

Guide to:

# CONFLICT ANALYSIS

NOVEMBER 2016



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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There are many individuals across UNICEF who have provided valuable insights and contributions to the production of this guide. The guide was produced through a consultative process and informed by practical application of its content through several training workshops at country and regional levels, often tied to UNICEF programme planning processes. Special thanks go to Zachary Metz, Naghmeh Sobhani and Kristoffer Nilaus-Tarp, the three consultants who worked closely with Sharif Baaser and John Lewis (HATIS/ Programmes Division, UNICEF NYHQ) in producing the guide as part of a broader capacity development project.

# INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT FOR UNICEF CONFLICT ANALYSIS

**M**ore than 250 million children – 1 in 10 children globally – currently live in areas affected by armed conflicts and violence. By 2018, it is estimated that half of the world’s poor children and the majority of out-of-school children will live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. In 2000, 23 per cent of the world’s children were living in the 52 countries designated as fragile by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the World Bank. By 2014, that figure had risen to 28 per cent, representing almost one third of the world’s child population. In these contexts, access to basic social services and the protection of child rights are largely hampered due to widespread insecurity and weak institutions, leading to child deprivation and increased poverty.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a specific goal on peaceful and inclusive societies, the international community has once again emphasized the centrality of peace and peacebuilding to achieving development.

The Agenda calls for a stronger integration between the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding pillars of the United Nations. The United Nations has also undertaken three high-level reviews related to its peace operations and peacebuilding architecture, as well as on women, peace and security (Security Council Resolution 1325). Each of the reviews makes recommendations on how the United Nations should respond better as a system to the dynamics and effects of violent conflict, as well as address the underlying factors for achieving sustainable peace.

The related resolutions expand the notion of peacebuilding, including a definition of ‘sustaining peace’, which encompasses ‘activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict ... and should flow through all three pillars of the UN’s engagement at all stages of conflict’. The resolutions further illustrate why peacebuilding is important to the entire United Nations family, including UNICEF.

**250+**  
 million

CHILDREN CURRENTLY LIVE  
 IN AREAS AFFECTED BY ARMED  
 CONFLICTS AND VIOLENCE

**23%**

OF THE WORLD’S CHILDREN, IN 2014,  
 WERE LIVING IN THE 52 COUNTRIES  
 DESIGNATED AS FRAGILE



The UNICEF Guide to Conflict Analysis (the Guide) comes at an important time in the development of peacebuilding in the United Nations. The importance of analysis – more specifically, an analysis of the dynamics and root causes of conflict – has been highlighted a number of times in discussions around the Sustainable Development Goals and during the three high-level peace and conflict reviews that occurred in 2015, which broadly outlined the need for the United Nations to strengthen its conflict analysis capacity.

For example, the Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations talks about developing ‘a deep analysis of the situation and clear high-level strategic parameters for United Nations-wide engagement. The Secretariat must begin its strategic analysis and decision-making earlier and must improve the quality of its analysis’. This is echoed in the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts (AGE) and in the Senior Peacebuilding Group (SPG) response to the report: ‘While the SPG supports the broad thrust of recommendation 157, of the AGE report, to strengthen Resident Coordinator capacities, its implementation should be context specific. Beyond the RC, some agencies noted that the capacities of other senior managers and teams on the ground might be strengthened regarding peacebuilding analysis, planning and implementation’. Furthermore, the SPG response suggested that, ‘dedicated capacity should be provided to Resident Coordinators’ offices and the UNCT in the concerned countries to support analysis, planning and conflict sensitive programming, in line with recommendation 158 from the AGE report’.

Within UNICEF, there is a current emphasis on addressing fragility and building resilience, and on a risk-informed approach to programming that is critical to designing interventions and supporting the management and delivery of social services. In order to understand the context and do no harm, and to design and implement programmes that alleviate and transform the underlying drivers of vulnerability and risk, it is critical to conduct a multi-hazard risk assessment that looks at multiple risks, including conflict. From this starting point, it is then necessary to more specifically analyse violent conflict, and its causes and dynamics, through a conflict analysis.



## OVERVIEW OF UNICEF’S CONFLICT ANALYSIS APPROACH



While early conflict analysis work focused mostly on the political and security aspects of conflict, studying the social aspects of conflict has gained increasing prominence. It is now understood that many conflicts, particularly within states, emerge in response to a sense of marginalization of specific groups or areas. Conflict analysis should therefore capture the multidimensionality (political, social, economic, security, etc.) of conflict. To prevent lapse or relapse into violent conflict, marginalization must be addressed in an equally broad manner, which in turn necessitates a ‘holistic’ conflict analysis that spans all aspects of what drives conflict.

For UNICEF, this includes focusing on the social dimensions of conflict, the particular role of children and young people in conflict, protection issues, and equitable access to social services. Conflict analysis must resonate with and meet the needs of UNICEF’s sector programming and advocacy work in order to enable a programmatic response. While there are many different conflict analysis frameworks and methodologies developed by various institutions and government and non-government agencies, the following model consists of five key elements often used and which resonate with UNICEF’s work.

Conflict analyses can vary in their scope and scale. At one end of the spectrum, consulting local newspapers would allow for a basic understanding of changes in parliament, grievances with social-services access or increasingly antagonistic language. At the other end of the spectrum, the full United Nations system, at times including the World Bank or the government itself, may lead a lengthy and resource-heavy process, including comprehensive literature reviews, civil society, regional consultations, household surveys and so on. Between the light ‘conflict scan’ and the wide-ranging indepth conflict analysis, UNICEF has undertaken a range of conflict analyses with different purposes and with different levels of comprehensiveness.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDE

This Guide is a tool for UNICEF staff and leadership to understand, situate and operationalize conflict analysis into UNICEF programme planning and implementation. In the UNICEF context, conflict analysis is understood as the systematic study of the profile, causes, actors and dynamics of conflict. In essence, a conflict analysis seeks to understand who is involved in a conflict and what they want to achieve and why – including the historic and current events and developments that influence them.

As underscored in the ‘Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding in UNICEF Technical Note’ (June 2012), countries affected by conflict and high levels of violence are a priority for UNICEF. The Technical Note and subsequent documents have emphasized that UNICEF plays a vital role in peacebuilding, and that UNICEF needs a more systematic approach to ensure that all of its programmes are conflict-sensitive, and for designing explicit peacebuilding interventions to improve the quality of its programmes and achieve better and more sustainable results for children in these contexts.

## GUIDE TO THE GUIDE

This Guide can be used as a stand-alone resource, or it can be used as a reference for UNICEF staff that have completed a training workshop on conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding (country office, regional office or online). Each tool and concept should be contextualized and adapted to the realities, dynamics and needs of the context in which it is used.

Users will see throughout the Guide that the more conceptual elements are written with a broader, more general approach, while the programming-related elements are written to directly address the field-based user of the guidance, emphasizing tools and checklists so that the material can be immediately applied to conflict analysis needs. Several sections of the Guide include ‘application questions’ to immediately help in the relevant context.

Users of the Guide are strongly encouraged to also refer to the ‘UNICEF Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide’ as they explore the tools and frameworks in this Guide. They are encouraged to pick, choose and utilize the elements of this Guide that add value for specific programming needs and contexts. It should be used as a dynamic, flexible toolkit rather than a formula. The table that follows lists the Guide’s sections so that users can pick and choose sections that are most relevant for their needs.

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This Guide is a tool for UNICEF staff and leadership to understand, situate and operationalize conflict analysis into UNICEF programme planning and implementation.

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# 1

## Context-setting & core concepts

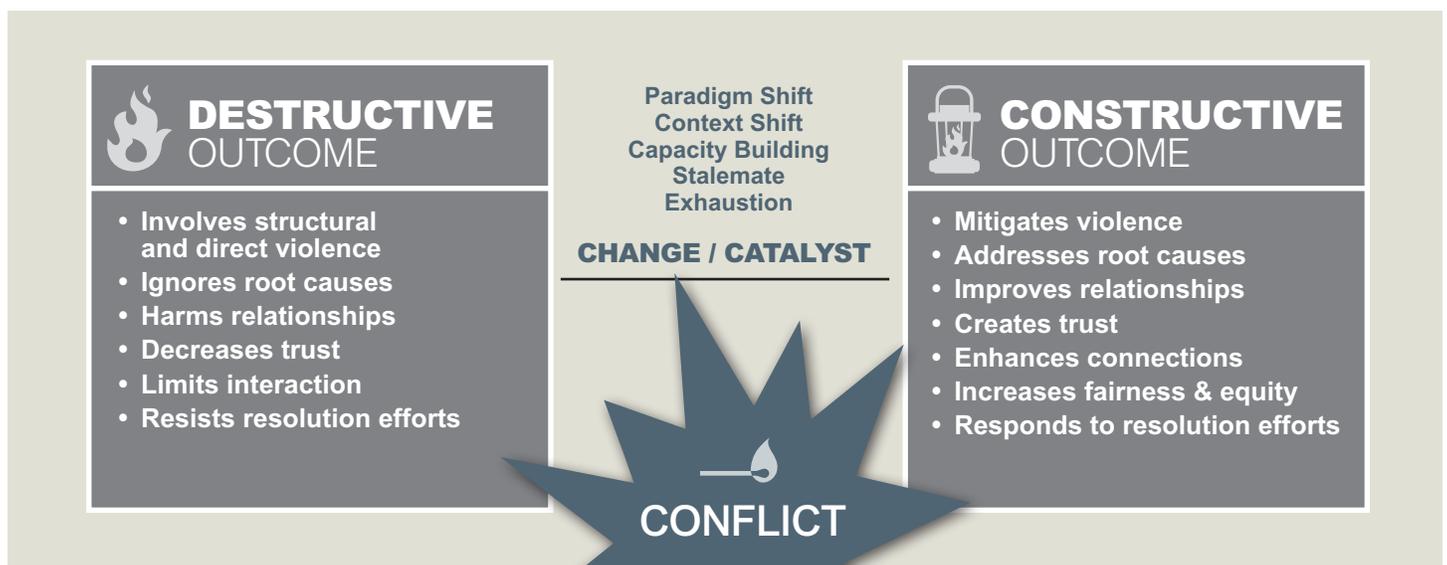
- ▶ What is conflict?
- ▶ What is social cohesion?
- ▶ What is conflict analysis?
- ▶ What makes the UNICEF conflict analysis approach unique?

### WHAT IS CONFLICT?

As a professional working in conflict-affected societies, and as UNICEF staff focused on programming related to conflict analysis, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding, it is useful to give thought to individual assumptions about, understandings of and reactions to conflict.

Conflict involves a clash or struggle between groups who perceive that their needs, goals or strategies are incompatible, mutually exclusive or antagonistic. Conflict can involve contestation around demands, interests, collective memory, emotions, perceptions, values, beliefs, history, culture, behaviours, actions, symbols and power. Conflict can manifest from micro interactions to macro systems. It is a natural outcome of normal human interaction.

Conflict is obviously often powerfully destructive to individuals, relationships, groups, societies and nations. However, research and observation show that the expression, process and outcomes associated with conflict may alternately be destructive, constructive or both, in any given social context.



Conflict is **destructive** when:

- **People and relationships are harmed (through direct, structural or cultural violence), and grievances, injustice and exclusion are active and left unaddressed;**
- **Misunderstandings increase;**
- **Communication breaks down;**
- **Trust and interaction are degraded; and/or**
- **Root causes of conflict are ignored or inflamed.**

However, conflict is also a **dynamic** phenomenon. This means that conflict can be (and often is) impacted by catalysts that create **change**. Some key catalysts for change in a conflict system include:

- **Shift of context, constraints, interests or other key elements;**
- **Shift of paradigm, beliefs or visions for the future held by parties;**
- **Building of new capacities, knowledge or attitudes;**
- **Reaching ‘mutually hurting stalemate’;**
- **Parties become exhausted and tired of fighting; and/or**
- **External forces or interventions impact the conflict.**

Each of these significant shifts may create opportunities for constructive outcomes of conflict. Conflict can result in constructive outcomes when such shifts lead to:

- **People and groups pursuing their own needs and rights, while also allowing for others to do the same;**
- **Institutions, policies and norms negotiating and advocating for all groups in society, redressing inequities and seeking to engage all voices, openly and transparently;**
- **Groups being more truthful with each other and understanding the value of benefits of diverse and pluralistic social groups; and**
- **Increased capacity to address issues and root causes of conflict.**

## WHAT IS SOCIAL COHESION?

Social cohesion refers to the quality of bonds and dynamics that exist between groups within a society. Groups can be defined in terms of ethnic and sociocultural origin, religious and political beliefs, social class or economic sector, or characteristics such as gender and age. The strengthening of social cohesion at the ‘vertical’ (state relations to citizens and groups) and ‘horizontal’ (intra- and inter-community relations) levels is one of the key results that emerges from effective peacebuilding interventions.

