral themes generally emerge as key conflict causes (eg competition for access to natural resources) and a multi-sectoral team will be pulled together accordingly. The team will normally consist of no more than five people, including sectoral specialists, who can be either from the head office or in-country consultants (the number of people from head office is usually restricted to one or two people). The team spends about three to four weeks in-country, working with the mission staff.

### Guiding questions / indicators

The methodology suggests some broad guiding questions, in order to stimulate thinking on the interaction of different issues and tensions. They centre on the need to first establish the variety of causes that interact and overlap, and then to move into the more detailed analysis of what these causes are and the dynamics between them. This analysis focuses on four categories of the causes of internal conflict and specifies a number of key issues under each category:

1. root causes (greed and grievance): including ethnic and religious divisions; economic causes of conflict; environment and conflict; population, migration and urbanisation; and the interaction between different root causes and conflict
2. causes that facilitate the mobilisation and expansion of violence (access to conflict resources): organisations and collective action; financial and human resources; conflict resources and widespread violence
3. causes at the level of institutional capacity and response: democracy and autocracy; political transitions and partial democracies; weak states, shadow states and state failure; state capacity, political leadership and conflict
4. regional and international causes/forces: globalisation, war economies and transnational networks; bad neighbourhoods.

In addition to the categories and principles outlined above, the idea of 'windows of vulnerability' is also introduced, which indicates the moments when particular events (eg elections, riots, assassinations etc) can trigger the outbreak of full-scale violence.

### Required resources

The resources required relate to the time spent on the desk study before the in-country visit, the in-country visit itself, and the follow-up support after the visit. In total, the entire process takes around two months.

### Current applications

This methodology has been applied in about 18 countries to date in Africa, the Middle East, the Caucasus, Latin America, Asia / Near East and the NIS. USAID also participated in the multi-donor assessment that was conducted in Nigeria (together with DFID, the World Bank and UNDP).

### Lessons learnt

- Workshops were found to be a useful format for the in-country assessment work.
- Using local consultants has been very valuable, but one needs to carefully select them, bearing in mind their own political opinions and affiliations. In some cases, it has been impossible to use local consultants due to such sensitivities or the fact that they may be put at risk through their involvement in the assessment.
- The importance of having a team composed of specialists from different sectors has been proven, so as to broaden it beyond people usually working only on conflict.
- Similarly, integrated, multi-sectoral programming is important in order to effectively address the confluence of the different conflict causes and dynamics.
- The ultimate objective of the assessment is to enable the mission to adjust their programming in order to make a difference to the conflict dynamics in-country. The close involvement and buy-in from the mission staff is therefore critical to ensure that implementation takes place.
- In-country, good co-operation with the US Embassies has proven very useful.
- After producing the assessment report with its recommendations, it is crucial to follow up and ensure that the findings are incorporated into the programme strategies in country.
- It has proved fairly easy to convince mission staff of the link between conflict and their programming, but the challenge has been how to then design and implement more conflict-sensitive programmes. With this in mind, USAID has started developing a menu of options / examples for different types of programmes on different sectors, such as for instance how to design a programme for conflict-sensitive water management or youth engagement.

### Commentary on the tool

This methodology has been very successful at establishing the analysis of what conflict causes are and how they link to sector programming. The challenge is now to ensure that this realisation is implemented through appropriate programme design and implementation.

### Available reports

The country reports are not available publicly and the conflict assessment framework methodology is not available yet, although it is envisaged that it will eventually be available on the USAID website.

### Contact details

Adam Reisman

Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation

USAID

Tel: +1 202 661 5862

Email: [areisman@dis.cdie.org](mailto:areisman@dis.cdie.org)

Website: [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

## 12. Conflict analysis for project planning and implementation

Version / Date of issue **2002**

Name of organisation **GTZ**

Author(s)

**Manuela Leonhardt**

**Primary purpose**

Conflict analysis and planning

**Intended users**

Desk officers, regional representatives, project managers of donors and international NGOs working in development.

**Levels of application**

Country and project levels.

**Conceptual assumptions**

The conflict analysis tool is based on a synthesis of existing tools. It places particular emphasis on participatory approaches to conflict analysis.

**Main steps and suggested process**

**A. Conflict analysis**

**1. Conflict profile**

- What kind of conflict do we deal with? What are its consequences?
- When did it start? How did it develop over the last years? What phase are we in?
- Where does the conflict take place? Territorial issues?

