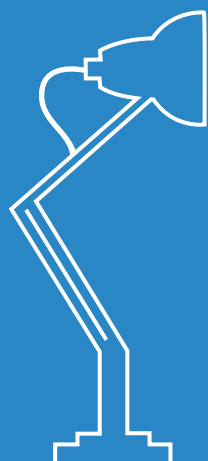


Fabio Oliva and Lorraine Charbonnier



CONFLICT ANALYSIS HANDBOOK

A field and headquarter guide
to conflict assessments



UNITED NATIONS
SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE

UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
STAFF COLLEGE
(2016)
Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0
International (CC BY-NC 4.0)



Under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

Non Commercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

For further enquiries:
United Nations System Staff College
Viale Maestri del Lavoro 10
10127 Turin, Italy
<http://www.unssc.org>
peacesecurity@unssc.org
Tel. +39 011 65 35 911

The views expressed in this handbook are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the United Nations, in general, and the United Nations System Staff College, in particular.

Graphic Design:
Andrea Meloni - www.eloe.eu



UNITED NATIONS
SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE

Fabio Oliva and Lorraine Charbonnier

CONFLICT ANALYSIS HANDBOOK

A field and headquarter guide
to conflict assessments

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONFLICT ANALYSIS TOOLBOX SUMMARY	6
LIST OF ACRONYMS	8
FOREWORD	11
INTRODUCTION	
1. Rationale of the handbook	13
2. Methodology	14
3. Structure and reading guide	16
4. Acknowledgements	17
PART I - CONFLICT ANALYSIS: AN OVERVIEW	
1. The origin and evolution of conflict analysis	18
2. State of play and challenges	26
2.1 Insights from field practitioners	26
2.2 From theory to practice: challenges	30
PART II - EXPLORING THE COMPLEXITY OF CONTEMPORARY VIOLENT CONFLICTS	
1. The changing character of conflict and new analytical mindsets	35
2. Systems thinking and conflict analysis	38

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART III - CONDUCTING A CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS	46
1. Guiding principles	47
2. Inventory of traditional tools	51
3. Practical instructions for conflict analysis processes	81
REFERENCES	116
AUTHORS	123
ANNEXES	
Annex 1: Annotated bibliography	124
1. Conflict analysis and impact assessment frameworks	125
2. Issue-specific and other conflict-related frameworks	165
Annex 2: Systems thinking and examples of conflict archetypes	180
Annex 3: Results of the field survey	187

CONFLICT ANALYSIS TOOLBOX SUMMARY

SITUATION PROFILE

Timeline	52
Conflict Arena and Geographical Mapping	54
Curve of Conflict	55
Conflict Escalation Stages	56
Issue Matrix	58

CAUSAL ANALYSIS

Iceberg	59
Levels of Conflict	61
Conflict Tree	62
Conflict Pillars	63

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Onion	64
ABC Triangle	65
Inventory of Stakeholders	66
Pyramid	67
Stakeholder Matrix	68
Stakeholder Mapping	70
	71

ANALYSIS OF PEACE AND CONFLICT DYNAMICS

Issues Synergies Diagram	73
Connectors and Dividers	75
Force-Field Analysis	76
Peace Profile Matrix	76
Scenario Building	78

LIST OF ACRONYMS

A

APFO Africa Peace Forum

C

CAF (WB) Conflict Analysis Framework

CAST Conflict Assessment System Tool

CDA Collaborative for Development Action

CECORE Center for Conflict Resolution

CHA Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies

CIAS Conflict Impact Assessment System

CPAA Conflict Prevention: Analysis for Action

CPAF Conflict and Policy Assessment Framework

CPR Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction

CVA Conflict Vulnerability Analysis

D

DESA (UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs

DFID (UK) Department for International Development

DFS (UN) Department of Field Support

DIE Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik

DoC Drivers of Change

DPA (UN) Department of Political Affairs

DPKO (UN) Department of Peacekeeping Operations

E

EC European Commission

EDiCT Empathy Dynamics in Conflict Transformation

EU European Union

EWPM Early Warning for Preventive Measures

F

FEWER Forum on Early Warning and Early Response

FSAM Fragile States Assessment Methodology

LIST OF ACRONYMS

G

GSEA Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis
GTZ Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Agency)

H

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

I

IAP Integrated Assessment and Planning
ICA Institutional and Context Analysis
ICAF Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework
ICCO Inter-Church Organization for Development Cooperation
IFRC International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INGO International Non-Governmental Organisation
ISIL Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISSAF Interagency Security Sector Assessment Framework

J

JRC Joint Research Centre

M

MIRA Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment
MSTC Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts

N

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation
NZAID New Zealand International Aid and Development Agency

O

OCHA (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

P

PAPEP Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios Project
PBSO (UN) Peacebuilding Support Office
PCA Peace and Conflict Assessment
PCIA Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment
PVA Participatory and Vulnerability Analysis

R

RAFT Respect, Accountability, Fairness and Transparency

S

SAF Stability Assessment Framework
SCA Strategic Conflict Assessment
SDC Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SFCG Search for Common Ground
Sida Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SWOC Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints
SWOT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

LIST OF ACRONYMS

T

TTP Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (Taliban Movement of Pakistan)

U

UK United Kingdom

UN United Nations

UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDG United Nations Development Group

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNDSS United Nations Department of Safety and Security

UNSSC United Nations System Staff College

US United States

USAID United States Agency for International Development

V

VCA Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

FOREWORD

In the last decades, we have witnessed an increase of conflicts of different nature all over the globe. From international crises to civil wars, the world is scourged by violence affecting the lives of millions of people and putting in serious danger the possibility for societies to recover, develop and flourish.

Various international actors, from governments to multilateral and non-governmental organisations, are today committed to end conflicts by intervening directly or indirectly in areas of crisis, but technical approaches to peacebuilding are no longer considered a viable solution. The answer is and must be political and a more transformative approach has to be adopted if we want to achieve sustainable and durable peace. This is the priority for the United Nations today in the understanding that peace is not just the absence of violence, but the creation of the political, social and economic conditions necessary for peace to last.

In order to attain this goal and find the right political solutions, knowledge plays a critical role. Only through the profound and correct understanding of the nature of conflicts, their specificities in terms of challenges and dynamics and the recognition of their underlying causes, it is possible to provide adequate and impactful responses.

Conflict analysis studies have produced a vast theoretical and empirical literature on the subject. However, conflict resolution processes rarely take full advantage of this bulk of knowledge. The United Nations, in general, and the United Nations System Staff College, in particular, have made serious investments in building the capacity of UN staff to absorb and apply the recommendations emanating from the literature in the field setting.

With this aim, over the past 15 years, the United Nations System Staff College has supported UN organisations and their personnel through direct and indirect learning initiatives on the subject, reaching as many as 50 UN Country Teams and over 15 peace operations. Overall, thousands of UN staff at all level, both national and international, have been trained on this topic. Part of our role in the UN system is, in fact, to act as a bridge between academia

FOREWORD

and UN practitioners. One of our key objectives is to make sure that what is already in the public domain is not only accessible, but thoroughly used.

This publication is the United Nations System Staff College's latest contribution towards this goal. The aim of this handbook is thus to share, systematise and make more 'user friendly' existing knowledge and literature on conflict analysis in order to support staff members who have the difficult task to bridge theory and practice in their everyday work in the field.

Overall, these efforts, complemented by other UN and non-UN learning initiatives, have produced significant improvements in the capacity to address complex challenges such as managing armed conflicts, mitigating political crises, rebuilding state institutions, promoting social cohesion and reconciliation in conflict-affected countries. That being said, immense work remains to be done "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" as the Preamble of the UN Charter recalls.

It is our hope that this handbook will improve understanding of conflict dynamics while, at the same time, assist in appreciating the positive role played by peace actors and dialogue networks in the resolution of violent conflicts.

Jafar Javan
Director, UNSSC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jafar Javan', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the handbook

There are plenty of conflict analysis methodologies, frameworks and models available to peace and conflict practitioners. This wealth of resources reflects the great interest generated by an investigative process that has gradually become the key ingredient of any intervention in a conflict situation. The available literature, however, offers guidance almost exclusively in relation to the types of tools and methods that analysts can use, but provides scant direction regarding the practical implementation of conflict assessments. This handbook seeks to fill that knowledge gap and enable conflict specialists to carry out more effective and better tailored inquiries. It does so by tapping into first-hand accounts, challenges and solutions experienced by a wide range of dedicated colleagues working in various organisations – e.g. the United Nations (UN), International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), universities, donor agencies, think tanks – or as individual experts.

Quite surprisingly, despite decades of conflict assessments, many of these experiences have not been documented systematically and relevant information is still very much dispersed. This initiative hopes to contribute to better knowledge management of a discipline that has grown unevenly and has often struggled to adapt itself to the rapidly evolving nature of armed conflict.

The key drivers of conflict have not changed radically in the past decades; control of political power, cultural hegemony, social exclusion, discrimination against women and girls, and economic marginalisation continue to feature – conceivably in different combinations – among the root causes of most conflicts. On the other hand, a sea change has occurred with respect to the conflict players. Today a much wider spectrum of stakeholders is capable of and keen on resorting to violence to pursue their goals. Preserving peace has become more complicated because of an increase in violence, no longer perpetrated exclusively by national security forces and conventional armed oppositions but also by an increasingly wider and assertive range of hybrid actors, such as violent extremists, criminal organisations, transnational networks of illicit traffickers and private security companies. Their impact is so significant

that the violence resulting from these unconventional players exceeds that of many ongoing civil wars – and must be added to the role of revolutionary mass movements, such as the popular uprisings in the Arab region. Given its magnitude, this is a phenomenon that can hardly fit into any traditional political science classification of conflict players. The patterns of social mobilisation witnessed in the past few years in the Middle East are unprecedented and, to date, cannot be fully explained by analysts and experts on the region.

The changing nature of conflict has not just produced hostile derivatives. A variety of new actors and networks – business entrepreneurs, religious leaders, media managers, social media influencers and other opinion-makers – have emerged as strategic mediators and effective peacebuilders. In some cases, women civil society leaders have been able to give impetus to the peace agenda through tailored messages and refined mobilisation strategies. Of course, this does not mean that all the daunting obstacles to full empowerment and equal participation of women have been removed. But there are clear indications that the range of national peace constituents has widened and the principle of subsidiarity is gradually overriding the primacy of external third party mediation.

Transformed patterns of warfare have also prompted new thinking and original methods of decoding the new global setting. Analysts have become mindful that the fluidity and hybridity of contemporary conflicts can be better explained by applying knowledge gained from disciplines as varied as anthropology, sociology, psychology, neuroscience, physics and even poetry (Haykel and Creswell 2015; Paraszczuk 2015). Less conventional tools are being used and new mindsets are being forged, with systems thinking representing the most compelling analytical improvement. By embracing complexity as a key organising principle of any conflict situation, systems thinking has subverted dogmatic beliefs and habits ingrained in traditional conflict resolution practices that were often governed by one-dimensional perspectives and rigid cause-effect calculations. Regrettably, systemic approaches have not translated easily into practical techniques for conducting systemic conflict analyses. One of the specific purposes of this handbook is to make systemic approaches to analysis more accessible and thus to offer a redesigned conflict assessment toolkit. The incorporation of innovative methods does not suggest a rejection of traditional approaches. On the contrary, this publication advocates for full exploration and use of traditional approaches in combination with new ones.

2. Methodology

UNSSC has worked uninterruptedly on conflict analysis since 1998.¹ Its initial activities have focused mainly on the design and delivery of training courses aimed at improving conflict analysis skills of UN field staff. Since 2010, efforts

¹ Before its formal establishment as an independent UN organisation by the UN General Assembly in 2002, the UN System Staff College Project had been an initiative of the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation since 1998.

have gradually expanded to include other forms of analytical support to UN Country Teams and Peace Operations, such as technical advice, conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding programme development, development of web-based analysis platforms and facilitation of conflict assessments. This interagency experience over the past two decades has generated a specialised level of expertise that has *de facto* positioned the UNSSC as a knowledge hub on conflict analysis.

This handbook has been developed over the period of one year using a multitrack methodology, which included: 1) an extensive literature review; 2) an inventory of conflict analysis tools; 3) a research component; 4) a documentation process; and 5) a staff survey.

1. Literature review. The authors reviewed approximately 70 frameworks, policies and guidance documents on conflict analysis and related issues. The outcome of this review is the comprehensive annotated bibliography available in Annex 1.

2. Inventory of conflict analysis tools. There are literally dozens of conflict analysis tools, some very widespread among the conflict analysis community, others less conventional or specific to certain types of analysis. An inventory of conflict techniques and visuals was conducted to help practitioners tailor a conflict analysis methodology and, at the same time, provide a comprehensive repository of the different tools available.

3. Research component. Extensive research has been carried out to map the evolution of conflict analysis since the 1990s and to understand how the changing nature of contemporary conflict has affected analytical processes. Extensive time was also allocated to systems thinking and complexity theory in order to distil practical applications for conflict practitioners.

4. Documentation process. The documentation of good practices, suggestions and lessons on the conduct of conflict assessments has relied on various sources: first-hand experience of the UNSSC Peace & Security Team; direct accounts by members of UNSSC's conflict analyst roster; internal manuals, training sheets and templates produced during multiple design sessions, internal evaluations, and after-action reviews.

5. Staff survey: The views, challenges, concerns and solutions of UN staff and other Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) personnel were also used to inform the findings and considerations of this handbook and have been captured in a dedicated section.

3. Structure and reading guide

The handbook is organised into three main parts.

- The **first part** is an overview of the evolution and current practice of conflict analysis. It traces the origins of the discipline and describes its challenges and available tools.
- The **second part** explores the changing patterns of violent conflicts in the world today and suggests how new and unconventional disciplines – such as systems thinking – can be integrated to complement traditional conflict analysis approaches in order to navigate the fluidity of contemporary conflict dynamics.²
- The **third part** articulates the steps required to conduct an ideal conflict analysis process. It presents some guiding principles and screening questions that are critical to design an effective and fit-for-purpose analysis process; it then walks the user through the implementation of the actual assessment, providing guidance with regard to the various tools.

The Annexes include the annotated bibliography on conflict analysis frameworks, some archetypes of systemic models and the complete results of the field survey. The handbook does not have a specific target audience as it has been intended for a wide range of users. At the same time, the authors are cautious that readers may have different levels of experience and needs with regards to conflict analysis. For this reason, a reading guide has been developed to direct different users towards the sections that may be more relevant and useful for their work.

GUIDE BY TOPICS OF INTEREST

If you are interested in the evolution of conflict analysis go to...	p. 18
If you want to review and learn about traditional conflict analysis tools go to...	p. 51
If you are interested in the practical steps for conducting an actual conflict assessment go to...	p. 81
If you want to know more about the theory of systems thinking go to...	p. 38
If you want to learn about systemic approaches and tools for conflict analysis go to...	p. 107
If you want to review the existing conflict analysis frameworks and manuals go to...	p. 124

² By “traditional” conflict analysis and tools, this handbook refers to mainstream approaches developed starting with the late 1990s, which are still in use today. Unless specified in the text, the term “traditional” does not refer to indigenous processes and other localised conflict resolution mechanisms.

GUIDE BY LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE OR SKILLS REQUIRED

If you are approaching conflict analysis for the first time go to...	p. 26
If you have been indirectly involved in a conflict assessment and want to build your practical knowledge go to...	p. 51
If you have a theoretical knowledge of conflict analysis and want to strengthen your practical skills go to...	p. 81
If you are an experienced conflict analyst and want to know more about systems thinking go to...	p. 107

4. Acknowledgements

This handbook has benefited from the inputs of several professionals who have contributed one way or another to its completion. For this reason, this work is the result of a collective effort. That being said, all flaws and shortcomings are clearly attributable only to the authors.

The first thanks go to colleagues at the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), particularly to Jafar Javan, Claire Messina and Svenja Korth for their support throughout this extended project.

The handbook would not have been the same without the constructive comments and punctual inputs of a group of conflict analysts and peacebuilding experts who spent time to go through the manuscript and provide their perspectives. The authors are particularly indebted to Donata Garrasi, Jo Nickolls, Masayo Kondo-Rossier, Rob Watson, Sarah Douglas, Stefano Ruzza, Undine Whande, Yuji Uesugi.

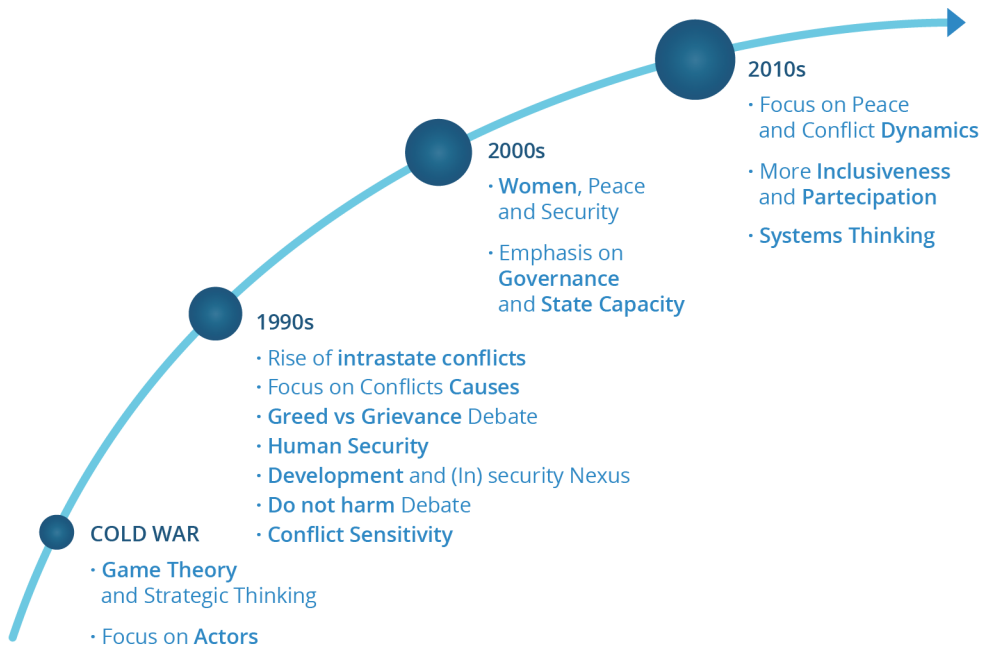
The preliminary research and the contents were shaped by the valuable feedback received by several field staff who took the time to respond to the field survey. A complete list of respondents is included in the annexes.

Finally, the authors would like to thank Brett Shapiro and Andrea Meloni for their patient work on the handbook's editing and layout.

1. The origin and evolution of conflict analysis

Contemporary conflict analysis originated from the evolution of other broader conflict-related fields, notably conflict prevention, peacebuilding, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. In this sense, the origin and evolution of conflict analysis seem to be rooted in the two-fold desire to understand the nature of contemporary conflicts in order to prevent them and to avoid unintended and perverse effects of activities or external interventions originally aimed at improving the situation. Although these are long-standing quests and the above-mentioned fields have longer traditions, it is especially since the 1990s that the relevance of integrating conflict-sensitive perspectives on policy and programming in conflict-affected contexts has been recognised and implemented. In fact, the changing global landscape and the emergence of new challenges, together with various experiences on the ground – positive and negative – has encouraged the introduction and development of conflict assessment methodologies and procedures.

It has been argued that, “during the Cold War, the study of armed conflict and war was largely systemic in orientation and other conflicts were seen as ‘proxy wars’, ‘small wars’ or ‘low intensity conflicts’, to a large extent a product and creation of bipolarity” (Gomes Porto 2002, p. 2). The common tendency to focus on the confrontation between the two superpowers and, more broadly, on interstate wars, was partially motivated by the traumatic experiences of the two World Wars and the legitimate belief that a better understanding of these types of conflict would inform and enhance conflict prevention strategies, thus increasing their effectiveness and reducing the likelihood of deadly conflicts (Gomes Porto 2002). As a consequence, precursors of contemporary conflict analysis were equipped primarily to understand and handle the East-West confrontation, mainly focusing on patterns of escalation and polarisation so as to tackle and contain the nuclear threat (Wallenstein 2002).



Concerning the theoretical and methodological framework, **game theory**¹ played a prominent role in strategic studies for exploring issues and models of deterrence and arms race spirals, such as security dilemma and balance of power (Wallensteen 2002). Generally, conflicts were understood as an action-reaction dynamic between two or more actors “seeing the conflict in the same way, only reversing the picture” (Wallensteen 2002, p. 34). In this sense, at this point in time, conflict analysis was predominantly actor-oriented and related to **strategic thinking** and rational calculation, hence mostly confined within the security and political fields. In fact, it has been observed that the Cold War introduced “a distinction between the humanitarian and the political, and security dimensions of the international society” (Mayall 2007, p. 3). Likewise, international development cooperation was narrowly conceived as a far less political activity in nature, entirely dedicated to supporting development in a country or region (Paffenholz 2005a).

Paradoxically, in spite of the overwhelming interest in interstate conflicts, at the close of the 1980s the end of the Cold War brought about significant changes across the global landscape and the distinctions between security issues, humanitarian crises and underdevelopment became blurred and often

¹ Game theory makes use of numeric models and analytical tools to explore impacts and consequences of alternative solutions and explain how decision-makers choose between competition and cooperation. The basic assumption is that each player's best choice is strictly dependant on those of its counterpart to such an extent that it cannot decide unilaterally which action to undertake. This circumstance compels the player necessarily to consider what the other is thinking or planning to do and think strategically. The purpose of game theory is in analysing the rational behaviour of interdependent actors.

misleading. Starting in the 1990s, the priority attached to understanding and preventing *interstate* armed conflicts appeared to drop in favour of increasing concerns about **intrastate conflicts** and civil wars. Over the last few decades, the decline of more conventional armed confrontations *between* states and the simultaneous upsurge in conflicts *within* them led to a profound reconsideration of the international peace and security agenda (Buzan and Hansen 2009; MacGinty and Williams 2009; Rousset and Söderholm 2015). The international community found itself dealing with a considerable variety of internal conflicts, differing in terms of characteristics, actors involved, underlying motives and consequences. This resulted in a revised approach to the analysis of violent conflicts.

As regards conflict theories, and **conflict analysis** specifically, a great deal of research was conducted seeking to clarify the nature of these conflicts and this, in turn, caused a shift of focus towards “local actors and local situations” (Gomes Porto 2002, p. 6). Indeed, “to explain these armed conflicts, analysts and policy-makers looked at groups in conflict and their claims in order to establish what these conflicts were about” (Gomes Porto 2002, p. 6). Consequently, the analysis of conflict causes and causal mechanisms leading to violence became the core of conflict analysis processes in an attempt to look beyond visible manifestations of conflict and to identify its underlying and driving factors (MacGinty and Williams 2009). In this regard, as pointed out elsewhere, “all the usual suspects are found: territory, ideology, dynastic legitimacy, religion, language, ethnicity, self-determination, resources, markets, dominance, equality, and, of course, revenge” (Gomes Porto 2002, p. 6). Yet, as argued by Kett and Rowson, “whilst some [academics] have traditionally focused on [...] grievance-related drivers of conflict, such as poverty and inequality, another strand of thinking has suggested that the incidence of war is dependent on material interests instead” (2007, p. 403) as exemplified by the so-called ‘greed theory’, originally conceived by Collier at the beginning of 2000s. The conceptual distinction between greed and grievance led to an initial polarisation within both the academic and policy realms. Nevertheless, despite the tendency to classify contemporary conflicts in different categories and typologies according to the issues at stake (e.g. “ethnic conflicts”, “resource wars”), the multidimensional and multilayered nature of contemporary conflicts was increasingly recognised. This trend has coincided with a broadening of the concept of development beyond its narrow association with economic growth and a similarly deepened and widened conceptualisation of security (i.e. “**human security**”), “thus bringing a wider agenda around economic, environmental, societal and regional security and a deepening of the referent object beyond the state” (Buzan and Hansen 2009, p. 189). In particular, a growing interest in the relationship between “**development and (in)security**” started to emerge (Buzan and Hansen 2009, p. 176). Indeed, as argued by MacGinty and Williams (2009), any clear separation of development and conflict studies from one another was challenged by the growing consensus on the critical role played by development themes in explaining violent conflict.

In addition, as observed elsewhere, “the early 1990s saw the beginning of an intensive debate on the contribution that development cooperation and humanitarian assistance could make to stable and peaceful development in conflict situations” (De la Haye and Denayer 2003, p. 49). Accordingly, both INGOs and international organisations systematically increased their engagement in conflict-affected or conflict-prone areas, including development programmes as an integral part of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding agendas to such an extent that security and development began to be understood as “twin imperatives” (MacGinty and Williams 2009; Tschirgi 2003). However, the tragic crises and the failure of some interventions in the mid-1990s revealed the contradictions underneath the development-security nexus. Importantly, these events disclosed the perverse effects that development and humanitarian assistance can have on conflict dynamics, thereby prompting and intensifying debates within both development and peace practitioner communities concerning, on the one hand, their role in conflict-affected contexts and on the other, the actual possibilities for conflict prevention (MacGinty and Williams 2009; Paffenholz 2005a; Paffenholz 2009).

It was precisely during this period that “development donors started funding early warning research, projects and mechanisms”, in the belief that quantitative methods and indicators could correctly predict upcoming violence and conflicts (Paffenholz 2009, p. 279). However, subsequent studies on conflict prevention conducted in the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and following other missed opportunities for avoiding violent conflict, demonstrated that quantitative information alone is not sufficient to predict political violence and that, besides political will to engage in early action, it is crucial to obtain an adequate understanding of the situation (De la Haye and Denayer 2003; Paffenholz 2005a; Paffenholz 2009). Further research produced evidence indicating that, although well-intentioned, development and humanitarian programmes might actually have negative consequences in war-torn societies (MacGinty and Williams 2009; Paffenholz 2005a; Paffenholz 2009). This concern was incorporated into the **“Do No Harm” debate**, which fostered the recognition that poor initial analysis might compromise entire aid programmes and that, conversely, a well-designed conflict analysis is essential to: a) assess conflict factors, actors and dynamics; b) understand the relationships between those dynamics and international interventions designed to promote peaceful change and development; and c) present increased opportunities to minimise negative impacts on conflict and possibly maximise the positive ones. On this basis, discourse on the paramount relevance of **“conflict sensitivity”** emerged and became current, demanding further refinement of conflict analysis methodologies. As a result, the fields of conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis grew rapidly and evolved in parallel in order to avoid “conflict blindness” when working both *on* conflict and *in* conflict.

Since then, considerable efforts have been made to develop assessment methods and procedures that allow for improved analysis of conflict situations and encourage constructive coping strategies or interventions. In partic-

ular, from 1993/1994 onwards, Mary B. Anderson and her team laid the foundations of the “Do No Harm” principle, by means of the *Local Capacities for Peace Project* – later renamed *Do No Harm Project* – which relied on case studies and field experiences to support aid workers in finding ways to address human needs in conflict settings without exacerbating the conflict itself but rather promoting effectiveness of international assistance (CDA 2004; Paffenholz 2005a; Paffenholz 2009; Wallace 2002). At almost the same time, Luc Reyhler started to develop his *Conflict Impact Assessment System*, and in 1998 Kenneth Bush introduced the *Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment* framework (Paffenholz 2005b). These works had a significant impact overall, although initially they focused mostly on aid projects at the local (micro) level. Those approaches were endorsed or adapted thereafter by larger INGOs and several bilateral donor agencies – such as DFID (2002), GTZ (2001), SDC (2005), Sida (2006) and USAID (2005)² – to improve country strategies and programming at the national (macro) level (Freeman and Fisher 2012; Paffenholz 2005b). Furthermore, although the concept of “conflict sensitivity” originated in the development and humanitarian fields, it has spread and evolved across the peacebuilding community to the point that some authors considered it “...the starting point for the coming together of the peace and development communities: development actors were in need of conflict analysis, which led to the introduction of analytical approaches from conflict analysis, which were quickly transformed into user-friendly toolboxes” (Paffenholz 2009, p. 279).