### Application questions

- ▶ *What are your own views and assumptions about the nature of social conflict?*
- ▶ *How do those views impact how you approach programming?*
- ▶ *How can your existing programming contribute directly to constructive conflict ‘shifts’?*
- ▶ *How can your planned or envisioned programming contribute directly to constructive conflict ‘shifts’?*
- ▶ *How can your programming cultivate constructive processes and capacities at institutional, community and individual levels, towards social cohesion?*

## WHAT IS CONFLICT ANALYSIS?



In general, conflict analysis is the systematic study of the profile, causes, actors and dynamics of conflict. Conflict analysis should capture the multidimensionality (political, social, economic, security, etc.) of a conflict, and can be tailored to specific geographic areas, programmatic levels, and sectoral themes and issues.

## WHAT MAKES THE UNICEF CONFLICT ANALYSIS APPROACH UNIQUE?

### ROOT CAUSES...

...are a critical concept in conflict analysis. They are underlying, structural factors, often which pervade policies, institutions or social norms. They can create pre-conditions for conflict. In relation to UNICEF’s analyses, root causes can include a lack of or discriminatory access to social services, discriminatory or exclusionary policies, horizontal inequalities among groups and regions, inter-group competition, lack of rule of law, massive youth unemployment, etc.

While some approaches to conflict analysis focus mainly on the political and security aspects of conflict, studying the social aspects of conflict has gained increasing prominence. It is now understood that many conflicts, particularly within states, emerge in response to a sense of marginalization and exclusion of specific groups or areas.

Given UNICEF's mandate and focus, the UNICEF approach to conflict analysis strives to capture the multidimensionality (political, social, economic, security, etc.) of conflict. To prevent lapse or relapse into violent conflict, marginalization must be understood broadly, which necessitates a 'holistic' conflict analysis. For UNICEF, this means focusing on the social dimensions of conflict, the particular impacts on children and young people in conflict (and their potential capacities and roles), child protection issues and, ultimately, on equitable access to social services.

Therefore, your own approach to conflict analysis should resonate and meet the needs of your UNICEF sector programming and advocacy efforts. Keep in mind that a single conflict analysis effort cannot (and should not) cover everything that relates to social conflict. You need to make choices as you approach your conflict analysis, to define the parameters. This can include addressing:

- **geographical focus;**
- **time constraints;**
- **capacity limitations (finances, expertise, access to data, groups or regions); and**
- **purpose of your specific exercise – for instance, focusing on a particular social service such as education.**

UNICEF has a number of mechanisms for conducting conflict analysis, to augment the scope, scale, reach and relevance of conflict analysis efforts, including:

- ▶ **Conducting its own stand-alone Conflict Analysis, including as part of a SitAn**
- ▶ **Conducting sector or issue-specific conflict analyses**
- ▶ **Conducting a region-specific conflict analysis**
- ▶ **Advocating for inclusion of conflict analysis in government assessment, planning & monitoring frameworks**
- ▶ **Including conflict analysis elements in programme planning process (Mid-term review/annual review) or MICS surveys**
- ▶ **Including UNICEF priorities within a joint Inter-Agency Conflict Analysis as part of a joint analysis and planning process (e.g. Common Country Analysis (CCA) UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), Strategic Assessment Missions (SAM), Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF), Peacebuilding Priority Plans (PPP), Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment**

While acknowledging the limitations and constraints, it is always better for you to know *something* rather than *nothing* about the conflict context.

## Application questions

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- ▶ *What parameters or constraints are critical for you to take into account as you approach your conflict analysis effort?*
- ▶ *How might your plan actively address these parameters or constraints?*

# 2

## Goals & objectives for conflict analysis

As you approach conceptualizing, designing and implementing a conflict analysis, it is critical to first define your goals and objectives. Conflict analysis can accomplish a range of goals in support of programming efforts. Specifically, conflict analysis helps to:

▶ **Strengthen programme approaches for conflict sensitivity**

At a minimum, all UNICEF programming and interventions should be conflict-sensitive. Conflict analysis significantly increases the likelihood that your programming is in line with the UNICEF mandate to ensure 'Do No Harm' in programming. Conflict analysis supports this by identifying and prioritizing key underlying causes of conflicts. This helps you to ensure conflict sensitivity by establishing a better understanding of how your programming choices might escalate or fuel further conflict. For example, if discrimination along ethnic lines is identified as a root cause of conflict, your programming should ensure that staff and implementing partners are inclusive and representative, and that services are delivered equitably.

▶ **Strengthen the existing programme for peacebuilding**

Conflict analysis is an important tool to help you review and adapt your existing programming to verify whether it is adequately integrating peacebuilding objectives. These reflections may lead you to shift or reorient your overall portfolio or to shift, reorient or even conclude individual sector programmes. For example, if your conflict analysis indicates that inequality in access to water, sanitation and hygiene services is a root cause, that programme could be adapted to include the production of better data on access and refocus programming to strengthen dialogue between water authorities and local communities.

▶ **Inform new programming for peacebuilding**

Conflict analysis may also reveal key peacebuilding programming opportunities that you are currently not pursuing. By understanding stakeholders, root causes, conflict dynamics and peace capacities, new areas for programming needs may be illuminated. For example, in Liberia, conflict analysis highlighted the critical role of youth as peace capacities and also potential instigators of conflict. The Liberia Country Office supported the development of the Youth Empowerment component of the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation into a full-fledged programme with a US\$1.5 million commitment under the Peacebuilding Fund.

▶ **Provide data for advocacy**

Conflict analysis can inform advocacy and 'upstream' work – for example, by helping you analyse inequalities – which strengthens UNICEF's approach to advocacy with national and local stakeholders. Conflict analysis provides empirical and standardized data for use in your advocacy efforts with external partners (governments, civil society, other United Nations agencies, funders, etc.) and with internal colleagues. For example, in Somalia, peacebuilding was mainstreamed into the three-year interim Education Sector Strategic Plan as a result of advocacy through the Education Sector Committee.

► **Provide dialogue opportunities**

Diverse or even conflictual stakeholders can participate in conflict analysis processes, which can lead to a richer and more nuanced understanding of conflict issues and peacebuilding priorities and opportunities. Keeping in mind the need to remain conflict-sensitive even in your approach to conflict analysis, you can use the analysis process to support constructive dialogue among diverse key stakeholders.

Overall, conflict analysis helps you answer a range of key questions, including whether your programming is:

- **Making things worse? Fuelling conflicts? Perpetuating hostilities?**
- **Working in the right geographical and thematic areas?**
- **Working with the right people and groups, in the right ways?**
- **Addressing conflict dynamics, root causes, or potential triggers?**
- **Capitalizing on peacebuilding opportunities?**
- **Setting appropriate priorities?**



## Application questions

- *Considering your current, planned or envisioned programming efforts, on which of the goal or goals discussed above will you use your conflict analysis findings to support?*
- *What do you need to keep in mind to best align the process to your identified goals?*

# 3

## The range of conflict analysis approaches

### ► Conflict analysis in emergency settings

Conflict analyses can vary in their scope and scale. At one end of the spectrum, simply consulting local newspapers might give you a basic understanding of changes in parliament, grievances with social services access, or increasingly antagonistic language in public spaces.

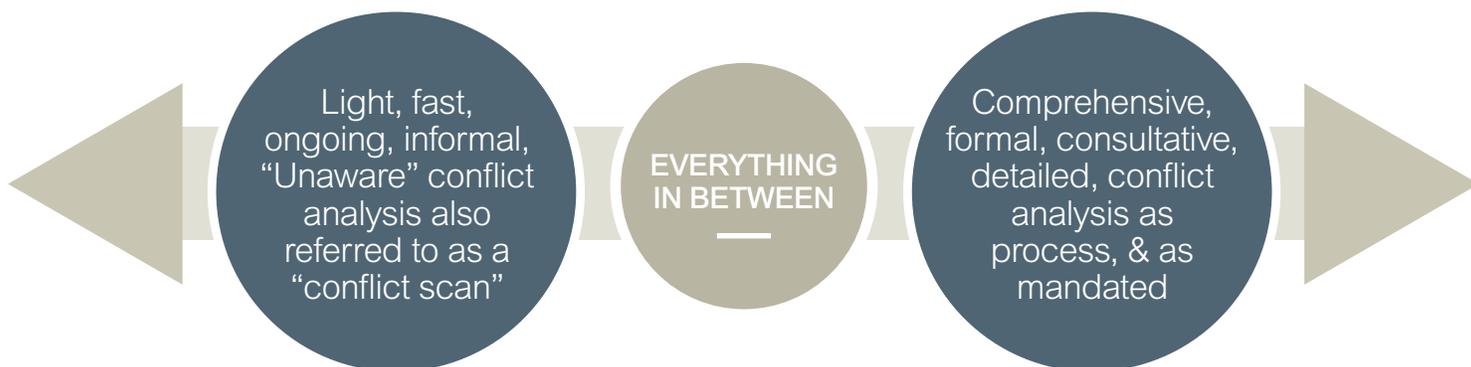
At the other end of the spectrum, the full United Nations system, at times including the World Bank or the government itself, may lead to a lengthy and resource-heavy process including comprehensive literature reviews, regional consultations, household surveys, etc. Between the light 'conflict scan' and the wide-ranging in-depth conflict analysis, UNICEF has undertaken a range of conflict analyses with specific goals and with different levels of comprehensiveness. For example, the Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme conducted 14 countryspecific conflict analyses, assessing the key conflict dynamics in each country, and focusing specifically on the role of the education sector.

In addition, for applications for the Peacebuilding Fund, UNICEF has often presented briefer conflict analyses, to show how the programmatic intervention is linked to a specific conflict issue. Also, at the start-up of integrated United Nations missions, UNICEF participates in Secretariat-led planning missions. As part of agency-wide efforts, UNICEF can also participate in conflict-related development analysis (see box).

### **CONFLICT-RELATED DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS (CDA)**

Of particular relevance to UNICEF, CDA focuses on the use of conflict analysis for programme development, strategic positioning, political processes and mission planning. The CDA guidance explains the linkages between conflict analysis findings and the development of theories of change. It also focuses on using CDA/conflict analysis for integrated assessments and planning processes in contexts where integrated missions are being deployed. Lastly, it focuses on using CDA/conflict analysis for Peacebuilding Fund support. The CDA is a comprehensive toolkit that was initially

developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It was recently revised through an interagency process and subsequently endorsed by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) for use by all agencies, funds and programmes. In addition to presenting a range of methodologies and tools for conflict analysis, the CDA provides in-depth advice on planning and conducting a conflict analysis from a United Nations perspective. This UNICEF guide seeks to build on the CDA and to infuse a unique UNICEF perspective to conflict analysis.



UNICEF has also participated in Post Conflict Needs Assessments (now called Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment or RPBA), which involve the World Bank and the European Union. In the broad multi-stakeholder processes, UNICEF’s focus is on ensuring that the interests of children and their caretakers are adequately reflected in the analysis.

For UNICEF-specific conflict analyses, the primary focus is on generating the knowledge needed to implement conflict-sensitive programming and to identify peacebuilding opportunities in UNICEF sectors (including programmatic and advocacy entry points) that can be developed to address the causes and dynamics identified by the analysis.

## CONFLICT ANALYSIS IN EMERGENCY SETTINGS

It is important to remember that conflict analysis can be many different things. While a lengthy conflict analysis is often not possible in emergencies and acute crisis, lighter efforts can be undertaken to understand local conflict dynamics. The tools in these contexts may include rapid community consultations and a quick scan of existing conflict analysis, and the outcomes may be captured in bullet points, if at all. The term ‘good enough’ conflict analysis has been adopted in the field to indicate that some level of analysis has been undertaken in an emergency setting, in situations in which the full resources, time and access needed for a broader conflict analysis exercise are not available. While such analysis will not establish a detailed picture of conflict dynamics and underlying causes, it enables UNICEF to avoid the most obvious ways of doing harm by unintentionally contributing to conflict dynamics. The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) has identified five key steps and seven questions for considerations in a ‘good enough’ approach to conflict analysis within an emergency setting.

The five steps include:

1

**SPEAK WITH AT LEAST THREE COLLEAGUES WHO KNOW THE CONTEXT TO IDENTIFY CONFLICT TRIGGERS.**

2

**SPEAK WITH AT LEAST THREE CONFLICT EXPERTS ON CONFLICT ACTORS, DYNAMICS AND CAUSES.**

3

**CONVENE KEY STAFF TO DISCUSS CONFLICT ISSUES EMERGING AND POTENTIAL MITIGATION MEASURES**

4

**HOLD A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION ON CONFLICT TRIGGERS AND HOW TO MITIGATE THEM.**

5

**APPLY CONFLICT ANALYSIS TOOL.**

The seven questions are:

1. **What** is the history of the conflict in the area being assessed?
2. **What** is the conflict about? (likely more than one factor)
3. **What** groups are involved in the conflict and the programme?
4. **What** divides these groups?
5. **What** connects these groups?
6. **Where** are the conflict-affected areas and the programme areas geographically located?
7. **Does** conflict get worse at any particular time or period?