**2. Stakeholder analysis**

- Who are the parties to the conflict? What are their positions, interests and capacities? Alliances?
- What position do the (intended) beneficiaries have towards the conflict? How does the conflict affect them? What survival strategies have they developed?
- What capacities do the conflict parties have to continue the conflict? Are there capacities for peace?
- What are the conclusions of this analysis for the selection of partners and beneficiaries?

**3. Causes of conflict**

- Why did the conflict start? What are its root causes (security, political, economic, social, external)?
- What factors contribute to prolonging the conflict?
- What are the main obstacles working against a peaceful solution?

**4. Trends and opportunities**

- How does the conflict presently develop? What factors encourage violence, what factors contribute to peace?
- Are there peace initiatives? At what level? What have they achieved?

- How can linkages between micro-level activities and macro-level processes be achieved?

**B. Project planning**

**1. Capacity analysis (own organisation and partners)**

- Why do we want to work on conflict? What is our mandate? Do partners and beneficiaries wish such an engagement?
- Do we have the necessary skills, knowledge, resources, and networks to work on conflict? How can we build them?
- How would this affect our other activities in the area?

**2. Goal analysis**

- What are the key entry points for working on the conflict?
- What are the beneficiaries/partners' priorities?
- What are our priorities?
- What is our comparative advantage?

**3. Strategy development**

- Do we have a coherent strategy to address the priority issues identified above?
- Do we have the minimum political, legal, and security requirements to do this work?
- Do we have sufficient political support (local, national)?
- Is the timing appropriate? Is there a window of opportunity?
- Is the initiative sustainable?

**4. Risk assessment**

Is there a possibility that the initiative, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally:

- contributes to social and economic polarisation?
- reinforces undemocratic political structures?
- weakens civil society and undermines political participation?
- compromises local mediators or conflict management structures?
- provides opportunities for hate propaganda or censorship?

**5. Peace and conflict indicators**

To cover the security, political, economic, social, and external dimensions of conflict.

**Guiding questions / indicators**

Each analytical step contains a set of guiding questions, which help the user to build an understanding of the conflict and prepare conflict-sensitive action. The key guiding questions are:

**A. Conflict analysis**

1. Conflict profile
2. Stakeholder analysis
3. Causes of conflict
4. Trends and opportunities

**B. Project planning**

1. Capacity analysis

2. Goal analysis
3. Strategy development
4. Risk assessment
5. Peace and conflict indicators

The manual offers fifteen analytical tools to support the user in working on the guiding questions. The tools are drawn from the participatory rural assessment toolbox, the Responding to Conflict tools as well as from the work of individual conflict specialists. They include:

- conflict profile
- phases of conflict
- timeline
- arena analysis (spatial conflict analysis)
- conflict mapping (actor analysis)
- conflict actors pyramid
- conflict onion (positions, interests, needs analysis)
- conflict tree (similar to problem tree)
- conflict pillars (factors upholding the conflict)
- trend analysis
- conflict scenario
- capacities and vulnerabilities analysis
- institutional analysis
- capacity analysis
- Do No Harm analysis.

#### Required resources

The required resources relate to the organisation of workshops and consultation meetings. Some desk-based work can also be undertaken, but it is better to organise workshops and consultation meetings on site.

#### Current applications

GTZ conducted approximately 20 country studies in the Caucasus, Central Asia, South Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America on the basis of this tool. The tool was also requested by other German development co-operation organisations and used in their work.

#### Lessons learned

This methodology focused on development co-operation and adopts a participatory approach, which has proven to be a great strength in its application. In order to use this methodology, facilitators require some time investment to become acquainted with the guidelines, as they comprise almost 100 pages.

#### Commentary on the tool

Experiences of the applications are currently being examined. The tool will be revised on the basis of these experiences up to the end of 2003. Publication of the revised tool is envisaged.