However, all this implied further research and a proliferation of frameworks aimed at developing and introducing reliable analytical tools to conduct effective conflict analyses and inform conflict-sensitive planning and programming. The most authoritative work in this regard is *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*, a landmark book conceived and developed by Simon Fisher and his colleagues in 2000, which has subsequently become a reference point for other methodologies and guidelines delivered by agencies and organisations worldwide. Most of the analytical instruments included and thoroughly explained in this book are still in use – albeit sometimes with variations – as can be seen in several reports and frameworks on this matter produced by NGOs, governments and multilateral organisations. Among other notable attempts to sort conflict-related assessments and evaluation frameworks is the 2004 publication, *Conflict-sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack* (FEWER et al. 2004), which provides exhaustive explanations of relevant concepts and latest thinking on conflict sensitivity, as well as a clear overview of the state of conflict analysis in the early 2000s. Since then, new approaches and frameworks have been developed, while earlier ones have been refined and periodically updated according to the evolution of academic knowledge on conflicts, the growing experience of practitioners on the ground and the development of the normative landscape over the past decade.

² For further information, refer to *Annex 1 – Annotated Bibliography*.

In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1325 on **Women, Peace and Security**³, recognising that women, men, girls and boys are differently involved in and differently affected by violent conflicts, and that women can play a pivotal role in conflict prevention, resolution and peaceful change (UN S/RES/1325). Because the experiences of women in conflict are often different, they offer a vital perspective for understanding conflict situations and, importantly, they also provide effective contributions towards sustainable peace. Ensuring equal and full participation of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict, however, requires the integration of gender perspectives in every step of the peace process, starting from the conflict analysis. Having a gender lens during the analysis provides sharper and more nuanced insights into conflict factors, actors and dynamics (Anderlini 2006). As a result, from the early 2000s on, several NGOs, multilateral organisations and donor countries started to mainstream – or at least to mention – gender issues within their assessment guidelines. Although gender has increasingly been considered a cross-cutting issue rather than a specific dimension of conflict, “gender variables are [still] missing in most frameworks” (Anderlini 2006, p. 2). The *Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, published in September 2015 with support from a UN Women-hosted secretariat, reaffirms the persistence of obstacles and challenges to the full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, despite the amount of rhetoric accorded to this topic (UN Women 2015, p. 14). This study pinpoints the need for gender-sensitive analysis of conflict because it “can reveal otherwise unseen conflict drivers and triggers” (UN Women 2015, p. 198) and strengthen effectiveness, especially in the area of peacebuilding, where “there must be a detailed mapping and understanding of local conditions with the participation of women themselves before programmes are designed, formulated or implemented” (UN Women 2015, p. 16).

More recently, concerns about **state fragility** and vulnerability have re-emerged, gaining further traction in the aftermath of the events of 9/11/2001. These concerns have led to a renewed interest in the role of states in preventing and peacefully managing potential conflicts within society and, accordingly, the need for effective and legitimate institutions. Consequently, “violent conflict has come to be seen simultaneously as a cause, symptom, and consequences of fragility, depending on the situation” (Slotin *et al.* 2010, p. 9). The World Bank’s World Development Report on *Conflict, Security and Development* asserts that conflict prevention and recovery necessarily require the transformation and strengthening of legitimate institutions and **governance** that provide citizen security, justice and jobs (World Bank 2011). This growing consensus on the correlation between conflict and state fragility or poor institutional performance spurred the development of new assessment methodologies focusing specifically on governance and on the various dimen-

³ As a follow-up to 1325, the UN Security Council adopted other additional resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, notably resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013).

sions of state fragility (Buzan and Hansen 2009; Slotin *et al.* 2010). Most of the assessment frameworks and guidelines developed at this point in time, in fact, complement the analysis of conflict situations with so-called “political-economy analysis” in an attempt to explore underlying economic factors, incentive structures and reward systems that shape formal and informal institutions and constrain both development and peace processes. More specifically, “assessments based on political-economy analysis draw on some of the thinking that underlay earlier efforts at conflict analysis, combined with evolving thinking on state fragility” (Slotin *et al.* 2010, p. 8). Some of the most prominent examples of assessment frameworks in this regard are the United Kingdom (UK)’s *Driver of Change Analysis* (2004), Sida’s *Power Analysis* (2013), and the Netherlands’ *Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis* (2007) (Slotin *et al.* 2010, p. 8). As observed by Newton (2014), this focus on governance and state capacity encouraged a new approach towards closer partnerships with the state during the assessment phase. A good example of such an approach is represented by the *Fragility Assessments* methodology proposed by five of the G7+ countries⁴ (i.e. Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Timor-Leste). Advocating for the inclusion of a set of peacebuilding goals in the post-2015 agenda, they proposed the *New Deal on Engagement in Fragile States*, which aims at developing “a country-led joint analysis and subsequent vision and plan to transition out of fragility” based on the five “Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals” (Newton 2014, p. 3).

In 2009, Interpeace published the findings of an interesting study on “local, regional and national peace initiatives in the Somali region since 1991”, which addressed the issue of state fragility from a different angle (Bradbury 2009, p. 6). The entire Somali Programme, in fact, is built on the assumption that “instead of viewing Somalia as a ‘fragile’ or ‘collapsed’ state that can be rebuilt through foreign aid, a more productive starting point is a deeper understanding of the actual context” (Bradbury 2009, p. 10). In line with this approach, a great deal of attention has been paid to investigating the conditions and processes by which societies respond and adapt to conflict (i.e. “Peace Mapping”) in the attempt to identify “key factors that influence successful peace initiatives and factors that may undermine their sustainability”, thus enhancing reconciliation and the consolidation of peace (Bradbury 2009, p. 6). Similar concerns with the **dynamics of fragility and resilience** in conflict-affected societies appear to have influenced other conflict analysis frameworks, as demonstrated by the revised version of USAID’s *Conflict Assessment Framework* (2012), which includes fragile institutions and absent or weak systems of re-

⁴ The G7+ is a voluntary association bringing together countries that are or have been recently affected by conflict, with the aim of providing a common platform to share experiences and challenges and to advocate for more appropriate international policies to engage with conflict-affected states. Currently, G7+ includes 20 member countries, namely Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo, and Yemen.

silience as key factors that might exacerbate grievances and lead to violence. The fact that resilience systems and peace dynamics are important for understanding and assessing the overall conflict context was further acknowledged by UNDP-led work on “infrastructures for peace” and “insider mediation” that greatly influenced analytical approaches by stimulating both the identification of entry points for responding to the conflict and a deeper analysis of the existing “network of interdependent systems, resources, values and skills held by government, civil society and community institutions that promote dialogue and consultation, prevent conflict and enable peaceful mediation when violence occurs in a society” (UNDP 2013, p. 1; UNDP 2014).

An additional important indication of progress in the development of conflict analysis methodologies is the growing concern about lack of **participation** and the resulting efforts to seek greater **inclusiveness** during the process. This applies particularly to the NGO sector, where several frameworks for conflict assessment reflect this concern and encourage a more participative approach (e.g. Caritas International 2002; Reflecting on Peace Practice Projects/CDA, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict and Norwegian Church Aid 2012; ICCO and Kerk in Actie 2008; Islamic Relief 2014; World Vision 2015). Contextually, as noted in a USAID report, “a growing number of governmental, non-governmental, and academic organizations have [...] called for greater policy coherence, integration, coordination and holism as the key to increasing the effectiveness of development and security initiatives” (Ricigliano and Chigas 2011, pp. 4-5). Therefore, various attempts to create an interagency framework and common methodology for conflict analysis have been carried out recently, notably by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) (2004), and the United States government (2008).

Since its origin, the evolution of conflict analysis been driven mainly by the advancement of research on conflicts, along with experiences in peacebuilding and development practice and changes in the broader political and policy contexts. More recently, fields other than social sciences have exercised considerable influence on theoretical and methodological approaches towards conflict analysis. In particular, the complexity of contemporary conflict contexts – and the mirroring complexity of peace and development interventions therein – seem to demand a **systems thinking** approach in order to produce a “comprehensive, multi-faceted picture of the forces driving conflict and peace, *and* an understanding of how the factors interact and relate to each other” (Ricigliano and Chigas 2011, p. 6). Therefore, although still in its initial stages and limited to a few experiences, “systemic conflict analysis” might eventually represent the next “incarnation” of conflict analysis methodologies.

2. State of play and challenges

Today conflict analysis forms the foundation on which coherent strategies and actions should be designed and implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner. As such, conflict analysis applies throughout the whole programme cycle management. In particular, it is possible to distinguish three different purposes for conducting this kind of analytical exercise:

1. Understanding the context;
2. Providing a basis for planning and implementation;
3. Supporting monitoring and evaluation phases.

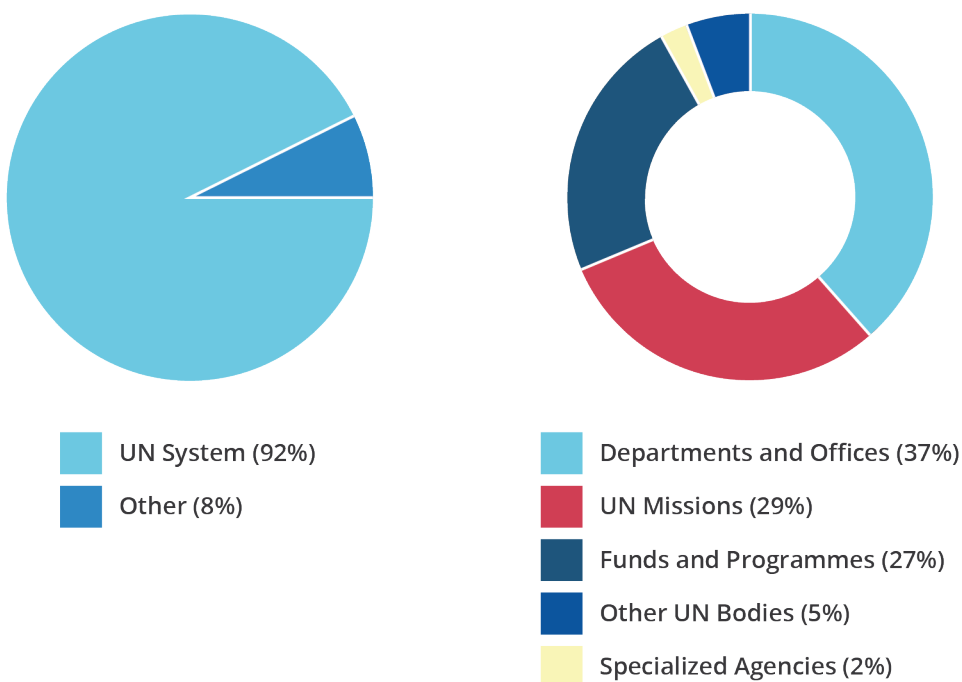
The World Bank clarifies that “as used by most development [and humanitarian] agencies, conflict analysis is not an instrument for resolving conflict” (2006, p. 2). However, at times, conflict analysis can represent “an intrinsic part of programming itself” (Van Brabant 2010, p. 1). When properly adapted and designed to serve this aim, in fact, a conflict analysis process can be used as a tool to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders and encourage local actors to reflect together on their own conflict and share different perspectives and perceptions on the same problem (Newton 2014; Van Brabant 2010). Hence, in this sense, conflict analysis has also great potential as regards mediation and peacebuilding purposes.

2.1 Insights from field practitioners

An important part of the latest research on conflict analysis by UNSSC consisted of getting feedback and insights from UN field practitioners. With this aim, UNSSC reviewed 270 individual questionnaires that had been used previously to gather information from participants prior to their attendance at UNSSC courses on conflict analysis and electoral violence delivered between 2012 and 2015.⁵ To obtain additional input on the topic, UNSSC carried out a survey between June and August 2015, directed at alumni of the Peace & Security Programme, which received 76 responses.⁶

⁵ *Conflict Analysis for DPKO and DPA* (New York, November 2012), *Conflict Analysis for DPKO and DPA* (New York, May 2013), *Analytical Reporting for UNAMA* (Kabul, June 2013), *A Political Approach to Preventing and Responding to Electoral Violence* (Dead Sea/Amman, June 2013), *Peacebuilding Programming Guidance and Support for UNCT in Kyrgyzstan* (Bishkek, August 2013), *Conflict Analysis for DPKO and DPA* (Entebbe, November 2013), *A Political Approach to Preventing and Responding to Electoral Violence* (Nairobi, November 2013), *A Political Approach to Preventing and Responding to Electoral Violence* (New York, April 2014), *A Political Approach to Preventing and Responding to Electoral Violence* (Accra, June 2014), *Conflict Analysis in the Context of Humanitarian Action and Peacebuilding* (Geneva, October 2014), *A Political Approach to Preventing and Responding to Electoral Violence* (Bangkok, November 2014), *A Political Approach to Preventing and Responding to Electoral Violence* (New York, March 2015), *Conflict Analysis for UNIFIL* (Naqoura, April 2015), *Applied Conflict Analysis for Prevention and Peacebuilding* (New York, May 2015), *Conflict Analysis Training for UNOAU, AU, and Subregional Organizations* (Addis Ababa, August 2015).

⁶ In the same period, OCHA conducted an internal survey aimed at mapping conflict analysis



Given the mandate of the UNSSC, the great majority of the respondents were UN staff members (both national and international), as illustrated in the chart. Surveyed individuals included staff from over 30 different UN entities (with DPKO, DPA and UNDP accounting for a significant share).

Results of the pre-course questionnaires indicated that half of the participants claimed to have some kind of experience with or knowledge about conflict analysis. Results from the 2015 alumni survey are more encouraging, as over 90 percent of respondents answered positively when asked if they were familiar with conflict analysis. This increase is not surprising, since the respondents are UNSSC alumni who, as such, have been exposed to UNSSC conflict analysis methodology in greater or lesser detail depending on the overall purpose of the training received. However, although most alumni respondents were not completely unfamiliar with conflict analysis, only 67 percent of the interviewees described having actually conducted a conflict analysis. Hence, it is reasonable to think that knowledge on conflict analysis is generally better developed at the theoretical level rather than at the practical one. In line with this assumption, one respondent stated that conflict analysis is often considered to be merely an academic concern and it must be noted that, for some of the interviewees, direct experiences with conflict analysis might be limited to training or academic exercises that neither refer to – nor influence – real-life

capacity among its staff members. The results have been shared with the authors and are in line with UNSSC findings.

situations. Nevertheless, the results of the consultations encouraged interesting reflections on conflict analysis and, to some extent, informed the drafting of this handbook. Some of the sharpest comments and aspects that emerged from the surveys are summarised in the following sections. The first section focuses on the purpose of conflict analysis and its outcomes, methodology and lessons learned. The second section looks specifically at the challenges and dilemmas faced by practitioners during the analysis process.

When asked about the purposes of conflict analysis, according to their experiences, the interviewees mentioned a wide range of objectives, showing how context-specific the scope of this kind of exercise is and how it largely depends on the goal one seeks to achieve through it. Contemporary conflict analysis is generally understood to be a systematic study of the causes, stakeholders and dynamics of a conflict, both to achieve short-term objectives and build long-term visions overall. As such, it serves as a basis to inform conflict-sensitive programming and to identify critical priorities for development and humanitarian assistance and for peacebuilding interventions, by providing a better understanding of factors and forces promoting either violent conflict or peace. There was widespread agreement among the survey participants that conducting conflict analysis fulfils the following purposes:

- Enhancing cultural awareness;
- Increasing information-sharing and reporting within a team;
- Facilitating conflict-sensitive programme design, planning and implementation;
- Integrating gender lenses into both the design and implementation of programmes;
- Evaluating and monitoring programmes/projects;
- Evaluating the impact of peace and conflict dynamics;
- Developing and updating conflict-related policies;
- Increasing safety and security of personnel and civilians;
- Supporting conflict prevention, resolution, transformation and peacebuilding;
- Finding entry points for interventions and prioritising responses;
- Linking development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding fields;
- Training and building capacity among staff.

Conflict analysis was also seen by some of the respondents as a means to better understand cross-cutting issues, such as public health, social exclusion or disaster risks, to mention a few, which may represent sensitive aspects of a given conflict.

A general tendency among respondents was to pinpoint more specific aspects of a conflict; for instance, some referred to the use of conflict analysis for profiling armed groups, while others focused on issues like the roles of extractive industry and natural resources as drivers of conflict. Whereas conflict analysis is clearly a mainstream investigative tool, it often appears to be used in conjunction with other more specific analytical frameworks.

In the accounts of most of the respondents, conflict analysis is usually presented in a narrative form, briefing notes and reports representing the most common output or format of analysis. In some cases, findings were incorporated into more strategic documents, such as country profiles, broader political analyses or comprehensive mission plans. Some interviewees stated that the integration of different analytical products, although an exception rather than the rule, can be an asset if properly acknowledged and managed. Unfortunately, as argued by some practitioners, conflict analysis still lacks full recognition as “an integral dimension of situational analysis for programming”. Too many times “lessons are not learnt and policy is not informed by conflict analysis”, thus compromising its overall benefits and leading to “incredibly short-term calculations”.

Several interviewees stated that lack of skills and first-hand experiences in conflict analysis can undermine the reliability and relevance of the assessment. This might justify or explain the widespread reliance on external consultants and experts for conducting assessments. According to some of the interviewees, however, while external resources are commonly more trusted than internal ones, they often fail to understand either the needs or the capabilities of the requesting organisation. On the other hand, various interviewees identified lack of practical skills for conducting conflict analyses among staff as a major obstacle. Similarly, another respondent claimed that in most cases conflict analysis is not an organisational priority. From a similar standpoint, an interviewee reported that staff mandated to conduct analysis do not follow a particular analytical methodology but rather rely on their own knowledge and prior experience. During UNSSC consultations with practitioners, however, only a minority of them referred to specific conflict analysis frameworks.⁷

One of the main findings emerging from the survey is that practitioners with different backgrounds and expertise, using different methodologies and tools, agreed that conducting a conflict analysis is not an easy task but rather a dynamic and complex process that requires continuous effort and constant updates. The survey confirms a general reliance mainly on causal and stakeholder analysis. This seems to derive from a lack of practical tools to investigate the dynamic factors of a conflict and the rapid evolution of crises that are difficult to catch up with. This is considered an important limitation for the majority of current conflict analysis models.

⁷ A large number of such frameworks are summarised in *Annex 1*. The most-cited guidelines in the survey are those created by the UNDP, UNDSS and UNSSC with regard to the UN system, and by the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Responding to Conflict.

The survey identified several lessons learned and factors that can contribute to good conflict analysis. These include: 1) teamwork and coordination among staff members; 2) field experience; 3) culture sensitivity; and 4) local ownership. Consultation and engagement with different stakeholders and local communities can help prevent potential shortcomings. However, achieving greater inclusion and participation is time-consuming and when extensive participatory analyses might be impossible a “good enough” analysis appears to be the only option. As expressed by one respondent, “consultation is a double-edged sword” and in some cases “*quick and dirty* [analysis] is of considerably more practical value than *precise but slow*”.

2.2 From theory to practice: challenges

The experience from almost two decades of conflict analysis training for UN staff indicates that the most difficult part of a conflict assessment is making a strong case for it to happen. This is confirmed by the feedback of UN staff and other conflict practitioners that emerged from the consultation conducted by the UNSSC. As can be deduced from the results, there are several reasons to explain the reluctance to engage in analytical processes. The most recurrent concerns refer to external constraints (e.g. lack of time, poor security) or organisational barriers (e.g. limited capacity, insufficient resources, lack of political will). To be clear, these are not petty pretexts but represent real and substantial challenges. However, these impediments are also common to many other project management stages, such as design, planning, implementation and evaluation. Nonetheless, for some unclear reasons, analysis is always the first stage to be discarded. Even when those legitimate obstacles can be overcome, the plea for a conflict analysis is often accepted reluctantly and the odds are that doubts will be raised about the actual need for a thorough and “lengthy” analysis.

In the end, conflict analysts often have to swim in rough waters due to the multiple sensitivities that surface in conflict situations. Political imperatives, cultural sensitivities and technical impediments tend to restrict the operating space and influence the outcome of analytical processes. While some of the challenges are produced by factors that are external to the people running the analysis, some of the most complex and incomprehensible impediments have their origins in people’s minds and in the biases and prejudices that cultures and mental models produce.

a. Dilemmas and trade-offs

Many external factors can have a negative influence on our ability to perform an optimal analysis. In some extreme cases, a number of these factors align to produce situations in which sound analysis is simply impossible. Somalia is perhaps one of these, if we consider how partial and biased our understanding still is regarding the conflict system that has pervaded and subverted So-

mali society for the past three decades. Fortunately, for most of the countries or regions that we attempt to analyse, the number of constraints is manageable and good analysis is within reach.

External obstacles are better described in terms of dilemmas and trade-offs. This is because, in many cases, analysts have to make a judgement call among different options. An example is the issue of **time**. Performing and updating a thorough analysis may imply spending several months to ensure full territorial coverage, participation and inclusion. As mentioned before, the problem with protracted assessments is that they risk producing analytical outputs that may no longer be valid because of fast-changing conflict dynamics. In other cases, analysts may find themselves on the receiving end of either last-minute requests by high-ranking officials or breaking news crises that require quick action and, therefore, hasty analysis.

Another potentially disruptive factor in the analysis processes is the issue of **access**, in terms of physical security of analysts and participants. The changing character of armed conflict is such that there are more and more regions that are simply off limits for foreigners and even for locals due to the extent of violence and threats to civilians. Accounts from those areas are very scattered and partial. In some cases, they originate from rumours and unreliable sources and therefore lack credibility. The most frequently cited impediment to good analysis is the **lack of capacities or resources**, in human and financial terms. While having the right people and enough funds to conduct the assessment are important factors, these complications can be overcome by using alternative solutions that tap into technology and human resourcefulness.

Dealing with very complex and protracted conflict situations can be challenging for those attempting an investigation. On the one hand, the amount of information, facts, events and issues to consider can be overwhelming and lead to a phenomenon known as “**paralysis by analysis**”. During prolonged assessments analysts are faced with recurring patterns and circuitous cause-effect diagrams, which can easily result in analytical deadlock. On the other hand, the **lack and reliability of data** can also affect the quality of assessments, forcing experts to make tenuous assumptions to fill information gaps.

Political sensitivity is a recurrent dilemma, especially in the UN context. The presence of UN agencies in a country is based on the consent of the host government. Some governments are particularly sensitive to the nature of activities implemented on their territory by external agencies. They may not be comfortable with foreigners “going around asking questions” and “encouraging dissent among the population”. In other cases, the UN is often involved in joint assessments with government counterparts – for instance in the case of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is co-signed by the UN agencies operating in a specific country and the host government. Terminology can therefore become an issue and the expression “conflict analysis” can collide with the intent of some governments to deny even the existence of a conflict in their own country. We sometimes hear of surrogate terms such as “crisis assessment”, or “governance analysis” when semantics pose a problem for analysts.

A more profound question is posed by **cultural sensitivity** or the lack thereof. Often framed in terms of language or religion, this type of constraint has broader ramifications touching on a multitude of elements that define local cultures and make them different from others. Differences in gender roles and traditions are obviously part of the problem but, in some cases, challenges and problems with conflict analysis can also be about particular places and the legacies or feelings they prompt in the local people, or even about hierarchies that international analysts fail to see because they transcend or work in parallel with formal institutions and their organograms.

Finally, a UN guide would not be good or useful without mentioning the hurdles of **inter-agency coordination**. The number of UN entities working in the same place can be as high as 30 and, despite many efforts, we still see the UN struggling with the “Delivery As One” test in many countries.⁸ Different agencies have different mandates. Similarly, the analytical perspectives can vary dramatically among humanitarian, developmental and political entities, each focusing on different time frames and issues. Some recent efforts have aimed to create a common approach to conflict analysis and an integrated response to violence (e.g. Strategic Assessments and Integrated Strategic Frameworks in the context of UN Peace Operations, and UNDP’s Conflict-related Development Analysis) but we still can see a proliferation of different tools and approaches.

b. Analytical traps, biases and deviations

Peace and conflict studies is perhaps the “least perfect” of the social sciences – one that not only studies the dynamics of social conflict and its potential resolution but is also intensely influenced by the inner emotions, legacies, attitudes and inherent imperfections of human beings in the conduct of its work. The human element is so important that in many cases it defines the outputs of the discipline. Subliminal and seemingly unintentional factors can drive the methods, assumptions and findings of investigations.

The World Bank’s 2015 World Development Report places great emphasis on the importance of understanding “irrational” behaviours and explores how mental models and biases can negatively affect development policies (World Bank 2015). The impact of human psychology on decision-making – and consequently on the analytical processes leading to conclusions – can be far-reaching as it is contingent on the influence of filters like cultural legacies, social constructs, and personal experiences. These prejudicial tendencies are technically defined as *cognitive biases* and can be described as “[s]ystematic error[s] in judgment and decision-making common to all human beings which can be due to cognitive limitations, motivational factors, and/or adap-

⁸ Delivery As One is a 2006 report by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, whose name has been inherited by the following UN policy. The concept aims at strengthening the effectiveness of the different UN interventions of UN interventions and is based on four main principles: One Leader, One Budget, One Programme and One Office.

tations to natural environments” (Wilke and Mata 2012, pp. 531-535). Cognitive biases can materialise during assessment processes, prompting analysts to selectively observe reality, omit evidence or misinterpret facts. They are also known as “cognitive traps” since they produce deviations from rational and logical thinking processes, which taints the validity of conclusions. We describe below the most recurrent cognitive biases affecting conflict analysis processes.⁹

Confirmation bias: “The tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms one’s beliefs or hypotheses while giving disproportionately less attention to information that contradicts it”. This is perhaps the most recurrent fallacy conflict specialists stumble upon during a conflict analysis process. Human beings inherently prefer to stay within their comfort zones and can become very selective when information must be gathered and should be retained.

Anchoring: “The tendency to rely too heavily on the first piece of information offered (the “anchor”) when making decisions. During decision-making, anchoring occurs when individuals use an initial piece of information to make subsequent judgments”. This phenomenon occurs particularly in those contexts about which people know the least. The limited knowledge about the situation and its background generates an inclination to look for quick evidence to rationalise and explain the unknown. Once an opinion has emerged, it can be difficult to change it.

Group-think: This phenomenon “occurs when a group of people, for the desire for harmony or conformity in the group, produces irrational or dysfunctional decision-making outcomes. Group members try to minimize conflict and reach a consensus decision without critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints, by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from outside influences”. This bias is particularly relevant in situations where a team is put together to conduct a conflict assessment in a region or a country. The large assessment missions and task forces generally deployed in the context of UN planning processes are likely to be affected by this miscalculation.

Mirror-imaging: “The assumption that the people being studied think like the analysts themselves”. According to research on intelligence analysis, mirror-imaging has led to “massive oversights and poor planning in the face of national security threats”, such as in the case of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, where cultural approximation and juxtaposition led US planners to disregard the possibility that Japanese forces could even think of attacking a largely superior military power (Witlin 2008, p. 89).

⁹ The definitions are taken from Wikipedia, as they represent the most comprehensive and practical definitions available. A separate [page](#) provides a fairly exhaustive list of the most well-known cognitive biases. It is, however, important to know that not all of the biases mentioned there are fully relevant to conflict analysis and the most recurrent are reviewed in this handbook.