## Application questions

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- ▶ *Considering your goals for the conflict analysis and the constraints you anticipate facing, what scope and scale do you envision: brief 'conflict scan', in-depth and longer-term analysis, or something in between?*
- ▶ *What areas do you want to emphasize in the analysis (specific sectors, particular issues, etc.)?*

**CONFLICT  
SENSITIVITY**

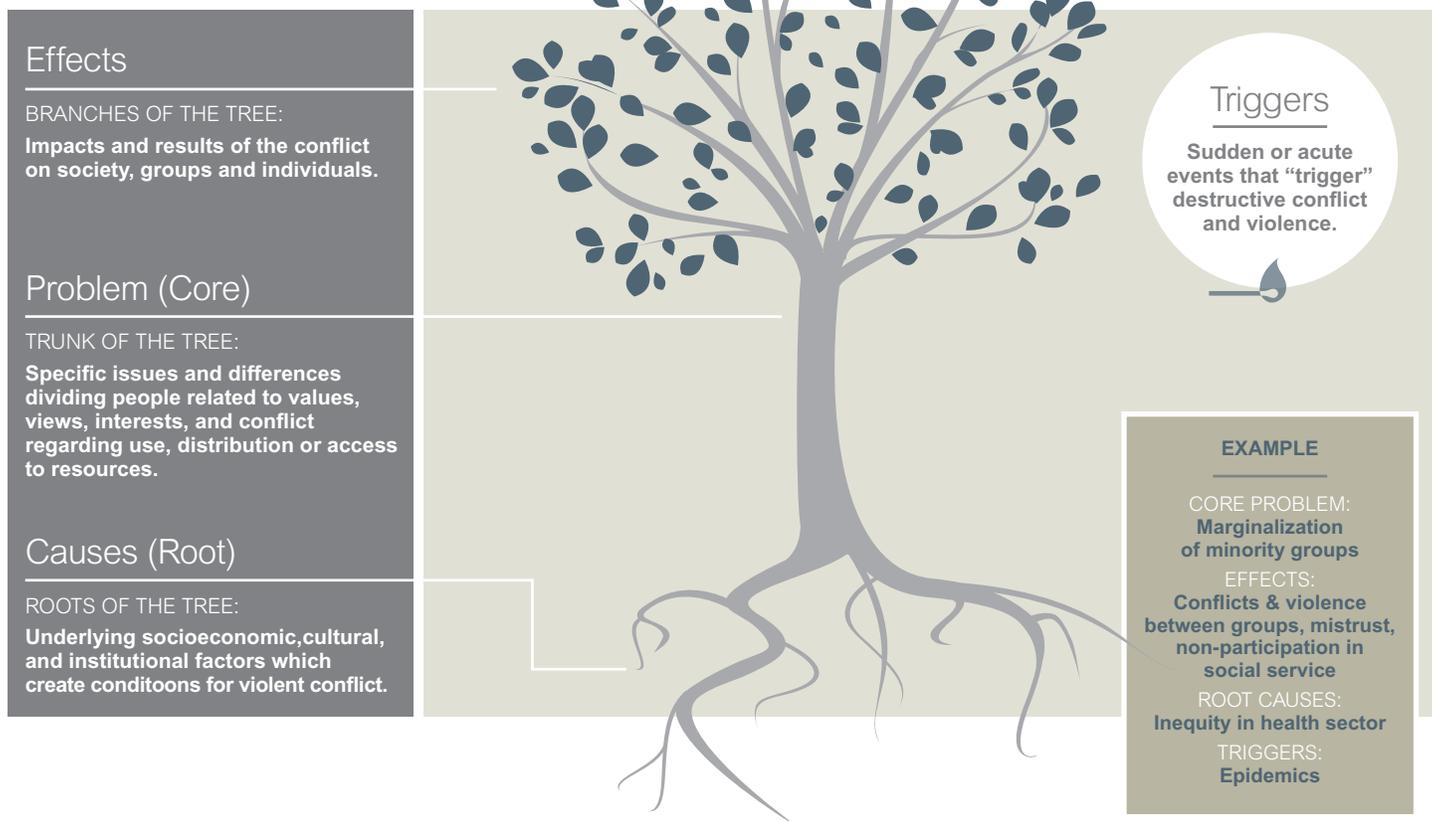


# 4

## The elements of UNICEF conflict analysis

- ▶ The metaphor of a Conflict Tree
- ▶ The five elements of UNICEF conflict analysis
- ▶ Context and conflict ‘thumbnail’
- ▶ Gender & underrepresented groups in conflict analysis

### THE METAPHOR OF A CONFLICT TREE



The classic ‘Conflict Tree’ is a useful metaphor to help you begin considering the paradigm and structure of a typical conflict analysis. This simple visualizing tool illustrates how disaggregating conflict into underlying causes and effects can help you better understand what is going on and why. Note that these causal relationships are not strictly linear. There are interconnections between root causes and their effects, leading to vicious cycles of violence.

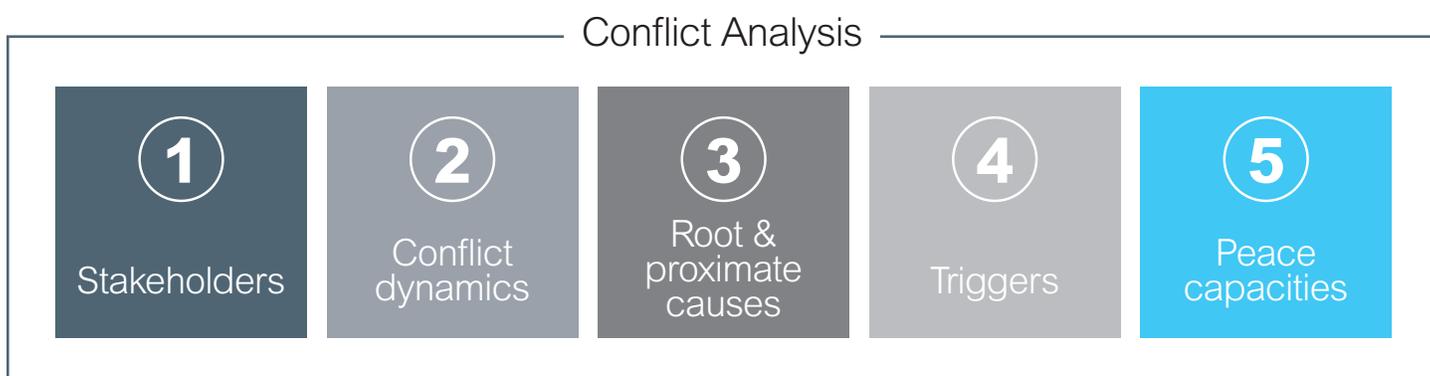
This model helps you reflect on and identify root causes of conflict, which, if addressed, will help in the pursuit of sustainable results. This is important, as it orients programming to address *underlying structural causes*, rather than only its observable effects and impacts. Designing your programmatic interventions requires an awareness of the root causes in order to make informed strategic decisions that reflect a thorough understanding of the conflict context. Regardless of the primary objective (peacebuilding or more standard development or humanitarian outcomes), it is critical to conduct a conflict analysis to understand the conflict context.

You can also use this tool as an initial exercise with stakeholder groups to begin a dialogue about different views regarding root causes, core problems, effects/consequences and triggers of conflict in a given society or area.

## THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF UNICEF CONFLICT ANALYSIS

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This is the model you will use to design and implement your UNICEF conflict analysis. This model has been developed to best fit with UNICEF's social service and sector work. See the 'UNICEF Conflict Analysis Guiding Questions' tool (in the Annex of this Guide) for detailed questions to guide you in implementing this model.



Note that the 'How to implement a UNICEF conflict analysis' section of this Guide (Section 5, below) provides a detailed step-by-step guide for implementing your conflict analysis, using the five elements described below.

## CONTEXT AND CONFLICT 'THUMBNAIL'

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Your first step in creating a conflict analysis is to develop an overall, general context summary, including the conflict histories, issues and current status, in a conflict 'thumbnail'. The thumbnail is not a discrete element of the conflict analysis. However, it is important because it provides a sense of the overall view of the conflict(s) being analysed. You should describe the geographic scope, basic demographics, social and political history in brief, and recent relevant events for the area being analysed. As this is the thumbnail, you should not go into detail, but should give a sense of the overall issues at play that are most relevant for UNICEF programming.

## 1 Stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis provides an understanding of key actors' perspectives, needs and interactions with each other and the conflict context. This can provide you with new insight regarding how to engage in collaborative and inclusive partnerships, as well as stakeholders to target with new programming.

To complete a stakeholder analysis, use the 'Stakeholder Mapping Worksheet' (in the Annex of this Guide), addressing the following categories and ensuring that the data as well as analysis of these dimensions below are disaggregated based on gender, age, identity and geography:

- 1. Stakeholders:** Identify relevant actors who influence or are influenced by the conflict.
- 2. Interests:** Analyse identified stakeholders' positions and interests:  
*Positions* - The 'what' of conflict; demands made by each key actor.  
*Interests* - The 'why' of conflict; motivations, needs, desires and objectives.
- 3. Worldview:** Analyse identified stakeholders' 'worldview', meaning strongly held beliefs, attitudes, values, perceptions and underlying assumptions which come from culture, context and experiences. Note that 'worldview' often feels non-negotiable to people in conflict.
- 4. Perspectives on histories and narratives:** Analyse key stakeholders' view on the history and 'narratives' regarding the conflict.
- 5. Conflict dynamics:** Identify key 'connectors' and 'dividers' in the conflict dynamics, meaning stakeholders with capacities to influence the conflict dynamics positively ('connectors') or negatively ('dividers').
- 6. Relationships:** Analyse the relationships among key stakeholders (i.e., tensions, alliances, informal links, spheres of influence, etc.)
- 7. Peace perspectives:** Analyse key stakeholders' 'peace perspectives', meaning how each stakeholder views opportunities for pursuing sustainable, equitable peace.
- 8. Process:** Given your analysis, consider who to engage with and how to maximize your chances for success.

## 2 Conflict dynamics

Understanding the 'pulse' of a conflict context requires awareness of the conflict dynamics, including patterns and forces that connect or divide social groups. Ensure that your analysis considers gender, identity, geography and age.

**PATTERNS** - trends linked to the conflict that reoccur cyclically, and windows of opportunity for programmatic responses. Example: Violence between youth during holidays with nationalist or exclusionary themes.

**DIVIDERS AND CONNECTORS** - groups, processes, mechanisms, practices, policies and institutions with the capacity to connect or divide people.

Examples (Dividers):

- Discriminatory admissions to health centres
- Disparities in access based on region or identity
- Land disputes
- Unaddressed trauma and historical grievances

Examples (Connectors)

- Joint cooperative projects on water resources
- Youth centres in neutral regions
- Women's groups collaborating across ethnic lines

### ③ Root and proximate causes

#### ROOT CAUSES

underlying socio-economic, cultural and institutional factors which create conditions for destructive conflict and violence.

Examples:

- **poor governance**
- **systematic discrimination**
- **lack of political participation**
- **unequal economic opportunity**
- **grievances over natural resource allocation**
- **'cultural biases' against minority groups**

Analysis can also reveal specific environment-related dynamics in relation to the conflict, including renewable and non-renewable natural resources.

#### PROXIMATE CAUSES

contributing to escalation of tensions and creating enabling environments for violence.

Examples:

- **drought aggravating competition over pasture & water**
- **human rights abuses**
- **narcotrafficking**
- **regional influences**
- **small arms**
- **worsening economic conditions**
- **aggressive rhetoric & violent incidents**

### ④ Triggers

are sudden or acute events that 'trigger' destructive conflict and violence.

Examples:

- **elections**
- **sudden rise in food prices**
- **military coups**
- **assassination of leaders**
- **political changes**
- **legislative or constitutional reform**
- **culturally insulting communication, hate speech**

When working in a conflict context, it is critical to be aware of the potential triggers that can contribute to the outbreak or further escalation of tensions and violent conflict, and understand what consequences and impact these triggers can have on stakeholders and the implementation of programmes.

### ⑤ Peace capacities

are institutions, groups, traditions, events, rituals, processes/mechanisms and people who are positioned and equipped to address conflict constructively and build peace.

Examples:

- **back-channel communications between opposing parties**
- **reform programmes**
- **civil society commitment to peace**
- **anti-discrimination policies**
- **ritualized & traditional dispute resolution approaches**
- **social service delivery mechanisms**

Identifying peace capacities through conflict analysis is foundational to defining potential peacebuilding programming entry points for UNICEF sector work. Peace capacities can become the building blocks through which peacebuilding can be supported. UNICEF's multi-sectoral platform is ideally positioned to reinforce and strengthen local capacities for peace while delivering its humanitarian-development mandate.

Following are some examples of peace capacities directly related to UNICEF sectors:



## GENDER AND UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS IN CONFLICT ANALYSIS

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Your conflict analysis will inform programming, policy and efforts. Therefore, data and analysis must consider and address issues of gender and other equity concerns. For instance, your analysis should disaggregate and reflect the differential impacts of conflict on underrepresented groups, including women, children, youth (female and male), disabled populations, internally displaced persons, and others.

