

# CONFLICT SENSITIVITY PRACTITIONERS' TRAINING MANUAL

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## Overview

This manual is intended for development, humanitarian and peace practitioners, it also applies to multiple actors including diplomatic, governmental and donor agencies and the private sector in identifying possible areas for infusion of conflict sensitivity.

The manual is ideally useful as a guide for operationalisation of conflict sensitivity by way of assessments, context analysis and mainstreaming of conflict sensitive approaches in institutional policies, organisational interventions; community based initiatives, individuals' daily work and life settings in all contexts, regardless conflict status. The realisation that assistance becomes part and parcel of the context and the conflict in the setting in which it is given makes it paramount for the people working in such scenarios to be able to understand the interaction between their actions and processes with the conflict dynamics in the same context.

This guiding manual is aimed at improving and enhancing the values and principles in the understanding, application and monitoring of conflict-sensitive practices and programming. It is intended to equip practitioners with skills and knowledge that will enable them to among other tasks conduct context analysis, conflict sensitive trainings and undertake peace and conflict impact assessments. It also helps stakeholders design, implement, monitor, evaluate and exit programs and/or projects in a conflict sensitive way. This essentially means that conflict sensitivity is applicable throughout the program and/or project cycle.

The manual is designed for institutions and individuals who wish to ensure that the impact of their engagement (Humanitarian, peacebuilding, Human Right based Approaches and developmental) will, as a minimum 'do no harm', and as an optimum, have a positive effect on the conflict areas in which the interventions are carried out.

Institutional mandates and policies should therefore deliberately be designed to take into account the realities in conflict contexts to support peace and avoid exacerbating any existing tensions. This resource will help practitioners both in their personal life and in their work with communities.

## The Manual's Structure

This manual is made up of nine modules, each looking at different elements that are essential to conflict sensitive approaches (CSA). All modules include suggestions for practitioners on how to apply concepts as well as adapting them to their context of operation. While observing the general principles of CSA matters, practitioners need to retain the flexibility of adapting these to their already existing tools (e.g. Action Aid's Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis tool (PVCA) and World Vision's Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts tool (MSTC) among others) to add value to the interventions.

The guide thus provides practitioners with opportunities to explore practical ways of utilising the conflict sensitivity concepts to achieve better programming and improved positive impacts in humanitarian, development, peace building and multi-mandated interventions.

# Module 1: Introduction to Conflict Sensitive Approaches

## Objectives

- Have a shared understanding of conflict sensitivity and its principles/steps
- Understand the utilisation of CSA to the project cycle

## Understanding Conflict Sensitive Approaches

Conflict Sensitive Approaches (CSA) refer to strategies and methods that help humanitarian, development, peace building and multi-mandated interveners to examine and take into account the unintended impacts of their interventions on the context of conflict or **Humanitarian crisis**.

Embracing CSA necessitates knowledge of one's context, hence the importance of conflict/context analysis. It is also necessary that stakeholders systematically examine the interaction between their interventions and their context. This enables an actor avoid conflict blind programming by instilling the principles of conflict sensitivity.

### **Necessary Steps for Conflict Sensitive Practice**

- *Acknowledging the reality that actors' interventions in conflict prone areas have the potential to 'do harm.' Assistance given in any context is not neutral, but rather it impacts on the context and interacts with the conflict*
- *Analysing and understanding the interaction between an organization's interventions through its mandate and policies on the context. It is therefore crucial that a thorough context/conflict analysis be conducted before initiating any assistance not only in conflict prone settings but also in perceived stable contexts*
- *Assessing how interventions impact on conflict and peace situations either positively (by reinforcing connections) or negatively (by increasing tensions and exacerbating conflicts). This relates to being cognizant of the actual and potential impacts of the interventions on the contextual dynamics in the area of operation and designing appropriate programs/projects*
- *The practice of examining intervention details through a conflict lens with a view to developing alternatives and options that address the observed shortcomings. All through the conceptualization, design, planning and implementation stages the interventions should incorporate the sensitivity to conflict factors*
- *Application of conflict sensitivity throughout the actions and processes for sustainable development and just peace. Hence, the totality of organisational practices, processes and actions should be acknowledged as interacting with the context, in terms of influencing conflict positively or negatively. In this light, procurement policies and procedures, financial policies and procedures, and resource transfers (i.e. the actual implementation of interventions in program/project areas), among others, need to be executed conflict sensitively in order to minimise negative impacts and maximise the positive.*
- *Learning and unlearning through actions and experiences that maximize positive impacts and minimize negative impacts of interventions. This is the principle and practice of utilizing lessons learned during implementation to redesign and improve effectiveness of interventions bearing in mind changing contextual dynamics.*

## Questions

- i. How well do you understand your context of operation?
- ii. Are you able to measure your interventions' impacts and redesign programs/projects if necessary? Share your experiences.

## Defining conflict sensitivity

Conflict sensitivity can be defined as different efforts, methods and tools for working in a context with the objective of at least avoiding destructive, negative, harmful, unintended effects and if possible contributing to peacebuilding through positive effects.

Institutional mandates and policies inform areas of intervention. They also influence organisational decisions on the location and nature of their interventions. This has a bearing on the interaction between an organization's interventions and the context. Understanding this dynamic is central to the practice and application of conflict sensitivity.

### **The Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium Definition of CSA**

*"a deliberately systematic practice that ensures our processes and actions minimize negative and maximize positive effects within a given context, based on the awareness about the interaction between the said processes, actions and the particular context."*<sup>1</sup>

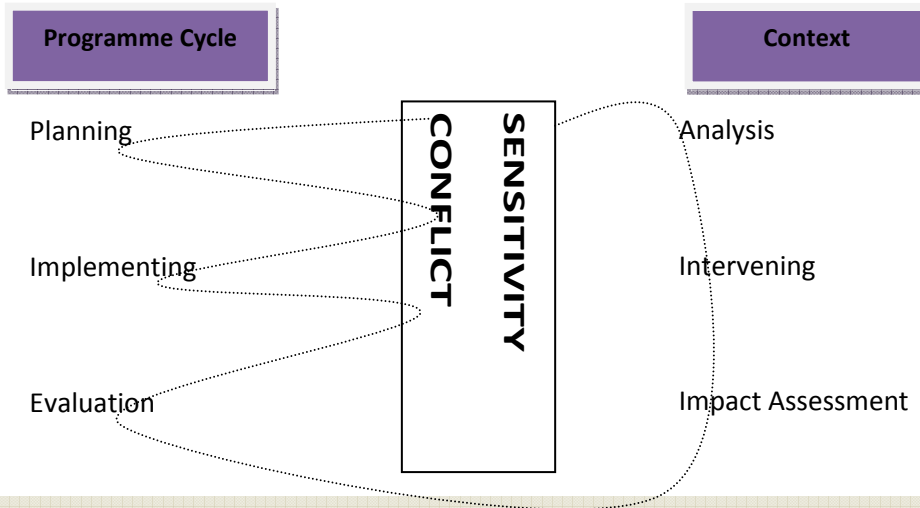
#### **Conflict sensitivity is about**

- a) *Understanding the context and the conflict: this means being able to identify conflict causes, stage/level of conflict, drivers and structural factors of conflict, power dynamics, and historical injustices*
- b) *Understanding the interaction between the intervention and that context: being conscious of the fact that the context and the conflict impacts on your work and your work impacts on both the context and the conflict-being conscious of unintended negative impacts of your work*
- c) *Acting upon that understanding of the contextual realities, in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of your intervention*<sup>1</sup>

Conflict-sensitive practice has come to mean not only adjusting existing development, humanitarian, human rights, peacebuilding and other activities to avoid or minimize negative impacts and promotes positive impacts on the conflict context, but also the design of initiatives to address the underlying causes of tension, power imbalances that results to conflict.