Failure of imagination: “A circumstance wherein something seemingly predictable and undesirable was not planned for”. The paradox of this bias is that, in hindsight, most of the facts or events appear as if they could have easily been predicted and even prevented. But it is often the failure to “connect the dots” that prevents the analyst from anticipating such occurrences. The attack on the World Trade Center is often cited as an example of this analytical fallacy.

Circular reporting: “A situation where a piece of information appears to come from multiple independent sources, but in fact is coming from only one source”. Also known as “echo reporting”, a famous case of the incidence of this cognitive trap is the intelligence manufacturing process that led to the US decision to launch the second Iraq military campaign in 2003.

All cognitive biases presented have something in common – i.e. prevalence during the investigation of mental comfort zones that are quickly constructed and owned and that generate enduring opinions, which are reluctantly abandoned even in the presence of conflicting evidence. Witlin (2008) suggests that the lack of information is the general precondition for the activation of cognitive biases, since “[w]hen an analyst lacks information he or she is more likely to look within his or her own experiences to fill in any informational gaps” (p. 89).

EXPLORING THE COMPLEXITY OF CONTEMPORARY VIOLENT CONFLICTS

1. The changing character of conflict and new analytical mindsets

Much has already been written about “new wars” (Kaldor 1999; Kalyvas 2001; Keegan 2004) and whether they are genuinely novel types of conflicts or just different manifestations of traditional warfare (Berdal 2003; Kaldor 2013). Whatever conclusions this academic debate may yield, the literature has identified some critical shifts in the actors, goals, logic and means of conflict over the past two decades. The norms that used to regulate hostilities are obsolete, the means of war are unprecedented and the distinction between victims and perpetrators is no longer obvious. In addition, the very motives and drivers of conflict have changed. Fighters have abandoned global ideologies to take refuge in national and subnational identities. New research and evidence from recent conflicts suggest that some additional shifts have occurred in contemporary warfare. These changes appear to be affecting conflict actors in particular, as more insights are available about their morphology, communications and geographic reach. Political settlements no longer offer an appealing option to end fighting, when unconventional and hybrid stakeholders manage to achieve their political and economic objectives by-passing state institutions, and global powers or universal organisations such as the UN have lost the traction and influence to secure compliance with international standards. Urban settings have become much more contentious and filled with hybrid actors whose behaviours can be attributed to criminal groups, violent extremists and armed opposition all at once. This has contributed to an internationalisation of civil wars and the growing military involvement of foreign powers in nominally national struggles (Einsiedel *et al.* 2014). As a result, contemporary conflicts have become fluid phenomena that stretch across states and regions (Oliva 2015).

Another fundamental shift has occurred in the type of violence taking place during conflicts. Overall trends indicate a reduction of fatalities as a result of conflict (Goldstein 2011; Human Security Research Group 2014). While this is

certainly a positive development, it should not be taken as an indication of a decline in the use of violence. Some have argued that the decline in conflict-related deaths has been countered by a sharp rise in the number of people wounded, suggesting that improvements in medical care and first-aid treatment in combat zones are saving more lives, so that fewer people are dying but many remain severely injured (Fazal 2014). More importantly, conflict-related violence is being dwarfed by crime-related armed violence. The number of homicides recorded in countries like Brazil, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Venezuela has surpassed the casualties registered in some civil war-affected countries. It has also been demonstrated that in the past five years, armed violence accounted for about 75 percent of violent deaths globally (Geneva Declaration 2015; McQuinn and Oliva 2014).

In addition to lethal violence, other extreme and brutal forms of violence have become predominant. In the last few years, fact-finding reports and news accounts have found evidence of new forms of slavery, mass rapes, beheadings, forced cannibalism and other atrocities that are bleak reminders of a distant and gloomy past. A whole separate discussion should be devoted to conflict-related sexual violence, i.e. “the strategic use of brutal forms of sexualized violence against civilian populations to serve specific purposes” (UN Women 2010, p. 8). Most cases of such violence, which have been reported in contexts of conflict and civil unrest alike, reveal a sophisticated and deliberate use of sexual violence aimed at annihilating the enemy not just physically. Examples of conflict-related sexual violence include: “forced incest and public rape for maximum humiliation and to shred the social fabric, as in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Timor-Leste, turning victims into outcasts; rape as a deliberate vector of HIV during the Rwandan genocide; forced impregnation of women in camps specifically designed for that purpose in Bosnia and Herzegovina; premeditated rape as a tool of political repression in Guinea-Conakry to punish women for participating in public life” (UN Women 2010, p. 8).

The impact of these emerging trends on the work of the UN is significant and they have dented its aspiration to be a universal organisation supporting global peace. Poorly equipped and ill-planned UN Peace Operations have become entangled with increasingly complex settings characterised by a proliferation of violent players, politically sophisticated elites and massive humanitarian crises. An indication of the declining effectiveness of peace operations is the longer presence of blue helmets in host countries (Einsiedel *et al.* 2014, p. 4).

Conflict analysts need to recognise these important changes and adapt their methods and mindsets accordingly. As a matter of fact, these transformed patterns of warfare have prompted some new thinking and original methods to decode the new global conditions. Analysts have become mindful that the fluidity and hybridity of contemporary conflicts can be better explained by applying knowledge gained from disciplines as different as anthropology, sociology, psychology, neuroscience, physics and even poetry. Sensible advances in the understanding of conflict dynamics have been made possible by the inclusion of anthropologists and sociologists in research teams and programme

officers deployed in troubled areas. Solutions to complex emergencies, such as the Ebola pandemic, have benefited from the expert advice of people who can understand West African traditional burial practices in order to detect the origins of the problem (Banbury 2016).

Similarly, one cannot overlook the extent to which, in some places, conflict has become an entrenched component of daily life and violence is the established means to manage differences. Besides the direct human cost, protracted conflicts have profound consequences on the social fabric of a country, changing the cultural traits, habits and behaviours of its people. In a fascinating and bold piece, Zainab Bangura, UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, speaking of the brutal campaign of violence against women by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)¹, explains that these perverse acts have to be placed in a wider sociological perspective, whereby “conflict is a license to reassert outmoded models of masculinity” and therefore some men join ISIL “out of a sense of emasculation, arising from unemployment and fear of encroaching ‘Western values’ like women’s empowerment” (Bangura 2015). In their influential article, Haykel and Creswell (2015) make a convincing case in favour of recognising the cultural expressions of jihadists, particularly their production of poetry, as key elements for understanding their motivations and aspirations. “Analysts have generally ignored these texts, as if poetry were a colorful but ultimately distracting by-product of jihad. But this is a mistake. It is impossible to understand jihadism – its objectives, its appeal for new recruits, and its durability – without examining its culture. This culture finds expression in a number of forms, including anthems and documentary videos, but poetry is its heart. And, unlike the videos of beheadings and burnings, which are made primarily for foreign consumption, poetry provides a window onto the movement talking to itself. It is in verse that militants most clearly articulate the fantasy life of jihad” (Haykel and Creswell 2015).

The rise of criminal violence and the hybridity of some insurgent groups have also made apparent the need to better understand the economic incentives of organised violence. Political economy has emerged as a critical discipline to demystify the assumption that all belligerent parties are impelled to action by deep-rooted enduring causes (e.g. ethnicity, religion, tribalism). Insights into the economic opportunities created by conflict dynamics have questioned arguments about the “irrationality of war” and the idea that conflict is just chaos. On the contrary, violent engagements are often organised and driven by defined economic motives of combatants seeking a “return on investment”. The mounting relevance of conflict economies also has profound consequences on the nature and duration of insurgencies. As it has been noted, “lootable resources (...) can prolong conflict by creating discipline problems that make it difficult for leaders to impose a settlement on followers” (Einsiedel *et al.* 2014, p. 8) and, more generally, political settlements often cannot give to combatants what they have already secured by fighting, namely access to resources

¹ Here we adopt the terminology commonly used by the UN, but the group is also referred to as “ISIS” or “Daesh”.

and direct revenues such as through extortion, theft, looting, licensing fees, taxation and illicit trafficking.

Neuroscience and psychology have also provided new perspectives on the impact of the human brain and personality on both the understanding of conflict and people's behaviours in situations of tensions and violence. On the one hand, the reasons behind conflicts often have their origins in deeply seated narratives, emotions and beliefs, which are not fully recognised by our brains. Human beings are also inherently obsessed with righteousness; people of any age seek "victory" whenever they can, even in petty arguments. This is because the brain rewards itself for being right and human beings therefore favour information and arguments supporting their points of view. On the other hand, biases and blind spots also influence the way people understand and analyse conflict. The same logic that rewards confidence also affects judgements and decisions that are made during conflict assessments. It is much easier to seek confirmation of initial hypotheses than to admit to an oversight or misinterpretation of a situation. This handbook has already provided an overview of the cognitive biases that affect analytical capacity and often lead to miscalculations and oversimplifications of reality.

2. Systems thinking and conflict analysis

Especially during the last few decades, experiences in the fields of peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance and development cooperation have demonstrated the importance of taking context into consideration when planning and implementing third-party interventions in conflict-affected societies. To quote Anderson and Olsen (2003), "the evidence is strong that the more peace practitioners know and understand about the situations in which they are working, the less likely they are to make mistakes and the more likely they are to identify productive avenues for working" (p. 45). Accordingly, as we saw over the course of the twentieth century, scholars and researchers have theorised and conceptualised a number of analysis frameworks to examine the nature of a given conflict, its history, causes, actors, dynamics and impact. Nevertheless, the complexity and persistence of many conflicts seems to reveal the limits of the analytical discipline and question its traditional methodologies.

Despite the growing literature on the topic, conflict intractability has not been unanimously defined.² In this regard, at least part of "the problem in framing a coherent theory [regarding the fundamental processes underlying intractable conflicts] reflects the inevitable idiosyncrasies of each conflict", which makes it almost impossible to generalise from case to case (Vallacher *et al.* 2010, p. 264). Nevertheless, intractable conflicts can be broadly defined as

² The variety of terms used to describe these kinds of conflicts already demonstrates a certain degree of inconsistency among scholars. Over time, these conflicts have been labelled "deep-rooted", "protracted", "enduring" and "moral". However, "intractable conflict" now seems to be the most widespread terminology.

persistent, embedded and enduring conflicts in which different dimensions and scales overlap with a myriad of mutually influencing factors to such an extent that the resulting complexity makes them seem impossible to resolve (Coleman 2011; Hendrick 2009; Vallacher *et al.* 2010). Additionally, intractable conflicts are characterised by tremendous volatility and change, which make their development unpredictable. At the same time, however, the dynamics of protracted conflict situations “can be extremely stable and functional (in maintaining the violent status quo) over time” (Loode 2011, p. 81), thus further undermining predictability. Not surprisingly, this paradox exacerbates the complexity of the context and poses increasing challenges for practitioners.

Whereas the idea of describing phenomena as “systems” dates back a long way, the origin of modern systems thinking can be ascribed to the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy, who developed the “general systems theory” in the 1930s as a reaction to Newton’s reductionist model, which assumes that to understand phenomena and solve problems it is necessary to divide them into their component parts and analyse the behaviour and features of each element separately. In contrast, general systems theory – and all the related theories and approaches developed after it – holds that aggregating partial explanations obtained by studying each component part as an independent entity is not equivalent to understanding the phenomenon under scrutiny as a whole. Over the course of the twentieth century, the field of systems thinking has developed further and encompassed more sophisticated approaches, such as “system dynamics”,³ developed by Jay Forrester and his colleagues at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States. More recently, after being confined to the natural sciences for decades, systems thinking started to merge with other disciplines.⁴

Overall, systems thinking can be described as a holistic approach and analytical method “for seeing wholes” and looking at phenomena through a complexity lens. It includes a large body of methods, tools and principles that focus on the interactions among the different parts composing the whole (Senge 2006, p. 68). In the words of Williams and Hummelbrunner (2010), “thinking systemically is about making sense of the world rather than merely describing it. It is fundamentally a sense-making process that organizes the messiness of the real world into concepts and components that allow us to understand things a bit better” (p. 18). Increasing attention is now being paid to understanding how this new body of knowledge may affect our ability to understand and influence complex global challenges, such as the persistence

³ As explained by Williams and Hummelbrunner (2010), “Forrester intended to combine the strength of the human mind and the capacity of computers through modelling, that is, compensating for the unreliable part of our understanding of systems by using mathematical rigor” (p. 45).

⁴ For a summary of key contributions of complexity science – in its broadest sense – to social sciences, please refer to the *Summary of Key Complexity Science Findings Relevant to the Social Sciences* produced by the Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict and Complexity, available [online](#).

of poverty and hunger, inequality, environment degradation and violent conflicts.

Systems thinking is usually seen as a problem-solving tool. Nevertheless, from a more practical standpoint, it also provides a language with a strong visual component suitable for communicating about complexity and interconnectedness. Importantly, as pointed out by Senge (2006), “systems thinking provides a language that begins by restructuring how we think” (p. 69). If a person’s language reflects dynamics and interconnections, that person will tend to view and interact with phenomena using a more systemic approach. On the contrary, “without such a language, our habitual ways of seeing the world produce fragmented views and counterproductive actions” (Senge 2006, p. 74). Before any attempt to change the ordinary way we think and talk about complex issues, it is therefore critical to familiarise ourselves with the basics of systems thinking. Below is a brief explanation of some of the main concepts.

System: Scholars have not yet reached agreement on a single and concise definition of “system” but there is a shared understanding of what composes a system and what constitute its main characteristics (Meadows 2008; Williams and Hummelbrunner 2010). It is generally accepted that a system consists of a set of *elements* that form a complex and unified whole through their *interactions* over time (Anderson and Johnson 1997; Meadows 2008; Senge 2006; Williams and Hummelbrunner 2010). By interacting with and affecting each other, single parts produce a coherent *structure*, which determines how the system *as a whole* behaves. In the words of Aristotle, “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”. Systems are composed of elements and interactions, patterns of behaviour and structures (Meadows 2008). Yet, as explained by Meadows (2008), “systems fool us by presenting themselves – or we fool ourselves by seeing the world – as a series of events”, so that we overlook the underlying structure of the system and miss the overall picture (p. 88). When facing complex problems, in fact, people usually tend to focus on single elements or, in an even more reductive way, solely on their manifestations, thus responding to events, rather than dynamics (Coleman 2011). A clear representation of this mindset is the enduring “root cause discourse” and the tendency to look for the single cause that allows for a full explanation of a conflict. This is quite normal and understandable; events are not only easier to see, they also have a bigger impact on emotions, especially if the events are tragic. They obviously capture attention, but such a “way of seeing the world has almost no predictive or explanatory value. Like the tip of an iceberg rising above the water, events are the most visible aspect of a larger complex – but not always the most important” (Meadows 2008, p. 88). Although elusive, it is the structure of a system that drives and explains events (Anderson and Johnson 1997; Meadows 2008; Senge 2006). As a consequence, it is by looking at that structure that we might be able to understand “not just *what* is happening, but *why*” (Meadows 2008, p. 89). As described by Senge (2006), “systems thinking is a discipline for looking at ‘structures’” and, consequently,

for understanding how systems work and possibly seeing new opportunities for changing them to produce better results (p. 69).

Interconnectedness: In a system, each individual element exists in relation to others. That is, every system's part is affected and influenced, at any time, directly or indirectly, by at least one other part of the system. The etymology of the term "system" (from the Greek *sunístánai*, "to cause to stand together") reflects this feature quite well. As has been explained elsewhere, "interconnectedness is like a spiderweb: pulling on any one strand in the web will affect, directly or indirectly, every other strand in the web" (Ricigliano 2012, p. 22). Interconnectedness gives rise to **emergent properties** (or emergence) of a system, defined as "the appearance of new structures, patterns, and properties" that "form a new and more complex collective behaviour" (Williams and Hummelbrunner 2010, p. 25). Emergent properties cannot be predicted or deduced simply by observing those of single elements composing the system, which is why it is of paramount importance to look at the web of interconnections within a system.

Feedback and Dynamic Causality: Interconnectedness is also the basis of the concept of feedback.⁵ In fact, since elements in a system are somehow all interconnected, systems thinking assumes that each part influences the others both as a *cause* and as an *effect*. From this, it follows that causality is always dynamic; "if one part of the system affects another part, that action will reverberate throughout the system and eventually act on the part that initiated the action" (Ricigliano 2012, p. 23). Both feedback and dynamic causality are graphically represented by causal loops diagrams⁶ that visualise both key factors and their causal relationships over time (Meadows 2008; Senge 2006; Williams and Hummelbrunner 2010).

Nonlinearity: A further insight of systems thinking is that causality is both dynamic *and* nonlinear in the sense that "the relationship between causes and effects is neither unidirectional nor always direct and proportional" (Ricigliano and Chigas 2011, p. 3). A nonlinear relationship implies that small actions can produce large reactions (i.e. the so-called "butterfly effect") and, conversely, that large actions might be ineffective. As highlighted by Meadows (2008), "nonlinearities are important [...] because they confound our expectations about the relationship between action and response" (p. 92).

⁵ As noted by Senge (2006), at times referring to "feedback" may cause some confusion because of the everyday usage of the term to mean "opinion-gathering". However, "in systems thinking, feedback is a broader concept. It means any reciprocal flow of influence" (p. 75).

⁶ According to Williams and Hummelbrunner (2010), "causal loop diagrams provide a language for articulating our understanding of dynamic, interconnected situations (p. 31). They are based on the concept of "feedback", which is generally defined as a chain or closed sequence of causes and effects. A reinforcing (or positive) loop refers to "a dynamic in which all of the factors tend to build on each other, each one contributing to or even augmenting the overall dynamics" (e.g. arms race) (CDA 2013, p. 4). Conversely, in a balancing (or negative) loop "the dynamic serves to return to a state of equilibrium or to counteract the dynamic of a reinforcing loop" (e.g. thermostat) (CDA 2013, p. 4). The first reinforces the direction of change imposed on the system, while the latter opposes or reverses it (Meadows 2008, p. 188).

Delays: In addition to nonlinearity, the predictability of the behaviour of the system – and the effects of external interventions to change it – is compromised by the presence of delays. Indeed, the relationship between causes and effects might be neither obvious nor self-evident since they could be separated in time and consequences of actions could occur gradually (Senge 2006).

Resilience and self-organisation: The unpredictability yet relative stability of systems results from self-organisation, which has been defined by Meadows (2008) as “the ability of a system to structure itself, to create new structure, to learn, or diversify” (p. 188). In particular, systems maintain their stability through fluctuations and adjustments by “renewing their elements in a process of self-creation (‘autopoiesis’)” (Williams and Hummelbrunner 2010, p. 24). This process is the foundation of system resilience, allowing the system to recover from perturbation and address changes in the environment (Meadows 2008; Williams and Hummelbrunner 2010, p. 25). Likely or unlikely, according to the context and the goal one seeks to achieve, “there are always limits to resilience” (Meadow 2008, p. 76).

If conflicts conform to the basic principles of systems outlined above, “linearising” them into a set of snapshots (i.e. limiting the analysis to the elements composing a conflict) can be misleading and risky. When dealing with complex conflicts it is thus crucial to consider all these aspects to avoid unexpected and counterproductive effects. Besides a deep knowledge about the state of the system in a given time, this requires sensitivity to and awareness of its dynamics and underlying structures. Accordingly, using systems thinking and complexity concepts to explore complex conflict dynamics “will better allow us to understand what is happening in a conflict process, thus providing a more realistic and effective set of options for conflict prevention, mitigation and transformation” (Hendrick 2009, p. 23). In line with this approach, it is promising that peace and conflict researchers as well as practitioners are increasingly acknowledging system-like properties in conflict situations and are starting to explore the potential added value of reframing conflicts within the perspective of systems thinking. Gallo (2012), for instance, claims that

“conflict [...] is a very complex system, with adaptive structures and evolutionary mechanisms. It is a system composed of interconnected parts that, as a whole, exhibits properties which cannot easily be understood only by dissecting and analysing the properties of individual components” (Gallo 2012, p. 158)

Similarly, after having identified more than fifty variables to explain the intractability of conflicts, Coleman (2011) argues that

“as soon as one looks more deeply into the collection of fifty-seven factors, which are each the source of intractability, it becomes clear that there is something even more basic that intractable conflicts seem to share. These essences, all fifty-seven of them, are often

connected to one another in a very particular way. They tend to be linked in such a way that they support and reinforce one another. In other words, they function like a system” (Coleman 2011, p. 35)

Regrettably, conflicts are still too often conceptualised and approached according to the modern scientific method. At least to some extent, this constrains thinking to a linear, reductionist and determinist world view (Meadows 2008; Senge 2006). This propensity for oversimplification is further enhanced by some of the most common challenges faced by practitioners (e.g. time pressure, lack of resources and overload of activities). This, in turn, increases the risk of falling into two analytical traps that reduce the effectiveness of conflict analysis overall. First, as noticed by Anderson and Olson (2003), “in spite of a shared commitment to full and ongoing context analysis [...] experience shows that [peacebuilding agencies] do ‘partial’ analysis, shaped, on the one hand, by their expertise as an agency (or individual) and, on the other, by their beliefs about how to bring positive change in conflict settings” (p. 45). This tendency to wear disciplinary blinders reverberates during the programme’s implementation and evaluation; “most [agencies] focus their ongoing analysis on areas that immediately relate to their own activities and the responses to these activities. They rarely examine in detail the broader and developing context or consider concerns that lie beyond their immediate programmatic reach” (Anderson and Olson 2003, p. 45). The second analytical trap arises as an indirect consequence of the attempt to respond to disciplinary blinders by expanding the scope of the analysis in order to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the conflict. To do this, many analytical tools use checklists and indicator-based approaches. The result is that the outcome of these analyses often consists of long lists of factors (spanning historical, political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions) that “may contain insights into different aspects of a context but they often do not provide a way of prioritizing factors or shaping action” (Ricigliano 2012, p. 90). Confusing list-making with analysis is thus obviously misleading and likely to cause information overload. As pointed out by Meadows (2008), in fact, “once you start listing the elements of a system, there is almost no end to the process” (p. 13). From this, it follows that the analysis is likely to fail in “presenting a picture of the whole” and users would lose sight of the system, thus jeopardising the effectiveness and impacts of programmes at a later stage (Ricigliano 2012, p. 90; Meadows 2008). Both programme planning and implementation, in fact, require a conflict analysis that provides a comprehensive understanding of a situation while at the same time remaining comprehensible. In this regard it has been argued that systems thinking can contribute to the quality of conflict analysis and facilitate its interpretation and application by fostering an understanding that “incorporates complexity without being overwhelming” (CDA 2013, p. 3). Rather than trying to capture all the variables in a conflict, applying systems thinking to conflict analysis forces users to focus on key dynamics and structural interrelationships within the system, thus it “forces analysts to winnow out data so that they only include data on key factors that make up important

feedback loops and factors that have many important impacts or ripple effects on other factors in the system” (Ricigliano and Chigas 2011, p. 7).

The added value of systemic conflict analysis goes beyond its analytical dimension. Indeed, applying systems thinking to conflict analysis is also relevant for addressing the analysis-programme gap by offering a tool to prioritise key factors and identify entry points for intervention. If one assumes – as systems thinking does – that because of interconnectedness, changes in one part of the system lead to non-linear changes in others, then the purpose of the analysis is to identify **leverage points** where the system is less capable of resisting change and consequently where small shifts can produce bigger ones. From a systems perspective, the higher the leverage, the more the interventions will be effective in influencing the whole system’s dynamics and encouraging the desired behaviour (Meadows 2008; CDA 2013; Ricigliano and Chigas 2011; Senge 2006). In this sense, systemic conflict analysis is inherently action-oriented. Moreover, by defining success as changing the underlying structures and dynamics of a system, systemic conflict analysis also provides a framework for monitoring and evaluating peacebuilding activities. As argued by Ricigliano in his speech at the 2015 Sustaining Peace Conference hosted by the Advanced Consortium on Conflict, Cooperation and Complexity, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of peacebuilding in complex environments it is necessary to look beyond the ability of a programme to deliver direct project impacts and consider how well a programme works with a system to improve it over time.⁷ Also, based on the findings presented by the Reflecting on Peace Practice project, a more systemic approach towards analysis might help in “identifying synergies, gaps and potential cumulative impacts of peacebuilding”, which in turn can make peacebuilding activities accountable to the bigger picture (i.e. Peace Writ Large) (CDA 2013, p. 21).

In line with what has been stated so far, Gallo (2012) claims that “a systems approach is essential for a correct understanding of the characteristics and of the dynamics of a conflict and, as a consequence, for the decisions that are taken within a conflict” but that within the fields of peace and conflict studies “complexity is disregarded, and the need for systemic thinking is underestimated” (Gallo 2012, pp. 156-157). As a confirmation of this claim, there has been little experience to date with the application of systems thinking and a complexity perspective to conflict analysis⁸. Developing a systemic understanding of a conflict does not necessarily mean refusing traditional methods of analysis or denying the need and utility of analysing single components of a given conflict in more detail. On the contrary, what is required in order to

⁷ Video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9UgyelNq6xl> [accessed on 27 January 2016]

⁸ CDA – Collaborative Learning Projects and the Berghof Foundation for Peace Support have done pioneering work concerning systemic analysis and conflict transformation. More recent attempts to apply a complexity perspective and systems thinking both to the analysis of conflicts and to peacebuilding practices are represented by Coleman, P. (2011) *The Five Percent: Finding solutions to seemingly impossible conflicts* and Ricigliano, R. (2012) *Making Peace Last: A toolbox for sustainable peacebuilding*.

achieve adequate comprehension is the confluence of many different social and scientific approaches and a systemic perspective “under the umbrella of the metaframework of complexity” (Handrick 2009, p. 26). In this sense, echoing Ricigliano (2012), systems thinking should be seen as a conceptual framework and a way of reasoning in order to look at the conflict “as a whole (within a holistic frame) and try to understand it as a complex system (using a systemic frame)” (p. 85). As briefly outlined here, such an alternative approach would also “make visible some of our assumptions and could open us up to considering possible alternatives” (Handrick 2009, p. 26) or “options for initiating change” (Coleman 2011, p. 91).

PART III

CONDUCTING A CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS

It is difficult to offer an accurate number of the workshops and training events devoted to conflict analysis that take place annually. A conservative estimate would perhaps be on the order of hundreds per year. The number soars significantly if we include online courses and university classes. The preceding overview of the historical evolution of conflict analysis indicates that it is not a new venture, and continuous practice, methodological improvements and field experience have certainly professionalised the discipline.

Nonetheless, results are slow to come into view and, when they do, the picture is mixed. As a matter of fact, the impact of two decades of capacity building activities is rather limited and often compromised by a strong disconnect between theory and practice. More specifically, it is the persistent distance separating conflict analysts from conflict responders that continues to generate negative accounts and perceptions regarding the effectiveness of conflict analysis. Responses to conflict situations are, in fact, too often characterised by a series of “hope lines” that fail to spell out how and why the different actions of an intervention would materialise in order to accomplish the stated peacebuilding storyline. Increasing emphasis on *theories of change* in both policy and practice is good news and several UN entities have embraced this technique in their analysis and planning processes.¹ However, challenges still persist and the process of translating analysis into responses is still driven by perceived needs, favourite methods and corporate mandates.

This chapter is organised in three sections. The first provides a set of guiding principles for preparing and conducting a qualitative conflict analysis. These principles can be considered the key ingredients of an ideal assessment process. The second section provides a detailed inventory of the most used and relevant conflict analysis tools with plenty of visual aids and instructions as to how to apply them. The third and last section offers step-by-step instruc-

¹ PBSO, UNICEF and UNDP are among the UN entities that demand an explicit theory of change for many of their projects and programmes. Before them, INGOs such as Care International and aid agencies like USAID have included theories of change in their country assistance frameworks.

tions for implementing a “sub-optimal” conflict analysis. Recommendations and examples from both sections are based on direct experience in running conflict assessments and indirect exposure to best practices from UN and non-UN contexts.