The process and analysis should shed light on conflict-related gender-based differences. For example, you may identify potential but differentiated roles for men and women for promoting peace or addressing specific conflict factors. Or your analysis might reveal gendered dynamics of the conflict that empower or disempower women and men in certain ways based on gender. It is critical to monitor your conflict analysis design and implementation to ensure gender equity and the inclusion of marginalized and underrepresented groups.

Specific ways to effectively incorporate a gendered perspective into your conflict analysis include:

- ▶ **Disaggregate conflict analysis data collected by age and gender.**
- ▶ **Ensure meaningful participation of girls in developing analysis measures, and in the conflict analysis process.** Keep in mind that ‘participatory activities’ do not automatically ensure that girls’ voices are heard or that their perspectives are considered. Analyse obstacles for girls to participate in social settings, in leadership and in decision-making, and actively work to minimize these obstacles during the analysis.
- ▶ **Occasionally segregate some activities by age and gender to allow for more open and honest sharing.**
- ▶ **Carefully convene mixed group interactions, which can also be important, as they provide insight into important dynamics between sexes and ages.** They also serve as opportunities to observe and analyse conflicts and tensions that may exist among different genders and varying age groups. Mixed group interactions, however, should be facilitated with care and conflict sensitivity to avoid breaking and disrespecting social norms between males and females.
- ▶ **Investigate how capacities for peace, and visions of peace and the future, might look differently for girls and boys.**
- ▶ **Provide spaces for voice and representation of both girls and boys.**
- ▶ **Analyse the roles of girls and boys in the community as connectors and/or dividers.**
- ▶ **Ensure that all activities are conducted in a gender-sensitive way.** Facilitators should have a basic understanding of how the relative status of girls and boys in that community might be reflected in any activities conducted.

*(Adapted from ‘UNICEF Guidance Note: Children and young people as peacebuilders’)*

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# 5

## How to implement a UNICEF conflict analysis

- ▶ Before data gathering begins, consider how you will 'capture' and store the data.
- ▶ Define the structure, narrative, tone, etc. for written output of findings

As noted in Section 1, different approaches are taken to the management and roll-out of conflict analyses that benefit the work of UNICEF, whether it be solely implemented by the Organization, with the engagement of a partner or consultant, or a joint effort in collaboration with other United Nations agencies. If you are intending to conduct a conflict analysis, in this section, you will be coached through the entire process of designing a conflict analysis initiative, summarized as:

1. Define the goals and purpose of the conflict analysis.
2. Define the scope and scale of the conflict analysis.
3. Define the end users/audiences for the final outputs.
4. Define the implementation team.
5. Define the participants and data sources.
6. Design the data-gathering approaches.
7. Gather data.
8. Analyse data.
9. Compile and write final conflict analysis report.
10. Disseminate the report.
11. Apply findings to programming.

As you engage with the detailed discussion of the process in this section, you should first review and consider your responses to the 'application questions' in each of the above sections, to help shape and contextualize your design and implementation. The conflict analysis generally involves the following steps:

### 1. DEFINE THE GOALS AND PURPOSE OF THE CONFLICT ANALYSIS.

As noted in Section 2 of this Guide, setting the goals and purpose of your conflict analysis is critical, as it will shape the entire effort. Work with relevant colleagues, leadership and partners to review the range of possible goals, and discuss and decide on the objectives for your conflict analysis effort. The possible goals discussed in Section 2 include:

- Strengthen programme approaches for conflict sensitivity.
- Strengthen programme approaches for peacebuilding.
- Inform new programming for peacebuilding.
- Provide resources for advocacy.
- Provide dialogue opportunities.
- Other relevant goals.

## **2. DEFINE THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF THE CONFLICT ANALYSIS.**

As noted in Section 3 of this Guide, there is a range in terms of 'width' and 'depth' for conflict analysis. Consider, discuss and decide questions of:

- **Scope, including geography, stakeholders, time, resources, etc.**
- **Scale, including how 'deep', 'wide', etc., the analysis will go, broad-based or sector focused, etc.**
- **Timing, including when it is needed and why.**

## **3. DEFINE THE END USERS/AUDIENCES FOR THE FINAL OUTPUTS.**

One consideration that is often forgotten in the design phase is that of the end user, audience or readers for the final conflict analysis outputs. Addressing this early in your process helps to define a number of key parameters for the conflict analysis, including:

- **Depth of analysis – how much depth is needed and useful for the intended end users?**
- **Length and level of detail of document – how long and how detailed will the end user want or need it to be?**
- **Attention to protecting confidential data or removing it from the document – how does the intended audience impact the required protection of data and confidentiality of sources?**
- **Focus on UNICEF themes and language, versus more universally accessible themes and language – is the audience primarily UNICEF, primarily external, or mixed?**
- **Languages used, including UNICEF lingo, jargon and acronyms – what will resonate with and be best understood by the intended audience?**

## **4. DEFINE THE IMPLEMENTATION TEAM.**

In many cases, working with partners or consultants to implement a conflict analysis may be the most effective and efficient approach to implementation. In other cases, an 'in-house' conflict analysis will be the preferred approach. Consider the following questions as you put together your approach and team, in terms of UNICEF-driven, partner-driven, consultant-driven, etc.:

- **Who has the regional/context expertise?**
- **Who has the technical conflict expertise?**
- **Who has the capacity, resources, time, language skills, etc.?**
- **Who has necessary contacts/relationships to support the analysis?**
- **Who is viewed as trustworthy and inclusive by key stakeholders (internal to UNICEF and external)?**
- **Is it important to distinguish between or intersect the conflict analysis team and the program implementation (UNICEF) team?**
- **Are there political or other conflict sensitivities that suggest that an in-house or outsourced approach is best?**

## **5. DEFINE THE PARTICIPANTS AND DATA SOURCES.**

As the conflict analysis takes shape, consider where to get your data. Consider the following themes when defining participants and data sources:

- **Scale – How many data sources do you need for a robust analysis? (This will partly depend on your goals and the scope of your effort.)**
- **Relevance – How will you ensure that relevant data are being used? One way to address this is to gather more data than you will eventually need, which will allow you to find patterns, themes and trends, and also to verify and 'triangulate' from multiple sources, and to remove data that do not meet your criteria without harming the analysis process.**
- **Reliability and verifiability – How will you ensure that your data are reliable (not false or fabricated)**

and verifiable (the sources can be identified and confirmed)? Keep in mind that, while some of the data are 'objective' (numbers of incidents, resources available, etc.) much of the data that make up a conflict analysis are not necessarily 'neutral', 'unbiased', or 'objective', as they are analyses of perspectives and subjective views of the population being researched.

- **Diversity and inclusion** – How will you ensure that your data are as reflective of all social groups and identities as possible? Working with partners (government, civil society and other international organizations) can help to identify people and groups to include in your data-gathering efforts.
- **Gender sensitivity** – How will you ensure that both your process and outcomes are gender-sensitive? This means working to ensure equal, consistent and meaningful participation of women and girls in the process, and disaggregating findings from and related to women, men, boys and girls in the data analysis.
- **Accessibility** – How will you ensure that you can actually access the people and data you need? Working with trusted partners can be a major resource for gaining access to people, areas and information.
- **Conflict sensitivity** – How will you ensure that your conflict analysis efforts 'do no harm'? Carefully consider the safety and security of those sharing information for the analysis (as well as UNICEF staff), movement restrictions, risks of association with UNICEF, and what language would be appropriate in contexts where there is sensitivity around the explicit use of words such as 'conflict' and 'peace'?

## 6. DESIGN THE DATA-GATHERING APPROACHES.

Based on the design of the overall conflict analysis, you next need to consider and design the tools for data gathering. Here are several to consider in your design, keeping in mind needs (scope, scale, diversity, etc., of data) and constraints (time, resources, access, verifiability, etc.).

- **Desk review:** The first step in nearly all conflict analysis is desk review. This means collecting, organizing, reading and synthesizing available and relevant information from existing primary and secondary written sources. In particular, you should read and consider any existing conflict analysis reports for the region you are focused on, to understand what others have done.
- **Surveys:** Surveys involve the use of questionnaires to which large groups of people give responses, and are normally done in writing or verbally. They are highly scripted, using close-ended, qualifying and other kinds of questions to gather data on opinions, views, experiences, demographics, etc.
- **Key stakeholder interviews:** Interviews with individuals who are well situated to understand and comment on conflict factors and dynamics (often called 'key informants') are powerful for bringing depth into a conflict analysis.
- **Focus groups:** Focus groups bring together small groups of people (often three to five participants) to discuss and gather data about perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes regarding the research questions in the conflict analysis. In conflicteffected contexts, focus groups can either be conducted from within a community or across conflict/identity lines.
- **Capacity-building events:** Workshops, trainings and other capacity-building initiatives on a wide range of topics (for example, development, rights, education, peace and conflict resolution, and technical and sectoral themes) can provide opportunities to gather data relevant for conflict analysis.

See the 'Tools for Data Gathering' appendix for in-depth discussion of data-gathering design and implementation.

## 7. GATHER DATA.

Before data gathering begins, consider how you will 'capture' and store the data. Once the data gathering begins, you will need an efficient, effective and secure process for gathering and storing the data. Consider the following questions as you begin gathering data:

- How will your data be gathered (paper notes, Word, Excel, or other data-processing applications, audio files, photo or video files, etc.)?
- How much data will you gather – how many interviews and focus groups, what length, etc.?
- How many files will be created and how will they be organized and categorized?
- What level of detail will the notes include?
- How will you ensure security and integrity of the data?
- How much digital (or physical) storage is needed and available to your project?

## **8. ANALYSE DATA.**

Create an action plan for sorting, synthesizing and analysing your data from each source. Cluster your findings and arrange them into themes using the 'Five Elements of UNICEF Conflict Analysis'. Use spreadsheets or research software (for example, NVIVO), to create categories and 'tag' your data using the categories and in line with the Five Elements. Look for:

- Themes;
- Trends;
- Clusters of data – geographic, by identity or group, by gender, age, socio-economic status, vocation, level of education, etc.;
- 'Outliers' – document data that appear to not fit the trends, noting who or where these data came from, as outliers are often indicators of voices not being heard in the 'mainstream'; and
- Other striking findings related to conflict analysis and UNICEF programming.

## **9. COMPILE AND WRITE FINAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS REPORT.**

Keeping your goals and end users/recipients in mind, define the structure, narrative, tone, etc. for written output of findings (report, summary, etc.). The following standard approach to report writing is applicable for conflict analysis, keeping in mind the need to be vigilant and conflict sensitive with the written outputs:

- Draft findings using defined structure;
- Circulate to appropriate and relevant respondents for feedback;
- Revise per feedback; and
- Finalize written outputs.

## **10. DISSEMINATE THE REPORT.**

Publishing and broadcasting your findings is both critical and highly prone to dilemmas and problems. Consider the following when deciding how to disseminate the conflict analysis:

- Conflict sensitivity, safety and security of participants and others – is it risky to share this report beyond UNICEF?
- Responses from key partners – what is the best way to share this with partners, including considering the title and framing of the report, the mode of dissemination, and lining up support and shared understanding before sharing it?
- Relevance – who needs it and why?

## **11. APPLY FINDINGS TO PROGRAMMING.**

Keeping in mind the identified goals of the conflict analysis effort, work with colleagues, partners, etc., to directly apply findings for increased conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding programming. See the 'UNICEF Guide for Conflict Sensitive and Peacebuilding Programming' for in-depth discussion of how to apply findings for programming.