## Utilising CSA in the Program Cycle

Conflict sensitivity is applicable throughout the program cycle as depicted in the Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium's diagram<sup>1</sup> below:

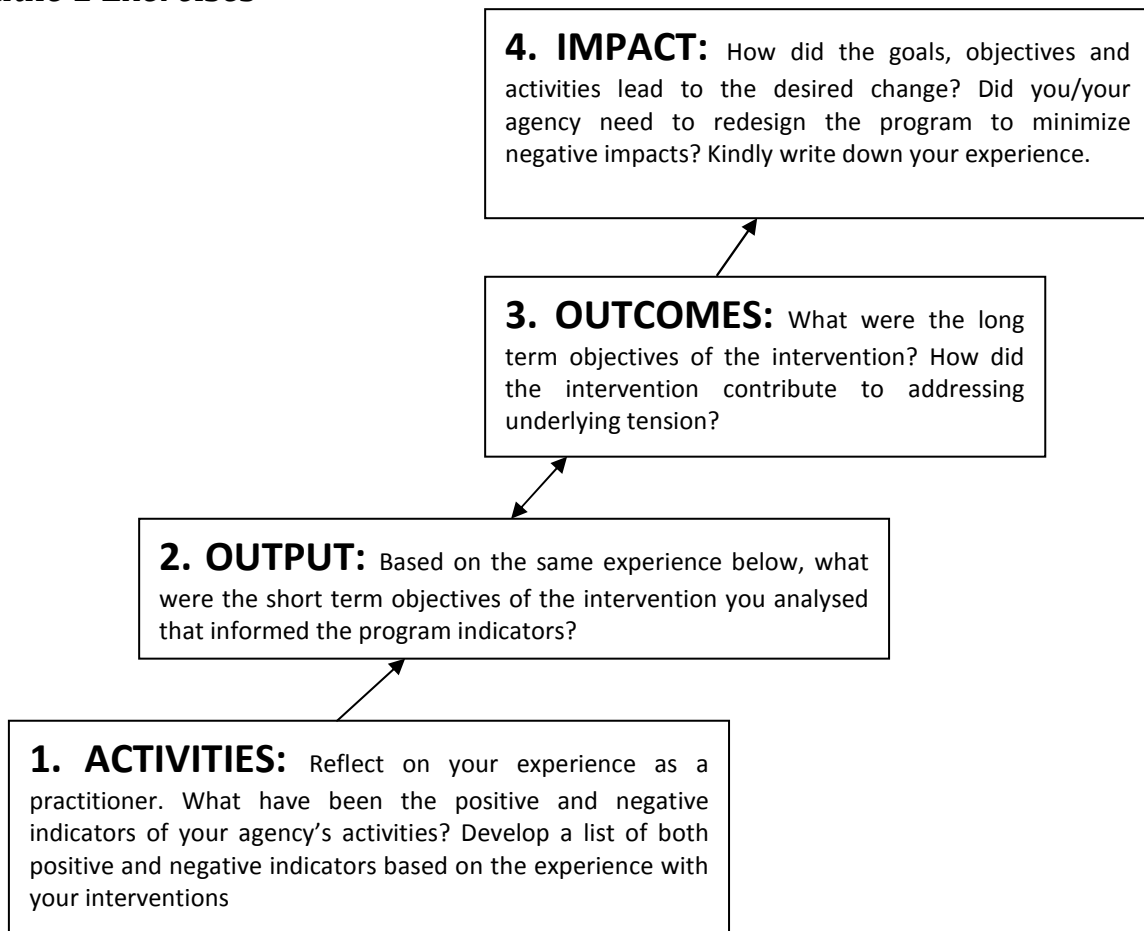


### How to Apply CSA in the Program Cycle

- *At the planning and program design stage, the application of conflict sensitivity begins with conflict analysis-linking this to needs assessment or appraisals.*
- *During the implementation phase, an intervener relies on conflict indicators (e.g. frequency of disputes, armament, fights over the new resource brought by the agency etc) and peace indicators (e.g. water management committees, frequency of inter-group dialogue etc) to measure the level of positive or negative results the intervention is having. If there are unintended negative consequences, the intervention is redesigned.*
- *Similarly, during the evaluation stage, conflict and peace indicators are measured alongside general program indicators, in order to measure the intended as well as unintended consequences. This should either inform the manner of exit or re-engagement with the community.*
- *The project life cycle should involve the use of conflict sensitive lenses as well as an ongoing reflective and evaluative process to ensure that the attained objectives are in line with the change theory hence contributing to achieving the desired goals. The diagram below shows the connections that should be initiated and undertaken to attain the ultimate result (impact on the communities and the environment of operation)*

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, *Embracing the Practice of Conflict Sensitive Approaches: An Analysis of the Kenyan Context*, (Nairobi: Action Aid International Kenya, 2010), p.ii

## Module 1 Exercises



### **Remember:**

- *Conflict indicators refer to causal factors of conflict and how these are animated to accelerate a situation to violence. They are therefore indicators of an intervention's negative impact, hence negative indicators.*
- *Peace indicators relate to factors contributing to peace and whether or not they contribute to more stability, harmony and peace. This means they are positive indicators.*
- *Program and/or project indicators specifically relate to the agency's intervention. They are the measurable benchmarks set out in the program/project to monitor its performance in relation to the set objectives of the intervention.*

## Module 2: Steps in Conflict Sensitive Programming

### *Objectives*

The objectives of this module include:

- Exploration of steps to be taken in mainstreaming conflict sensitivity
- Develop step down guides in conflict sensitivity programming