1. Guiding principles

Before applying any conflict analysis tools, it is important to explore the quality standards of a good assessment. The contribution of a sound methodology is, in fact, limited if the analyst is not fully aware of the principles that should guide the implementation of the analysis process. In most cases, success does not come from what we do but rather from how we do it. Below is a description of the guiding principles that define a good conflict assessment.

Demystification

Professionals who spend prolonged periods of time in the same duty station or region tend to develop an inherent conviction (and attitude) that they know everything about that place, its problems and how they could be solved.² This tendency is very worrying, as it builds on preconceived and entrenched ideas that are rarely challenged or ascertained. As in the case of mental models, what we call *mainstream narratives* also exist with respect to countries. These stereotyped accounts often lead to a mistaken understanding of a situation and to wrong conclusions. For instance, prior to the 2008 post-election violence, within international circles Kenya was regularly described as a shining success story on the African continent. There was a wide consensus about the country's achievements in terms of economic performance and democratic progress, and most of its problems were constantly being swept under the carpet by international analysts and reporters. As a result, election-related inter-ethnic violence took them by surprise, despite the fact that every poll since the first multi-party election in 1992 had been marred by violence and, in the run-up to the 2007 election, it was evident that a collection of deep-rooted grievances and societal divisions were all aligning to create the havoc that occurred a few days after the presidential vote. An overly positive mainstream narrative about Kenya – a country described as a democratic and peaceful middle-income economy – prevented analysts from recognising some apparent indicators of potential violence. Similar narratives were quite widespread in North Africa and the Middle East just before the wave of popular uprisings. At the other end of the continuum, there is a range of countries that are systematically associated with violence and instability, and where analysts are inclined to interpret and describe events as if “everything is conflict”.

² In some cases, these narratives can take derivative post-colonial tones with a tendency to attribute the failure to address problems to the lack of willingness or helplessness of local populations.

When such narratives are persistent, there is a frequent inclination to opt for “quick and dirty” analysis. But, as we have seen earlier, superficial and rushed analyses are likely to trigger a whole range of cognitive biases. Effective conflict analysis can help mediators, peacebuilders, peacekeepers and humanitarian and development specialists in avoiding oversimplifications (e.g. mono-causalism) and misrepresentations of reality (e.g. criminalisation of poverty or youth unemployment). The first guiding principle for a good analysis should, then, be the unrelenting commitment to *demystification*. This means not buying into mainstream narratives, defying preconceived ideas and, above all, rejecting unwarranted simplifications.

Collectiveness

We argued earlier that conducting a conflict analysis is an intervention in itself. As it is performed by human beings, each of them holding different world visions, socio-cultural values and political beliefs, the implementation process is subject to the influence of the personal opinions and sensitivities of those who carry out the assessment. Likewise, its outcome is likely to be affected by the same preferences and inclinations and to reflect their probable blind spots.

To counter the negative effects of such a personalised and possibly biased analysis, it is advisable to include in the assessment as many different voices as possible, including local perspectives. There are several established mechanisms to do this, including surveys, focus groups, consultations and validation workshops, to name a few. However, in some instances there is neither time nor resources to broaden the sources of information and inputs that feed into the analysis. In these cases, it is common practice to conduct conflict analysis within a limited time frame as a “solo exercise”. While conflict analysis performed by a single individual is still much better than no analysis at all, engaging a wider and diverse audience in the conduct of the assessment grants more objectivity, reliability and credibility to the analysis produced.

Proximity

The 2015 High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations revisited the concept of *impartiality*, which has been reinterpreted in the light of the evolution of international practice *vis-à-vis* the enduring contradiction between respect for national sovereignty and application of universally recognised legal norms. The Panel’s conclusion on the subject encourages a more pro-active and protection-driven application of impartiality, understood as “adherence to the principles of the Charter” rather than “equal treatment of all parties in all cases for all time” (High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations 2015, paragraph 123). Recent consensus has also emerged on the understanding of “impartiality” in the context of mediation and conflict prevention (see UNDP Insider Mediation guidance note) and peacebuilding (see the 2015 Review of the

UN Peacebuilding Architecture). Recent policy and research efforts have recognised that people closer to the problem are better equipped – hence more likely – to provide the solution. Local people have both the capacities and the capabilities to influence and steer a peaceful settlement, despite their own opinions and affiliations. This new understanding also applies to the practice of conflict analysis. Ideal conflict analysis processes should be driven primarily by those people who have a stake or can influence the conflict. This is not that obvious in practice, and external assistance is often required to facilitate the understanding of conflict dynamics and avoid having the parties become trapped by the legacies of conflict. The spectrum between conflict analyses entirely powered by locals and exclusively external processes is as wide as it is unexplored. In most cases national assessments are either unknown to or disregarded by international analysts and it is still prevalent practice to conduct brand new assessments, which start from scratch and, at best, include some local voices in the process.

When locally owned analytical processes are not within reach, paramount importance should be given to the inclusion of local views. In 2013, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) published a comprehensive study (DPKO/DFS, 2013) that provided valuable insights on the integration of local perceptions in peacekeeping contexts. The use of mixed teams (national and international) has become a good practice for conflict assessments. Alternatively, for international conflict analysts, slow and consistent network- and trust-building efforts seem to provide a crucial entry point for better inclusion.

Overall, the tenet of *proximity* is perhaps one of the most important guiding principles for conflict analysis processes. It implies closeness to the affected people – both in terms of empathy and understanding and in terms of physical immediacy to the situation and to the main conflict stakeholders. In the end, the plea for proximity is way to deter conflict analysts from being cold and detached technical experts but it is also an effort to avoid conflict analysis exercises that are conducted in a vacuum and often outside the country.

Authenticity

As argued by Simon Sinek in his captivating talk³, “you need to say and do the things you actually believe.” Authenticity is a critically important skill for running a conflict assessment. Facilitators have several responsibilities. The most important is to create an enabling and conducive environment throughout the entire analysis process. For this reason, the facilitator should be equipped with both process facilitation and conflict analysis skills. He or she should be able to project truthful and reliable messages to the participants in the conflict assessment, anticipate process fatigue, deal with conflict among participants and understand when the time is ripe for a push and when reflection and respite are required.

³ Video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIKvV8_T95M [Accessed on 12 February 2016]

Conflict sensitivity

Conflict analysis does not happen in the vacuum and is an intervention itself. Data collection, interviews, focus groups, and workshops have all an impact on the situation. Analysts are never neutral agents. As such, they can alter the equilibrium and change perceptions within the operating context (i.e. group, community, region or country). Conflict-sensitive considerations should guide the decisions for all the activities of the assessment and appropriate precautions should be taken to avoid allowing the assessment to exacerbate local conflict dynamics or inadvertently empower new groups of stakeholders to the disadvantage of others. It is therefore highly recommended to constantly scrutinise and monitor actions to ensure alignment with the “Do No Harm” principle.

Iteration

Conflict analysis tools can prompt very different reactions among conflict experts. Some embrace the toolkit with great enthusiasm and welcome a structured approach to analysis processes that were previously conducted in arbitrary or unsystematic ways. Others approach the same tools with some hesitancy and trepidation as they see some probable value added in adopting a methodology but fail to see the practical applications of theory to real-life situations. Finally, there is another group of practitioners that reject those tools with sarcasm and even unwarranted cynicism. They rebuff analytical methods as intellectual or fictional constructs of academics and believe that only field presence and routine observation can provide a compass to understand what is going on. Luckily, this last category is slowly but progressively being overcome, not only by institutional procedures and policy directives but also by the consensus that current analytical capacities, especially in international organisations, have not delivered effective assessments but rather have led to poor judgements and wrong decisions.

Negative reactions often result from a certain fatigue with conflict analysis tools. Once they have been learned and adopted, those tools are used mechanically in linear sequence (first situation, then causal and stakeholder analysis). These types of exercises eventually produce very general and superficial assessments. The key to addressing this problem is to fully understand the potential of each tool and its limitations. Practicing with each tool clearly provides an incremental analytical edge as the conflict system is progressively disentangled, majority assumptions are broken down, personal blind spots are acknowledged, and grey areas are explored. However, at some point in the analysis process, there may be a need (or it may prove beneficial to the quality of the process) to move from one tool to another before getting back to the same tool. This triangulation among tools reflects the fact that conflict analyses are iterative processes and not binary input-output procedures.

2. Inventory of traditional tools

Fisher and his colleagues (2000) define conflict analysis as a “practical process of examining and understanding the reality of a conflict from a variety of perspectives” (p. 17). In order to do so and to identify key factors shaping the context in which interventions are – or will be – implemented, conflict analysts should focus at least on the profile of the situation, the issues at stake and the actors involved, along with relevant peace and conflict dynamics. It is for this reason that, while sometimes different in purpose and coverage, most conflict analysis frameworks entail similar steps or basic elements, as illustrated in the diagram in this page and explained in the following paragraphs.



Each sub-analysis can be conducted in several ways. This handbook recommends using a selection of practical and flexible tools to systematise the conduct of the analysis and to brainstorm on the various aspects of a conflict. These tools are also a good support for knowledge management and guide the report-writing phase that translates analytical findings into narrative form. Overall, the inventory of conflict analysis tools presents and defines 20 tools, which are drawn on both the sources reviewed in the extended Annotated Bibliography (see Annex 1) and on the direct experience of UNSSC. In this handbook, traditional conflict analysis tools are organised under four categories, which reflect the most recurrent and widely accepted analytical structure: 1) Situation Profile; 2) Causal Analysis; 3) Stakeholder Analysis; and 4) Analysis of Peace and Conflict Dynamics. Concrete examples and tips regarding the use and triangulation among tools will follow later in the document (see Section 3).

MAIN COMPONENTS OF TRADITIONAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS		
1.	Situation Profile	General overview of the situation
2.	Causal Analysis	Survey of the issues and factors of conflict and instability
3.	Stakeholder Analysis	Mapping of main conflict players and review of their role and influence on the conflict
4.	Analysis of Peace and Conflict Dynamics	Examination of the interaction among background situation, conflict causes and stakeholders and the trends and changes produced over time

Situation Profile

Generally, conflict analysis starts with a situation profile that aims to briefly outline “the current and emerging historical, political, economic, security, socio-cultural and environmental context in a conflict-affected area at a specific point in time” (UNDP 2015, p. 19). Violent conflicts do not occur in a vacuum. The situation profile focuses on the big picture, representing an entry point to understand the situation on the ground and providing an introductory characterisation of the context as well as an overall sense of the conflict. The development of a situation profile generates the first level of information required to acquire a deeper understanding of the conflicts at later stages.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What are the key historical events in the country?
Is there a history of conflict?

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

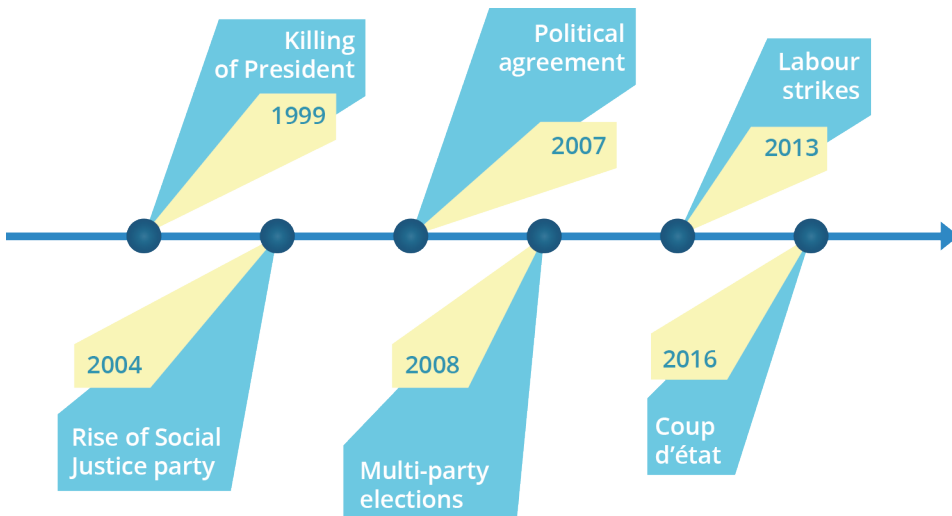
What are the gendered impact of the conflict on women, men, boys and girls?

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

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

Tool 1: Timeline

The Timeline is a simple tool that shows key events graphically plotted against time from an analyst’s perspective. Depending on the scale, it can include years, months or days of events and circumstances relevant for both the



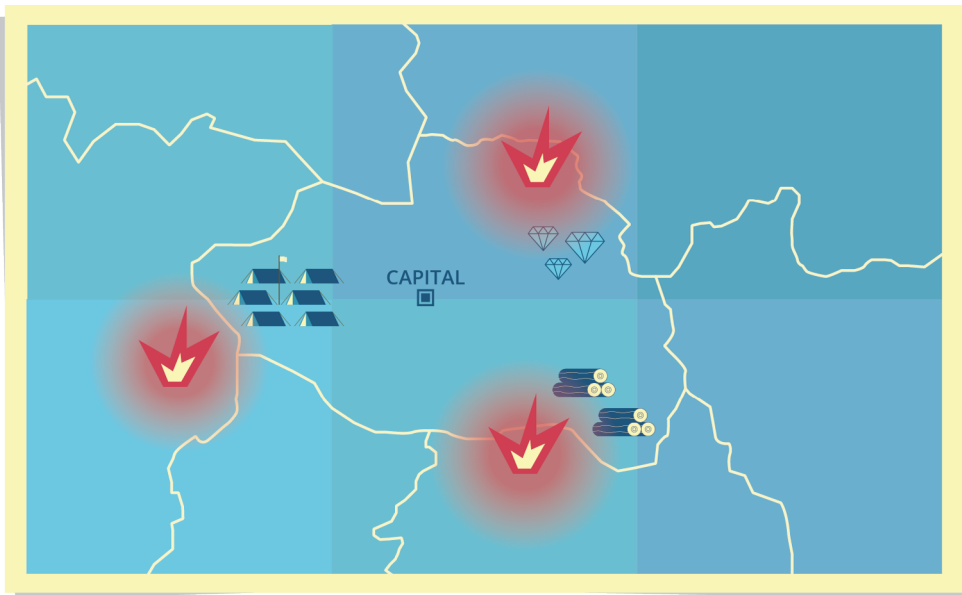
eruption and the evolution of a given conflict. Since in conflict situations people – especially stakeholders – might have different experiences and perceptions about their understanding of the conflict’s history, the Timeline is a tool for clarity rather than analysis. In fact, using Timelines is convenient to observe different interpretations and distinguish between various perspectives. In conflict analysis, using this tool is a way to acknowledge that there is no single “truth” concerning history. It is therefore crucial to comprehend different views and sensitivities in order to get a more nuanced understanding of the conflict. Different individuals note different events, understand them in distinct ways, describe them differently and, importantly, attach constraining emotions to them. Along with other analytical tools, the Timeline supports both the early process of analysis and the later stages (e.g. planning and strategy-building) by providing qualitative information that is useful to identify which events are most important and how far apart the perceptions of opposing parties to the conflict might be. Moreover, it is a suitable tool during mediations and negotiations processes, especially when people disagree about events or do not know about each other’s history.

Comments and Variations:

- Depending on the context and on the purpose of the analysis in its entirety, it might be useful to develop a Timeline of peace initiatives.
- In cases of personality-driven conflicts it may be useful to draw a Timeline tracing the highlights of antagonism and the crucial instances that have shaped a rivalry.
- When there is more than one conflict taking place simultaneously, possibly in different locations, or when the number of stakeholders increases the complexity of the situation, it might be necessary to draw different Timelines and then compare them.
- To better capture conflict trends and intensity, it is appropriate to use the Timeline in combination with other tools, notably the curve of conflict (see Tool 3).

Tool 2: Conflict Arena and Geographical Mapping

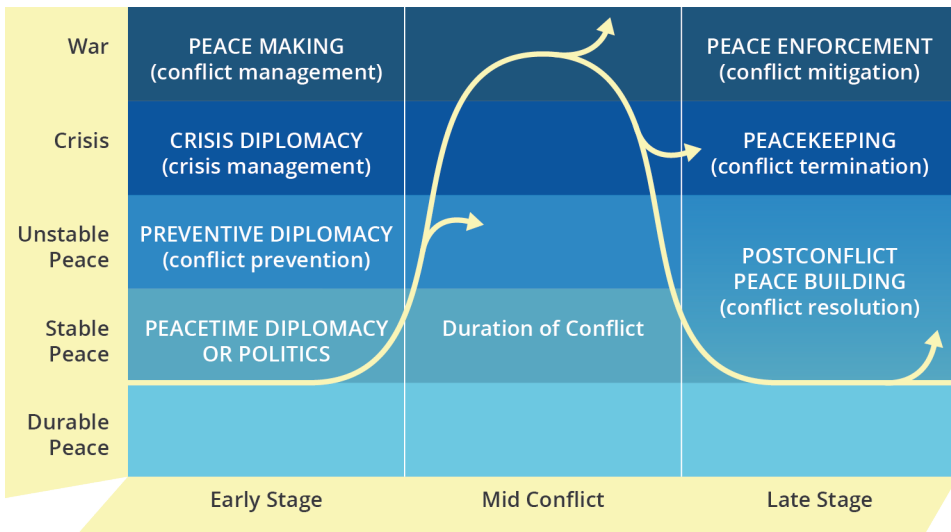
Conflict Arena and Geographical Mapping is a tool supporting a spatial analysis of conflict. Its aim is to plot critical factors or features in order to visually capture areas of influence, significant borders and communication links, locations of natural resources and patterns of violence, among others. Given that these factors often play an important role, mapping this kind of spatial information might be crucial to fully understand territorial aspects and dynamics and their implications for both the internal and the regional contexts (e.g. to identify external influences and areas of tension or safety). Moreover, a participatory approach to these tools might disclose the symbolic values of certain territories, thus informing the analysis with significant qualitative information about subjective and local perspectives.



Tool 3: Curve of Conflict

The Curve of Conflict is a graphic tool that shows the course of a conflict over a certain period of time, passing through different stages of activity, levels of intensity and scales of violence (i.e. conflict stages). Generally, the Curve of Conflict contains five general phases of conflict escalation:

1. Pre-Conflict or Latent Conflict;
2. Confrontation or Conflict Escalation;
3. Crisis or Acute Conflict;
4. Outcome or Conflict Settlement;
5. (Transition to) Post-Conflict Situation.



Adapted from: Lund 1996

The Curve of Conflict represents a simplification of reality; conflicts only rarely escalate and de-escalate in a linear way, while several conflict cycles are likely to occur. Nevertheless, this tool is a valuable means to visually capture how conflict changes over time and locate the current situation within the overall course of the conflict. This tool can stimulate discussions concerning the reasons behind a certain development of the conflict and the factors influencing its trends and patterns. Besides, reflecting on these issues may facilitate the forecast of possible future directions of the conflict, thus allowing a more coherent scenario-building process at a later stage of the analysis. In addition, when planning or strategising activities in a conflict context, distinguishing between stages of conflict might support practitioners in recognising challenges and opportunities associated with different levels of intensity and engagement.

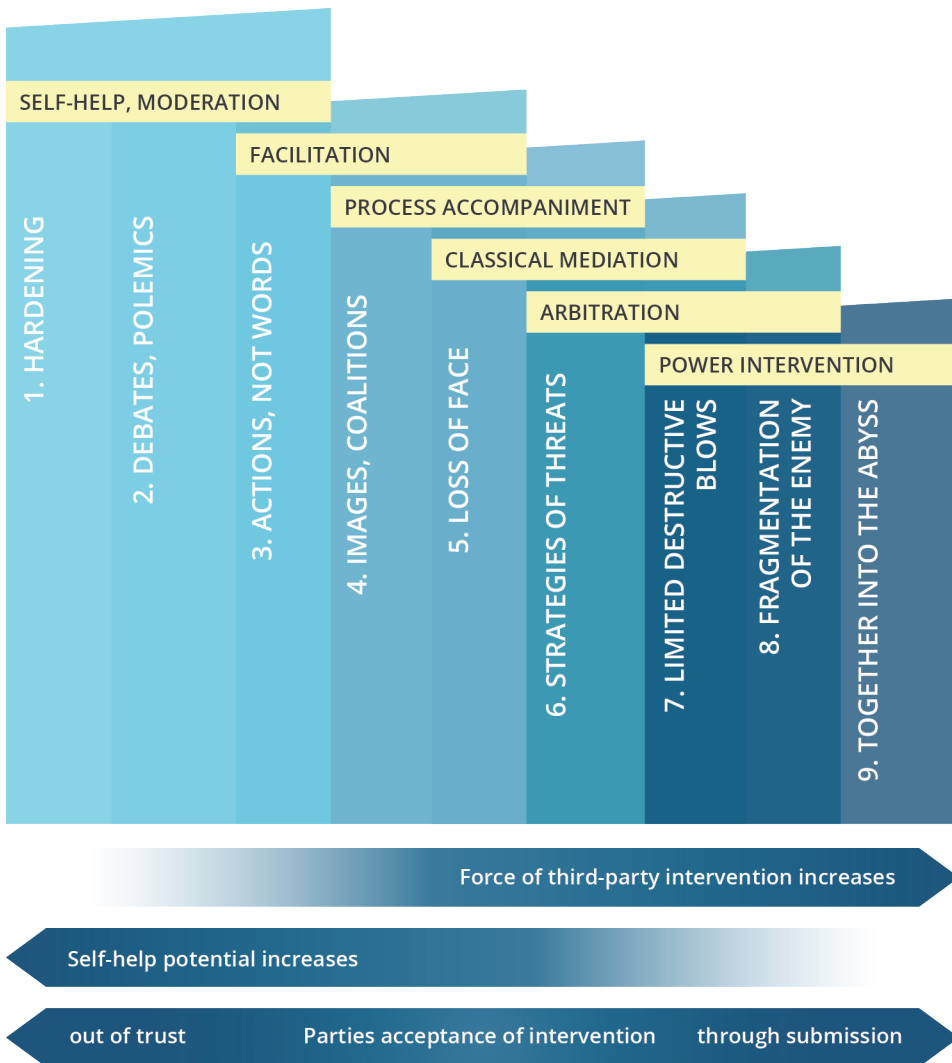
Comments and Variations:

- As already suggested, in order to link the history of conflict with its evolution in terms of intensity and escalation, it is often recommended to complement the Curve of Conflict with a Timeline relating to the same period.
- Depending on the nature and geographic extension of the conflict under consideration, recording the Curve of Conflict for different regions or areas separately might provide interesting insights concerning possible discrepancies and differences within the same overall conflict. Likewise, different viewpoints belonging to diverse stakeholders should be carefully considered.
- In some circumstances, showing the escalation of conflict in a downward direction may be convenient. This variation in the use of the tool, for instance, underlines specific features of the conflict such as its intractability, the depth of the crisis and the difficulties in changing the situation constructively. In turn, this would enhance reflections on conflict dynamics and facilitate the triangulation of the Curve of Conflict with other analytical tools focusing specifically on how conflict factors interact and the impact of such interactions.

Tool 4: Conflict Escalation Stages

Friedrich Glasl's seminal book *Konfliktmanagement* (1997) provides a very useful diagnostic tool that examines the logic of conflict escalation and the possible responses that may de-escalate tensions. The model presents a theoretical conflict timeline defined by nine main stages, each of them characterised by an increasing level of tension and more entrenched positions by the parties. As a consequence, the level of response varies at each stage, becoming more forceful as the situation moves on. In the early stages (from 1 to 3) self-help is considered possible and a settlement is accepted out of trust; mid-stages (4 to 6) are generally seen as the typical situations where facilitation and mediation by a third-party are effective; the late stages (7 to 9) leave limited room for mediated solutions and are often characterised by situations where forceful solutions need to be enforced by a third party. The pedagogical linearity of the model has no ambition to reflect the course of real conflicts. Glasl acknowledges that most conflicts undergo very fragmented and discontinuous phases. Sometimes conflicts maintain certain levels of tension for long periods before a sudden escalation or de-escalation. However, this tool is very useful to map the evolution of the conflict and therefore provide a contextual assessment, while supporting the identification of the most suitable response. At the same time, it can be used as a reference to determine the conflict dynamics and possibly project future developments.

CONDUCTING A CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS



Adapted from: SDC 2005

Tool 5: Issue Matrix

The Issue Matrix is a tool intended to collect and subsequently systematise conflict-relevant information in order to obtain an introductory “snapshot” of the current and emerging context. This tool provides a baseline from which to review existing literature and analysis. As such, it helps disclose information gaps and create a common understanding of the “basics” of a country. The matrix guides the analysis through the areas that are relevant to developing a descriptive overview of the situation (e.g. political system, socio-cultural

	Political	Economic	Social	Environment	Security
International					Violent extremism
Regional / sub-regional	Autonomy claim by minority group				
National					Inter-ethnic clashes
Sub-national		Economically deprived IDPs			
Local				Pollution by mining companies	

aspects, economic issues, neighbour relations). In view of the uniqueness of each conflict, the information required to obtain a comprehensive overview may vary quite extensively. As a consequence, a map of appropriate areas of inquiry and specific guiding questions can be developed prior to the analytical process itself⁴. Relevant information and findings can be then summarised in a table or briefly outlined in a narrative report.

Comments and Variations:

- The Issue Matrix can provide a useful reference for subsequent trend analysis and monitoring of the situation as the conflict goes through different phases. To this end, analysts should make sure that specific indicators are identified to measure the evolution of the conflict.

⁴ Standard checklists are widely available. Some of the questions look at the following macro-areas of a country or regional profile, i.e.: a) security of civilians; b) population movements and displacement; c) militarization of society; d) state authority and legitimacy; e) rule of law; f) employment and distribution of economic revenues; g) group identity and cohesion; etc. Upon request, UNSSC can provide interested analysts with a detailed checklist of screening questions.

Causal Analysis

Conflicts never have a single cause. Conflict analysis therefore also requires a multi-dimensional assessment of existing conflict causes and potential sources of tension. Causal analysis is a fundamental component of the process, which aims at looking beyond the visible manifestations of conflict – frequently in the form of violence – in order to focus on the factors underlying them. The purpose of conducting a causal analysis is to identify the multiple factors causing or driving conflict, as well as to disclose “the degree to which [these] factors are entrenched in any context, and the degree of pervasion and influence” (UNDP 2015, p. 13).

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

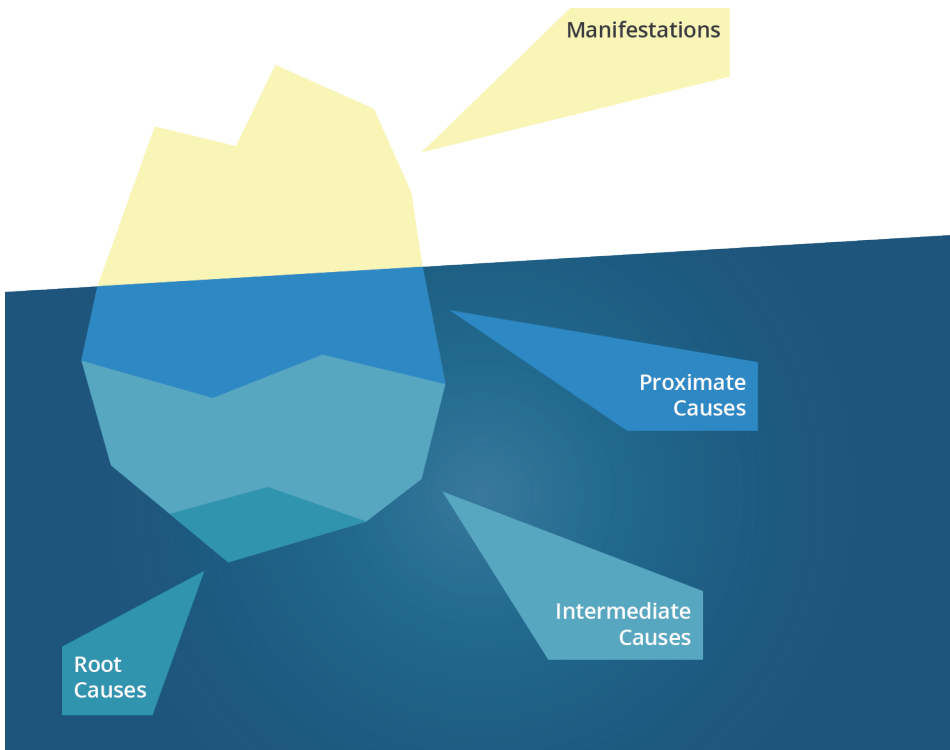
What are the key sources of tension and the underlying structural causes that could lead to structural instability in the society?