#### Available reports

The GTZ approach is available at <http://www.gtz.de/crisisprevention/english/>. The following reports were also conducted on the basis of the above

methodology:

- GTZ, Tara Polzer 2002, 'Developing conflict sensitivity: lessons learned from seven country studies' (Draft version)
- GTZ 2002, '**Nepal** Country Study on Conflict Transformation and Peace Building'
- GTZ 2002, 'Peace Development and Crisis Prevention in **Colombia**' (available in German only)
- GTZ 2002, 'Peace Development and Crisis Prevention in **Guatemala**' (available in German only)
- GTZ 2002, 'Conflict Assessment **Afghanistan**' (available in German only)
- GTZ, FES, FriEnt 2002, 'Regional Conflict Assessment **Afghanistan**' (available in German only)
- GTZ 2002, 'Country Study **Zimbabwe**' (available in German only)
- GTZ 2002, '**Tajikistan**: Conflict and Reconstruction' (available in German only)
- GTZ, KfW, DED 2002, 'Analysis of Peace and Conflict Potential in **Yemen**'
- GTZ 2002, 'Peace Promotion and Conflict Transformation in **Sierra Leone and Guinea**'
- GTZ 2001, 'Conflict Analysis **Caucasus**' (available in German only)
- GTZ 2001, '**Chad**: Conflict Management and Peace Development' (available in German only)
- GTZ 2001, 'Prospects of Crisis Prevention and Conflict Management in Mulanje District, **Malawi**' (Southern Region)
- GTZ 2000, 'Crisis Prevention and Conflict Transformation in **Uganda**' (available in German only)

The reports in English available from the same website.

#### Contact details

GTZ  
Sector Programme Crisis Prevention and Conflict Management  
Melanie Seegräb  
Tel.: 0049-(0)6196-79-3124  
Fax: 0049-(0)6196-79-6310  
E-Mail: [melanie.seegraef@gtz.de](mailto:melanie.seegraef@gtz.de)  
Website: [www.gtz.de/crisisprevention/english/](http://www.gtz.de/crisisprevention/english/)

## 13. FAST methodology

Version / Date of issue **1999**

Name of organisation **Swisspeace**

Version / Date of issue 1999

Author

**Swisspeace, in collaboration with VRA (Virtual Research Associates)**

### Primary purpose

Risk assessments and early warning

### Intended users

Development agencies, especially at desk officer level, Foreign Ministries and international organisations and NGOs.

### Levels of application

FAST provides *country-focused* real-time monitoring of social, economic and political developments, by way of continuous collection of events data, with an emphasis on political stability and instability. The methodology can also be used for regions or sub-regions and be modified for other thematic focuses (eg migration, health, human rights, etc.).

### Conceptual assumptions

The objective of FAST is the recognition of impending or potential crisis situations for the purpose of early action and the prevention of violent conflict. FAST aims to enhance the ability of political decision makers to identify critical developments in a timely manner, in order to formulate coherent political strategies to prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflicts.

FAST uses a comprehensive combination of qualitative and quantitative analytical methods to produce risk assessments. The concept that forms the foundation of the FAST early warning methodology is *event data analysis* – ie the ongoing information collection of daily events and its quantitative analysis. This is supplemented by the qualitative analysis provided by international experts as well as the in-house analysis carried out by the desk officers.

### Main steps and suggested process

The conflict analysis is carried out along two principles:

- The qualitative conflict analysis of a given country is conducted by applying the *FAST analytical framework*, which aims to determine root, proximate, and intervening factors that can lead to the outbreak of a violent conflict or shape an existing conflict.

### Analytical framework

#### Root causes

- Background factors that enhance armed conflict
- Necessary but not sufficient causes of armed conflict
- Mostly static – change only slowly over time
- Mostly embedded in historical context
- Examples: Ethnic diversity; Colonial history; Economic situation

#### Proximate causes

- Factors that can lead (with the root causes) to armed conflict
- Are time-wise closer to the outbreak of armed conflict
- Can change quickly over time
- Mostly embedded in historical context
- Examples are: Government type; increase in poverty

#### Positive intervening factors

- Decreasing the likelihood of armed conflict
- Example: Seasonal factors

Armed conflict

#### Negative intervening factors

- Increasing the likelihood of armed conflict
- Example: Arms-trade

- The quantitative analysis follows the logic of event data analysis, meaning the ongoing collection of daily events that are relevant for our focus of increasing/decreasing stability in a country. This data set is then analysed statistically and the results are displayed in graphs. The information collection is carried out by local information networks on the ground in order to have a set of data that is independent from Western newswires but also to gain higher frequency and dispersion throughout the country.

### Guiding questions / indicators

The analytical framework looks at root and proximate causes, as well as intervening factors, along a timeline. Thereby, various indicators are identified, following a set of topics, including historic, political / institutional, economic, societal / socio demographic, ecological, and international issues. These indicators, however, have to be applied in a flexible manner and need to be adjusted according to the context.