### *CSA in the Project Cycle*

#### ***Infusing CSA in the Project Cycle***

- ***In the Planning Phase***
  - To define new interventions and to conflict-sensitise both new and pre-defined interventions (e.g. selection of areas of operation, beneficiaries, partners, staff, time-frame) one has to first conduct a conflict analysis and then take into account the contextual dynamics during planning.
  - A conflict analysis tells you the causes of conflicts, who the actors (belligerents, inciters, and interveners) are, the patterns of conflict and its dynamics, as well as the capacities for peace. These will not only help an agency determine the needs of the various groups, but will also help locate hotspots of conflict, and reveal how interventions could unwittingly worsen an existing conflict, create a new one or contribute towards its resolution.
- ***Implementation Stage***
  - In this stage, one is concerned about the details of organisational actions and processes (i.e. both the actual interventions as well as the totality of organisation policies including finance, human resource, procurement and decision making policies and processes);
  - One observes the interaction between the context and the intervention in terms of what, when, where and how the intervention is undertaken. The cumulative impact should be used to inform project design (and redesigning where necessary) as well as day-to-day decision-making.
- ***Monitoring and Evaluation Stage***
  - One measures the interaction of the intervention(s) and the conflict dynamics in which they are situated.
  - As the project indicators are monitored, consideration is also made for peace and conflict indicators. Project success should not just be about exclusive achievement of stated objectives but also about whether the intervention contributes to peace or conflict. Should the project be seen to be contributing to conflict, one should have the flexibility to consider strategic options for redesigning the intervention in order to minimise the negative.
  - Ahead of completion of the project, a conflict sensitive exit strategy should be clearly developed in good time. Measures for guaranteeing project sustainability after the agency's pull out are a primary consideration. Mentoring the beneficiaries as they sustain the intervention is useful. Essentially, the exit strategy should be well-thought out, consultatively developed, and its execution shouldn't mean that the target group relapses to their initial situation. Community members shouldn't be orphaned but empowered.

## **Module 2 Exercises**

### **Steps in Mainstreaming Conflict Sensitivity**

1. Conduct a cross-departmental conflict sensitivity self assessment (see Annex 1 for self-assessment tool). How well do all staff members understand conflict sensitivity? What are the gaps in terms of application? How can the organisation ensure shared understanding and common application of the concept?
2. Conduct a brief conflict analysis of your area of operation. What are the causes of conflict (dividers) in that area? What brings people together (connectors)? What are the conflict dynamics? How has the intervention/organisation impacted on dividers and/or connectors? Are there approaches that should change?
3. Retrospectively look at any of your organisational interventions. What success stories can you highlight (in relation to applying conflict sensitivity)? What areas need growth? How can the lessons be documented and shared organisationally and with partners if possible?

*This should help participants understand the steps involved in CS mainstreaming and the processes that bring to fruition successes as well as program effectiveness*

## Module 3: Levels of Application

### Objectives

- Appreciate the need to apply conflict sensitivity at all organisational levels and with all stakeholders
- Examine extent of CSA infusion and provoke its wider utility

### Levels of CSA Application

Conflict sensitivity is applicable in all contexts and at all levels. This is because the interdependence of each organisational sector means that failure to apply CSA in one level affects the success of its practice at another level. Hence several levels of CSA application can be highlighted:

#### A. Organisational Level

This relates to organisational policies and processes such as:

##### i. Human resource policy

- a. Does staff recruitment uphold diversity? Are qualified persons from organisational area of operation hired for some positions?
- b. Do staff induction procedures include orienting new staff on conflict sensitivity?
- c. How are staff members' grievances handled?

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#### **An Illustration of the Importance of CSA**

*Similarly, in the aftermath of the July 2005 Turbi massacre in Marsabit, agencies realised that they were tagged as partisan due to the selection of their areas of operation. Communities that weren't targeted by these agencies treated them with suspicion. Agencies then chose to be conflict sensitive in their targeting.*

*The 2008 post-election violence exposed the need for diversity in staffing of agencies. Some agencies that were viewed as predominantly ethnicized had their staff targeted and/or insecure. In some cases these staff had to be evacuated. But the lessons on the need for a conflict sensitive human resource policy were learnt.*

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##### ii. Procurement policy

- a. Are local contractors given a chance to bid to provide the organisation needed goods and services? Are procurement policies and procedures so stringent that they lock out local contractors?
- b. Are calls for expressions of interest publicly and locally advertised to enable local providers to apply for them?
- c. Does your organization have in-built conflict handling mechanism where in addressing grievances from the community members

##### iii. Overall organisational policies

- a. Does the organisation explicitly recognise conflict sensitivity in its policies?
- b. Does the organisational culture enable and support discussion of what has

worked well and what is going wrong e.g. by admitting ineffectiveness due to conflict blind programming and instituting conflict sensitive mainstreaming processes?

- c. Does the organisation explicitly adopt policies that advocate for and champion the use of conflict sensitivity internally and externally (with partners and other stakeholders)?

### ***Some ways of Operationalising CSA Policies***

*Institutional insulation from the danger of conflict blind programming is undertaken through infusion of conflict sensitivity in the organisational strategies, such as participatory planning involving all partners and stakeholders as well as enlightening them on conflict sensitivity. Recruitment processes should embrace contextual realities and dynamics e.g. setting up joint recruitment committees and transparent interviewing panel, induction processes explicitly utilising conflict sensitive principles and practice, institutional operations and support of the staff on dealing with volatile situations. On recruitment, there should be efforts to employ local professionals and contractors with deliberate consideration of local suppliers to avert increasing tensions in the context.*

## **B. Project Level**

This relates to the integration of conflict sensitivity in organisational interventions. Therefore conflict sensitivity should be integrated at all three levels not forgetting the point of exit:

- i. Planning
- ii. Implementation
- iii. Monitoring and evaluation
- iv. Exit

*Refer to diagram 1 (in Module 2) and Module 7.*

## **C. Donor Level**

This relates to how donors integrate conflict sensitivity both internally and in their interactions with civil society organisations. Donors can help popularise the mainstreaming of conflict sensitive approaches (CSA) through:

- i. Making it a prerequisite for applicants for their funding to integrate conflict sensitivity in their proposals, monitoring and evaluation frameworks and progress reports.
- ii. Supporting the capacity building of civil society actors on issues of conflict sensitivity.
- iii. Explicit espousal of CSA in donor policies

## **D. Government level:**

Their work has to be conflict sensitive. This speaks to how the government works with the institutions that are tasked with the role of ensuring conflict sensitivity. The government needs to build the capacity of the government departments e.g. the NCIC, NSC among others. Enhancing deliberate and systematic interdepartmental exchange, information sharing, cooperation and collaboration fosters harmonization of approaches and interventions. This contributes to averting negative competition that may result to conflicts at different levels. Some ways the government can mainstream CSA include:

- i. Consideration of CSA as a critical issue in the propagation of policies and programmes within government ministries by hiring advisors with CSA knowledge, and enhancing staff's capacity and expertise on conflict sensitive practices. Such advisors need to work towards ensuring integration of conflict sensitivity in government policies and programmes and laws.
- ii. Embracing conflict sensitive participatory transformative approaches in the national plans for development, peacebuilding and multi mandate interventions.

## ***Module 3 Exercises***

1. How have government programmes, their initiation, implementation and/or termination impacted conflicts negatively or positively?
2. What different ways can be used to enhance CSA at government and donor levels?
3. What specific policies and actions can be utilised to foster conflict sensitive practice at all levels?