What issues can be considered proximate causes of conflict?

What factors can contribute to promoting peace?

Tool 6: Iceberg

The Iceberg is a visual model showing different levels of causation. The analogy with an iceberg is particularly appropriate to understand the critical and hidden role played by root and structural causes in threatening the stability of the situation. Like the submerged part of an iceberg, most of the conflict causes are difficult to detect and identify. Conversely, the effects of conflicts are usually clearly visible, much like the top part of an iceberg. Nonetheless, as the Titanic disaster recalls, underestimating the influence of deep underlying factors on the outbreak and continuation of conflict might be risky.

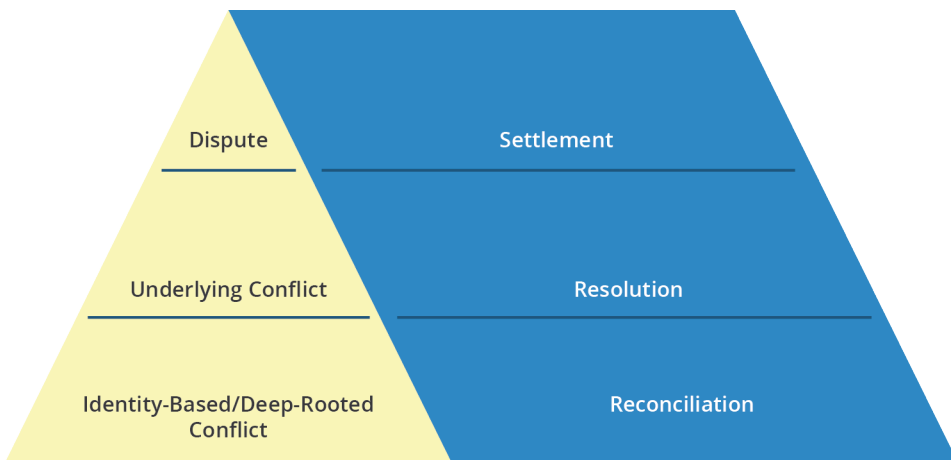


Comments and Variations:

- Another means to differentiate between root or structural causes and more recent or proximate causes is the analogy with a volcano. Along with these levels of causation, this visual model adds triggers and catalysts.
- The Iceberg model also serves to differentiate between the different forms of violence labelled by Galtung; the top part symbolises “direct violence” and the submerged part represents “structural violence” and “cultural violence”.

Tool 7: Levels of Conflict

This tool is not used widely in the UN system⁵ but can be of significant help in determining the severity and types of conflicts that exist in a specific situation, as well as the most appropriate resolution mechanisms. The model categorises three levels of conflict: dispute, underlying and identity-based (or deep-rooted). The first level, the dispute, is the most common and noticeable manifestation of conflict. It is a basic disagreement over a legal duty or a right and it may produce a claim for compensation. A lawsuit over the improper or unauthorised use of personal images on social media is a typical example of dispute. The second level, the underlying conflict, represents a more severe type of conflict, as it is the result of cumulative unresolved disputes. Past actions and decisions by the parties intensify tensions and render their differences more acrimonious as they are heavily influenced by mutual resentment. For instance, neighbour quarrels are often the product of several combined incidents that have left a bitter sense of frustration on both sides and can result in stern encounters. The third level, identity-based conflict, is the most severe and yet sometimes the least visible one. It centres around the values, beliefs, customs and ideals of people, which explains its complexity. Social groups inherit a certain moral compass defining their identity, which at times may clash with that of other groups or may be threatened by the emergence of new legal or political situations. Religious, ethnic and racially motivated hostilities are distinctive examples of identity-based conflict.



Adapted from: Madden and McQuinn 2014

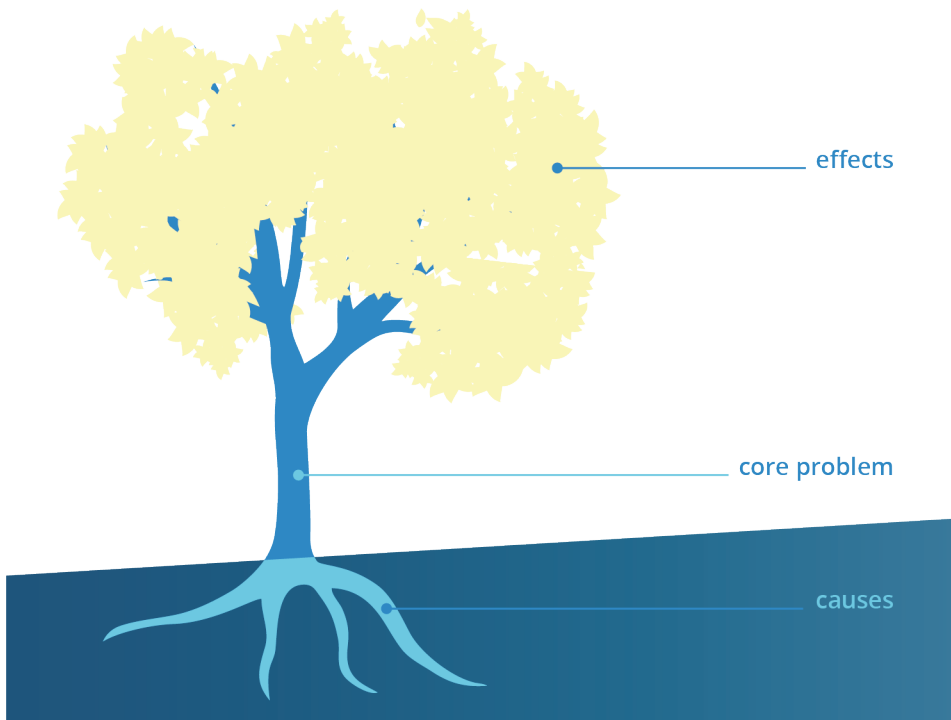
This tool also provides analysts with the corresponding response to address conflict at each level. Settlement is the mechanism generally proposed to address disputes, resolution can tackle underlying conflicts, whereas reconciliation is the process required to address identity-based conflicts. The three resolution methods obviously have very different timelines, with settlement

⁵ The tool was originally developed by the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution (2000).

and reconciliation being at the two extremes of the spectrum. However, this model is often evoked as a good visual of conflict transformation work; in order to change the negative and vicious dynamics of a deep-rooted conflict one can start by addressing the disputes and build on the temporary consensus to address other more entrenched issues.

Tool 8: Conflict Tree

The Conflict Tree is a graphic tool based on the classical “problem tree” method. It aims at identifying and sorting key conflict factors using the image of a tree: the roots represent the underlying or structural causes of conflict; the trunk represents the main manifest issue (i.e. the core problem); and the branches stand for the effects and symptoms of conflict. Overall, this analytical tool serves as an initial step in preparation for further analyses and as an entry point for planning. In fact, the Conflict Tree is a way to get basic understanding of the nature of the conflict without associating it only with the visible core problem and effects. The central idea, indeed, is to ensure that core problems, root causes and effects are correctly identified. However, this exercise is often challenging and might stimulate discussion about causes and effects, and how they relate to each other. In particular, it may easily happen that recurring issues can be considered both a cause and an effect of a particular conflict, hence drawing attention to the cyclic nature of some conflicts.



Adapted from: Fisher et al. 2000

Comments and Variations:

- When possible, this tool is best used collectively rather than individually, since it can encourage stimulating reflections on different perspectives..
- According to the nature of the conflict under consideration, it might be necessary to complete several different Conflict Trees for each of the main issues. If this is the case, it is important to investigate if, how, and to what extent the trees interact with one another. For instance, do effects in one tree reinforce causes in another tree? Are there similar causes in several trees? Are there emerging patterns?
- A less creative version of the tool consists of a simple table with three columns representing: (a) contributing factors or root causes; (b) driving factors or core problem; and (c) consequences and effects.

Tool 9: Conflict Pillars

In every conflict there are factors prolonging and sustaining an otherwise unstable situation. These factors often have a great influence on the course of conflict and, therefore, it is important to establish how they “hold up” the conflict. The Conflict Pillars tool can help identify the supporting factors of core problems and find out how they can be weakened, removed or replaced. This tool is particularly suitable to investigate structural issues such as inequality, discrimination and injustice. In addition, it is useful for isolating entry points for responses.



Adapted from: Fisher et al. 2000

Comments and Variations:

- The Conflict Pillars tool can be adapted to support the stakeholder analysis. This is done by associating each pillar with those actors that, through their indifference, action or disagreement, support the status quo.
- As with the Conflict Tree, one could run different iterations of this tool, one for each of the key issues that require analysis. In this case, it may prove useful to track those issues that recur in the different phases of the exercise to isolate key driving factors of instability (or stability).

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis is a fundamental part of any conflict assessment. It identifies and examines critical local, national, regional and international actors who can affect and influence, or who are affected by, the conflict. Some of

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What are the main stakeholders?

What are their main positions, interests and needs?

What are their capacities, constituencies, power bases and resources?

What are the relationships between all stakeholders, and how are they connected?

What stakeholders can be identified as peace agents? Why?

the conflict analysis frameworks reviewed distinguish three categories of stakeholders, according to the degree of their involvement in the context, i.e. primary, secondary and external. Other frameworks differentiate stakeholders according to the social level (or arena) in which they are active – notably grass-roots, middle level, or top level – and the type of actor they represent, such as individuals, groups, organisations or institutions. This segment of analysis crucially explores goals, positions, capacities and resources of stakeholders, and their relationships with other players. As described by Van Brabant (2010), this kind of analysis “tries to learn about the full spectrum of actors (visible and less visible) that matter with regard to

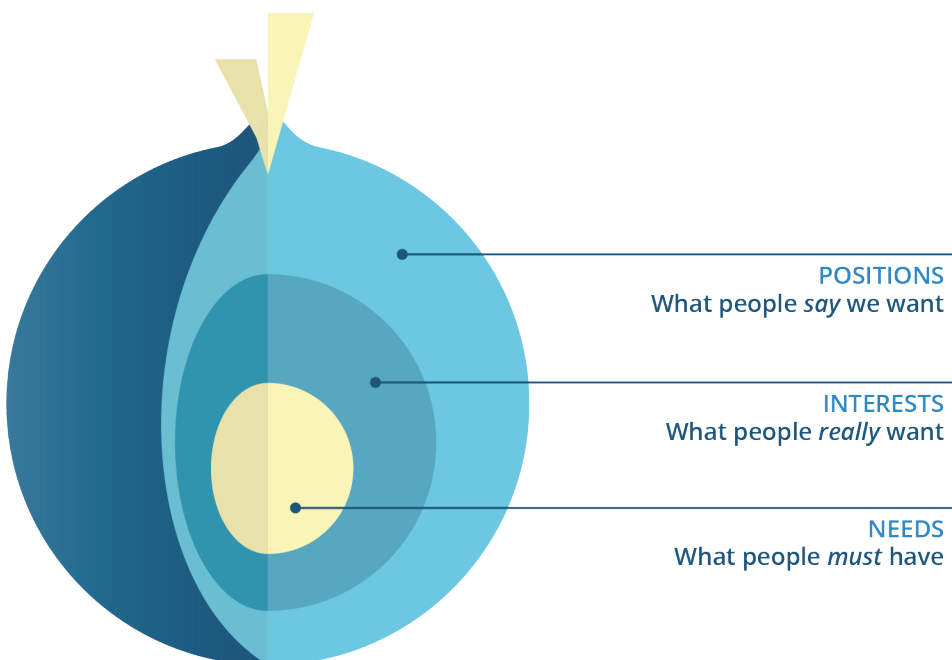
the destructive dynamics that prevail but also that can matter to turn into a more constructive dynamic” (p. 6). In this sense, such actors should also be assessed in relation to their agendas and capacities for peace, pointing at “their capacity of conflict management, their legitimacy, the likelihood of their engagement and the possible roles they can adopt” (FEWER *et al.* 2004, Ch. 2, p. 4).

Tool 10: Onion

Conflict parties tend to hide their basic needs, hence altering perceptions and the attitudes that drive their relations. This is due to the fact that informing potential enemies about one's own needs is often perceived as a risk that increases existing vulnerabilities. As a consequence, in volatile situations, actions and behaviours are often based on interests and, when those are threatened, people usually rely on positions further removed from their actual needs. The Onion tool uses a visual analogy to detect the positions, interests and needs that influence the behaviour of the conflict parties. It consists of concentric circles showing – from the outside to the inside positions – interests and needs of each stakeholder. According to Fisher (2000), the three concepts can be defined as follows:

- Positions: what people say they want;
- Interests: what people really want;
- Needs: what people must have.

The point of this model is to demonstrate graphically that, although in a conflict there are many dynamics and layers to consider, only those on the surface are visible at first. Therefore, it is necessary to “peel away” as many layers as possible in order to reach the underlying needs that drive people's actions. For this reason, the idea is to carry out the Onion analysis for each party involved. Using this tool can also bring new insights into protracted and intractable conflicts, which often involve hidden, distorted or changing needs.



Adapted from: Fisher et al. 2000

Comments and Variations:

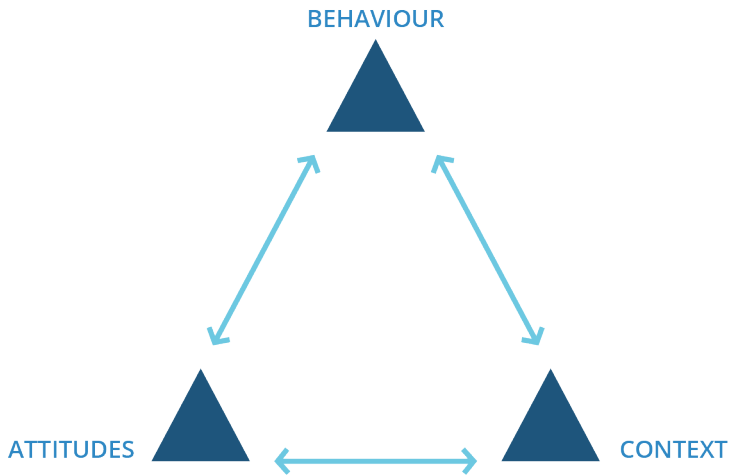
- The Onion can be used in conjunction with the Stakeholder Matrix (see Tool 14), with the difference that the Onion, being a visual tool, can induce multi-party discussions and is also more intuitive, while the matrix is more helpful for systematising information and providing a more comprehensive profile of a stakeholder.
- The Onion model can also be applied as part of an analysis to understand the dynamics of a conflict situation. It can also be used as preparation for facilitated dialogue processes between groups, or as part of a mediation process.
- When conducting this exercise for the different conflict actors, it is important to identify and underline possible similarities and areas of divergence in the interests or needs of the parties considered. Accordingly, it might be appropriate to draw the Onions in a way that facilitates comparisons (e.g. overlapping Onions or triangles).

Tool 11: ABC Triangle

The ABC Triangle is a tool based on Johan Galtung's premise that conflicts have three major components, namely Attitude (A), Behaviour (B) and Context (C).

- "Attitude" refers to the psychological state of stakeholders, their emotions and feelings;
- "Behaviour" involves actions undertaken, either positive or negative;
- "Context" considers the overall situation, notably in political, economic and social terms.

These components are graphically represented as the corners of a triangle, symbolising the conflict as a whole. Conflicts can be initiated, exacerbated or mitigated by focusing on each of the three angles. The arrows indicate the mutual impact that attitudes, behaviours, and context have on each other. This analogy can serve to analyse factors related to attitude, behaviour and context from the viewpoint of each of the major parties to the conflict. As a consequence, the ABC Triangle is suitable for understanding and comparing the different perspectives of stakeholders in relation to the conflict, due to their diverse experiences and concerns. In fact, the tool is specifically intended to consider the perspectives of others, to understand what either prompts or constrains the actions of different parties.



Adapted from: Fisher et al. 2000

Comments and Variations:

- The ABC Triangle can be used to define different types of violence. Attitude commonly refers to cultural or symbolic violence, Behaviour indicates direct violence, and Context designates structural violence.

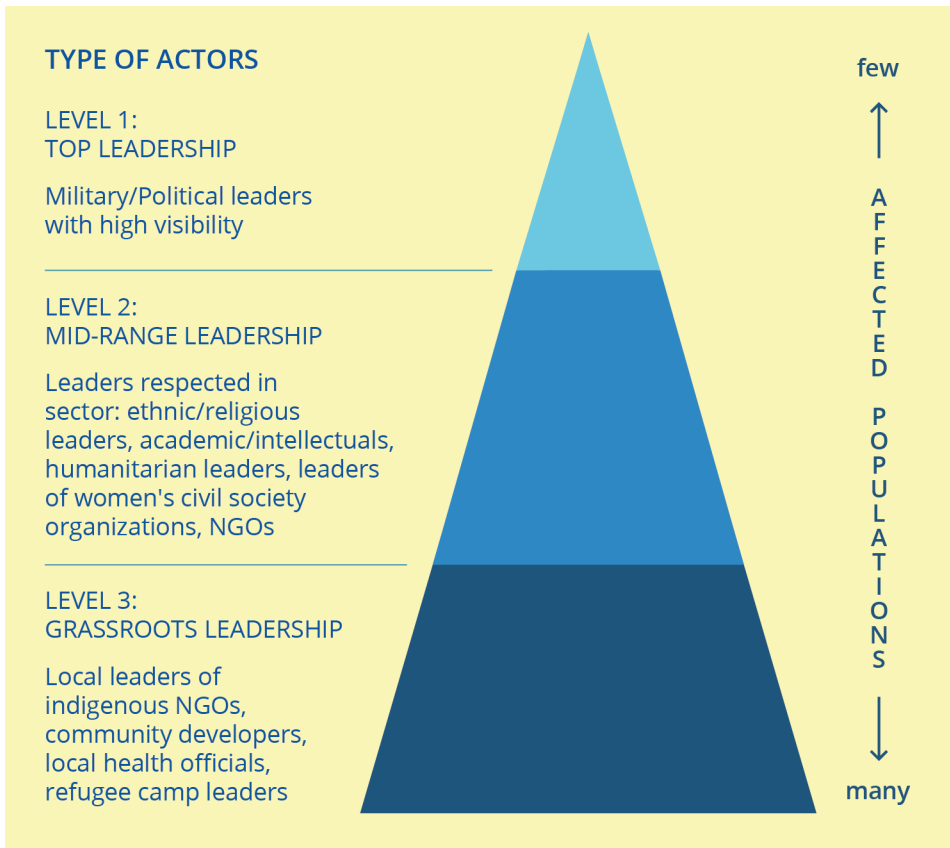
Tool 12: Inventory of Stakeholders

This tool guides analysts through a screening procedure, which focuses the analysis on the actual stakeholders who are relevant to the conflict under investigation. It is common practice to start immediately with a stakeholder map but the output is often a crowded and incomprehensible graph (the so-called “spaghetti chart”) where all stakeholders are somehow connected. Creating an inventory of stakeholders permits reflection on key players and prevents losing track of some critical but perhaps less visible stakeholders. This tool can help in creating an inventory to use in the following stages of stakeholder analysis.

STAKEHOLDERS	Area of influence or relevance			Type of conflict		
	National level	Regional level	Local level	Political	Socio-economic	Issue-based (e.g. natural resources)
Ruling party	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Government-affiliated youth militias	✓			✓		
Army	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Police	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Foreign oil companies	✓		✓			✓
Women's NGOs		✓			✓	
Community elders			✓		✓	
Minority groups	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
IDPs		✓			✓	✓
Church			✓		✓	

Tool 13: Pyramid

The Pyramid is a tool introduced by John Paul Lederach in the context of peacebuilding interventions. It shows how stakeholders are hierarchically positioned in society and in relation to the conflict itself. Lederach argues that often it is either stakeholders at the top level or those at the grassroots who receive the greatest attention in the resolution of conflicts. However, he attributes more significance to the mid-level – or middle ground – a space generally populated by less visible actors, such as business entrepreneurs, tribal or religious leaders, academics, trade union delegates, media managers, youth leaders, opinion-makers and key advisors to political leaders. The significance of these stakeholders derives from their linkages with both the highest level and the grassroots level. As such, middle-level influencers and institutions are the *strategic “who”*, namely those stakeholders who can instigate change, create consensus and generate a critical mass of support for peace agendas. In conflict situations, the middle ground is generally seen as irrelevant or inactive because it is marginalised or lacks the resources to act as mitigating factor. This tool can help identify key actors at each level and prompt considerations as to how to build constructive linkages between the various levels.



Adapted from: Lederach 1998

Comments and Variations:

- In complex conflicts, it is suggested to build a Pyramid for each level and to identify its own elite, middle and lower players.
- It is suggested to use a Pyramid for each party to the conflict. This way, it should be relatively easy to compare them and reflect on their linkages and interactions. The Pyramid can also be used to map relationships, as a complementary tool to the Stakeholder Map (see Tool 15).

Tool 14: Stakeholder Matrix

The output of a Stakeholder Matrix is a comprehensive peace and conflict profile of each key stakeholder. This tool provides an overview of the logic and motives behind stakeholders’ behaviours. Moreover, to acknowledge different interests, needs and fears of stakeholders in relation to the conflict, the matrix can support attempts to reframe the core problem and stimulate discussions on common solutions. Key stakeholders are those who are actively engaged in the conflict – either negatively (e.g. belligerent parties and spoilers) or positively (e.g. peacebuilders and agents of positive change) – and those most vulnerable to it. As a consequence, it is crucial first to distinguish between primary, secondary and external stakeholders. The matrix focuses on several key aspects of stakeholders:

- Characteristics: the main features that describe the stakeholders (typology, size, organisational set-up, nature of organisation, etc.)
- Positions: their perspective on fundamental issues (official demands, public declarations, etc.)
- Interests: their interests in relation to the conflict and how these interests can influence the conflict.
- Needs: the underlying concerns, desires and fears that lie behind the publicly articulated demands.
- Capacities: resources and capabilities available to influence the conflict, either positively or negatively
- Peace agendas: their vision of peace (if any) and future plans.

The information gathered should then be included in a matrix, which briefly summarises relevant findings and reflections.

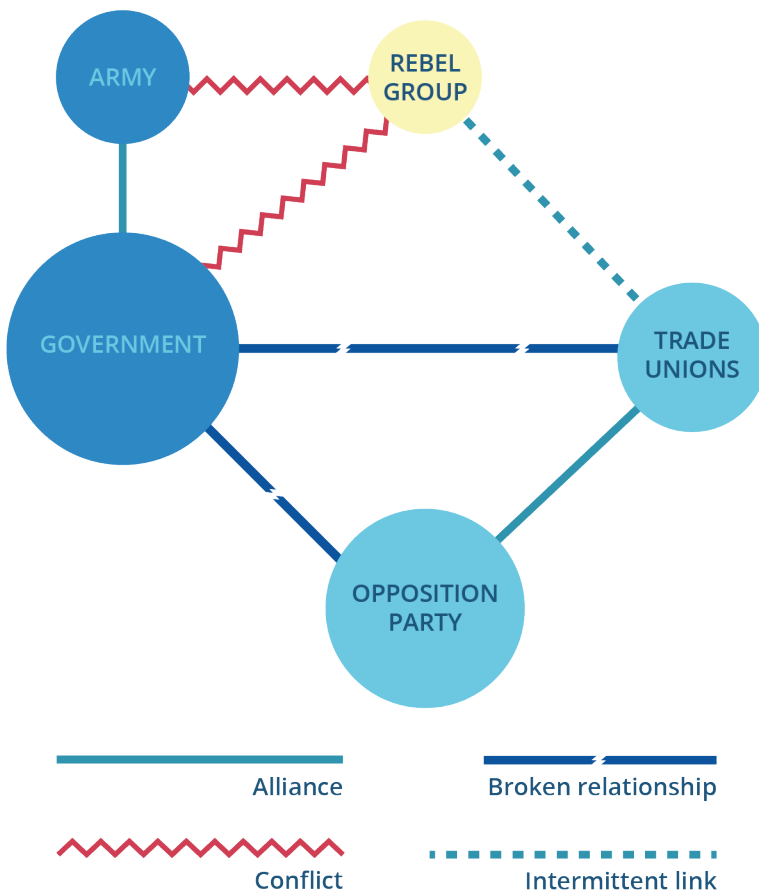
	Primary Stakeholders	Secondary Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
Characteristics			
Positions			
Interests			
Needs			
Capacities			
Peace Agendas			

Comments and Variations:

- The Stakeholder Matrix and the onion are usually complementary, although the Onion should come first in the process iteration and it is more intuitive and less process-intensive.
- Depending on the conflict and on the purpose of the analysis, the matrix can include other variables (capacities to cope with problems, willingness and capacity to negotiate, leverage, implications for peacebuilding, etc.)

Tool 15: Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder Mapping is a visual technique for representing relationships between actors in a conflict setting. The overall aim of this exercise is to graphi-



Adapted from: Fisher et al. 2000

cally show existing connections, the nature of those connections and, possibly, stakeholders' positions regarding specific conflict issues. Conducting a mapping exercise may disclose connections otherwise overlooked or point at unknown relationships, hence providing sharper insights into the conflict. Each stakeholder is represented by a circle, the size of which indicates the strength of that particular actor within the context considered. This particular technique also makes the tool suitable for visualising and reflecting on power relations. Moreover, this tool is useful to identify marginalised constituencies, programme target groups and potential partners, and then to observe their positions within the conflict system. For this reason, it is essential to include in the map peace-supporting and non-violent parties in order to determine how those positive agents can be engaged, supported and not harmed by potential interventions. This is certainly one of the most useful techniques of the conflict analysis toolkit.

Comments and Variations:

- It is important to acknowledge that a mapping process is inherently subjective and partial, thus it cannot enlighten all aspects of a complex reality. As a consequence, it is often useful to draw different maps of the same situation according to different viewpoints and perceptions. This can be a valuable exercise during negotiation and mediation processes.
- Conflict situations are very dynamic and change constantly. Therefore, it is important to revisit the map from time to time in order to represent the situation more truthfully.

Analysis of Peace and Conflict Dynamics

Based on the previous steps, the analysis of peace and conflict dynamics explores the interaction among background situation, identified conflict causes

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What consequences may conflict triggers have on the causes and key stakeholders?

What are the main mechanisms and logics driving the conflict?

Are there any redundancies in behaviours and actions?

Can specific patterns be identified in the occurrence of violence?