The indicators that are identified in the analytical framework are used for the ongoing monitoring that is carried out. Besides, these issues correlate with the indicators that are used in the quantitative system used by FAST.

### Required resources

Due to the different components of FAST, the amount of human resources that is required is as follows:

- desk officers in Bern (each desk officer covers 2-3 countries)
- local Information networks (3-5 field monitors in each country as well as one country coordinator)
- an expert network to cover all the countries that are monitored by FAST
- statisticians and personnel for quality control.

At present there are 12 employees at the headquarters in Bern.

### Current applications

- FAST currently covers 22 countries in Central Asia, South Asia, the Balkans, the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes region and Southern Africa. The coverage can be expanded according to clients' needs.
- The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), initiated by IGAD, has adapted the FAST methodology focusing on cross-border, pastoral conflicts in the IGAD member states.

### Lessons Learnt

- Real-time monitoring of 186 event types – conflict / cooperation – using event data analysis
- System can be tailored to meet the end-user’s needs
- Combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis
- The analytical framework tool has proven an effective analysis tool that has also been effectively used at several early warning training workshops.

### Commentary on the tool

FAST is an early warning tool based on conflict analysis, and not an early response mechanism, as the responses to be taken, on the basis of the forecasting provided by FAST, remain with the end users.

The analytical framework – FAST’s qualitative analysis tool – can easily be applied by other institutions. Besides, FAST has used this tool in several training workshops (held in collaboration with the FEWER network) and has received positive response to its application. The framework allows for a comprehensive, in-depth analysis of a region / country and gives an excellent overview of the causes and the development of a conflictive environment over time, while highlighting positive intervening factors that can be useful for peace-building initiatives.

The complex FAST methodology can be modified and adjusted to different regions and focuses. The set-up and application, however, is cost-intensive due to the different components needed for information collection and quality control, analysis, and report writing. Nevertheless, the advantage of having local networks for information collection and data that is independent from Western newswires clearly outweighs the higher overall costs.

### Available Reports

The quarterly risk assessments are published on the FAST website ([www.swisspeace.org/fast/](http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/))

### Contact details

Swisspeace

Tel.: +41 (0) 31 330 12 12

Email: [fast@swisspeace.ch](mailto:fast@swisspeace.ch)

Website: [www.swisspeace.org/fast/](http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/)

## 14. Conflict diagnostic handbook

Version / Date of issue **January 2003**

Name of Organisation **Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)/Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction (CPR) Network resource**

Author(s)

**FEWER/CIDA**

### Primary purpose

To facilitate the design of a Conflict Diagnostic Framework that enables planners to make strategic choices, and define entry points for response, by assessing conflict and peace factors and conducting a stakeholder analysis.

### Intended users

Development practitioners seeking to mainstream peace and conflict analysis into their long-term development programmes

### Levels of application

Country and regional

### Conceptual assumptions

The Conflict Diagnostic Framework is based on the assumption that the identification of key indicators / stakeholders, the definition of scenarios / objectives, and the unpacking of strategic issues, together set the stage for a comprehensive (and evidence-based) peace-building strategy.

The framework is not aimed at assessing the impact of a particular project on the peace and conflict dynamics in a society nor to fully cover programme implementation issues.

### Main steps and suggested process

For each step there is a table that needs to be completed, that reflects the components of the analysis in each step.

- **Step 1:** Conflict Diagnostic Framework
- **Step 2:** Conflict analysis
- **Step 3:** Peace analysis
- **Step 4:** Stakeholder analysis
- **Step 5:** Scenarios and objectives
- **Step 6:** Strategic issues and choices
- **Step 7:** Peacebuilding recommendations

### Guiding questions / indicators

#### 1. Step 1: Conflict Diagnostic Framework

This has a series of assumptions as part of its rationale:

- that conflict indicators, peace indicators and stakeholders need to be identified for conflict analysis
- that trends in key conflict/peace indicators and stakeholders need to be analysed in order to be able to



identify likely scenarios

- that scenarios can be easily translated into objectives, thus rooting peacebuilding objectives in reality
- that, in order to define responses to conflict, the following strategic issues need to be considered: the main conflict indicators and the synergies among them; any gaps in peace-building; and strategic choices to be made by responding institutions.