# Module 4: Conflict Analysis

## *Objectives*

The aims of this module are:

- To provide a basic understanding of conflict analysis
- To examine some components of conflict analysis. Practitioners and organizations should be able to analyze a conflict based on this guide.

## *Definition*

Conflict analysis is a systematic examination of a particular conflict in a particular context, with a view to understand its profile, causes, actors/stakeholders, and the dynamics.<sup>2</sup>

Conflict sensitivity emphasizes the need to embrace systematic and thorough analysis of the context as well as the conflict. Thereafter an agency needs to use the conflict analysis findings to influence programmatic decisions and strategies.

It is quite challenging to understand conflict because of the complexities and fluidity of its nature. In order to conduct a useful analysis of any conflict, it helps if the issues are broken down into separate parts. Dealing with the issues separately helps one to better understand the different components of the conflict and how they influence the overall conflict scenario.

### **Questions to Brainstorm about**

- *What is conflict analysis? Why is it important to analyze conflict?*
- *How do we analyze conflict? What does conflict analysis involve?*
- *Who should conduct a conflict analysis?*
- *How does analysis be linked to programme?*

*In a workshop setting, participants should be given time to brainstorm and reach a common understanding*

## **Conflict Analysis Process**

There are various ways of analyzing conflict. A combination of different tools is encouraged for a rich analysis. It is recommended that whichever approach is used, there are major components that should guide the analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> Madola. S., Giarmana. V., Dalrymple. S. & Manoocha. Degahati. (2008). Conflict Sensitive Development Briefing

## Key Components of Conflict Analysis

- Understanding the history of the conflict, its level, stages and the dynamics
- Identifying types of conflict. Conflicts can be resource-based, identity-based, political, and so on. Some are complex, having many faces to them. Ask participants to examine the type(s) of conflict in their context.
- Identifying the parties and actors in the conflict and their roles (looking at their positions, interests and needs)
- Identifying the conflict issues and the nature of these issues
- Identifying the structural and proximate causes, conflict triggers and impact of the conflict
- Examining the manner in which the conflict is being experienced and expressed
- Identifying the local capacities for peace (existing systems and mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacebuilding)

Divide participants in groups to analyse a conflict in their contexts based on these components.

The purpose for which an analysis is being done can determine how it is done and who is to be involved. For instance, a participatory conflict analysis process would involve the project team, community representatives and key stakeholders.

There are international, regional, national, and local levels of analysis. 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 (e.g. community, district, county or national) with the level of intervention (e.g. project, sector, policy), it is also important to establish systematic linkages. These linkages are important, as all of these different levels impact on each other.

Conflict sensitivity has implications for agencies' analysis, programming and advocacy. Agencies should carry out ongoing, in-depth participatory analysis of the conflict environment, and use this analysis to inform every step of the

### Exercise

Based on the earlier conflict analysis, answer these questions:

- i. What were local, county and national dimensions of the conflict?
- ii. How did national level dynamics influence the county and local level dynamics?
- iii. How did the local level dynamics influence those at higher levels?

**NOTE:** Ensure that when answering the questions above, not a single level is ignored during discussions. This way, linkages will be clearly determined.

### Remember:

- *Conflict analysis should provide a better understanding of the conflict dynamics and the context itself*
- *Conflict Analysis is the launch pad for conflict sensitivity. The quality of the analysis depends very much on the skills and knowledge of individuals or groups involved*
- *Conflict analysis can be carried out at various levels (e.g. local, regional, national, etc) and seeks to establish the linkages between these levels.*

programme cycle: planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Conflict analysis should also form the basis for advocacy to influence the policy parameters of international interventions and for guidance tools to inform decisions regarding the impact of advocacy on field access and security.<sup>3</sup>

Conflict analysis and assessment tools should be used as programmatic tools throughout the programme cycle, including monitoring and evaluating the impact on conflict in order to (re)design projects. The findings help development, humanitarian and peacebuilding organizations to gain a better understanding of the context in which they work and how their interventions may impact the context and the conflict.

#### Exercise

*Still basing discussions on the earlier conflict analysis:*

- i. *How does the provisional conflict analysis (in the previous two exercises) influence the ways your project activities should be planned and implemented? Create a list of implications, stating what aspects of your analysis have determined your response.*
- ii. *From the conflict analysis, what are the emerging issues of interest for your organisation (in thematic terms)? Create a list, and consider these to be issues for further research, advocacy, and/or project design or re-design*

## Program/Reprogram

### Planning

A conflict profile and causes of conflict (structural, proximate and triggers) should be identified at the pre-planning stage.

As earlier discussed, a conflict analysis should be conducted keeping in mind the necessary conflict analysis components. This will help to understand the context in which organizations operate and anticipate how such a context will affect, and be affected by, project implementation. It could also be used to help understand the beneficiaries and staff (skills and other relevant traits).

Organizations should conduct a risk assessment and scenario development during the preplanning stage. Remember that a conflict risk assessment entails the following steps:

- i. Conflict analysis: By examining conflict indicators (the structural, proximate and trigger causes of conflict), a practitioner should, in risk assessment, make a predictive analysis on the future conflict risk
- ii. Analysis of responses to the conflicts and examining the impacts of such responses, and whether there has been conflict transformation or there is the potentiality of

- *At this planning stage, organizations should identify the problem that the project is aiming to address by using problem identification methodologies*
- *Organizations should gather relevant, reliable, and the latest information at the planning stage of an intervention (development, humanitarian, Right based, and peacebuilding)*
- *Organizations should ensure the adherence to all Government policies with regard to humanitarian and development work*

<sup>33</sup> Lange, M. *Building Institutional Capacity for Conflict Sensitive Practice: A Case of International NGOs*. p.8

- the continuity and/or recurrence of the conflict
- iii. Generation of strategies and options to make interventions more conflict sensitive

Organizations should remember to identify drivers of conflict and/or peace. Any problem identification undertaken should be inclusive, or at the very least the intervention should 'do no harm' to the existing dividers and connectors. The notion of 'do no harm' should be used in a practical way. For example, a project intervention should not reduce opportunities available to other groups (such as undermining existing livelihoods or the status quo of peaceful coexistence).

**Setting up of the project:**

Organizations should include Conflict Sensitive measures in their intervention strategy in order to prevent further conflicts and reduce tensions. For instance, agencies should work with pre-existing structures trusted and recognized by the community, ensure local ownership of the intervention and constantly monitor the impact of the project with a view to minimizing the negatives and maximizing the positives.

**Sustainability/Exit strategy:**

Every organization should include a sustainability/exit strategy and a contingency plan for their intervention (refer to module 2 on CSA in the project cycle).

**Monitor/Evaluate**

As discussed in Modules 2 and 3, M&E frameworks should integrate conflict sensitivity by measuring the impact of the intervention on peace and conflict. This is through monitoring of peace and conflict indicators, and determination of the extent to which the intervention had an impact on either.