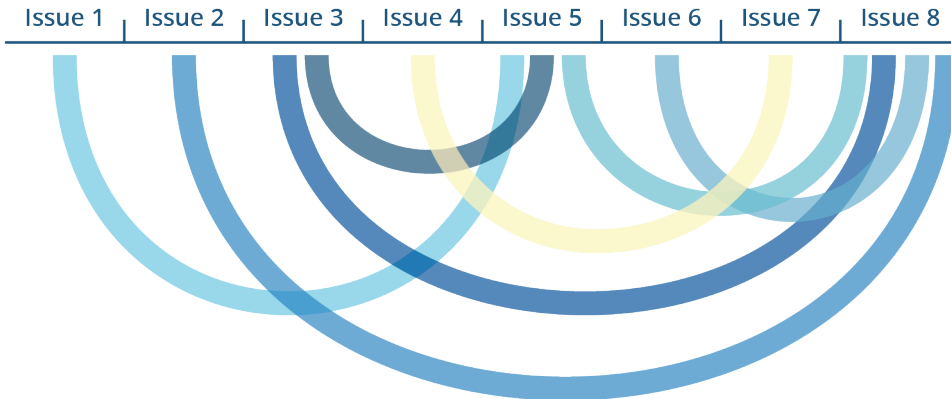
What likely scenarios can be developed from the analysis of the conflict profile, causes and actors?

What are the main capacities for managing conflict?

and stakeholders involved. Understanding these correlations is key to assessing the likelihood for conflict to increase, decrease or remain stable. In essence, the focus of this step of conflict analysis is on the dynamic forces that drive negative or positive change. Understanding these aspects helps to identify common patterns that feature conflict and violence in a country.

Tool 16: Issues Synergies Diagram

The essence of effective analysis for conflict dynamics is to focus on describing the nature of the causal interaction (the “how and why” of a conflict situation). As explained earlier, conflicts are characterised by a number of factors and features, which may vary in importance. Conflict causes do not exist independently of one another, but interact with and influence each other in varying combinations. In order to understand the combined effect of various conflict factors (i.e. the so-called “confluence”), it is recommended to assess the relative importance and interrelationships of identified conflict causes. In this regard, it could be appropriate to start by depicting their linkages and synergies in a simple diagram. The idea is thus to identify the key issues of a given conflict and to explore linkages or synergies among them simply by



Adapted from: GTZ 2001

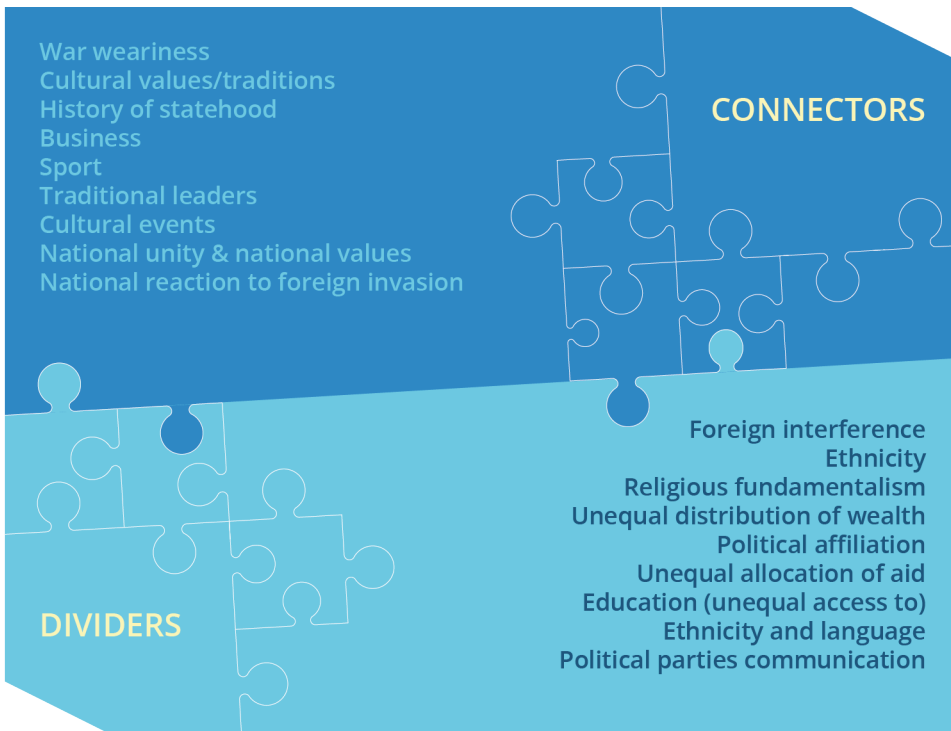
drawing arrows to visualise ongoing flows of influence. This exercise can reveal potentially unexpected linkages between issues and therefore cluster different problems that need to be addressed with comprehensive responses.

Comments and Variations:

- The Nugget is a variation of this tool. The diagram emerging from the intersecting circles (thus the name “nugget”) is simply a visual representation of the interdependency and mutual influence of conflict factors that becomes apparent when aligning the findings of the analysis of individual conflict causes. In this case, analysts can align the Icebergs visuals developed earlier in the analysis and identify potential overlaps, influence and correlation among different causes.
- Some useful questions in this phase are the following: How can we describe the interaction between the identified causes? Do they reinforce one another, or do they create new issues?
- If time allows, analysts could try to develop descriptive statements (even one or two sentences) to capture emerging interactions and their dynamics.

Tool 17: Connectors and Dividers

Every conflict situation emerges from the interaction of two driving forces: Connectors and Dividers. Connectors are elements within a society that bring together or connect people across subgroups despite their differences. At the



other side of the spectrum, dividers are those elements that are not subject to consensus in society and serve as sources of tension and cleavage in society. Connectors and dividers are context-specific and the same elements that work as connectors in one society can be dividers in another one (e.g. religion and identity). Connectors and dividers are not fixed in time but can be progressively reinforced or undermined, thus fuelling conflict or leading to peaceful coexistence.

An effective Connectors and Dividers analysis is the bottom line for “Do No Harm” approaches and it can pre-empt perverse effects or negative impacts of third-party interventions. This exercise is usually performed by means of brainstorming and discussion at the end of which identified dividers and connectors can be sorted in a table for easy reference and monitoring.

Tool 18: Force-Field Analysis

Closely linked to the analysis of connectors and dividers is the so-called Force-Field Analysis. Once conflict factors have been established, this tool can prompt reflection on how different forces influence the conflict. In particular, this tool helps establish which forces are supporting (i.e. positive/driving factors) or hindering (i.e. negative/restraining factors) a desired change in the situation. In order to do so, each relevant factor identified during the static analysis (e.g. situation, causes, stakeholders) has to be included in a table, which provides a visual overview of the interactions between such factors and their relative strength (i.e. thickness of the arrow). Overall, this exercise enhances understanding of what is currently maintaining the status quo and what might exacerbate or reduce the conflict, thus raising awareness on the evolving conflict dynamics.



Adapted from: Fisher et al. 2000

Tool 19: Peace Profile Matrix

In every conflict there are efforts and processes in place aiming to cope with violence and insecurity or trying to mitigate the conflict itself. A survey of peace factors is as important as the analysis of conflict issues. Nonetheless, far too many times the main focus of analysts is on what does not work and what causes violence. A simple method is suggested here to develop a “peace profile” of a given situation. To do so, it is important to differentiate among the following elements:

- On-going Peace Efforts;
- Existing Peace Structures and Processes for Peace (i.e. Infrastructures for Peace);

CONDUCTING A CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS

- Peacebuilding Gaps (i.e. what issues or concerns require attention to sustain peace that are not currently addressed);
- Peacebuilding Synergies (i.e. the combined effect and interrelationships of various peace efforts, factors, processes and structures).

	On-going Peace Efforts	Existing Structures and Processes for Peace	Peacebuilding Gaps	Peacebuilding (and Conflict Mitigation) Synergies
Political	High-level negotiations among Government, army and armed groups	Political Dialogue Forum	No involvement of women political leaders in negotiations. Middle-level leaders lack capacity and skills to influence positively top leaders	More linkages between formal and informal political influencers would strengthen the sustainability of the peace process
Economic	Reform of the mining sector	Kimberly process and international facilitation	Decentralized governance	World Bank's support to macro-economic reforms could be helpful to the on-going political negotiations
Social	None	Informal solidarity networks at the local level	Social cohesion	Social cohesion agenda could be linked with the economic reforms at the municipal level
Cultural/Identity	Inclusive Constitution drafting process	Constituent Assembly	Inclusion of ancestral rights of indigenous people in the draft Constitution	Synergies could be strengthened between local reconciliation initiatives and national political efforts
Security	Ceasefire agreement under review	Civilian peace monitors	Radical groups not included in the ceasefire agreement talks	Children rehabilitation process could be linked to DDR projects targeting child soldiers
Other		Traditional land dispute resolution mechanisms		

Comments and Variations:

- Depending on the nature and the extent of the conflict under consideration, it might be useful to sort information in accordance with different levels of analysis – local, national, regional or international.
- It is also possible to complete the Peace Profile Matrix with information on key actors supporting or positively influencing peace dynamics. In particular, depending on the situation, it might be necessary to include international responses to the conflict (humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding, mediation, etc.)
- A more creative way to visualise the peace profile of the situation might be to represent peace through the analogy with a flower and to distinguish the main elements accordingly: on-going peace efforts (petals); existing processes and structures for peace (stem and roots). Several “peace flowers” might be drawn in order to encourage discussion and reflection on different perspectives, peacebuilding gaps and synergies.

Tool 20: Scenario-building

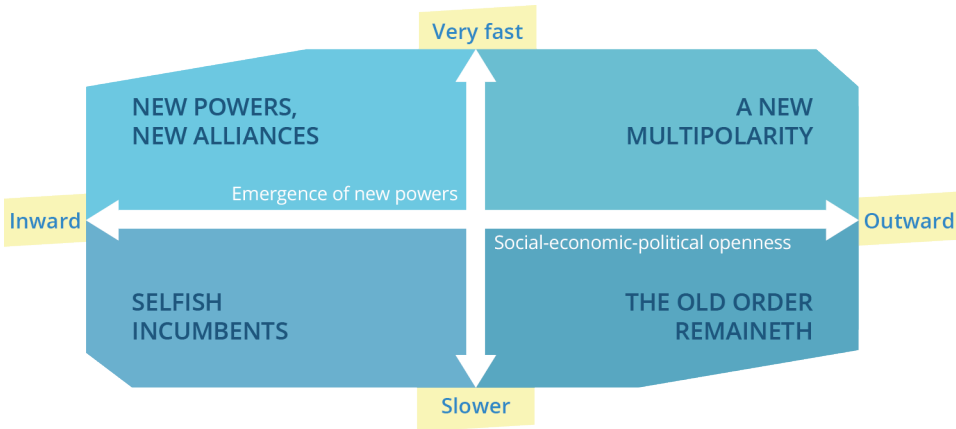
Scenario-building is a technique to portray a hypothetical description of future conditions within a specific time frame. Scenarios are stories (or narratives) set in the future. However, Scenario-building does not represent an attempt to strictly predict the future. Rather, it works as a strategic tool, providing a “reality check” for reviewing strategic options against major challenges and risks, thus stimulating refinements and the formulation of new strategies or broader visions.

Scenarios are prepared according to previously identified trends (i.e. continuities) and triggers (i.e. discontinuities). Indeed, the analysis of longer-term trends is usually complemented by the identification of shorter-term triggers, defined as single crucial acts or events that might escalate the conflict or alter its course – such as violent protests, military coups, natural disasters, assassinations, etc. Based on this analysis, it should be possible to better anticipate future trends and identify windows of opportunity for responding effectively to the conflict. It is common practice to develop a set of scenarios associated with different trends and events. It is useful to develop at least three scenarios: a best-case, a worst-case, and a middle-case or *status quo* scenario. Each of them must be plausible, internally consistent, based on rigorous analysis, engaging and compelling.

We recommend following one of the three methodologies employed by the UK Foresight Horizon Scanning Centre (2009), namely the “*Two axes method*”, the “*Branch analysis method*”, and the “*Cone of plausibility method*”. These are briefly described below.

Two axes method

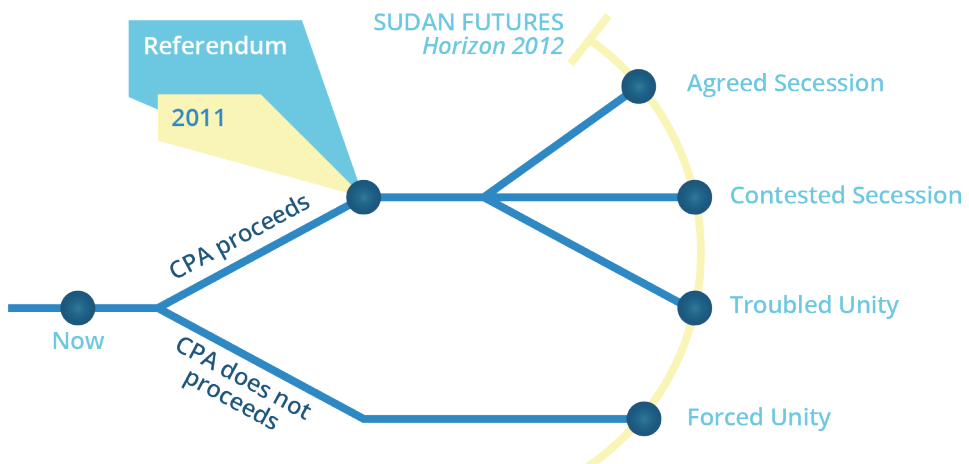
This method aims at generating and illustrating four contrasting scenarios according to a specific area of interest (geographic, thematic, etc.) In order to do so, it is necessary to place “a major factor influencing the future of the issue being investigated on each of the axes, which cross to form four quadrants” (p. 12). These spaces are then developed further into scenario narratives by identifying and reflecting on clusters of drivers that “have the highest impact and are the most uncertain” (p. 12).



Adapted from: UK Foresight Horizon Scanning Centre 2009

Branch analysis method

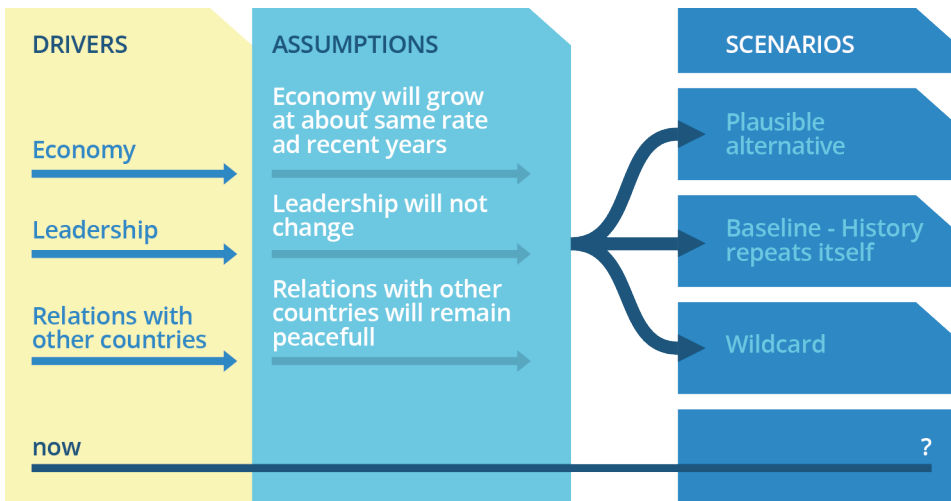
This method focuses on developing scenarios around key events that are known in advance (e.g. elections). Once the turning points are identified and sequenced, their potential outcomes and consequences are mapped onto a branching diagram, which allows for developing scenario narratives and reflecting on how to address possible developments.



Adapted from: UK Foresight Horizon Scanning Centre 2009

Cone of plausibility method

This method requires that scenarios are built based on a series of previously identified drivers and a set of deterministic assumptions (e.g. if A, then B). More specifically, “once the key drivers have been identified, one or more assumption per driver is produced so to generate a baseline scenario. Next, the behaviour and consequences of each assumption are explored and adjusted in order to generate plausible alternative scenarios. Narratives are then developed on the basis of the most likely, the most extreme and the less likely future pathways of the baseline” (p. 14).



Adapted from: UK Foresight Horizon Scanning Centre 2009

3. Practical instructions for conflict analysis processes

The implementation of a conflict analysis is generally organised into three main stages: the first is the *preparatory stage*, which entails fundamental decisions defining the purpose, scope and expected outcome of the assessment; the second is the *process design & planning stage*, where a methodology is developed and the different analytical stages are carefully articulated and prepared; the third and last stage is the actual *conduct of the assessment*, a series of investigative components performed with the support of visual and collaborative tools.

MAIN COMPONENTS OF TRADITIONAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS		
1.	Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening process and contextualization • Definition of purpose and expected goals • Anticipation and management of possible risks
2.	Process design & planning stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning of analytical stages • Methodology design • Security assessment • Logistics
3.	Conduct of the assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of conflict analysis tools • Review and finalization of findings • Validation and dissemination

Before digging into the practice of conflict analysis, it is important to emphasise here an important disclaimer. The guidance provided in this handbook is structured to reflect an ideal conflict analysis process, where the number of constraints is limited and resources such as time, funding and expertise are generally available. Being aware that, in most cases, this may not reflect reality, a methodological compass is provided at the end of this chapter to help analysts steer the process and tailor it to the possible scenarios, thus prioritising those actions that are indispensable. The templates are not shortcuts and should not pre-empt analysts from seeking to achieve the best process possible.

a. Preparatory phase

When a request for an assessment is made, most conflict analysts find themselves in situations where proper preparation is not feasible, yet it is the preliminary work that often determines the quality of an assessment by ensuring that critical issues are considered and addressed prior to the conduct of the assessment. In the preparatory phase, analysts define the parameters of the analysis and thereby significantly reduce the negative impact of the analytical dilemmas and cognitive interferences presented earlier. This also helps anticipate those externalities that would normally hijack the process. Below is a short overview of the elements worth considering during this phase.

Contextualisation: There can be plenty of different reasons for conducting a conflict analysis. Clarity about the *purpose* will provide the most important parameters to tailor the process. Not all conflict assessments are conducted for mediation purposes. Take, for instance, the case of a humanitarian agency involved in delivering food or providing shelter in a situation of emer-

gency. It will probably find it useful to know more about the composition and hierarchical levels of the beneficiaries and map their relationships with other nearby communities (i.e. stakeholder analysis). Such an understanding would help the agency deliver assistance impartially and avoid having its interventions produce unintended consequences or wrong perceptions (i.e. conflict sensitivity). The same humanitarian organisation may find it less relevant to its task to investigate the root causes of violence or the underlying factors that triggered a natural disaster (i.e. causal analysis). If the same agency were to look at actions to prevent new crises, then a good causal analysis would become central to the assessment. This is why defining the analytical purpose is crucial, as it automatically defines the analytical boundaries and determines the methodology that best fits the declared goal. At this stage of the process design it is also useful to run a *conflict analysis baseline* and gather information about past efforts. This will help analysts build on previous assessments and learn from them.

KEY QUESTIONS:

What is the purpose of the analysis?

How is it going to be used?

Why is it happening at this moment?

Has something changed?

What analysis has been produced so far?

Is it still relevant?

Calibration: Another careful adjustment to be made during the design phase is the definition of the scope of analysis. An improper choice at this stage can compromise the relevance of the analysis. It is therefore critical to start achieving some clarity about the type of conflict that we seek to understand (land dispute, political crisis, ethnic violence, etc.) or the key issue that we want to tackle (food insecurity, environmental degradation, gender-based marginalisation, state corruption, etc.). It is then important to determine the geographic focus of the analysis (e.g. the entire country, a region or a specific community). These are important considerations that will help analysts fine-tune the methodology, prioritise issues – dismissing factors and stakeholders that may not be relevant to the analytical level envisioned – and structure the process accordingly.

KEY QUESTIONS:

What specific conflict does the analysis seek to understand?

Is there a particular issue that the analysis should look at more closely?

What is the geographic focus of the assessment?

Ownership: There is a good chance that the people carrying out the assessment will not be the same people who will then use its findings. In

some cases, it is also possible that the end user is not the same stakeholder who commissioned the analysis in the first place. In such situations, ownership of the analysis may be in doubt, thereby paving the way to a dysfunctional process. Analysts have more chance of success when they are able to probe the background to a request for analysis and be exposed to the needs and expected outcomes of the commissioning entity. Some international organisations tend to rely heavily on hired consultants to sub-contract analytical and programming functions. This practice already has limitations with regard to the quality of the assessment⁵ and it is also vulnerable to institutional turbulence and the frequent disconnection between those who initiate conflict analysis and the end users. There are plenty of accounts and anecdotes about conflict

analyses that, despite the considerable costs and use of resources, were left on a desk with no follow-up because of inadequate engagement with the end user.

Sources of information: It goes without saying that, if information is scarce and/or unreliable, the assessment will suffer in terms of accuracy and impartiality. Lack of information will have an impact on the effectiveness of conflict analysis tools and, in some cases, may hijack or delay the assessment. Security, or lack thereof, is the primary cause for poor information, but issues such as culture and language are also important barriers to access to knowledge. In the last 8-10 years, the wide and rapid

KEY QUESTIONS:

Who commissioned the conflict analysis?

Who is going to validate the findings?

Who is the end user?

Are the subjects aware of the initiative? Do they genuinely endorse it?

Are lines of communication in place?

What is the expected outcome of the process?

How is the analysis going to be used?

What are the operational and political boundaries of the process?

Are there any specific issues that need to be looked at more closely?

Any issues that fall outside the scope of the analysis?

⁵ We have argued above that individual endeavours are most exposed to process flaws. They are subject to cognitive biases, lacking meaningful participation and inclusion, and therefore can lead to one-sided and partial results.

spread of information technology coupled with the proliferation of mobile devices, particularly in Africa and Asia, has opened up the potential for information-sharing and collection. Mobile platforms such as Ushahidi have inaugurated crisis mapping processes that rely on crowdsourcing methods⁶, using cheap technology available to ordinary people.

Format: Last but not least, an important consideration for contextualising the analysis process concerns the end product and its appearance. It may seem a trivial point, but the format of the output is as important as its content. Conflict analyses can take the form of long full-fledged documents, flash reports, code cables, talking points, briefing notes and



KEY QUESTIONS:

What sources of information are available?

Are they primary or secondary sources?

Are the sources reliable and can their information be vetted?

Is information available for all stakeholders or dimensions of the conflict?

If some information is not available or not accessible, are there alternative methods to gather secondary feedback (proxy informants, surveys, crowdsourcing)?



KEY QUESTIONS:

What is the required format of the analysis?

Are there institutional guidelines to be followed?

What level of detail and analytical depth is expected from the exercise?

What level of confidentiality is the organisation accustomed to?

PowerPoint presentations. Experienced analysts familiarise themselves with the required format beforehand and inquire about the level of analytical depth that the analysis should reach. Also, different organisations manage confidentiality in different ways and it is safer to become familiar with organisational standards and procedures regarding such a sensitive matter.

⁶ Crowdsourcing is defined as the process of “obtaining needed services, ideas, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people and especially from the online community rather than from traditional employees or suppliers” (Merriam Webster dictionary)

b. Process design & planning

The second stage of a conflict analysis implementation is an operational one. It lays down the different activities to be carried out during the assessment process and helps formulate a sequenced plan of action. Below are some of the most common items to be considered in this phase.

Literature review: It cannot be emphasised enough how important it is not to start from scratch and to make sense of the existing documentation on the subject we want to investigate. The literature review seeks to capture existing knowledge, previous analyses and arguments relating to conflict and security in the region or the topic we are interested in. The review will also help draw the boundaries of investigation and – in some cases – revise the analytical scope.

Pre-design consultation: When time and resources allow, it is good practice to conduct a preliminary consultation with key stakeholders and get their feedback on the proposed analytical process. This activity will also validate some of our assumptions and methodological considerations, while ensuring that issues like security, conflict sensitivity and resource management are duly taken into consideration in the process design.

Formulation of the analytical framework: Building on the work carried out in the screening phase and during the initial consultations, the analysis team will devise the analytical methodology suitable to the specific purpose and process identified. The framework will identify: 1) the sources and information to draw upon; 2) the conflict analysis tools and techniques to employ; 3) the people to involve throughout the assessment – both as participants and facilitators; 4) the methods for consolidating the findings. It is good practice to prepare a contingency plan as part of the analytical framework in order to make the assessment flexible and adaptable to the possibly changing circumstances and the security situation.

Main assessment: At this point, analysts should have enough information and guidance to plan the main assessment. This step of the design & planning phase looks concretely at the format and location of the different events and the sequencing of actions (i.e. the critical path). There are several ways to gather information and facilitate knowledge-sharing. Some of the most common techniques are: 1) online and paper-based surveys; 2) structured group interviews; 3) key informant interviews; 4) focus groups; 5) conflict analysis workshops; 6) open and closed-door consultations. These events can take place at different geographic levels (local, regional, national) and involve different configurations of participants (men, women, elders, youth, former combatants, children, civic leaders, religious leaders, government officials, members of armed forces, etc.).

Validation process: Last but not least, any sound conflict assessment should include a time for verification of the findings. The process can take the form of a validation workshop at the community or national level or may simply entail

a set of bilateral briefings with the concerned parties. The feedback received at this stage may imply a review of the analytical findings or the need for additional analysis with regard to some specific aspects or actors of the conflict.

Dissemination: Once the assessment has been completed and a report finalised, this should be disseminated and shared with the relevant audience (i.e. those who commissioned the assessment and other actors whose actions may benefit from the findings). Conflict analysis reports are rarely published in full length as they contain sensitive information. Nonetheless, the dissemination process is an important one as it can increase the understanding of the conflict and raise awareness on specific and sometimes overlooked issues.

c. Conduct of the assessment

The results of the screening and planning phases provide the primary inputs to define the boundaries of the assessment. The investigative clarity derived from those findings will make the task of actually conducting the assessment a much easier and more productive effort. In the review of the different conflict analysis frameworks, we have highlighted the fact that the overwhelming majority of them adopt a methodology based on four main pillars, or analytical segments: 1) Situation Profile; 2) Causal Analysis; 3) Stakeholder Analysis; 4) Analysis of Conflict Dynamics. These pillars denote a “traditional” and undoubtedly valuable approach to conflict analysis, which looks at conflict within its own boundaries, examines its constituent parts and driving forces (causes and actors) and observes its evolution over time (dynamics). As explained earlier, this traditional approach has some limitations, but those are outweighed by the gains that an orderly analytical approach can produce.

Recent and innovative practice has suggested that some intractable and prolonged conflicts lend themselves to being better explained through systemic approaches. The use of systems thinking in conflict analysis, however, encounters some resistance among conflict practitioners who tend to assume that one can only make sense of a conflict by narrowing rather than amplifying its boundaries and by simplifying rather than magnifying the inter-connections. What is proposed below is a framework of mutual support between the two approaches, the traditional and the systemic. The suggestion is to start a conflict analysis process with traditional methods and then embrace systems thinking to better capture the complexity of conflict. The sometimes-perceived shortage of practical plug-ins in systemic approaches is overcome by the identification of tools that can be practically applied to analytical baselines produced with traditional methods.

Before getting into the specifics of running a conflict analysis process, it is imperative to share an important caveat. The review of conflict analysis frameworks presented in Annex 1 has shown several similarities among the various

analytical models in terms of scope and focus of conflict assessments. Another similarity those models share is that the majority of tools embraced have been conceived and designed to look for “bad things”, such as dysfunctional institutions, violent actors, corrupt leaders, unfair political systems and biases in legal norms. In the past few years, conflict analysts have promoted efforts to reverse the perspective of conflict analysis and focus also on positive factors rather than overwhelmingly on negative elements. In the UN system, UNDP has conducted a fair amount of work to help analysts and programmers alike to identify and sustain constructive societal elements, often referred to as infrastructures of peace. While it is critical to understand the structures of violence, it is also absolutely essential to recognise the sources of peace and societal resilience. Without this balance, the analysis would be lopsided and interventions could do serious harm.