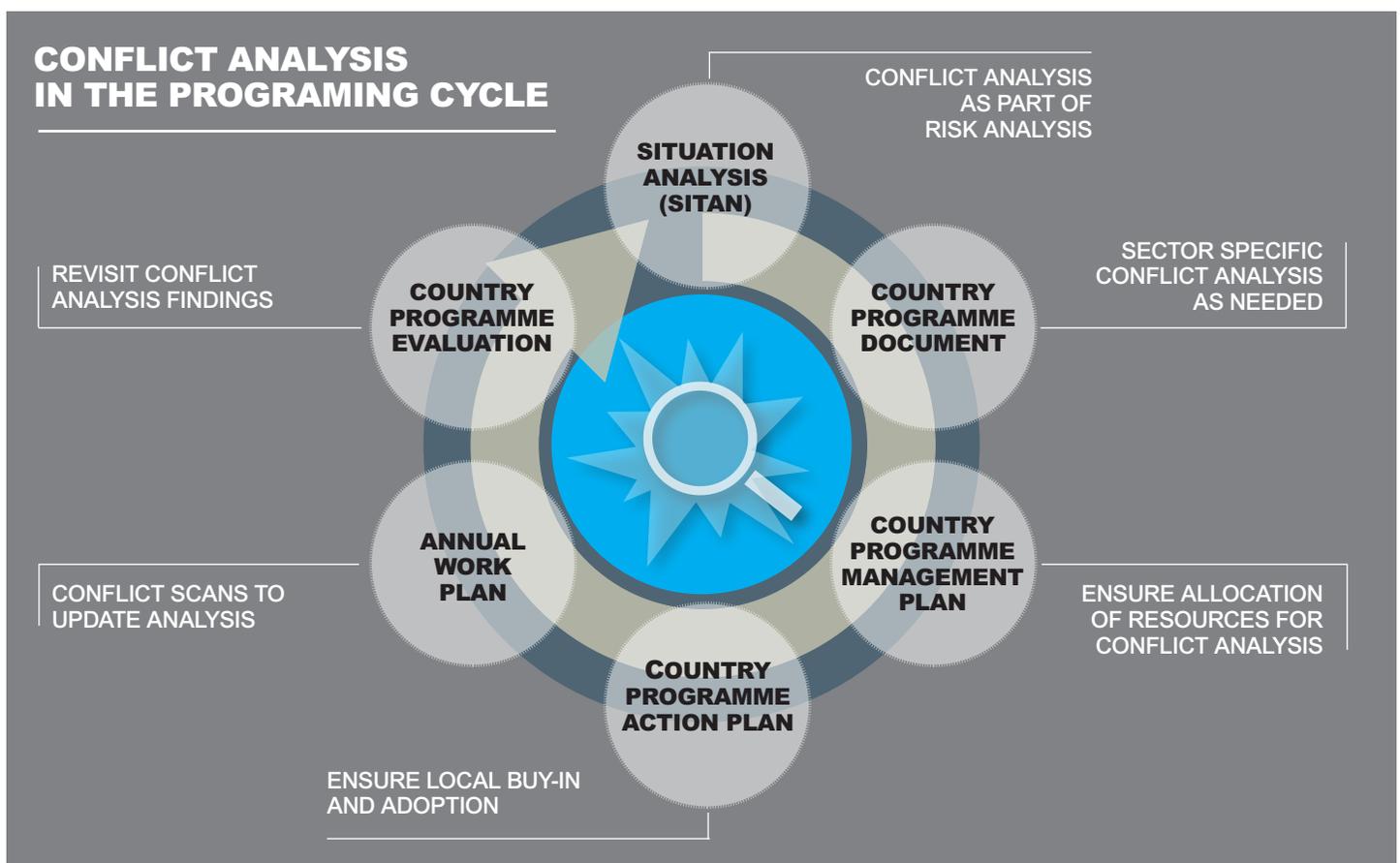
# 6

## Guidance for managers on conflict analysis

- ▶ When should conflict analysis be conducted during programme planning?
- ▶ How does conflict analysis link to other UNICEF strategic frameworks and tools?
- ▶ Managing the conflict analysis process: Best practices for management

### WHEN SHOULD CONFLICT ANALYSIS BE CONDUCTED DURING PROGRAMME PLANNING?

Managers should keep in mind that conflict analysis should be integrated into the UNICEF programme planning processes and milestones in fragile and conflict affected contexts. It should be done as part of Risk-Informed Programming (RIP) and related risk analysis starting with the Situation Analysis (SitAn) and then periodically revisited and updated as part of different programme cycle milestones, including annual work plans and mid-term reviews.



Following these initial steps, managers should consider:

- **Conducting additional, ‘light’ and issue-specific or sector-based conflict analysis (or ‘conflict scans’) to support specific programming when drafting country programme documents;**
- **Conducting additional conflict scans to ensure that programming is informed by ongoing changes in context;**
- **Ensuring adequate allocation of financial and human resources to support conflict analysis;**
- **Sharing with the government, in conflict-sensitive ways, key findings of the conflict analysis that will inform the Country Programme Action Plan;**
- **Advocating for inclusion of conflict analysis in government assessments, planning and monitoring frameworks; and**
- **Probing and validating if the assumptions in the conflict analysis were valid, in the Country Programme Evaluation.**

As noted in the previous section, there are a number of considerations when planning a conflict analysis. This includes decisions related to identifying and establishing the conflict analysis implementation team. A key decision point is whether the exercise will be completed ‘in-house’ (staffed from within UNICEF) or involves partnerships with local organizations (i.e., nongovernmental organizations, universities, research centres, etc.), consultants (international or national) or collaborations at the United Nations inter-agency level. In any case, it is good practice to note what other United Nations agencies and partners on the ground are doing and identify synergies and opportunities for inter-agency cooperation to build on experience, fill in the gaps and avoid redundancy and overburdening data sources.

## **HOW DOES CONFLICT ANALYSIS LINK TO OTHER UNICEF STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS?**

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Integrating conflict analysis into UNICEF’s programme planning process reinforces and brings added value to UNICEF strategies and frameworks, particularly within the risk-informed and equity-based agendas:

“Although disaster risk analysis and conflict risk analysis (...) require different methodologies there is often an interaction between these two risks in many humanitarian situations.”

UNICEF “should therefore look into both conflict and disaster risk and adopt a holistic approach integrating these two types of risk in a coherent analytical framework to guide the formulation of country programmes.”

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*Technical Note: Emergency Risk-Informed Situation Analysis, August 2012*

### **CONFLICT ANALYSIS LINKED TO RISK ASSESSMENT**

Conflict analysis adds value for risk-informed assessment because:

- Conflict analysis provides in-depth analysis of the factors and dynamics that drive humanmade conflict risks, including civil unrest, terror and inter-communal conflict.
- Conflict analysis highlights peace capacities that can alleviate these risks.

### **CONFLICT ANALYSIS LINKED TO EQUITY-FOCUSED ASSESSMENT**

Conflict analysis reinforces the equity agenda because:

- Conflict analysis can help understand the bottlenecks (proximate causes in conflict analysis) and barriers (root causes in conflict analysis) related to equity, which may drive or derive from conflict dynamics.
- Conflict analysis provides data on capacities for peace that can be strengthened to address the structural causes of inequity.

The UNICEF equity agenda, through the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRes), is a key source for accessing gathered data and comparative analysis focused on equity. Disparities and unequal access to social services and resources are often root causes of conflict.

## **MANAGING THE CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS: BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGEMENT**

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Building on to the detailed guidance provided throughout this Guide, managers should keep in mind that:

- Conflict analysis can be positioned as a tool to inform programming at all levels of a country office, or it can be an effort to inform one sector, region or programme, or it can be a stand-alone intervention.
- Analysing sources, causes and effects of conflict is a sensitive issue. Data collection and analysis have the potential to exacerbate conflict, so the design and delivery should also be conflict sensitive in order to not do harm, or antagonize key partners.
- Ideally, all local stakeholders (including children, to the degree possible and appropriate) should participate in and play key roles in conflict analysis. While remaining conflict sensitive, making conflict analysis participatory will help capture more diverse perspectives. This often requires input and support from managers to accomplish.
- The goal is not to create a 'perfect' analysis. Conflict analysis should be 'good enough' for the purposes it will be used for, and managers should support the 'good enough' approach, to avoid having conflict analysis become an end in itself, rather than a means to an end.
- Managers should support further updates and refinement over time, to the degree needed and possible. Time and resources should be allocated to periodically reflect, update, add or change the analysis to keep it current as the conflict analysis evolves.

# 7

## Challenges, dilemmas & opportunities in conflict analysis

There are several challenges and dilemmas related to planning and conducting conflict analysis that you should keep in mind. These include:

▶ **No perceived or acknowledged conflict**

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First and foremost, in many contexts actors do not or cannot acknowledge the existence of conflict. To some stakeholders, the term ‘conflict’ can be viewed as a way of legitimizing opposing or ‘enemy’ perspectives or groups. Partners may view ‘conflict’ as solely the presence of direct violence and armed conflict, whereas UNICEF’s understanding of violence also includes cultural and structural violence. In addition, many states prefer nomenclature that either emphasizes extreme forms of conflict (for instance, ‘terrorism’) or minimizes conflict (for example, ‘domestic disputes’). Therefore, you may encounter serious problems with partners when framing activities as ‘conflict analysis’. Changing the language may help overcome these challenges. For example, you may consider framing your effort as ‘social cohesion analysis’, ‘resilience analysis’ or ‘development impediments analysis’.

▶ **Who to involve**

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Another dilemma is considering to what degree the analysis should include external partners. For upstream and advocacy purposes, it may be critical to involve government counterparts to ensure that the findings can inform public planning and service delivery processes. However, in a country where the legitimacy of the state is contested, a process involving the government may also be perceived as illegitimate by civil society and other key stakeholders. A related question is the inclusion of and consultations with non-state actors. In some contexts, the government may wish to limit consultations with certain non-state actors. In most instances, the selection of interlocutors – who to include and who not to include – will be regarded as a potentially politicized process and the subject of extensive scrutiny.

▶ **Scope of analysis**

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Another challenge is in the overall scope of the conflict analysis exercise. Designing a conflict analysis will always involve decisions of what not to do. For example, the analysis may focus on a sector or a geographical location, which means not focusing on others. While such decisions are both necessary and their consequences can be mitigated and explained, there are related challenges that must be understood. For example, the analysis may focus on conflict related to water. While this focus may ensure a more targeted and useful analysis, it runs the risk of ignoring other conflict factors that may be consequential. Decisions may be influenced by a ‘supply drive’ – i.e., the tendency for institutions with a specific mandate to look for problems that ‘fit their solutions’.

▶ **Biases**

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A deeper sociocultural issue is the bias all conflict analysts unknowingly bring to the process. Every researcher has a specific education, unique experiences and cultural background that shapes how the researcher sees the world and understands conflict.

▶ **Causes versus consequences**

.....

When your analysis zooms in on specific issues, it is important to try to distinguish between what relates to the conflict overall, versus the conflict as it manifests for the specific group of people in that specific geographical location impacted by a unique range of events and dynamics. A good conflict analysis must also try to distinguish between cause and consequences – i.e., is a community conflict-prone because it is deprived of social services, or does conflict prevent the delivery of services? It may also be challenging to ‘rank’ the importance of each factor, which is often necessary if the analysis is to be useful for priority-setting and programmatic focus.

▶ **Gaining access**

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In conflict settings, access to areas, people, groups and verifiable data is often a challenge. This is particularly true for engaging with the most marginalized groups, which often make up UNICEF’s main beneficiaries – children, young people and women. Remote areas can be hard and dangerous to reach, and children, adolescents/youth and women are often marginalized, and deprived of a voice and representation in ‘conflict cultures’ dominated by grown men. The participation of these stakeholders may be perceived as too sensitive.

**Data-gathering problems**

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There are a number of problems and challenges specifically related to data gathering for conflict analysis that you should keep in mind, including:

- **INTERVIEW FATIGUE**  
 participants, groups and communities may have been interviewed and surveyed repeatedly by multiple internationals, leading to a lack of interest or willingness to participate in yet another interview, focus group or questionnaire.
- **EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT**  
 people providing inputs for research may understandably have elevated expectations regarding receiving tangible or concrete benefits for themselves, their organizations or communities.
- **SAFETY RISKS**  
 participants involved in research related to conflict may face increased security risks, and may be targeted by actors antagonistic to the work of the international community.
- **CONFLICT INSENSITIVITY AND RE-TRAUMATIZATION**  
 probing and asking questions related to conflict and violence may evoke traumatic memories and trigger very strong negative emotions.

## **CONCLUSION: CONFLICT ANALYSIS AS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY**

Conflict analysis activities can present and create unique opportunities. A conflict analysis can, for example, be a peacebuilding intervention in and of itself, through which different and conflictual stakeholders work collectively on understanding the nature of the conflict they are a part of. This can allow stakeholders to learn about their counterparts' views and interests, help build trust and empathy, and potentially help identify hidden opportunities for building peace.

Conflict analysis processes can also strengthen collaboration between United Nations actors across humanitarian, development, political and security domains, as well as between the United Nations family and external actors. Overall, conflict analysis brings a range of benefits for UNICEF programming, and should continue to be mainstreamed into activities and programmes across all sectors.

Conflict analysis processes can effectively help to generate policy dialogue and inform decisions made at the institutional and national levels. Conflict analysis is not merely an internal exercise. The findings of a conflict analysis can profoundly influence national and sectoral processes and development plans, if the process itself involves a sustained consultative and inclusive mechanism, engaging local authorities and policymakers, in all phase of the process, supporting confidence, capacity and ownership.

**PEACE-  
BUILDING**



# ANNEXES



## ANNEX 1: UNICEF conflict analysis guiding questions tool

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This tool is your guide for data gathering and analysis to populate your UNICEF conflict analysis process. Use this worksheet to gather data related to each of the Five Conflict Analysis Elements detailed in Section 2. You should contextualize, select and adapt these questions for the specificities of your sector and country or regional realities.