**Example of Monitored Positive and Negative Indicators, and the Project Impact**

Conflict Indicator	Peace Indicator	Changes attained
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destruction of properties, killings (desire for vengeance, systematic intergroup attacks) and violation of human rights</li> <li>• Economic discrimination and social marginalisation</li> <li>• Sectarianism and polarization along ethnic and political lines, low level of socialisation</li> <li>• Rumours, propaganda and use of media for incitement and war mongering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced/halt revenge attacks, communities' refusal of incitement and provocation to violence</li> <li>• Setting up or/and reformation of development, peace and dispute resolution committees</li> <li>• Establishment of joint markets, sharing schools and health facilities</li> <li>• Inter-communal sharing and management of common resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved intergroup dialogue as a result of the capacity enhancement and joint development projects initiated in the communities</li> <li>• Reduced level of animosity and rivalry, community involvement and ownership of the processes and projects undertaken</li> <li>• Improved social interactions, collaboration on ideas and projects of mutual interests and benefits</li> </ul>

# Module 5: Application of Conflict Sensitive Approaches In Project Cycle

## Objectives

- Revisit the project cycle
- Identify detailed ways of infusing CSA in the project cycle

Applying conflict sensitivity at project and programme level involves ensuring that managing the project cycle is done with due awareness about the causes of conflict and its dynamics as established in the conflict analysis. Each step in the project cycle – planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation – should be executed in a conflict-sensitive fashion.

Conflict-sensitive planning and programming, like all forms of organizational development, requires investment in building capacity beyond tools and policy frameworks. While policies and tools are important elements for mainstreaming conflict sensitivity, their use is often blocked by a number of internal organizational constraints. ‘Conflict-sensitivity mainstreaming’ is a comprehensive, yet incremental process of integrating sensitivity to conflict throughout the entire programming cycle at all levels of the organization and across all programmes.

Mainstreaming a conflict-sensitive approach also necessitates maintaining open communication channels across and between all levels of the organization and facilitating the flow of knowledge and learning.

## Design

Conflict sensitive project design means the project details have to take into account the conflict issues even if the interventions aren't directly associated with peacebuilding. The design process has to be conflict sensitive and it includes:

- Problem statement and justification
- Identification of type and area of intervention
- Developing intervention strategies

## Implementation

Conflict-sensitive implementation involves:

- Using conflict-sensitive tools and approaches. Examples of conflict sensitive approaches and tools in the Do No Harm (DNH) framework and the Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) methodology
- Investing in developing, disseminating and providing training in these tools. Specifically an organisation should domesticate pre-existing CSA methodologies, by developing their approach to infusing them. The agency should then develop guidelines and/or training tools which should be utilised for guiding internal application and building the capacities of staff and partners in CSA.
- Hiring specialists and experienced and trained conflict advisors to support field and HQ staff. For instance, in the Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, a project manager was hired to

### Exercise:

*Based on the conflict analysis you developed in Module 4:*

- What ways would use to ensure the type and area of intervention doesn't leave some groups feeling left out?*
- How would you link your intervention strategies to identified local capacities for peace in your intervention?*
- How would you ensure that your intervention will not undermine existing resilience within the target groups?*

specifically oversee the CSA mainstreaming project activities, while Consortium members had focal persons ensuring individual organisational involvement.

- Cooperating closely with local partners in identifying and addressing conflict dynamics (refer to module 4 for exercises on conflict analysis); and
- Anticipating changing dynamics and developing contingency plans. These contingency plans are essentially preventive measures that are developed in response to the conflict risk assessment (discussed in Module 4).

For conflict sensitive implementation, it is important to draw on the outcomes of an inclusive and participatory planning process informed by the conflict analysis. This should include:

- A needs assessment;
- A profile of the conflict context;
- Causes of the conflict (including key actors and stakeholders, as well as their relation to each other and any divisions and/or connections);
- Identification of conflict and/or peace drivers;
- Mapping of scenarios;
- Analysis of risks and risk mitigation strategies for the project, its staff, and participants; and
- Lessons learnt from previous interventions.

#### *Conflict Dynamics*

*To analyse conflict dynamics:*

- a. Analyse causes of conflict*
- b. Analyse the actors in conflict*
- c. Analyse how the conflict erupts, escalates and de-escalates. This should be pegged on identified conflict causes and actors*
- d. Identify capacities for peace and how these are utilised to address conflicts*
- e. Identify threats to peace and how these can further conflict*

## **Conflict Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Monitoring** is an integral part of any project, from start to finish. A project is a series of activities (investments) that aim at solving particular problems within a given time frame and in a particular location. These investments could be in the form of time, money, human and material resources. In the efforts to achieve its objectives, a project goes through several stages, monitoring being one of them. Monitoring takes place at – and is integrated into – all stages of the project cycle.

During the process of monitoring, one routinely gathers information on all aspects of the project, its actual outputs and impacts during implementation. Monitoring additionally provides the project team with current information that enables them to assess progress in meeting project objectives, and to adjust implementation activities as necessary. The data generated can be used for informed decision making and for evaluation purposes.

### **Conflict sensitive Monitoring**

- *Analysing the situation in the community in relation to the project;*
- *Determining whether the inputs in the project are utilized in a conflict sensitive manner;*
- *Identifying problems facing the community or project and finding solutions that will undermine divisions and promote connections;*
- *Ensuring all activities are carried out properly by the right people and in time using conflict sensitive participatory approaches;*
- *Using lessons from one project experience on to another; and*
- *Determining whether the way the project was planned is the most appropriate way of solving the problem at hand and how the problems can be avoided using conflict sensitive techniques and principles.*

Conflict-sensitive monitoring will enable project staff to gain a detailed understanding of the context, the intervention, and the interaction between the two. It introduces an understanding of conflict actors, profile, causes and dynamics into traditional monitoring processes and activities to inform required adjustments and changes to project or programme activities. In this way, conflict sensitive monitoring helps ensure the intervention has as positive an impact as possible on conflict dynamics.

**Evaluation** is a one-off assessment that typically takes place at the end of a project, although it can also be undertaken as a mid-project review. On the basis of systematically applied objective criteria, an evaluation assesses the design, implementation and overall results of an ongoing or completed project in relation to its stated goals and objectives.

Conflict-sensitive evaluation introduces a detailed understanding of actors, profile, causes and dynamics into traditional evaluation activities and processes. Conflict-sensitive evaluations are used to understand the overall impact a given intervention has had on its context, and the context on the intervention. These evaluations can then be used to adjust subsequent phases of an ongoing initiative, and / or provide lessons for future initiatives.

Conflict-sensitive monitoring and evaluation are characterized by an explicit articulation of the link between the goals and implementation of the programme and the two-way effect of the interventions on the wider conflict environment. The emphasis is on understanding the context as it changes over time and measuring the interaction between the project and the context (see diagram below). The key principles for conflict-sensitive monitoring and evaluation include:

- Monitoring and evaluating programmes according to their impact on conflict and peace and vice versa;
- Setting flexible indicators that cover the process and outcomes of the programme as well as its outputs; and
- Conducting joint monitoring and evaluation with local partners and communities on the processes and actions with a conflict/peace impact lens. Utilizing this lens helps the agency minimize negative impacts of a project and maximize the positive.