### 2. Step 2 & 3: Conflict analysis and peace analysis

The following guiding questions are used for these two steps:

- have you considered indicators at all levels (local, national, international)?
- have you considered indicators that relate to political, economic, social, and security issues?
- have you considered the relative importance of historic, present and future indicators?
- are your indicators reflective only of the current phase of the conflict (pre-conflict, actual conflict, post conflict)? If so, please consider whether other phases are relevant.
- are the indicators you selected important both in terms of facts and perceptions?
- do the indicators selected reflect the concerns of different sectors of the population (women, elderly, poor, children, rich etc)?

### 3. Step 4: Stakeholder analysis

The same guiding questions as above, plus the following:

- peace agendas: what visions of peace do the stakeholders have? What kind of peace do they want? What are the main elements of their peace agendas (land reform, national autonomy)?
- capacities: what capacities do the stakeholders have to support conflict prevention and peacebuilding or to otherwise affect it?
- implications for peacebuilding: strategic conclusions: what implications does this analysis have for pursuing structural stability and peacebuilding?

### 4. Step 5: Scenarios and objectives

The guiding questions are:

- what are trends in key conflict indicators/synergies, peace indicators, and stakeholder dynamics?
- what is your judgement about best/middle/worst-case scenarios when considering the overall (conflict, peace, stakeholder) picture?
- what optimal and contingency objectives can you draw from the best and worst case (respectively) scenarios?

### 5. Step 6: Strategic issues and choices

The guiding questions are:

- in view of the full analysis, review identified conflict synergies. Are they complete?
- assess the initiatives of other agencies and the capacity and comparative advantage of one's own agency in the different fields (governance, economic, socio-cultural and security).
- in view of the previous questions, are key peacebuilding gaps adequately defined?

- specifically look at your capacity in different fields (political, economic, social, security) at all levels (local, regional and international). What can be mobilised to impact on conflict synergies and peacebuilding gaps?

### 6. Step 7: Peacebuilding recommendations

Once the recommendations have been identified, they need to be looked at in terms of:

- the overall peacebuilding objectives
- coherence of the strategy
- who should be involved

#### Required resources

The framework is designed to be most useful when used in a workshop setting, and so resources would be required to organise a workshop.

#### Current applications

Three workshops have been held to apply this framework: in Sierra Leone, the Philippines and the DRC.

#### Lessons learnt

1. Although systematised thinking is required for good conflict analysis and strategy development, the constantly changing nature of conflict is not easily captured in tables and boxes. The use of supplementary devices to enhance understanding (eg conflict trees) is therefore essential.
2. The diagnostic tool is just that - it does not enable good analysis if its users lack a good understanding of the conflict under study, or analytical skills.
3. The tool needs to be adapted for use by different types of actors, eg international development agencies with programmed development interventions, or local NGOs engaging in various activities.
4. In order to ensure high quality analysis and a good strategy, the tool should be applied in a workshop process that brings together key (constructive) stakeholders.

#### Commentary on the tool

None

#### Available reports

The Compendium of Operational Tools can also be consulted at [www.acdi-cida.gc/peace](http://www.acdi-cida.gc/peace) for operational tools, best practices and lessons learned.

#### Contact details

Chief, Peacebuilding Unit

[peace\\_building@acdi-cida.gc.ca](mailto:peace_building@acdi-cida.gc.ca)



## 15. Better Programming Initiative

Version / Date of issue **1998**

Name of organisation **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**

Author

**Based on the Do No Harm approach and the Local Capacities for Peace Project (LCPP), adapted by the IFRC**

### Primary purpose

Impact assessment methodology and training initiative for analysing the positive or negative impact of Red Cross / Red Crescent National Societies' aid programmes on communities recovering from violence or conflict.

### Intended users

Red Cross / Red Crescent National Societies and Delegation programming staff and volunteers.

### Levels of application

Local, national and regional levels.

### Conceptual assumptions

Aid cannot reverse or compensate for the suffering and trauma that has occurred during conflict. It cannot prevent conflict from continuing or restarting, but it can be the first opportunity for war or violence affected communities to experience an alternative to conflict as the sole basis for their relationship with opposing groups.

In the context of post-conflict recovery, where resources are scarce and violence is endemic, the selective allocation of aid can be a powerful reason for disagreement and conflict between those who receive assistance and those who do not. How National Society and Federation programmes use and distribute resources will have an impact (positive or negative; direct or indirect) on the context in which they are working. Even if their approach is totally neutral and impartial, the perception of those who are excluded from assistance may be completely different.