### CONTEXT AND CONFLICT 'THUMBNAIL'

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**Your first step in creating a conflict analysis is to describe the conflict histories, issues, and current status in a 'conflict thumbnail', to give a sense of the overall view of the conflict(s) being analysed. You should describe the geographic scope, basic demographics and recent relevant events for the area being analysed. As this is your 'thumbnail', you should not go into detail, but should give a sense of the overall issues at play that are most relevant for UNICEF programming.**

## 1 Stakeholders

In addition to considering the following questions, you should also complete the Stakeholder Mapping Tool in this guide, to develop a visual map for your analysis. Ensure that your data are disaggregated based on gender, age, identity and geography

- ▶ Which individuals, groups, networks and other actors are viewed as central to social and political dynamics?
- ▶ Which individuals, groups, networks and other actors are viewed as peripheral to social and political dynamics?
- ▶ Which individuals, groups, networks and other actors are excluded or alienated?
- ▶ What role do diaspora, refugee, migrant and other communities play in influencing conflict dynamics?
- ▶ What role do international actors (states and others) and organizations play in influencing conflict dynamics?

## 2 Root and proximate causes

You will note that this section has clusters of questions, as causality can be found in a range of social, political, economic and cultural realms.

### COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

- ▶ How is the population geographically organized along identity, gender, age or other lines?
- ▶ How is this diversity viewed?
- ▶ What is the nature of intra-group contact (within communities)?
- ▶ What is the nature of inter-group contact (between communities)?
- ▶ Is there a history of tension or violent conflict that might drive further conflict?
- ▶ How are natural and other resources distributed across groups?
- ▶ Are neighbourhoods generally divided or mixed across identity lines?
- ▶ Are there current disputes, altercations and/or recent events around specific issues within or between communities?

## SECTOR POLICIES

- ▶ How and to what degree are current sector policies and structures inclusive or discriminatory in providing access to basic social services?
- ▶ How and to what degree are sector policies and structures conflict sensitive?
- ▶ How and to what degree are legal structures inclusive for children, youth, adolescents and caretakers, child protection and security? Consider gender, identity, age and geography.
- ▶ What mechanisms exist and are utilized for promoting equitable access to non-formal vocational and employment skills opportunities?
- ▶ How and to what degree do educational opportunities promote equity, social cohesion, peacebuilding and conflict resolution capacities?
- ▶ How and to what extent are platforms created for the participation of 'beneficiaries', inclusively, in shaping/providing feedback on said programmes/social sectors?

## SECTOR GOVERNANCE

- ▶ To what degree are there governance capacities to ensure equitable access to social services, resources and protection?
- ▶ How and to what degree are benefits from natural resources equitably distributed through governance structures?
- ▶ What is the nature and level of institutional capacity for democratic participation, including for young people, women and minorities?
- ▶ How and to what degree are sector institutions governing inclusively and consultatively?
- ▶ What roles does civil society play in sectors? What is the range and scope of civil society organizations engaged in meaningful participation and open dialogue?
- ▶ How and to what degree are all major groups represented in governance?
- ▶ How and to what degree are there governance disparities across different regions?
- ▶ How and to what degree are there diaspora communities influencing sector decisionmaking? How and what degree does the diaspora influence or promote social cohesion or social division and polarization?
- ▶ How and to what degree are public funds and budgets managed and distributed equitably and fairly?
- ▶ To what degree is corruption present?
- ▶ If corruption is present, how is it manifested (i.e., nepotism, regional/political/ethnic favouritisms, etc.)?

## SOCIAL SERVICES, PROTECTION AND SECURITY PROVISION

- ▶ What are the current security issues at the community level?
- ▶ How is violence manifested in communities (direct/physical, structural, cultural, etc.)?
- ▶ What is the nature and degree of equitable access to informal or community-based and formal justice mechanisms for the protection of children, youth, adolescents and their caretakers from violence, exploitation and abuse?
- ▶ What is the nature and degree of inclusive informal/community-based and formal mechanisms for access to health services, water, social protection and education?
- ▶ What is the nature and degree of equitable access to non-formal vocational and employment skills opportunities for young people and caretakers?
- ▶ What is the level and sense of physical safety for men and women, boys and girls across identity groups in homes?
- ▶ What is the level and sense of physical safety for men and women, boys and girls across identity groups in public and community spaces?
- ▶ What are the gender-based violence dimensions?

## CULTURAL IDEOLOGIES AND SOCIAL NORMS

- ▶ How and to what degree has violence become a norm?
- ▶ How and to what degree do social and cultural values and norms promote social exclusion?
- ▶ How and to what degree do social and cultural values and norms promote social cohesion?
- ▶ What are the norms in homes, community and public spaces related to conflict and violence?
- ▶ What is the nature and degree of a sense of dominance of certain groups over others? What form does this dominance take? How does it relate to identity or gender dynamics?
- ▶ What is the nature and degree of social norms and practices promoting participation of women and men in decision-making in the household, community life and public affairs?
- ▶ How and to what degree do social norms and ideologies value the voices, experiences and participation of children and young people, both boys and girls in all spheres of life?

## MEDIA DYNAMICS

- ▶ How and to what degree do media reach children, youth and adolescents?
- ▶ Do media tend to use divisive or inclusive language?
- ▶ To what degree is there free expression of opinions and ideas in the media?
- ▶ To what degree is media dominated by single, controlled or monitored points of views?
- ▶ How and to what degree is media controlled by political, commercial or other actors?

## PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF CONFLICT

For these questions, you should consider and disaggregate perceptions and experiences of children, youth, caretakers, providers, etc., along age, gender, identity and geography.

- ▶ What is the range of perception, narration and memories of individuals related to conflict dynamics and experiences? Are there generational divides? Is there a common narrative across generations?
- ▶ How and to what degree do divisive or discriminatory cultural norms and ideologies impact individuals?
- ▶ What are the perceptions and experiences related to rights protection and security?
- ▶ What are the perceptions and experiences related to access to equity of basic social services and to vocational training and employment opportunities?
- ▶ What are the impacts of division and violence on socio-psychological dispositions (sense of hope, self-esteem and us/them vs. inclusive identity formation)?
- ▶ What is the nature and degree of transfer of trauma and negative worldviews from caretakers to children (i.e., hateful rhetoric regarding the 'other', anger, normalization of violence, lack of emotional presence, etc.)?

## 3 Triggers

- ▶ What events, dynamics or changes have triggered conflict escalation in the past?
- ▶ What events, dynamics or changes may occur in the next three to six months that may trigger conflict escalation?
- ▶ What events, dynamics or changes may occur in the next three to nine months that may trigger conflict escalation?
- ▶ How and to what degree is there early warning available regarding these triggers?
- ▶ What is the nature and degree of early action regarding these triggers?
- ▶ How do state actors tend to react to the triggering events, dynamics or changes?

- ▶ How does civil society tend to react?
- ▶ How does the media tend to react?
- ▶ How do individuals tend to react?

## 4 Conflict dynamics

- ▶ What trends or patterns related to conflict reoccur frequently or cyclically?
- ▶ Which groups, processes, mechanisms, practices, policies and/or institutions tend to divide people, and to what degree?
- ▶ Which groups, processes, mechanisms, practices, policies and/or institutions tend to connect people, and to what degree? (Note that these should also be detailed in depth in the 'peace capacities' element, below.)
- ▶ What are the roles of traditional, cultural, political and religious institutions and practices in building social cohesion or triggering tension?
- ▶ Who and what are the connectors and dividers within media?
- ▶ What role do media providers and institutions play in undermining social cohesion?
- ▶ What role do media providers and institutions play in supporting social cohesion?
- ▶ What are national, regional or local narratives about the area's history and conflicts?

## 5 Peace capacities

- ▶ What formal or informal conflict resolution mechanisms exist? How and to what degree are they implemented, accessed and effective?
- ▶ What institutions exist that are currently supporting – or could support in the future – peacebuilding efforts?
- ▶ What groups exist that are currently – or could support – peacebuilding efforts?
- ▶ What is the nature and capacity for individuals to participate in peacebuilding efforts?
- ▶ What traditions or events exist that relate or could be linked to peacebuilding efforts?
- ▶ What are potentially shared interests, concerns, norms, values or social processes that do or could contribute to peacebuilding efforts?

## ANNEX 2: Unicef Relationship mapping guide



STRONG LINKS / RELATIONSHIP



ALLIANCE



INFORMAL / INTERMITTANT RELATIONSHIP



POWER / LEVERAGE DIFFERENTIAL



INEQUITABLE ACCESS



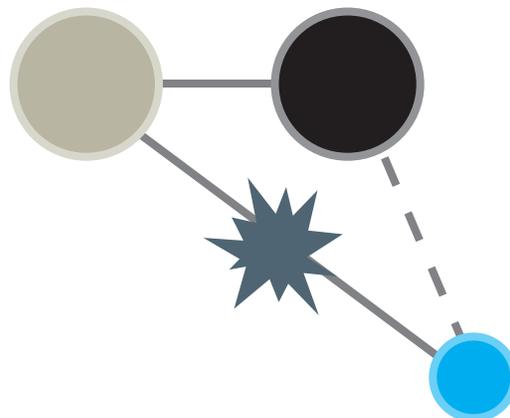
DIRECTION OF INFLUENCE



CONFLICT / HOSTILITY



BROKEN / DISCONNECTED RELATIONSHIP



DISTANCE ILLUSTRATES LEVEL OF CLOSENESS

## ANNEX 3: Stakeholder analysis worksheet

### Stakeholders

#### THE "WHO" OF THE CONFLICT

- Who are the parties directly involved in the conflict?
- What other parties impact the conflict?
- What other parties are affected by the conflict?
- What parties have not yet been engaged in the process?

### Interests

#### THE "WHY" OF THE CONFLICT

- **Psychological:** i.e. need to belong, to be recognized, for self/or group actualization/preservation etc.
- **Substantive:** i.e. need for access to basic services and resources etc.
- **Procedural:** i.e. need to have a voice in decision-making etc.

### Dynamics

#### THE "CONNECTORS & DIVIDERS" OF THE CONFLICT

- What are stakeholders' capacities to influence the conflict dynamics positively or negatively the conflict dynamics (connectors & dividers)?
- Who has formal power?
- Who has informal power?
- How are these capacities currently operating?

### Worldview

#### THE "BELIEFS" OF THE CONFLICT

- What are strongly held beliefs, attitudes or values?
- How do culture, context and history shape the various worldviews?
- What worldview issues appear non-negotiable to stakeholders?

## Stakeholder analysis worksheet (cont.)

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### Relationships

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#### THE "INTERACTIONS" BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS

- Who has alliances with whom?
- Who has the ability to influence whom?
- Who has formal or informal links with whom?
- Who is antagonistic with whom?
- Where are there mixed dynamics (cooperation & antagonism)?

### Process

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#### THE "HOW" OF ENGAGEMENT

- What approach for programming is envisioned?
- Who should drive what elements of the programming?

### History & Narratives

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- How does each stakeholder understand and narrate important historical experiences?

### Peace Perspectives

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- How does each stakeholder view opportunities for pursuing sustainable, equitable peace?

## ANNEX 4: Tools for data gathering for conflict analysis

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Strong and actionable conflict analysis hinges on high-quality, reliable and unbiased data. In addition, because conflict analysis involves engaging with conflict-affected populations, systems and dynamics, data gathering must also be done in a thoughtful and conflict-sensitive manner, in order to ‘do no harm’ (and, ideally, ‘do more good’).

In all approaches to gathering data for conflict analysis, it is critical to consider sources for both accuracy and perspective, including bias or missing ‘voices’. Peacebuilding researchers and practitioners have noted a pattern of using data that comes from, and therefore may privilege, the views of elites, both from within a conflict being studied and from outsider experts. To address this tendency, this Guide recommends explicitly surveying data for a balance of sources that go beyond the traditionally relied-upon organizations and experts.

There are a number of well-tested approaches to data gathering for conflict analysis, which each offer strengths and potential weaknesses for the researcher. Below are the standard approaches, with commentary to help select the appropriate methodologies for a given conflict analysis.

### DESK REVIEW

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The first step in nearly all conflict analysis is desk review. This means collecting, organizing, reading and synthesizing available and relevant information from existing primary and secondary written sources.

*Standard desk review steps for conflict analysis include:*

- 1. Map and categorize available sources of data** (journals, media, academic sources, government reports, reports from non-governmental organizations and international nongovernmental organizations United Nations reports, existing conflict analysis, etc.)
- 2. Actively pursue diverse and contrary data points, to enhance accuracy and reduce source bias.**
- 3. Review the ‘Five Elements of UNICEF Conflict Analysis’ to inform the categories you will look for in the data.**
- 4. Review data, tagging and clustering findings to identify trends, themes and emerging (and conflicting) narratives.**
- 5. Disaggregate data, based on relevant groupings (gender, identity, age region, etc.).**
- 6. Use the initial findings from desk research to inform the next steps in the conflict analysis, examples of which follow below.**

### SURVEYS

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Surveys involve the use of questionnaires to which large groups of people give responses, which are normally in writing or verbally to a survey administrator (called ‘polls’). They are highly scripted, using close-ended, qualifying and other kinds of questions to gather data on opinions, views, experiences, demographics, etc. The value of surveys in conflict analysis is that the pool of participants can be quite large, which helps the conflict analysis rest on broader and statistically more significant findings. This is also a challenge, in that the researcher can be overwhelmed with data, and the process of sorting and analysing the data can become unwieldy and expensive. In addition, non-literate populations are often not well integrated into survey processes, creating potential data biases and conflict insensitivities (as these populations may also be victims of conflict dynamics).