Participatory and inclusive monitoring and evaluation of the programmes enhances collaboration and provides ample opportunities to engage on both developmental, peace building and conflict mitigation strategies that eventually improve and increase effectiveness.

*Conflict Sensitive Indicators*  
*In addition to the already developed program/project indicators, practitioners and/or agencies should integrate conflict and peace indicators (like those developed in Module 4). These set of indicators shall help the intervener measure to what extent the program/project has enhanced peace or conflict indicators. Conflict sensitive monitoring and evaluation helps identify this interaction with a view to designing strategies to enhance peace indicators while limiting conflict risks.*

### **The Five Key Steps in Monitoring and Evaluation**

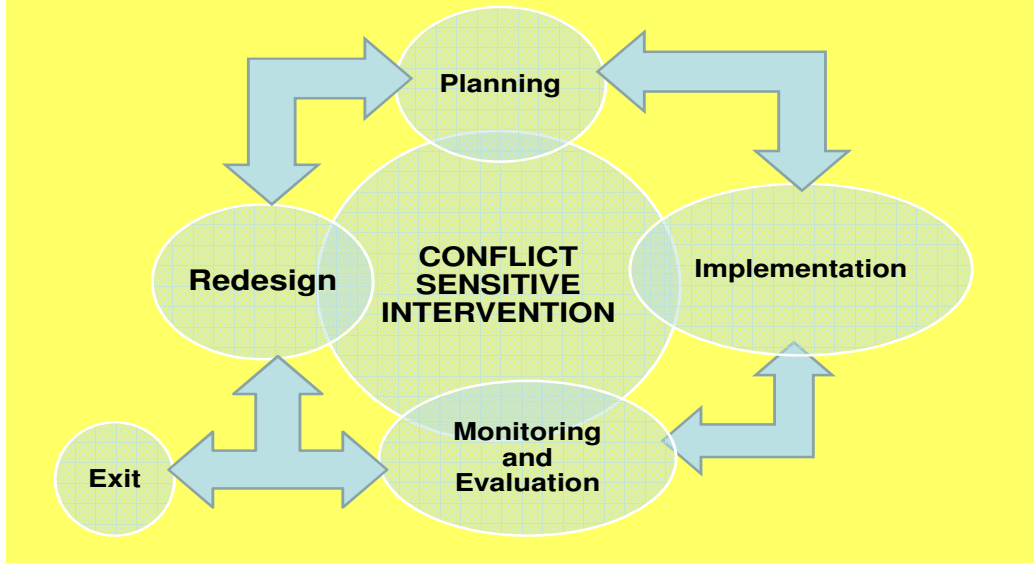
*Step 1: Work out a systematic way of conflict sensitive monitoring and evaluation of the interventions by deciding when to monitor and how to evaluate and who will involve*

*Step 2: Design conflict sensitive monitoring and evaluation tools and processes jointly by the target groups*

*Step 3: Ongoing collection of data and relevant information in relation to the intervention and conflict sensitive indicators*

*Step 4: Periodic analysis and update of the information on the intervention and the conflict*

# Conflict Sensitive Programming



Source: Millicent Otieno, 2010 CS and Do No Harm Training materials

## Module 6: Conflict Sensitive Approaches

### Objectives

- Highlight selected conflict sensitive approaches
- Explain the utility of each of the approaches

There are different ways to practice conflict sensitivity, hence the phrase “Conflict Sensitive Approaches” (CSA). Some of these include Do No Harm (DNH), Peace and Conflict Impact Assessments (PCIA) and Reflecting on Peace Practices (RPP).

### Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)

*PCIA is a means of evaluating and anticipating (as far as possible) the impacts of proposed and completed development projects on:*

- i. Structures and processes which strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease the likelihood of the outbreak, reoccurrence, or continuation, of violent conflict, and;
- ii. Structures and processes that increase the likelihood that conflict will be dealt with through violent means.

Where necessary futuristic/anticipatory assessments of projects should consider alternative project designs (including “no-action” alternative) as well as measures or “peace and conflict safeguards” that could be incorporated into a project’s design to offset potentially adverse impacts. Its best to have such an assessment at the earliest stage of a project design.<sup>4</sup> In essence, what this means is that projects should be flexible and adaptable, so that where negative impacts are likely to occur (or have occurred), there is a redesigning of the project with a view of maximizing positive impacts.

### Do No Harm (DNH)

The Do No Harm approach seeks to answer the question “How may assistance be provided in ways that rather than feed into and exacerbate conflict, help the local communities disengage from the violence that surrounds them and start developing alternative systems that address the underlying causes of conflict?” This question prompts the need for conflict sensitivity in development and humanitarian work.

Interventions have the potential of dual effects i.e. either reinforcing capacities for peace and bringing about improved relations or unintentionally reinforcing divisions and increasing tensions or capacities for violence.

The framework can be looked at in two segments, the analytical part on one hand and the programmatic one on the other. The analytical part deals with understanding the conflict context while the programmatic part deals with unpacking the assistance and programming it to suit the context.

The practical application of DNH has revealed a pattern which is illustrated by the ladder of impact adopted by Collaborative for Development Action (CDA). It includes the processes of building awareness, building knowledge and harnessing the skills, changing behavior, changing organizational structures and policies as well as changing practice and programming.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Kenneth, Bush, *A Measure of Peace: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) of Development Projects in Conflict Zones*, Working Paper No.1, Ontario: IDRC, 1998, p.7

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from the Do No Harm Ladder of Impact, *DNH Global Consultations, June 2011*

## ***Case Study***

A multi-mandate organization set up health facilities and hygiene/sanitation awareness programmes in a conflict prone area. During the electioneering period, ethnic clashes erupted leading to several deaths and many casualties in the region many of whom sought medical attention from the health facility. However, the staff realized that only one ethnic group was being attended to in the health centre while the “opponent” community resorted to nursing their wounds and injuries at home with traditional medicine or hiring vehicles to take the injured for treatment in neighbouring towns.

This trend prompted the management and some of the field staff to conduct an enquiry/assessment to establish what the hindrance was that barred one community from seeking medical assistance in a perceived “neutral” health centre serving all communities and persons in the area. The organization sent invitation letters through the faith-based institutions and the local chiefs in the area requesting for a meeting with all the communities. This was in order to initiate dialogue between the warring communities and also to establish why only one community was using their facilities. Unfortunately, the meeting was also attended by the same community that had been using the health facility. Thus the intended inter-ethnic dialogue process could not take place.

It was later revealed that the community that did not use the health facilities had shunned the centre due to fear and rumors that they would be injected with poison at the health centre and that the offer to use the health facility was a trap which would otherwise lead to their deaths.