An appreciative inquiry mindset can sensibly broaden the spectrum of options for conflict resolution and turn conflict analysis into “peace and conflict analysis”.⁷ Accordingly, every tool presented in this section can (and should) be used to highlight what works in a society and identify those factors and/or actors that can constructively help sustain peace.

STATIC CONFLICT ANALYSIS

Situation profile

Developing a situation profile is like taking a snapshot of a country.⁸ It does not look at the underlying issues or problems, but rather generates a broad descriptive glimpse of the context in a specific moment. This is a fundamental step as it prevents analysts from diving too early into deep and thorny diagnostic considerations. It also helps establish the analytical baseline – basically an agreed starting point of the investigation – to refer to during the exercise.

The first hurdle in a conflict analysis process is, in fact, to deal with the entrenched narratives about the country under scrutiny in order to forge a consensus about its general features. When a specific country is mentioned we all rapidly generate images to help us relate to it – e.g. a poor country, an authoritarian regime, a developed economy, a war-torn state, an emerging power, a violent society, a failed state. There can be several images for the same country, some radically different from one another, and this is explained by

⁷ Appreciative Inquiry is an organisational model that starts from the realisation that overemphasis on “problem-solving” approaches tends to inhibit genuine analysis and understanding of the situation. It suggests redirecting analytical efforts towards things that work and other positive organisational dynamics. More information on Appreciative Inquiry is available here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appreciative_inquiry

⁸ For the sake of convenience, we refer to “country” as a general term for the object of the analysis. However, the assertion remains valid that conflict analysis can also be conducted to assess the situation in a region, sub-region, or village unit, depending on the purpose of the assessment.

the incidence of subjective views and perceptions. People within the same country also see and interpret key events in distinct ways. They often own different and conflicting histories. This dynamic is typical of all societies and is also prevalent in groups participating in conflict analysis exercises. Therefore, the analyst's primary job is to uncover those narratives and help the participants to recognise the different perspectives.

The **Timeline** is a simple but valuable conflict analysis tool in this regard. It involves creating a chronology of events that allegedly define a country. People may disagree about crucial events or, in situations with competing social groups, they may not be familiar with each other's history. The Timeline is often used to initiate discussions in order to establish common ground and help people accept their own perspective as only one part of the "truth". The same tool can also be helpful later in a process to identify key trends affecting the current situation.

Experience in using the Timeline tool suggests that it is not only the dates featured in the chronology that are important. Some events may be missing because there is no clear recollection of them, while others may have been omitted deliberately because they are too painful to be exposed and discussed. This is a useful finding *per se* as it reveals the presence of strong emotions attached to some events, which are worth further investigation (see Box 1). Some timelines show long periods with no remarkable events. These ostensibly uneventful periods may reflect a gap in the analysis or indicate a period of stability and peace in the country. In the latter case, it may be worthwhile trying to understand what factors and dynamics made the country so uneventful in that period – it may be harsh regime repression coupled with economic stagnation due to international sanctions, as in the case of Iraq between 1995 and 2003, or a period of stability and relative social peace as a result of political accommodation, as in the case of Mozambique between 1994 and 2014. The Timeline can therefore be a convenient tool to identify positive elements (or peace factors) that are valuable assets in the response phase.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS IN IRAQ (1956-2013)

In 2012, a conflict analysis exercise was conducted with UN national staff in Iraq. The group included representatives of the three main groups, i.e. Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds. Early discussions focused on the recent history of the country and participants were asked to draw a timeline of the main events of the past century in Iraq. The result of the discussion produced a set of widely agreed dates and events, which are reported below.

- 1920 ● Creation of the State of Iraq
- 1932 ● Independence from UK
- 1968 ● Baathist coup
- 1979 ● Saddam Hussein becomes President
- 1980 ● Beginning of Iran-Iraq war
- 1988 ● End of Iran-Iraq war
- 1990 ● Iraq invasion of Kuwait and Gulf War
- 1995 ● Beginning of "Oil for Food" programme
- 2003 ● US-led intervention in Iraq
- 2006 ● Bombing of al-Askari mosque in Samarra and beginning of sectarian violence
- 2011 ● US troops withdrawal
- 2012 ● New cycle of sectarian violence

However, some of the most important findings started to emerge when the groups were asked to share the dates of events that other colleagues had not included in their timeline. Kurdish and Shia participants had, for instance, marked as important the first democratic election, in 2005, while the Sunnis did not, as they had basically boycotted that election. The remarkably important 1994-1997 Kurdish civil war

was only mentioned by Kurdish staff, as some international staff actually came to know about the event only at that moment. This was an important reality check for many who had previously assumed that the Kurds were a homogenous ethnic group within Iraq.

Interestingly, in some cases divergences were not about the relevance of the event, but about its wording. The 2003 US-led intervention was called “US liberation of Iraq” by the Kurds and Shiites, while Sunnis referred to it as the “US invasion of Iraq”. This confirms that semantic conflicts are often as important as disputes over concrete issues and facts.

The **Conflict Curve** and the **Escalation Stages** are two traditional visual models that can be used to trace the trajectory of conflict and its evolution. Both can be used in parallel with the Timeline, with a specific focus on the different stages of conflict, in order to match ground events with national or international conflict resolution attempts (if any). Another valuable tool is the **Issue Matrix**. This is a more conventional analytical aid that provides an introductory overview of the current context in various thematic areas. It looks at the general descriptive factors that shape the political and economic system of a country, its socio-cultural practices, demographic trends, regional alliances, relations with neighbouring countries, military capability and so on. These issues can be looked at from different levels (national, sub-regional and local) in order to produce a more nuanced situation profile.

Some people find it useful to rely on checklists to better systematise available information. While the usual caveats apply,⁹ a checklist of screening questions can ensure that the situation profile is well structured and encompasses the most salient information about a country's context. This tool can also be used as guidance when compiling the Issue Matrix.

In the practical iteration of a situation profile assessment, it is suggested to start with a general timeline in order to capture the long-term evolution of a country and map the main trends and events that have had an impact in the recent past. The Curve of Conflict and its escalation patterns can also help frame the situation and establish a conflict baseline. Those findings can then be complemented by applying the Issue Matrix and looking at what specific factors make the country unique and peculiar. Finally, the checklist of screening questions can be regarded as a valid support for finalising the situation profile and its rendition into written format.

Causal analysis

The second phase of a conflict assessment investigates the structures and factors that generate and sustain a conflict situation. If the situation profile is the "snapshot" of a given context, the causal analysis provides its "X-rays". Classifying the causes of conflict and understanding into their different natures, hierarchies and dynamics can help analysts make sense of sometimes complex webs of interdependent variables. This is because conflicts are never mono-causal phenomena and they never affect nor involve only one single dimension of a country's profile, such as its economy, politics or culture, but rather all of them at the same time.

Just as there is no single cause to a conflict, there is no easy hierarchy of the different factors of violence. Early conflict analysis deliberations often focused on the differentiation between root causes (also referred to as structural causes) and proximate causes. The problem with root causes discourses

⁹ There is some fairly justified scepticism regarding checklists, as they tend to instigate procedural automatism whereby people tend to tick boxes a bit too casually. If misused, checklists may also generate redundant and over-generalised analyses.

is that analysts eventually find a lot of redundancy in the factors identified. Many troubled countries appear to share more or less the same problems, which can be symptomatically called the “usual suspects” – i.e. economic marginalisation, political exclusion, social inequality. Such factors are also difficult to order and their ranking can become problematic as analysts get trapped in the chicken-egg dilemma. The difficult task of causal analysis is to articulate the right mix of influence of structural factors shaping the current situation and thus move beyond a mere inventory exercise. The “fixation” on root causes also tends to distract analysts from the real focus of the analysis, namely the current situation. Root causes enthusiasts tend to privilege a narrow and static perspective, one that considers reality as the product of a linear process. As we know, reality is subject to a wide range of factors other than causes and problems. Peter Senge’s systems thinking laws are helpful here to remind us that we are often set to resolve the consequences of past solutions, not past problems¹⁰. Third-party interventions are game-changing factors that can have a profound impact on the context, both in positive and negative terms.

These considerations are not being raised to encourage practitioners to scrap causal analysis completely. They should be taken simply as an admonition not to place excessive emphasis and expectations on this analysis segment, which often hijacks well-intended analysts and drags them into paralysis. With the right precautions, causal analysis constitutes an insightful review of a country’s inner dynamics, as it looks at some of the core governance issues that, over multiple generations, determine the fabric of a country and have a profound influence on its evolution.

Keeping this caveat in mind, when we conduct a causal analysis in a specific country we first need to identify the key sources of tension, particularly those pervasive factors that have become built into the norms, policies and institutions of society. In many cases, for instance, issues like economic inequality or ethnic discrimination are translated into specific laws and policies that provide privileged access to resources for certain groups only. It is also important to note that each structural factor that we analyse has a gendered dimension (e.g. women vs. men’s access to/ownership rights to land) that adds to generic group-based discrimination.

Secondly, we want to consider the so-called proximate causes of conflict, those factors contributing to a climate conducive to violent conflict or its further escalation, which are sometimes symptomatic of a deeper problem

¹⁰ In his masterpiece *The Fifth Discipline: The art and practice of the Learning Organization* (Senge 2006), Peter Senge suggests and explains 11 laws of systems thinking that help us understand systems better. The laws are: 1) Today’s problems come from yesterday’s solutions; 2) The harder you push, the harder the system pushes back; 3) Behaviour grows better before it grows worse; 4) The easy way out leads back in; 5) The cure can be worse than the disease; 6) Faster is slower; 7) Cause and effect are not always closely related in time and space; 8) Small changes can produce big results – but the areas of highest leverage are often the least obvious; 9) You can have your cake and eat it too – but not all at once; 10) Dividing an elephant in half does not produce two small elephants; 11) There is no blame.”

and indicative of rising tensions (e.g. capital flight, increased arrests, harsher messaging in the media, population movements and displacement). They can also indicate the targets and nature of violence, or the nature of the political force emerging. For instance, when the transitional leadership in Libya took control in 2012, in his first speech the leader lifted the ban on polygamy. This was a clear indication that women were being targeted. The pushback against women continued strongly in the ensuing years.

Finally, a causal analysis would not be complete without a contemplation of what factors are liable to spark violence – the conflict triggers. These are not long-term issues but single acts and events that build on existing tensions and can contribute to the outbreak and/or further escalation of conflict. Typical examples of triggers are political assassination, passing of discriminatory legislation, sudden rise in the price of commodities, declaration of election results, decision to bar political figures from elections, and so on. The advent of the Internet and the wider access to social media platforms has led to the emergence of a new generation of conflict triggers. In the past few years there have been several examples whereby violence has been triggered by popular reaction to acts of repression by state security forces and other brutal acts of violence posted or broadcast on Facebook, YouTube or Twitter. Triggers are highly unpredictable and volatile acts that challenge the predictability of conflict analyses. However, there are patterns that can be followed and there is a tendency for past triggers to re-occur over time. In addition, triggers are context-specific and issues that are liable to spark violence in some countries may not produce the same effects in other countries (See Box 2).

VIOLENT TRIGGERS IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan represents a good case to explain the relevance of local context to the identification and understanding of potential conflict triggers. In early 2012, two separate incidents involving the US military took place in the country. In February, some US soldiers operating at the Bagram Air Base just outside Kabul were caught inadvertently burning some copies of the Koran by some Afghan employees. The act sparked a wave of popular anger against the US presence, resulting in the deaths of two US soldiers and seven Afghans, and an official apology by US President Barack Obama to then Afghan President Hamid Karzai. Just a few weeks later, on 11 March, a US Army sergeant deployed in a rural area of Kandahar Province seized his weapon and killed 16 Afghan civilians, including some children. Based on the reaction to the Koran-burning incident, the US military braced itself for a far greater and more violent popular reaction. To their surprise, the anticipated violent response never materialised.

The different, and for most Western analysts, counterintuitive reaction can be explained by some factors that are peculiar to the situation in Afghanistan; the limited reaction to the US soldier's rampage has to be evaluated in the context of the pervasive violence that has affected Afghan society for the past decades. On the other hand, the news of the burning of the Koran reverberated exponentially because the event had targeted a cultural symbol and perhaps the key element of the identity of millions of Afghans. In an interview with Time Magazine, a provincial religious leader declared, "Of course we condemn that act but it was only 16 people. Even if it were 1,000 people, it wouldn't compare to harming one word of the Koran. If someone insults our holy book, it means that they insult our faith, our religion and everything that we have." (Time Magazine 2012)

The **Iceberg** is a tool many conflict analysts are familiar with. Its value lies in its capacity to visualise the “big picture” of conflict realities. The tool warns analysts to refrain from drawing hurried conclusions, suggesting that what we often observe in a conflict situation may only be part of the truth. This Malawian proverb describes the situation with an interesting metaphor: “It is easy to know you are being stung by bees, but it is difficult to know which one is stinging you”. We often see the manifestations or the symptoms of a problem but we do not know its exact origins. The tip of the iceberg reflects the manifestations of a conflict, as captured in a standard situation profile. Underneath the water level are the true dynamics of conflict, those forces and factors that have generated its narrative. The causal diagnostic will focus on that part of the iceberg. The Iceberg, as such, is a useful tool to start the causal assessment, but can become problematic if we are not clear about what conflict we intend to analyse. In fact, following a preliminary iteration of the Iceberg model, analysts may find it useful to make an **Inventory of Conflicts**. This is a very simple list of the different types of disputes and divisions that are present in the country under observation (e.g. land conflict, electoral dispute, ethnic violence, women’s marginalisation, territorial dispute). This is an important screening process, which helps focus the analysis by identifying a specific conflict. Experience shows that people tend to talk about “conflict” in very broad terms that often refer to different disputes.

The **Levels of Conflict** tool can help bring additional analytical clarity to the investigation process. Although it is not commonly used in the UN system, this conflict analysis tool allows for a valuable “zoom-in” into different typologies of conflicts. Disputes that may initially appear as racially motivated could be personality-driven, and vice versa. In some way, this model is a powerful “unbiasing mechanism” capable of revealing some possible blind spots of analysts. The example in the Box 3 shows how this tool can be useful to avoid oversimplifications and dangerous generalisations.

LEVELS OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Despite of being one the oldest democracies in Asia, the Philippines has been chronically affected by election-related violence. The country has also been for several decades the theatre of different armed rebellions, some ideologically driven (i.e. the Communist struggle of the New People's Army), others mainly fought on confessional grounds, such as the Moro insurgency in the Mindanao region. These seemingly overlapping but separate conflicts are sometimes hard to distinguish, especially to an outsider. Electoral violence as the manifestation of deeper tensions and conflicts can be a difficult phenomenon to understand. Too many interests clash and issues converge during electoral periods and the actual cause(s) of violence are probably hidden under proxy issues. Pre-conceived ideas would suggest that electoral violence is the result of the religious conflict that pits Christians against Muslims, but the reality is obviously more nuanced. The Levels of Conflict model proved a useful resource to dissect the different conflict layers during an analytical exercise conducted in 2007. Some relevant – although counterintuitive – facts were used to establish whether electoral violence was the result of the ongoing religion-based conflict in the Mindanao or rather the product of different conflict dynamics. Incident datasets and accounts of past elections showed that rivalries among political dynasties are the main drivers of electoral violence. In addition, unlike in other countries, the majority of violent incidents in the Philippines occur in the context of local elections. The Levels of Conflict helped in distinguishing violent acts that observers unacquainted with the country might have attributed to the wrong source. The analysis explained that electoral violence takes place at three different levels:

1. DISPUTE LEVEL: Catholic parties' election quarrels
2. UNDERLYING CONFLICT LEVEL: Clan/family-related turf wars
3. DEEP-ROOTED CONFLICT LEVEL: Communal violence

These three levels are separate arenas, as the stakeholders and their motives change in each case. The first level is characterised by intra-party disputes involving opposing candidates during the party primaries. The second level, which also appears to be the most violent, is exemplified by turf wars among rival clans or political dynasties. An example of this type of violence is the 2009 Maguindanao massacre, in which 58 people were brutally killed as a result of the continued rivalry between the Mangudadatus and Ampatuans, two prominent Muslim clans in the Mindanao region, over the bid for the governorate. A third level of violence is the result of the deep-rooted conflict between the Catholic government and Muslim insurgents in the Mindanao, a conflict that *also* reverberates during electoral periods but is mainly driven by the quest for self-determination. What makes the Philippines case peculiar is the fact that “conflicts between guerrillas and state security bodies often appear to result from private vendettas between rival families. For opportunistic reasons, they are reinterpreted as conflicts within the framework of the political struggle for self-determination” (Kreuzer 2005, p. 11), which can lead analysts to misleading conclusions.

Once the various levels (or layers) of conflict have been defined, it is time to focus on the conflict that we want to analyse. At this stage, it is crucial to identify the factors that sustain a conflict (or a problem) and the **Conflict Pillars** model appears the best suited for the task. What is important here is to clearly select a specific issue or conflict to break down. Clear and unequivocal wording is very important to ensure that all analysts start from the same premises. The Conflict Pillars model is particularly suited for identifying the structures of peace and sources of resilience. Finally, by using the well-known **Conflict Tree**, the analyst can determine the hierarchy of different causes (proximate vs. root causes) and establish the causal linkages between different causal factors.

The **Timeline** tool – already presented in the situation profile section – can also be useful during the causal analysis process to identify potential conflict triggers. Past triggers are very likely to recur in the future, probably in a different form. They create patterns of violent mobilisation that can be tracked and used to anticipate new triggers. Take the example of Iraq again. The bombing of the Shia mosque in Samarra is widely considered the first violent act of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. Though it did not kill anyone, it set in motion a violent escalation that generated a cycle of sectarian violence, which from 2006 to 2007 pitted Shia against Sunni militias. The bombing of other Shia holy sites was again the trigger of a second cycle of sectarian violence that has affected Iraq since 2012. The timeline tool is also a convenient instrument to map positive events in a country's history, namely those moments where the whole country felt as one and the population was able to transcend divisions (past peace deals, sports events, commercial agreements, etc.)

Stakeholder analysis

The study of peace and conflict stakeholders is definitely the most complex, though rewarding, part of a conflict analysis process. If there is anything that is subject to change very rapidly, it is most certainly information about stakeholders, their behaviours, strategies and actions. Sometimes, it is within days or weeks that we observe radical shifts, with some stakeholders becoming prominent and others losing relevance. Volatility is perhaps the primary characteristic of a conflict environment. Like conflict causes, stakeholders have different layers defining their identities, which drive their actions and are responsible for ostensibly erratic behaviours. What is relevant to analysts, however, is the fact that these shifts are not always for the worse. One-time violence aggregators and perpetrators can become the very agents of dialogue and peace, just as radical groups may soften their stances and find an interest in political accommodation. If properly used and adapted to the context, the tools presented in this section can support the difficult task of conflict analysis. Triangulation among tools and regular updates can help capture conflict shifts and identify leverage points to engage with the right people at the right moment.

A quick clarification of the term “stakeholder” is necessary before moving on with the different tools. As we have articulated in the opening of this chapter,

early conflict analysis work was partially tainted by overemphasis on negative factors (problems, issues, disputes). A related analytical bias used to give relevance mainly to those actors with a primary or active role in the conflict. Consequently, actors being considered would only be the frontrunners – namely, those armed factions, government members and political leaders driving the situation in the first place. This approach viewed those groups affected by the conflict as a consequence of the crisis and not as potential contributors to its resolution. With the advent of appreciative and positive analytical models, the word “actor” has given way to the concept of “stakeholder”. Not only does this word have a more neutral meaning, but it also allows for including in the peace and conflict map anyone who can influence or is affected by the conflict. Therefore, stakeholders are not only the most visible players but also the communities and their representatives, local leaders as well as some groups and individuals that would normally fall beneath the radar but hold a key role in mobilising or demobilising violence, such as religious leaders and traditional chiefs.

The process to start with is the **Inventory of Stakeholders**. This inventory should be clearly connected to the inventory of conflicts compiled during the causal analysis and linked to one level of type of the conflict identified during that phase. Once we have a list of stakeholders relevant to the conflict, we can start establishing their strengths and mutual relationships (if any). An initial **Stakeholder Map** is the best way to visualise the situation. When mapping the stakeholders in this phase, the analyst should refrain from making assumptions and leave any unanswered question and unclear relationships to be solved in a later stage. An important part of any analytical process is to make the “unknowns” explicit and identify areas where further investigation is required. For instance, there is a tendency to assume that stakeholders are monolithic and homogenous entities, while the reality is that any stakeholders that are not individuals – i.e. social groups, associations, political parties, governments, militias, Internally Displace Persons (IDPs), etc. – have multiple constituents and identities that coexist and collectively determine decisions. The way these components are organised can vary from entity to entity but knowing their roles and influence is of primary importance for producing a stakeholder profile.

It is also crucial to determine the level of action (or the arena) of different actors. For this purpose, it is useful to refer to the **Pyramid** tool. Conflict analysis can support the identification of the moderate actors (the “middle ground”) and indicate entry points for turning it into a constituency for peace. To do so, it is advisable to run a conflict pyramid exercise for each of the main stakeholders of the conflict identified. A complementary analytical aid to the conflict pyramid is the **Onion**. This is a tool that generates a scan of the stakeholder’s motives by disarticulating the stakeholder’s positions, interests and needs. This is all the more important to avoid using position-based analyses to design responses. Positions can be misleading as they only represent the formal appearance that a stakeholder decides to present to the public. Stakeholder positioning on certain issues may be only tactical and superficial as explained in the Box 4.

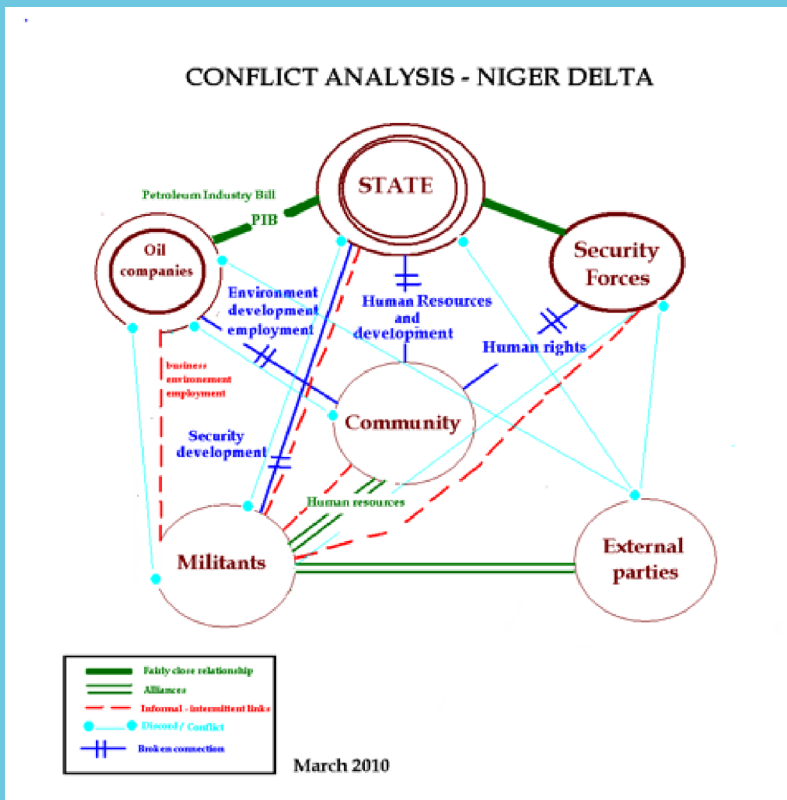
POSITIONS, INTERESTS AND NEEDS OF TUAREG REBELS

Although the Tuareg rebellion in the Sahel region became widely known in 2012 as a result of the *coup d'état* in Mali, the struggle of the Tuareg is not a new feature. Insurgencies have occurred at various intervals over the past 50 years – in the 1960s, in the 1990s and, more recently, from 2007 into the present. Self-determination has been often described as the key driver of the armed struggle but that is a very dense concept, which can mean a lot or nothing. If we apply the onion tool to dissect the actual motives of the struggle we find out that the official position (independence, separation, secession) hides some more concrete objectives. Tuareg leaders negotiating in Algiers over the past two years may be inclined to give up their secessionist claims provided they are able to administer their territory and access the revenues generated in the region populated by Tuareg people. This is, therefore, one of their key interests and it provides an important understanding of the reasons for their revolt. However, there is also a whole set of fundamental issues that are not subject to any compromise, and these are the needs. The possibility to exercise their own distinct culture – speak their own language, use their own traditional codes, and so on – along with upholding the welfare and security of the population, are all ingredients of the Tuareg struggle that may not be as apparent as other political demands but are crucial to the resolution of the conflict.

Given the importance of this analytical piece, it is suggested, if time allows, that analysts develop an Onion for each key stakeholder related to the conflict under investigation. The different layers of positions, interests and needs can easily be compared between different entities and common concerns highlighted in order to identify entry points for conflict resolution and programmatic interventions. Another option is to create a profile of each stakeholder, using a **Stakeholder Matrix**. This template basically incorporates the positions, interests and needs revealed by the Onion, adding other specific fields of analysis such as the key characteristics and resources of a stakeholder. These matrices are handy visuals that help in monitoring and updating any shift in the profile of an actor. The final step in the stakeholder analysis is to develop a final **Stakeholder Map**, which reflects the analytical findings produced as a result of the further investigations conducted after the initial map. This is also an opportunity to reflect on possible internal rifts, alliances or simply subdivisions within large stakeholder groups as shown in the Box 5.

CONFLICT MAP IN THE NIGER DELTA

The conflict map in the picture is the result of a three-day facilitated conflict analysis that was held with civil society and rebel leaders in the Niger Delta in March 2010. The event aimed to support the participation of excluded groups in the Niger Delta and increase capacity and support for peace processes rather than continued conflict. What emerges from a first look at the map is the sense of encirclement of the local community, which is caught between the violent actions of different stakeholders (e.g. the security forces and the militants). The encirclement is not only the consequence of military activities. The community is also negatively affected by the failure of the central State to secure economic welfare and development in the Niger Delta region.



Source: Rob Watson

This dire socio-economic situation has been further aggravated by the human resources policy adopted by foreign oil companies, which have not been hiring manpower from the local community. Finally, the community has also been bearing the environmental consequences of the oil industry. Another interesting feature of this conflict map is the visualisation of the multiple identities borne by some stakeholders. For instance, three layers (or circles) characterise the State stakeholder. This may well reflect different views or agglomerations of power that are built into the same entity.

CONFLICT DYNAMICS

The three steps described so far (i.e. situation profile, causal analysis and stakeholder analysis) can be described as “static” analysis components. They investigate and provide an analytical description of a conflict in a given time. However, conflicts can evolve very quickly, sometimes even overnight. For this reason, analysts often find themselves having to chase a moving target. A good practice to keep track of fast changes is to build a baseline conflict analysis (the first-time assessment) and then monitor developments to adjust the analysis if necessary. However, a dynamic analysis is one that makes sense of the different static factors and, in particular, the interaction between the conflict situation, stakeholders and the identified causes of conflict. Conflict dynamics are of critical importance as they provide valuable inputs for translating analysis into action. The **Issue Synergies Diagram** can help establish connections and mutual influence among different causal factors identified in the survey of conflict causes. It is important to consider both the most obvious linkages and those that are less apparent but may have a profound influence on the conflict dynamics.