- 1. Review findings from desk research to formulate basic survey questions related to the emerging themes & trends.**
- 2. Review the ‘Five Elements of UNICEF Conflict Analysis’ to inform the categories you will look for in the data.**
- 3. Develop the survey questions.**
- 4. Pilot the survey with 5–10 diverse and well-chosen respondents.**

- 5. Invite feedback from pilot respondents: what was clear, what was not clear, were any questions leading, biased or non-conflict sensitive? Were the responses clear and relevant?**
- 6. Revise the survey based on pilot findings.**
- 7. Define who will get the survey** (numbers, groups, individuals, etc.). **Carefully consider conflict sensitivity & inclusion.**
- 8. Create an action plan for distributing and collecting surveys.**
- 9. Create an action plan for sorting, synthesizing and analysing responses. Spreadsheets can be used to categorize survey results. For more extensive and broad-based conflict analysis, research software** (for example, NVIVO) **can be very helpful for creating categories and ‘tagging’ responses using these categories.**
- 10. Distribute surveys.**
- 11. Collect survey responses.**
- 12. Sort, synthesize and analyse the responses, using the Five Elements of UNICEF Conflict Analysis to guide the data analysis.**

## KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Interviews with individuals who are well situated to understand and comment on conflict factors and dynamics (often called ‘key informants’) are powerful for bringing depth into a conflict analysis. Interviews can be conducted with:

- ◆ **government stakeholders**
- ◆ **sector authorities**
- ◆ **civil society leaders**
- ◆ **faith or trade group leadership**
- ◆ **private-sector representatives**
- ◆ **young girls and boys**
- ◆ **children - boys and girls** (with strong protections regarding safety and consent)
- ◆ **educators**
- ◆ **women’s rights activists**
- ◆ **ex-combatants** (or current combatants, if security & impartiality are strongly protected)
- ◆ **academic experts from within or from outside the setting**

Political and social leaders are another important source of data, and it is critical to consider both the value and risks associated with interviewing (or not) representatives of groups seen as outliers or spoilers by the government. The structure or ‘protocol’ for conflict analysis interviews may be formal (scripted), semi-formal (scripted with latitude for deviation), informal (unscripted with goals but no pre-determined questions), or narrative (focused on storytelling, oral histories and even metaphors). Each of these approaches derives different kinds of data. The researcher should consider which approach will: a) provide the richest, most useful data for the conflict analysis, while b) protecting interviewees from re-traumatization and other risks.

One useful way to increase the diversity and reach of the conflict analysis interview methodology is through the use of the ‘Snowball Sampling’ method, through which existing interview participants are engaged to recruit additional subjects from among their networks. The strength of this approach is that it often allows for access to people (and therefore data) who the researcher may have difficulty reaching without the introduction by the earlier participants, increasing the scope and depth of the data. A risk associated with this method, particularly in polarized, conflict-affected settings, is that the ‘snowball’ will likely pick up like-minded and similarly positioned people, which can provide biased data. Therefore, the data-gathering approach needs to also strive to diversify the participant pool as much as possible.

*Standard interview steps for conflict analysis include:*

- 1. Review findings from desk research and survey data to formulate interview questions related to the emerging themes and trends.**
- 2. Review the Five Elements of UNICEF Conflict Analysis to inform the categories you will look for in the data.**
- 3. Develop the interview questions.**

- 4. Pilot the interview questions with 5–10 diverse and well-chosen respondents.**
- 5. Invite feedback from pilot respondents: what was clear, what was not clear, were any questions leading, biased or non-conflict sensitive? Were the responses clear and relevant?**
- 6. Revise interview questions based on pilot findings.**
- 7. Define who will be interviewed** (numbers, groups, individuals, etc.). **Carefully consider conflict sensitivity and inclusion.**
- 8. Create an action plan for inviting people to be interviewed, where interviews will take place, who will conduct them, how to ensure confidentiality and safety, and how responses will be recorded and protected.**
- 9. Create an action plan for sorting, synthesizing and analysing responses. Spreadsheets can be used to categorize survey results. For more extensive and broad-based conflict analysis, research software** (for example, NVIVO) **can be very helpful for creating categories and ‘tagging’ responses using these categories.**
- 10. Conduct interviews and record responses** (in writing or using digital or video recording, being extremely mindful of confidentiality and safety issues).
- 11. Sort, synthesize and analyse the responses, using the Five Elements of UNICEF Conflict Analysis to guide the data analysis.**

## FOCUS GROUPS

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Focus groups bring together small groups of people (often three to five participants) to discuss and gather data about perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes regarding the research questions in the conflict analysis. In conflict-affected contexts, focus groups can either be conducted from within a community or across conflict/identity lines. Each approach catalyses different kinds of interactions and data. Unlike in interviews, focus groups also generate a group dynamic, interactions and dialogue (or debate) between participants, which the researcher also observes as potentially relevant data. Along with the potential to reach more people more quickly, this is the main added value of focus group methods. It also allows people who may not feel comfortable or safe in a private interview to give responses, if they are put into a focus group with others they feel safe with. In addition, focus groups in conflict analysis may be positioned as entry points for peacebuilding, if a more dialogic space is created for the discussion of inter- and intra-group conflicts.

Risks associated with focus groups include potential lack of candour given the presence of other stakeholders, the development of ‘group think’ in which people report similar views to mirror others in the group, and the escalation of tensions (‘doing harm’) as people hear views counter to their own. The standard steps for designing, implementing and analysing data from focus groups is very similar to the steps for interviewing key stakeholders, outlined above.

## CAPACITY-BUILDING EVENTS

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Workshops, trainings and other capacity-building initiatives on a wide range of topics (for example, development, rights, education, peace and conflict resolution, and technical and sectoral themes) can provide opportunities to gather data relevant for conflict analysis. Participants can be engaged in activities designed to measure or reveal conflict dynamics within the groups, and can be given pre-/post-test evaluations that examine levels of trust, respect, co-existence, social cohesion, etc. The benefit of this approach is adding value to participants through capacity building, while also gathering data relevant for conflict analysis. Risks for this approach include blurring lines between research and programming/intervention, which may raise questions regarding the value of the data.

## **ANNEX 5:** Guide for engaging adolescents in conflict analysis

*Source: Excerpts from the UNICEF ADAP Guidance Note on Engaging Adolescents in PBEA Conflict Analysis*

### **PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE CONSULTING WITH ADOLESCENTS**

#### **◆ SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES ARE OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE:**

Given the sensitive political context in which programmes are implemented, UNICEF country offices will need to assess any possible risks that may be associated with involving adolescents in the conflict analysis. Participatory activities 'can lead adolescents to take action or speak about issues that local adults find objectionable or which are perceived as a challenge to existing power relations' (Hart 2004, p. 29). Depending on the context, risks may be specifically gendered, with girls facing greater obstacles to their participation than boys. With the priority on 'doing no harm', efforts to protect participants from any potentially negative impacts must be considered. In addition, the location of where consultation activities are held should be carefully evaluated to ensure that there are no threats to adolescents' physical security.

#### **◆ CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IS ESSENTIAL:**

Caution and sensitivity should guide all aspects of the conflict analysis process to ensure that adolescents' participation does not exacerbate existing tensions or create new ones. The topics that will be covered and questions that will be asked need to be carefully prepared in advance to appropriately respond to and manage potentially controversial issues which adolescents are likely to bring up – for example, tensions between different identity groups or experiences of gender-based violence. Throughout, awareness of the conflict dynamics is needed, with sensitivity to potential 'dividers' – such as identity, language, gender, religion, socioeconomic status or education level – taken into careful account when organizing group activities.

#### **◆ REFERRALS AND FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT MUST BE PROVIDED:**

It is the ethical responsibility of those engaging with adolescents to ensure follow-up services and referral to appropriate support services when protection concerns are raised (Boyden and Ennew 1997). UNICEF country offices will need to ensure that established child protection standards and protocols for the referral of abuse are followed. Collaboration and partnership with local government services or appropriate non-governmental organizations will be important in this regard. It is advised not to interview individuals who have been repeatedly interviewed by others, particularly when they have experienced abuse (UNICEF 2012c).

#### **◆ HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IS KEY AND EXPECTATIONS NEED TO BE MANAGED:**

Throughout any consultation process, it is essential to be honest with adolescents so that they can fully understand both what is expected of them as well as what they can expect as a result of their participation (Save the Children 2004). In the long run, trust is a necessary element for successful programming, and the time and effort taken to clarify expectations in these early stages is likely to be a valuable investment. In addition, as 'adolescents may travel long distances, negotiate their participation with family members, leave work or school and delay their household duties until a later moment' (Reilly 2009, p. 2), nominal compensation such as travel costs or refreshments may be considered (Save the Children 1998); this should be carefully managed in line with fair and established standards.

#### **◆ STAFF WORKING WITH ADOLESCENTS NEED TO BE TRAINED AND SUPPORTED:**

Adults working with adolescents can only encourage genuine participation effectively and confidently if they have the necessary understanding and skills. Efforts should be made to provide relevant briefing and possibly training opportunities to enhance knowledge and facilitations skills. Participation is a process to be sustained throughout the programme cycle: The participation of adolescents in a conflict analysis should be considered only as the entry point for their sustained participation throughout the duration of the programme. Adolescent participation should not be a one-time 'extractive' exercise – i.e., merely collecting information (Saferworld and Conciliation Resources 2012); rather, adolescents can contribute both to the identification of problems and conflict factors, and to recommending

possible solutions and peacebuilding opportunities. Moreover, consultations with adolescents carried out for the conflict analysis process should include opportunities for them to articulate their aspirations for peace, their priorities for education programming, and possibilities for how they can participate in peacebuilding processes.

## **PRACTICAL STEPS FOR CONSULTING ADOLESCENTS**

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### **◆ COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR AND ENGAGEMENT WITH ADOLESCENTS' PARTICIPATION:**

The first step in any effort to engage with adolescents will require informing and seeking the support from members of the community where the conflict analysis is to be conducted. In line with UNICEF's standard operating procedures in each context, initial meetings should be held with key local stakeholders, including the relevant government authorities, local leaders, parents and adolescents themselves.

### **◆ PARTICIPANT SELECTION:**

There is no singular or 'representative' adolescent voice, so efforts to engage adolescents should endeavour to include as wide a range of participants as possible in order to reflect the great diversity of experiences and perspectives. To the extent possible, there should be a range of ages and education levels. Gender-balanced participation should be assured, while group activities can be conducted in sex-segregated groups or with both boys and girls together, depending on social and cultural norms specific to each local context. Special efforts should also be made to involve adolescents who are usually difficult to reach, those who are not in school or those who are otherwise isolated or marginalized, including young people with disabilities.

### **◆ LOCATION AND TIME:**

The location of participatory activities needs to be neutral, safe and convenient for adolescents, as well as accessible for participants with disabilities. The location will need to allow for the protection of confidentiality and also be socially and culturally appropriate for both male and female participants. To include working adolescents, activities should be conducted at a time of day which is convenient. Provisions should also be made for young mothers so that they may be able to participate – for example, through the provision of child care. To make informed choices about timing, discussions of adolescents' daily responsibilities (differentiating between those of boys and girls) should be included in the preliminary conversations with host communities.

### **◆ INFORMED CONSENT:**

Gaining informed consent is a necessary prerequisite to beginning research with adolescents. It requires that participants and their parents or caregivers understand the reasons why they are being asked to participate, the themes which will be discussed, the types of questions that will be asked, the possible risks and benefits of participating, and how the information they provide will be used (WHO Standards 2007). If the participant is younger than 18 years of age then consent from a parent or caregiver should be sought (although consent from an adult caregiver may not be needed if the adolescent is an emancipated minor – i.e., if he or she is economically self-sufficient, living independently or married).

### **◆ PROTECTING CONFIDENTIALITY:**

At the beginning of any consultation, the principle of confidentiality should be clearly explained. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of information disclosed, participants in group discussions should either commit themselves to confidentiality or be aware that they should not share personal and sensitive information in the group. In some cultural contexts, confidentiality is not a familiar concept and may be difficult to uphold in practice; moreover, adolescents may not have developed the judgement to keep each other's comments confidential after a discussion.

### **◆ COMMUNICATING WITH ADOLESCENTS:**

The basic principles of communicating with adolescents are not significantly different from those required for communicating with adults, such as ensuring mutual respect and trust. However, certain adaptations will need to be made when communicating with adolescents.

While clarity of concepts is needed – especially in consideration of the potential sensitivity of themes relating to peace and conflict – facilitators and interviewers should not patronise or ‘talk down’ to young participants. Questions should be expressed simply, with only one question asked at a time (Reilly 2009).