In a reflective internal process using the DNH framework to unpack the intervention, the organization realized that almost all the staff (90%) working at the health centre belonged to the perceived enemy community. The health facility was also located in the “enemy” territory; this made it difficult for the injured persons to access the centre especially because the tensions persisted and incidences of revenge attacks were high.

The faith based institutions used to disseminate the invitations and the meeting’s venue were also apparently in the areas predominantly occupied by the community already benefiting from the services. The chiefs were hesitant to encourage the meeting due to the timing and dire consequences that may arise as a result of the gathering. Some of the chiefs were openly partisan and encouraged their communities not to attend the meetings. Even the faith based institutions were not seen as connectors as communities resorted to going to their ethnic groupings for prayers.

The organisation did not conduct a systematic conflict and context analysis at the beginning of the project but instead relied on its historical knowledge and understanding of the context when designing the intervention. The staff had in the past intuitively handled community complaints and got along with all the community members over the years. However, faced with this scenario the staff and some selected partners and stakeholders decided to look at the context dynamics, identify dividers and connectors in the context and check the implications of these factors on their interventions and vice versa.

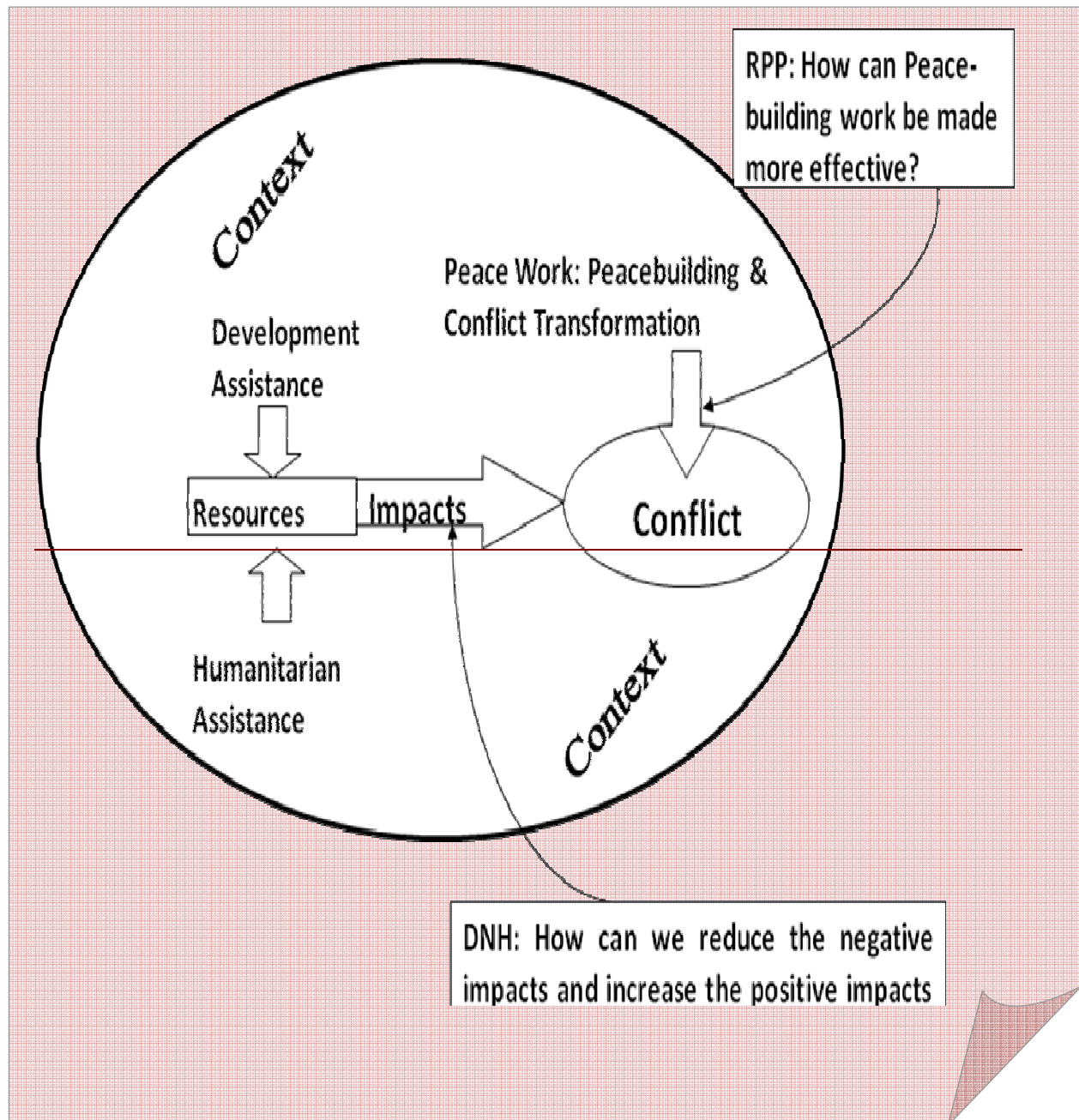
With the information on the context and conflict scenarios in the region, the organisation realised that its well intended interventions had unintended negative side effects. Hence, they engaged in a participatory process with the communities to try and redesign elements of the programme that were perceived to be exacerbating the tensions and at the same time take advantage of the connectors that were not exploited in the past.

### Exercise

- What are some of the dividers in this case study? Identify and explain how they increase the tension and contribute to capacities for war
- What are some of the connectors (existing and potential)? Explain how the connectors can be instrumental in promoting an environment suitable for sustainable development and peace!
- How did the programme contribute to the tensions and the divisions in the context? What should be done differently to address the negative effects of the programme details on the conflict?
- How can the programme maximize its potential to contribute to reinforcing connectors in the context?
- What specific measures should be taken in the redesigning and retransformation of the intervention?

## Reflecting on Peace Practices (RPP)

RPP looks at how peacebuilding work can be made more effective. RPP is about *reflection* and *practice*. It looks into what we learn from our experiences and how the experience compares with that of other practitioners. General lessons learnt from our experiences can then be disseminated. RPP is thus an experience-based learning process that equips peace workers with tools for prevention or mitigation of violent conflicts as well as strategies for peace work and monitoring/evaluation of peace initiatives. The diagram below shows the relation between working on conflict and working in a context of conflict.



## Module 7: Best Practice and Experiential Learning

### *Objectives*

- Recount the experience of the Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium
- Draw best practice lessons from the experience

### *Case Study*

The Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium is a country chapter in a four-nation project titled “The practice of conflict sensitivity – concept to impact.” It began in UK in 2008 but rolled out to three other countries (Kenya, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka) in 2009. The project aims at strengthening the practice of conflict sensitivity throughout and beyond a broad consortium of humanitarian, peace-building and multi-mandate development organisations.

When it was launched in Kenya (with the coordination point hosted at Action Aid International-Kenya), the very first challenge the Project Manager faced was to work toward member organisations’ buy-in. To achieve this, it became useful to engage decision-makers in all the eight member organisations, secure focal persons for the Consortium in each organisation, and involve the support of the UK-based international Project Manager in areas where further clarifications on the project were needed.