Where aid organisations, particularly local Red Cross and Red Crescent, can make a difference is in the planning and implementation of their own aid programmes. Humanitarian aid can and should promote long-term recovery and reconciliation within and between communities – at a very minimum it should never become a pretext for or cause of conflict or tension between groups.

### Main steps and suggested process

1. Analyse the context

- Identify dividers within the categories of systems and institutions; attitudes and actions; values and interests; experiences; and symbols and occasions.
- Identify connectors within the categories of systems and institutions; attitudes and actions; values and interests; experiences; and symbols and occasions.

2. Describe the aid programme

- Describe in details the planned / undertaken activities in terms of why, where, what, when, with whom, by whom and how.

- Analyse important institutional issues such as: mandate/influence in programme implementation; headquarters role/influence in programme implementation; fundraising/influence in programme implementation.

3. Identify the impacts

- Will the planned action reinforce a connector or weaken one? Will it aggravate a tension or lessen one?
- Use some specific questions as guidance, eg
- is our aid provoking theft, thus diverting resources towards the potential conflict?
- is our aid affecting the local markets, thus distorting the local economy?
- are our distributions exacerbating divisions within the population?
- is our aid substituting controlling authorities' responsibilities, thus allowing further resources to be invested in the potential conflict?
- are we, through our aid, legitimising local supporters of the potential conflict or those who want reconciliation?

4. Find alternative options

For each impact identified (positive or negative) as a side effect of the planned programme:

- brainstorm programme options that will decrease negative effects and increase positive ones;
- check the options for their impact on the other connectors and dividers.

5. Repeat the analysis

As often as the context demands, and as often as the project cycle indicates.

### Guiding questions / indicators

See the section above

### Required resources

Required resources and time will depend on the scope and context of the assessment. A training kit, with different modules, was created to introduce the Better Programming Initiative (BPI) in 90 minutes, one day or three days session. A BPI training of trainers workshop (9 days) was also developed.

### Current applications

Initially undertaken in Colombia, Liberia, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Tajikistan and Kosovo. In order to contribute to the institutionalisation of the BPI methodology within National Societies, the International Federation is training National Society staff and delegates as BPI trainers and integrating this tool within other Federation planning and assessment tools.

National Societies and Federation delegations are using the tool to assess the positive or negative impact of their projects, especially in post-conflict situations and in countries recovering from violence.

**Lessons learnt****1. Assessing needs**

Well-planned aid programmes can ease suffering and reduce vulnerability, providing a genuine foundation for recovery. However, experience in all six countries has shown that a thorough needs assessment is not enough unless it is accompanied by an in-depth analysis and understanding of the context, at the level of the intervention.

**2. Designing programming**

Rehabilitation programming by humanitarian aid organisations, including the International Federation, is increasingly used to support recovery and transition plans which form part of an overall political settlement. Evidence from several of the countries in which the BPI was piloted suggests that, when the Federation supports National Societies engaged in rehabilitation programs linked to political settlements, it needs to examine carefully the conditions under which it will be expected to work. Inevitably, there are groups who may oppose the settlement and the recovery plan that provides aid and resources to their former enemies. The population may also be sensitive to the type of assistance provided and the proportion in which it is allocated.

**3. Selecting and accessing beneficiaries**

Throughout the BPI testing phase, National Societies and delegation staff found that the most common way in which they may contribute to fuel tension is through the selection beneficiaries, without undertaking a thorough analysis of the needs of all groups affected by the conflict.

**Commentary on the tool**

Although this methodology initially focused on conflict and post-conflict situations, it has now been recognised that it may also be useful in other contexts. There are also concrete and successful examples of the BPI methodology used to analyse the impact of our National Societies' institutional capacities, as well as the impact of our Disaster Response, Disaster Preparedness and Development projects.

The experience also shows that BPI can be an element of analysis that supports the linkage between aid or relief and longer-term recovery and development. As a planning and impact assessment methodology and training initiative, BPI may also be a capacity-building mechanism.

**Available reports**

In 2003, the Federation was scheduled to publish '*Aid: Supporting or Undermining Recovery? Lessons from the Better Programming Initiative*', containing the lessons learnt in six countries (Colombia, Liberia, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Tajikistan and Kosovo).

**Contact details**

Inigo Barrena  
Disaster Preparedness and Policy Department  
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Tel: +41 22 730 4452

Fax: +41 22 733 0395

E-mail: [inigo.barrena@ifrc.org](mailto:inigo.barrena@ifrc.org)

Website: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)