◆ **ADAPT ENGAGEMENT TO SPECIFIC STAGES OF ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT:**

Despite great global diversity adolescence in all contexts represents an important phase in an individual’s life cycle, a transitional period of personal and social identity formation. Developmental considerations should be kept in mind when engaging with adolescents. Facilitators should remain sensitive, adapting their approaches according to their best understanding of the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of the adolescents with whom they are working. To respond to the psychosocial and development needs of adolescents, interactive warm-up activities and games should be used at the beginning of each discussion to help the participants feel at ease with one another and with the facilitators. Adapted to each context, these activities need to be accessible and inclusive for all types of abilities and should be age- and gender-appropriate.

◆ **NOTE:**

For creative and participatory research tools for engaging with adolescents in a conflict analysis. It provides a detailed outline and guide on how to conduct adolescent-friendly focus group discussions and individual interviews. To add depth and nuance to the information collected, complementary participatory tools are also described, including ranking, mapping, timelines, problem tree analysis, role play, case studies or life histories, and drawings.

## ANNEX 6: Case study of UNICEF conflict analysis process

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Source: *UNICEF PBEA 2013 Consolidated Report, June 2014*

The inequitable and discriminatory nature of Sierra Leone's education system during the 1980s and 1990s is widely acknowledged as a major factor in inciting the civil war. The education system collapsed just before the conflict broke out, and schools were closed, making it easier to persuade young people to join armed groups. Although the war officially ended in January 2002, drivers of conflict persist. Within this context, in 2012, UNICEF carried out a conflict analysis in Sierra Leone as the first step in implementing the PBEA programme.

The conflict analysis was conducted through a comprehensive, participatory process, designed in alignment with INEE Minimum Standards, Analysis Standard 1. Six steps were included: (1) an initial mapping of all available, relevant analysis and documentation, avoiding duplication and building on existing knowledge; (2) a desk review, including anecdotal testimonies and pictorial representations by children and young people from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports; (3) country office design of the analysis, including its geographical scope, key stakeholders and consultation methodologies; (4) selection of participants from a wide range of constituencies; (5) UNICEF implementation of participatory workshops and consultations, with support from ActionAid and World Vision for children's and adolescents' focus group discussions; and (6) findings consolidated in a report, presented to multiple audiences and strategically used to further develop the PBEA programme in Sierra Leone.

The process revealed several important points for the conflict analysis. Among them, it is crucial to encourage strategic thinking beyond educational activities. Consultation should include a conceptual map to visualize the linkages and emphasize the relevance of education to other sectors and broader spheres.

Overcoming the 'culture of sector silos' was also a challenge. In the future, stakeholders should be engaged from the start to frame a process that is relevant to both educationalists and peacebuilders; senior leadership and high-level advocacy can be very influential in this regard.

Finally, to engage children and youth in the analysis, without resorting to tokenism, an appropriate sampling and methodology is needed. In this case, partnering with the non-governmental organizations that have experience in this area was the solution.

*Adapted from: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 'INEE Guidance Note on Conflict Sensitive Education', INEE, New York, 2013, pp. 56–58.*

## **ANNEX 7:** Examples of conflict causes from UNICEF conflict analyses

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*From 'Lessons Learned for Peace: How conflict analyses informed UNICEF's peacebuilding and education programme', 2014 & 2015*

### **SECURITY FACTORS**

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#### **◆ CHRONIC INSECURITY**

In some cases, people are still suffering from the effects of insecurity, particularly where underlying conflict has not been resolved. For example, in East Jerusalem families have no sense of predictability and security in their daily lives. This results in general feelings of disempowerment. In other cases, such as Pakistan and the State of Palestine, the high number of military professionals in government and the ensuing militarization of society has led to a context of threat and violence. Additional factors that emerged were lack of justice and reparations, politicized youth wings and cross-border vulnerabilities – for example, in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Yemen.

#### **◆ VIOLENCE**

A culture of violence was identified as a conflict driver in Burundi, Chad, Liberia, Myanmar, the State of Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. A theme to emerge in the reports was the normalization of violence in the wake of conflict. A distinctive feature of the war in Burundi was the direct involvement of civilians in conflict. The report indicates that the legacy of this violence takes many forms: rape, domestic violence, gender-based violence, theft, assault and fighting. This is reinforced through the education system, most clearly through corporal punishment, but also through state coercion to attend school, and political party-supported politicization of teachers and classrooms during election periods. Similar challenges related to violence in the education system are evident in other contexts, including Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Pakistan, the State of Palestine.

#### **◆ REINTEGRATION OF RETURNEES**

Pressure related to returnees was also identified as a risk factor for violence in countries including Burundi, Myanmar, South Sudan and Uganda. In South Sudan, increasing social, cultural and economic pressure in rural and particularly urban areas caused by large numbers of returnees was seen to increase the likelihood of inter- and intra-communal tensions and conflict. These tensions may also be reinforced through a formal education system that is not well equipped to cope with the challenges posed by large numbers of returnees. The large number of students that fled to the United Republic of Tanzania during the war in Burundi learned Kiswahili and English in camp schools but not French or Kirundi, the languages taught in Burundi. Language issues highlight the differences between the two groups of students in the classroom and act as a barrier to integration.

### **POLITICAL AND GOVERNANCE FACTORS**

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#### **◆ CORRUPTION AND EXCLUSION**

Weak governance was explicitly identified as an underlying cause of conflict in the context of Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Myanmar, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Uganda. A common grievance is related to political corruption. Often this involved centralization of power and resources leading to a lack of trust and exclusion from decision-making. For example, Sierra Leone's conflict has its roots in a patrimonial system of governance where access to resources and power depended on personal connections leading to endemic corruption. Inequitable distribution of resources continues to act as a source of tension. During consultations, participants highlighted inequity in the distribution of schools and teachers, particularly for poor people in rural areas, as threats to the peace consolidation process and contributing to identity-based social cleavages. The exclusion of youth from political participation and decision-making is identified as a key factor across several countries, such as Burundi, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda.

◆ **RESTRICTION OF PUBLIC SPACE**

Restriction of public space was also cited as a driver of conflict, particularly where it involves restrictions on freedom to speak in public or to criticize government. In some cases, this related to the militarization of society. In Myanmar, the strong presence of military officials in government and a military style of command and control mean that popular protests are often met with violence. A root cause of the conflict that emerged from consultations was that the Government of Myanmar is only engaging in ceasefire negotiations, and not in political dialogue about ethnic minority grievances related to inclusion and identity. In other contexts, grievances related to a shrinking of public space despite official rhetoric that welcomes it. Although Uganda's constitution includes provisions on freedom of expression and association, civil society groups, particularly those focused on contentious issues such as transparency, governance or lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues, have had decreasing room to organize, assemble and express their views on government policy. Such situations create very difficult environments for educators in terms of a commitment to developing freedom of expression and critical thinking.

**ECONOMIC FACTORS**

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◆ **POVERTY, LACK OF LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES, ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Poverty, low levels of development and inequitable economic development were frequently cited as factors in country conflict analyses. Minimal economic diversification, poor infrastructure, limited job opportunities – particularly in the formal sector – and lack of relevant education increases frustration and tensions related to jobs and livelihoods. Often the greatest impact is felt by young people. Youth alienation was a theme that emerged in a number of country conflict analyses, including Burundi, Chad, Liberia, Pakistan, the State of Palestine, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Uganda. Burundi, for example, has an exceptionally young population with a median age of 17 years. The analysis indicates that costs of schooling (despite state coercion to attend) and difficulties in accessing jobs for those not connected to society's elites combine to limit the horizons of many young people. Given the breakdown of family support structures, lack of trust in governments' ability to provide for its citizens, high levels of youth prostitution, dependency on alcohol and drugs, and normalization of violence, in most consultations young people were highlighted both as particularly vulnerable and as a potential risk factor in terms of being easily mobilized for violence. The inability to obtain work not only impacts the economic futures of young people, but also affects social cohesion. In East Jerusalem, the Palestinian job market is not able to provide sufficient job opportunities for its graduates. Although the Israeli job market offers young Palestinians many more opportunities, to gain access it is necessary to have an education certificate recognized by the Israeli authorities. Those who enrol in the Israeli system, however, are viewed as traitors and unpatriotic by other Palestinians, with important consequences for social cohesion.

◆ **MIGRATION AS A SURVIVAL STRATEGY**

Pressure related to migration and displacement was identified as a conflict driver in Burundi, Chad, Myanmar, South Sudan and Uganda. Poverty, hunger and competition over scarce resources means that in some contexts voluntary migration is seen as a strategy for survival. This may involve a move from rural to urban areas or across borders. However, weak support structures combined with a lack of resources in the host community, can lead to a number of social problems. In the case of Burundi, this migration has led to an increase in youth prostitution, low paid work and dependency on alcohol and drugs in urban areas.

**SOCIAL FACTORS**

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◆ **MOBILIZATION OF ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS**

A further theme to emerge in consultations was the role that ethnic and religious divisions play in conflict. These were identified as conflict drivers in Chad, Liberia, Myanmar, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda. In many cases existing divisions have been mobilised for political purposes. In Côte d'Ivoire, the political elite played on long-standing and controversial issues of citizenship and access to land to foster ethnic polarization. In Pakistan, the deliberate or inadvertent misinterpretation of Islam by extremists, preachers and madrassa leaders has contributed to sectarian discord and impeded the development of an inclusive national

identity. Opportunities to build social cohesion through education have been missed where a majority-oriented curriculum and textbooks have not fostered a tolerant culture of 'peaceful coexistence'.

#### ◆ INEQUALITIES BETWEEN IDENTITY-BASED GROUPS

Divisions related to identity can be particularly powerful when they are aligned to inequalities in access to services and resources. The primary root cause of conflict in Myanmar identified in the consultations was related to the previous government policy of Burmanization, whereby the Bamar majority are presented as superior. The Bamar (Buddhist and male) majority (67 per cent of the population) hold all the most senior government and army positions. In Pakistan, the strong feelings of resentment that emanate from a perception of ethnic discrimination in areas such as Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan act as persistent barriers to peacebuilding.

#### ◆ GENDER-BASED IDENTITIES AND DISCRIMINATION

Conflict drivers related to gender can be expressed through both direct and structural violence. In some cases, it is apparent through the normalization of domestic abuse and rape (Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan), violence against girls in schools (Liberia and Uganda), and the association of masculine identities with the expression of threat, violence and force (Myanmar). In others, discrimination emerges in the way in which women are excluded from decision-making roles and reflected in their participation, or lack of participation in education systems.

### ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

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#### ◆ CONFLICT OVER LAND

Land and environmental factors were identified as a conflict driver in Burundi, Chad, Liberia, Myanmar, the State of Palestine, Sierra Leone and Uganda. Land disputes can range from local disagreements between neighbours over boundaries and ownership rights; between migrant and host populations over settlement of land; and conflict over 'land grabbing' that can involve governments as well as commercial interests and international companies. Access to, and competition over, land is a particularly volatile issue that can often serve as a trigger to violent conflict. In Liberia, dual systems of land tenure (traditional and modern) and lack of clear authority are key conflict factors that have warranted attention and subsequent programming intervention from donors. In Burundi, constitutional reform that affects land holding rights has become a key area of concern to re-polarize around ethnic and political affiliation lines.

#### ◆ COMPETITION OVER, AND UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF, THE BENEFITS OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The population of Chad is unevenly distributed across the territory, with the majority highly concentrated in the South. Due to its geostrategic position, the area also attracts internally displaced persons and refugees, which accentuates pressures on local scarce resources. In other contexts, grievances relate to how natural resources are being extracted. Often the benefits of these resources are enjoyed by foreign companies or political elites, rather than by the general population. In Myanmar, consultations highlighted the way in which the 'Rush to Gold' by foreign government and business interests in competition to exploit the natural resources of Myanmar leads to corruption, poor business practice, uncontrolled development and environmental degradation. A pertinent issue in Myanmar is the introduction of large infrastructure projects to exploit natural resources, which are seen to undermine the existing rural economy. The use of diamonds in Sierra Leone to fund armed conflict and support the patrimonial system of private gain is a further example. Few national curricula seem to address these issues, although there are obvious areas of the curriculum, such as civic and citizenship education, environmental studies and education for sustainable development, which could be used as entry points.

## **Annex 8:** Additional resources

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- ◆ **Integrated Assessment and Planning Handbook.** <http://tinyurl.com/oprpxem>
- ◆ **Post-Conflict Needs Assessments.** <http://pcna.undg.org/>
- ◆ **Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 'Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: Resource pack', chapter 2:** <http://tinyurl.com/qjuapfc>
- ◆ **World Bank, 'Effective Conflict Analysis Exercises: Overcoming organizational challenges.** <http://tinyurl.com/pvh6blq>
- ◆ **Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 'Conflict Analysis: The foundation for effective action'.** <http://tinyurl.com/nqvs3ga>

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