The confidence and trust building process was long. Then the Consortium, as its first activity, implemented a series of conflict-sensitivity self-assessment exercises alongside documentation of case studies.

The self-assessments served several purposes. First, it measured each member organisational staff’s knowledge of conflict sensitivity, and unpacked the tenets of CSA to the members. Based on the newfound understanding, staff then measured the extent of conflict sensitivity of their member organisation’s respective departments. This process highlighted strengths, gaps, but also created newfound appreciation of the applicability of the concept in all departments. Third, it created collective organisation resolve to put the concept to practice through formulation of change objectives.

The documentation of case studies accorded members an opportunity to reflectively look at past practices with a view to historicising them as a basis for conserving lessons learnt. Stories relating to successes and challenges in the implementation of organisational activities were recorded. These helped create a bank of information on experiences that were later published in 2009.

Based on the documented case studies and the results of the self-assessments, the Consortium members met to concretise change objectives for the Consortium as well as for the individual members. These formed the roadmap for the journey towards mainstreaming conflict sensitivity.

The next major step became the implementation of a countrywide conflict analysis as a step towards understanding the Consortium members’ area of operation. The analysis was also to be used to determine where two conflict sensitivity pilot projects would be implemented.

Therefore upon completion of the conflict analysis, the consortium agreed to implement pilot projects in Kibera, Nairobi (spearheaded by CARE-Kenya) and Maralal, Samburu (spearheaded by CAFOD-through diocese of Maralal). The pilot projects began in 2010. Further, concurrently accompanying the analysis process was a capacity building initiative where Consortium members were trained in conflict sensitivity as a process of creating Conflict sensitive expert resource base.

In 2011, the Consortium embarked on monitoring visits, to assess the members’ progress in the institutionalisation of conflict sensitivity and gather success stories in the same light. This monitoring process used the 2009 self-assessments as the benchmark for marking members’ progress in applying conflict sensitivity.

## **Best Practices**

From this case study, several best practice guidelines can be deduced:

- Organisational/Management and Staff Buy-in: Having the organisation embrace the need for conflict sensitivity is important
- Capacity building is a critical element in ensuring an organisation has the necessary work force to help in institutionalisation of conflict sensitivity
- Documentation of case studies, success stories and lessons
- Conflict sensitivity self-assessments
- Conflict analysis
- Piloting/Application of conflict sensitivity
- Integrating conflict sensitivity in monitoring and evaluation

## Module 8: Conflict Sensitive Exit Strategy

Conflict sensitivity is as much a question of strengthened relationships between different actors operating in the same context as it is one of an organization operating in a specific region.

- When extending the project or following up with a new phase, organizations should consider beneficiary expectations and flexible exit strategies, in order to respond to changes in the conflict context;
- Organizations should discuss and develop options for phasing out, as early as possible, with triggers for different options clearly identified. Doing so will make it possible to minimize unrealistic expectations among project staff and beneficiaries; and
- For the project to build sustainable structures that last beyond the life of the project, it should aim to build structural capacity, which will continue to analyze the conflict context and practice conflict sensitivity even after the project ends.

### Case Study

#### ***Exit Strategies and Mentoring Partners: Case of Mediating Wrangles in Kibera OVC Integrated Network (KOIN)***

Formation of KOIN was CARE-Kenya's exit strategy for its Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) programme in Kibera. CARE-Kenya encouraged formation of a network composed of community-based organisations (CBOs) that would deal with issues of interest in Kibera – hence KOIN. KOIN grew rapidly, and broadened its membership and pursued inclusive leadership. The problem was, with the enlarged membership, CBOs were few compared to Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres, which are numerous in Kibera. Thus, when it came to KOIN elections, most of the new leaders were from ECD centres, with very few representing CBOs.

This posed a special challenge in the context of CARE-Kenya's exit: The original members felt they were facing marginalisation at the point of CARE-Kenya's exit, yet they had been important partners throughout the OVC program period. They felt they would lose out and hence refused to leave office, asking, "We allowed an elephant to shelter its head from the rain in our hut, but it moved its entire body in to destroy our shelter." They also blamed CARE. On the other hand, the new members were enthusiastic about the new prospects of inclusive leadership. This stalemate threatened KOIN.

The CSA Consortium intervened by mediating the conflict. It was appreciated that in the enthusiasm to broaden the network membership and have an inclusive leadership, the basic prerequisites for organisational development were overlooked. For instance, KOIN hadn't yet developed their constitution. Secondly, while these challenges had been anticipated, no pre-emptive mechanisms had been put in place prior to the elections. The mediation was successful.

## ***Exit Strategies and Partnerships***

Managing and sustaining partnerships is an essential part of ensuring conflict-sensitive exit strategies. Partners are a capacity for sustaining the positives of the project beyond its conclusion.

It is necessary that an agency ensures local capacities are strengthened to carry on the positive gains from the intervention. This implies that efforts to ensure local community ownership of the project are essential.

Conflict-sensitive exit strategies are those which make a link between the sustainable structures and processes established as a result of the intervention and the intervention environment, to ensure that the remaining structures and processes do not unintentionally serve to exacerbate or create conflict (e.g. taking into account recruitment processes and impact among employment in a community, competing with local structures, etc.).<sup>6</sup>

Some ways of conflict sensitive exit include:

- Handing over a project to a credible community-based partner. In this case, the partner's capacity to manage the process should have been built and the community should be supportive and aware of this process. The partner can be mentored
- Phased transformation of the project to the agency's new focus, without undermining the gains made in the old intervention
- In the case of development projects, an agency can hand over the newly developed infrastructure (such as boreholes) to community members. In this case, building community capacities for administering the resources is useful. An example is having local management committees that have been constituted with community involvement.

### ***Questions on Partner Selection:***

- *How was the partner selection process conducted? Would you say the process was conflict sensitive?*
- *How does your organisation encourage conflict sensitivity of partners' programmes?*
- *How do you engage communities during such exercises? How is information presented and shared with the community?*

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<sup>6</sup> van der Leest, K., Kolarova, D., Mecreant, L., *A Guidance for Integrating Peacebuilding into Development*, (Brussels: Initiative for Peacebuilding, 2010), p.20

## Recommended Readings

“Do No Harm Ladder of Impact” presented in DNH Global Consultations, June 2011

Anderson, M., & Olson, L., *Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*, (Boston: Collaborative for Development Action, 2003)

Anderson, M., *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – or War*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999)

Kenneth, Bush, *A Measure of Peace: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) of Development Projects in Conflict Zones*, Working Paper No.1, (Ontario: IDRC, 1998)

Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, *Embracing the Practice of Conflict Sensitive Approaches: An Analysis of the Kenyan Context*, (Nairobi: Action Aid International Kenya, 2010)

Kenya Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, *The Practice of Conflict Sensitivity in Kenya: Beyond the Concept*, (Nairobi: Action Aid International Kenya, 2009)