The **Connectors and Dividers** model – used for conflict-sensitive programming – is also a valuable framework to measure possible changes in conflict or peace factors in a specific country. It is good practice, once the static analysis has been completed, to review the conflict triggers and pinpoint which **Conflict Trends** and other patterns have defined the evolution of a conflict. Past triggers are also relevant for anticipating future ones and building potential **Conflict Scenarios**. The Box 6 is a good example of a conflict trend analysis done for Pakistan.

CONFLICT TRENDS IN PAKISTAN

The short text below is the summary of a conflict trend analysis performed to observe and draw lessons from the evolution of the conflicts in Pakistan over the past decade. It is of particular interest as it clearly shows the key patterns that have come into being as a result of an entrenched conflict situation (e.g. nature and magnitude of violence, affected regions and unintended consequences of past solutions). These are all fundamental issues describing the conflict dynamics and their impact on the country situation.

Over the past decade, Pakistan has experienced a significant rise in violence in terms of frequency, scope, and magnitude. The origins and intensity of violence vary regionally and involve both longstanding conflict actors and new groups. This report maps recent conflict trends in Pakistan and explores the trajectory of violence in the provinces—namely, Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan—and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Gilgit-Baltistan, and draws from a variety of Pakistani and international sources to present as comprehensive a picture as possible.

Key findings:

- Violence is most concentrated along the Afghan border in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Other regions of Pakistan lying along the border with Afghanistan, including Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan, have also experienced a significant escalation in violence. This escalation is in part a result of the nexus between sectarian militants and terrorist outfits.
- In Sindh, most of the violence is concentrated in Karachi, which witnessed a tenfold increase in violence between 2006

and 2013. The security landscape there has become increasingly complex over the years with the addition of many types of actors, including sectarian militant groups, terrorist outfits, political parties and criminal gangs.

- The scale, scope, and magnitude of violence in Balochistan, the largest province in Pakistan in terms of territory, remain unprecedented and unabated. Sectarian and terrorist activities targeting the Shia Hazara community have compounded the effects of a high-intensity conflict between a secessionist insurgency and the military that has been underway in the province since 2006. Balochistan also provides safe haven to the Quetta Shura, a key Afghan Taliban group headed by Mullah Omar.
- For the past decade, Punjab has experienced the least violence of any province in Pakistan. However, the province is increasingly a breeding ground for terrorist and militant recruits engaged in violence in other regions.
- The deployment of drones, though selected for their precision, has fuelled recruitment in militant organisations and solidified the resistance against the state in the form of an increasingly strong Pakistani Taliban movement.
- Although the core of al-Qaeda is now believed to have been significantly diminished, it has over the years provided fertile ground for the political and military organisation of the TTP [*Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan*, i.e. Taliban Movement of Pakistan].
- Given the diverse and broad spectrum of conflicts afflicting Pakistan, it is important to analyse and address each conflict in its own context and plan for comprehensive state stabilisation and peacebuilding processes entailing both short- and long-term measures.

Source: Yamin and Malik 2014

SYSTEMIC CONFLICT ANALYSIS¹¹

The application of systemic approaches to conflict analysis requires a change of mindset on the part of the analyst, but this shift has too often been considered an obstacle to engaging in a less traditional but extremely useful discipline. It is true that looking at the outputs of systemic analyses, one can feel overwhelmed by so-called “spaghetti diagrams”, those seemingly overpopulated visual maps with lots of arrows and lines. Nevertheless, systems thinking is a discipline that prompts profound reflections and various considerations in the preparatory stage. Once the mechanics are defined and absorbed by analysts, it provides a rigorous methodology to tackle complex issues. As discipline is an important requisite of systemic approaches, the first step is to define the **boundaries of a conflict system**. As indicated by Gallo (2012), the system’s boundaries can be of different natures. Here we suggest focusing on three possible dimensions of conflict delimitation:¹²

- **Physical:** a conflict system can be defined in terms of its geographic reach – a country (Cambodia), a sub-region (Niger Delta), a city (Benghazi) or an entire region covering different countries (Horn of Africa) – and the actual bone of contention (e.g. land, oil, water, access to the sea, minerals).
- **Temporal:** in defining some conflict systems we can go back centuries or just a few years. During a conflict analysis exercise conducted in 2010 in Nepal, participants decided to go back to 1768, which was when the Hindu Kingdom was established, to frame the current conflict. In a similar conflict assessment conducted in Libya, participants agreed to consider 2011 – the Revolution – as point of departure of the investigation.
- **Symbolic:** Sometimes conflicts revolve around symbols rather than material resources. In the Mindanao region of the Philippines, the conflict between Christians, Muslims and indigenous peoples involves the definition and pursuit of the *ancestral domain*.

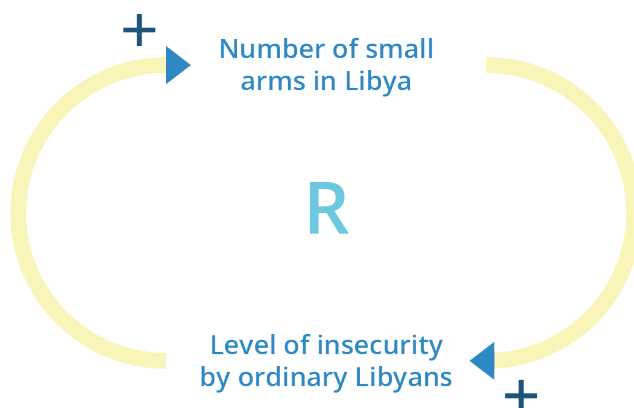
Once the conflict boundaries have been established, the analysis should be directed to understanding the forces that animate and drive the evolution of that specific conflict system. In this regard, two of the tools used in the survey of conflict dynamics can provide a good starting point for analysts, i.e. the Force-Field Analysis and the Issue synergies diagram. The Force-Field Analysis can help identify so-called Key Driving Factors (KDFs) of a conflict system, namely those issues or patterns that are pivotal in the conflict. If we had to

¹¹ This section borrows from two influential works on systems thinking and conflict analysis: United States Agency for International Development - USAID (2011) *Systems Thinking in Conflict Assessment: Concepts and Application*; and Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) - Collaborative Learning Projects (2013) *Reflecting on Peace Practice: Advanced Training of Consultants and Advisers*.

¹² The author also mentions an ethical boundary although his explanation remains vague and not easily applicable.

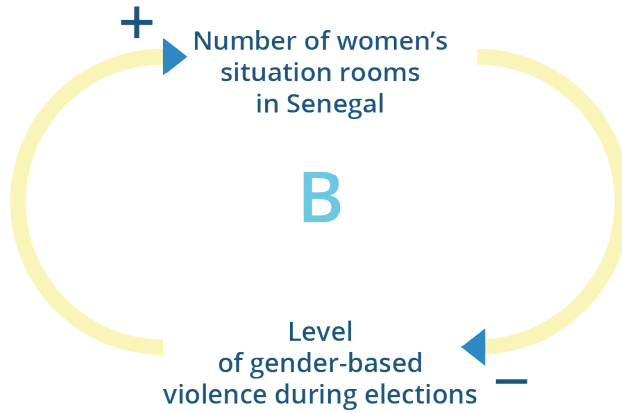
“remove” a KDF, the conflict would, in fact, cease to exist or would be entirely different. As such, KDFs function as the system variables. The contribution of Force-Field Analysis is of a positive nature as it also helps identify positive KDFs, which mitigate the negative dynamics of confrontation. KDFs are normally articulated in a way to facilitate the measurement of their change over time (e.g. “level of cohesion of the opposition”, “degree of influence of traditional leaders”).

As explained earlier, one of the fundamental features of a system is the interconnectedness of its different elements and the dynamic causality that permeates the relationships among different parts of the system. The different elements of a system are linked through cause-effect relationships. The KDFs should be used to determine and map the causal linkages that generate feedback loops. A loop shows the relationship between two variables and, depending on the nature of the change, it can be either a reinforcing loop – when “the factors build on each other, each one contributing to or augmenting an overall dynamic of exponential growth” (Ricigliano and Chigas 2011, p. 14) – or a balancing loop – when the cause-effect dynamic counters the effects of a reinforcing loop and produces a return to a situation of equilibrium. Graphically, the distinction between reinforcing and balancing loops is conveyed by plus and minus signs or ‘R’ and ‘B’ capital letters, respectively. An example of a reinforcing loop is the relationship between insecurity and small-arms proliferation in the case of Libya described below.



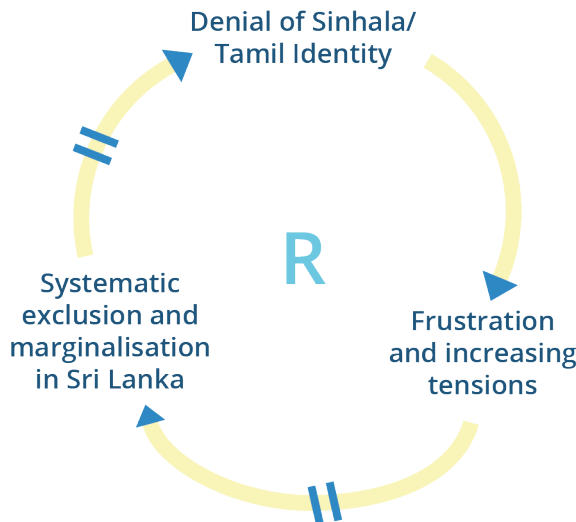
The widespread availability of small arms and ammunitions in the aftermath of the 2011 revolution, which led to the ousting of Muammar Qadhafi, set a vicious circle whereby people concerned about their physical security were induced to obtain guns and other light weapons to protect themselves. At the same time, the increased number of weapons generated a more widespread sense of insecurity, and so on.

On the contrary, the example from Senegal, described below is a good example of balancing loop.



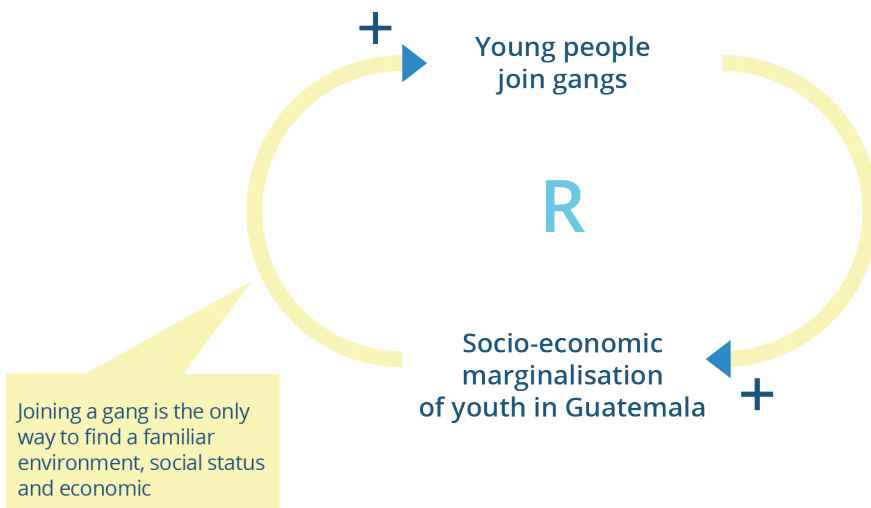
The establishment of women's situation rooms during the 2012 presidential elections in Senegal – described in the map below – can be considered an example of an intervention based on the introduction of a dynamic that would generate a balancing loop aimed at reducing the level of gender-based violence occurring during election times.

One of the most salient features of complex systems is the presence of time delays. Cause and effect are not closely related in time and space, and Senge mentions this as an underlying characteristic of all systems. It is our expectation for cause-effect correlation that often causes problems. Usually represented by a “//” symbol, time delays are important, as the consequences or effects of certain actions often take time to play out and materialize. In Sri Lanka, for instance, the dynamic underpinning the ethnic clashes that broke out in 1983 was largely affected by time delays, as the map below shows.



During British colonialism the Tamil minority benefited from a preferential treatment, which systematically excluded and marginalised the Sinhala majority. However, as Sri Lanka became independent in 1948, all the frustrations and tensions caused by the denial of Sinhala identity perpetrated during the century long colonial rule resulted in a reversal of the situation: The Sinhalese took power and implemented policies which, in turn, systematically excluded and marginalised the Tamils. Eventually, inter-communal tensions escalated during the 1983 riots that triggered the civil war.

Finally, a conflict system map would not be complete without so-called mental models. These are the inner logics and implicit psychological drivers of specific actions and dynamics. Mental models reflect embedded mind-sets and expectation of key actors involved in the conflict system. For instance, the resort to violence is characterized by several mental models that revolve around the idea that one's own protection can only be guaranteed at the expenses of others'. Understanding what mental models apply and drive interactions is of primary importance to understand the drivers of instability. As the map below shows, mental models can shape perceptions and greatly influence decision-making processes.



In Guatemala socio-economic marginalisation of youth and widespread criminality have created fertile ground for the emergence of the street-gang phenomenon, precisely because many young people are influenced by the idea that joining a gang is the only option to improve their living conditions and gain social status. Once again, a traditional conflict analysis tool, i.e. the Onion, comes in handy for identifying possible mental models which are closely related to the inner layer of the onion, namely the “needs”. Existing mental models associated with the factors in the map are visually captured by dialogue boxes, or “clouds”, connected to a factor or an arrow.

Instead of starting from scratch and creating a conflict system map, some find it useful to refer to existing templates of causal interaction, called archetypes. These reflect typical and often recurrent causal maps, and some of the most common archetypes are available in this handbook as a reference (see Annex 3). However, it is important to notice that, although useful, these archetypes alone are not sufficient to analyse conflicts and they do not represent a shortcut or a substitute for more detailed assessments (Ropers 2008). Rather, they provide a basis for further and deeper analyses and refinements. An additional aspect to consider is that in a conflict situation there may be many archetypal dynamics at play at the same time, which means that analysts should strive not to focus solely on a single pattern of interaction, but should ideally explore the conflict through the lenses of various archetypes (Ricigliano and Chigas 2011).

The usefulness of a systemic approach to conflict analysis also lies in the support that it brings in identifying possible solutions. Systems have leverage

points, namely those places where even a small change (i.e. an intervention) can produce large results by altering the vicious dynamics of the conflict system. Traditional conflict analysis can help in locating some potential leverage points, especially during the stakeholder assessment and the mapping of peace capacities stages. However, leverage points may not be obvious and can become explicit only after extended analysis. Some involve breaking a vicious circle or a specific link between causal factors; others imply changing the nature of a driving factor or reinforcing key balancing feedback loops in order to restore equilibrium to the system (CDA 2013). The list of key questions in the box can help assess the output of a conflict

system map and identify leverage points (CDA 2013, p. 34).

The example in the Box 7 from post-apartheid South Africa shows how a small intervention could be leveraged to address a case of deep-rooted urban violence.



KEY QUESTIONS:

What are the most important dynamics?

Why does the system persist? What keeps it going? Why are peace factors unable to exert strong influence?

Where might small changes have a large effect?

Are there important gaps, in terms of what people are working on?

What are future scenarios for change, tipping towards violence or towards peace?

LEVERAGE POINTS IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE TAXI-BUS VIOLENCE IN CAPE TOWN

The end of the apartheid regime and the advent of multi-party democracy in South Africa did not automatically translate into the establishment of a cohesive society and the disappearance of social conflicts. Violence rooted in the racially exclusive policies of the past continued to manifest itself under different forms, particularly as structural inequalities. At one point around the year 2000 a violent conflict arose once more in the transport industry in Cape Town. Drivers in the informal and semi-legal taxi business and the well-established local bus company engaged in a tussle over profitable opportunities. This led to a vicious series of violent acts, in which a hitman was hired who systematically attacked the busses and shot commuters from the side of the highways. This violence was the result of fierce commercial competition for routes and clients and was also pitting the mainly black taxi owners against the white-owned bus company. Through a dedicated mediation process, the violence was examined and underlying causes could be understood better, which eventually led to a review of the legislation regulating the transportation system in South Africa. Important insights were won about the ongoing dimension of structural violence that impacted on the aspiring black businesses and led to the spiral of overt violence. For instance, the mediators found out that, despite the abolition of the apartheid system, a subsidy was still benefitting the white bus company that had obtained its licences under apartheid when white businesses were privileged. Few officials were actually aware of the existence of such discriminatory measures. The arrest of the hitman resulted in an immediate end of the shoot-outs and discovery of the circumstances. At the time, the mediation process was discontinued once the violence ended and, to the frustration of the conflict resolution practitioners, did not provide a powerful leverage point for policy shifts until much later. Still, the use of a dedicated team of mediators in the engagement with this violent urban dispute meant that underlying root causes could come to light and understanding was furthered among the parties, as well as between

the parties and the authorities. Violent conflicts in the transport industry continued in Cape Town until such point that the city and municipal authorities began to take seriously the multi-dimensional and cyclical nature of these occurrences. Then began a process to regulate the transport industry in ways that gave space and genuine opportunities to those previously excluded and the worst conflicts subsided.

Overall, applying systems thinking to conflict analysis can be time-consuming. However, it has two indisputable advantages: first, it improves the understanding of the complexity of conflict, its nuances and multiple facets, some of which are visible while others are latent but equally important; secondly, it can make a difference in terms of posture and attitude of the analyst. In some instance, it may not lead to radically different findings or highlight original features in a conflict situation, but it certainly provides a more neutral and effective vantage point for the analyst. As Senge argues, “Today’s problems come from yesterday’s ‘solutions’. We are often puzzled by the causes of our problems when we merely need to look at our own solutions to other problems in the past”. Equally important is the fact that “those who ‘solved’ the first problem are not the ones who inherit the new problem” (Senge 2006).

d. Methodological compass

This final section of the handbook offers some practical recommendations to determine the most suitable methodological configuration for the expected conflict analysis process. It suggests specific tools based on very different starting scenarios in which analysts may find themselves. The suggestions are based on field experience, but it remains valid that every situation is different and the actual methodology will depend on contextual factors, such as the country specificities, situation, time and resource availability. Three broad scenarios and types of conflict analysis can be identified:

- **Desk analysis:** It is performed by one or two individuals and can be completed in a couple of days.
- **Rapid conflict analysis:** It is performed by a variable number of selected UN staff (between 5 and 10) and is led by an internal facilitator in a workshop format. Senior officials then validate the findings. It can take about one or two weeks (including report finalization).
- **Structured conflict analysis:** It is conducted in country by a team of UN staff with the support of an experienced facilitator. It can include the active engagement of civil society, members of national political forces and government (local and national) at specific stages of the assessment process. It can take from one to three months.

The table in the following page summarizes the different conflict analysis tools and suggests the ones to use according to the type of analysis and scenario in which the assessment takes place.

CONDUCTING A CONFLICT ANALYSIS PROCESS

Level of analysis	Phase	Tool	Desk analysis	Rapid analysis	Structured analysis
Static Conflict Analysis	0. Desk review	Review of previous analyses		√	√
		Literature review			√
	1. Situation profile	Timeline	√	√	√
		Curve of Conflict			√
		Conflict Arena and Geographical Map			√
		Escalation Stages			√
		Issue Matrix		√	√
	2. Causal analysis	Iceberg	√	√	√
		Pillars		√	√
		Levels of Conflict			√
		Conflict Tree		√	√
		Conflict Triggers			√
	3. Stakeholder analysis	Stakeholder Inventory	√	√	√
		Onion		√	√
		Stakeholder Matrix		√	√
		Stakeholder Map	√	√	√
		ABC Triangle			√
		Pyramid		√	√
Dynamic conflict analysis	4. Analysis of Peace and Conflict Dynamics	Review of past responses			√
		Force-Field Analysis			√
		Connectors and Dividers	√	√	√
		Peace Profile Matrix	√	√	√
		Issues Synergies Diagram		√	√
		Conflict trends			√
		Scenario Building			√
Systemic conflict analysis	5. Systems thinking	Conflict boundaries			√
		Key driving factors			√
		Reinforcing and balancing loops			√
		Mental models			√
		Archetypes			√
		Leverage points			√

REFERENCES

A

- ANDERLINI, S. N. (2006) *Mainstreaming gender in Conflict Analysis: Issues and recommendations*. World Bank: Social development papers, n. 32, Conflict prevention and reconstruction. [Online]. Available from: <http://documents.worldbank.org/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].
- ANDERSON, M. and Olson, L. (2003) *Confronting War: Critical lessons for peace practitioners*. Reflecting on Peace Project – Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) [Online]. Available from: <http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].
- ANDERSON, V. and Johnson L. (1997) *Systems Thinking Basics: From concepts to causal loops*. Acton: Leverage Networks, Inc.

B

- BERDAL, M. (2003) How 'new' are 'new wars'? Global economic change and the study of civil war. *Global Governance*, pp. 477–502.
- BRADBURY, M. (2009) *The Search for Peace: A synthesis report of the Peace Mapping study*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.jccp.gr.jp/_src/sc2329/2_PDRC_A_Synthesis_Report_of_the_Peace_Mapping_Study_20June_2009.pdf [Accessed: 26 May 2016].
- BANBURY, A. (2016) *I Love the U.N., but It Is Failing*, New York Times, 18 March 2016.
- BANGURA, Z. (2015) *Faith in Islam & Faith in Women: Why Gender Justice is Key to an Islam Without Extremes*, International Crisis Group, 31 October 2015.
- BUZAN, B. and HANSEN, L. (2009) *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

C

- CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION (2000) *Becoming a Third-Party Neutral: Resource Guide*. Ridgewood Foundation for Community-Based Conflict Resolution.
- COLEMAN, P. (2003) Characteristics of protracted, intractable conflict: Towards the development of a meta-framework I, *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, Mar., 9(1), pp. 1-37. [Online]. Available from: Taylor & Francis, EBSCOhost.
- COLEMAN, P. (2011) *The Five Percent: Finding solutions to seemingly intractable conflicts*. New York: Public Affairs, Perseus Book Group.
- COLLABORATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT ACTION (CDA) - Collaborative Learning Projects (2004) *The "Do No Harm" Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Assistance on Conflict: A Handbook*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.cda-collaborative.org/publications/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].
- COLLABORATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT ACTION (CDA) - Reflecting on Peace Practice Project (2013) *Advanced Training of Consultants and Advisers: Resource manual*.

D

- DE LA HAYE, J. and DENAYER, K. (2003) PCIA: A tool to move from conflict-ignorance to conflict-sensitivity within development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding, *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*. Jan. 1(2), pp. 49-62. [Online]. Available from: Taylor & Francis Ltb., EBSCOhost.
- DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR TECHNISCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GTZ) (2001) *Conflict Analysis for Project Planning and Management: A practical guideline*.

E

- EINSIEDEL, S. *et al.* (2014) *Major Recent Trends in Violent Conflict*, Occasional Paper 1, United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, Tokyo.

F

- FAZAL, T. M. T. (2014) Nonfatal Casualties and the Changing Costs of War, *Quarterly Journal: International Security*, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School. November 2014.
- FEWER, *et al.* (2004) *Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack*, London.

FREEMAN, L. J. and Fisher, R. J. (2012) Comparing a Problem-solving Workshop to a Conflict Assessment Framework: Conflict Analysis versus Conflict Assessment in practice, *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, Oct. 7(1), pp. 66-80. [Online]. Available from: Taylor & Francis Ltb., EBSCOhost.

G

GALLO, G. (2012) Conflict theory, complexity and systems approach, *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, Syst. Res. (2012). [Online]. Available from: Wiley Online Library.

GENEVA DECLARATION (2015) *Global Burden of Armed Violence 2015: Every Body Counts*. Geneva: Geneva Declaration Secretariat.

GLASL F. (1997) *Konfliktmanagement. Ein Handbuch für Führungskräfte, Beraterinnen und Berater*. Bern: Paul Haupt Verlag.

GOLDSTEIN, J. D. (2011) Think Again, War: World peace could be closer than you think, *Foreign Policy*, 15 August 2011.

GOMES PORTO, J. (2002) Contemporary conflict analysis in perspective, in: Lind, J. and Sturman, K. (eds.) *Scarcity and Surfeit: The ecology of Africa's conflict*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.

H

HAYKEL, B and CRESWELL, R. (2015) Battle Lines: Want to understand the jihadis? Read their poetry, *The New Yorker*, 8 & 15 June 2015.

HENDRICK, D. (2009) *Complexity Theory and Conflict Transformation: An exploration of potential and implications*. Working Paper, University of Bradford, Department of Peace Studies. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.beyondintractability.org/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

HUMAN SECURITY RESEARCH GROUP (2014) *Human Security Report 2013. The Decline in Global Violence: Evidence, Explanation and Contest*. Simon Fraser University: Human Security Press.

K

KALDOR, M. (1999) *New and old wars: Organised violence in a global era*. 1st edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.

KALDOR, M. (2013) In defence of new wars. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 2 (1).

KALYVAS, S. N. (2001) 'New' and 'old' civil wars: A valid distinction? *World Politics*, 54, October, pp. 99-118.

KEEGAN, J. A. (2004) *History of warfare*. London: Pimlico.

KETT, M. and ROWSON, M. (2007) Drivers of violent conflict, *Journal Of The Royal Society of Medicine*, Sep., 100(9), pp. 403-406. [Online]. Available from: MEDLINE, EBSCOhost.

KREUZER, P. (2005) *Political Clans and Violence in the Southern Philippines*, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt Report No. 71.

L

LEDERACH, J. P. (1998) *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. United States Institute of Peace.

LOODE, S. (2011) Peacebuilding in complex social systems, *Journal of Peace, Conflict & Development*, 18, Dec. 2011, pp. 68-82. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.bradford.ac.uk/social-sciences/peace-conflict-and-development/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

LUND, M. (1996) *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press

M

MAC GINTY, R. and WILLIAMS, A. (2009) *Conflict and Development*. Oxon: Routledge.

MADDEN, F. and MCQUINN, B. (2014) Conservation's blind spot: The case for conflict transformation in wildlife conservation, *Biological Conservation*. Volume 178, October 2014, pp. 97-106.

MAYALL, J. (2007) Introduction, in: Berdal, M. and Economides, S. (eds.) *United Nations Interventionism 1991-2004*, pp. 1-31. New York: Cambridge University Press.

MCQUINN B. and OLIVA, F. (2014) *Analyzing and Engaging Non-State Armed Groups in the Field: Preliminary Scoping Report*. United Nations System Staff College.

MEADOWS, D. (2008) *Thinking in Systems: A primer*. London: Earthscan.

N

NEWTON, D. (2014) *Conflict Analysis and Assessment: Where are we now?* European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO): Civil Society Dialogue Network Background Paper. [Online]. Available from: <http://eplo.org/activities/on-going-projects/civil-society-dialogue-network/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

O

OLIVA, F. (2015) Fit for purpose: Equipping the United Nations to better understand non-state armed groups, in United Nations System Staff College. *Understanding a new generation of non-state armed groups*. Turin: UNSSC.

P

PAFFENHOLZ, T. (2005a), Peace and conflict sensitivity in international cooperation: An introductory overview, *International Politics & Society* (Springer). Oct., 2005 (4), pp. 63-82. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.gsdr.org/go/display&type=Document&id=2798> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

PAFFENHOLZ, T. (2005b) *Third-generation PCIA: Introducing the Aid for Peace Approach*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.berghof-foundation.org/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

PAFFENHOLZ, T. (2009) Understanding the conflict-development nexus and the contribution of development cooperation to peacebuilding, in: Sandole, J. D. D. *et al.* (eds.) *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, pp. 272-285. Oxon: Routledge.

PARASZCZUK, J. (2015) "The Poems of Jihadists: A selection of militant verse on the Internet, from Chechnya to Syria" *The Atlantic*, 18 September 2015.

R

RICIGLIANO, R. (2012) *Making Peace Last: A toolbox for sustainable peacebuilding*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

RICIGLIANO, R. and CHIGAS, D. (2011) *Systems Thinking in Conflict Assessment: Concepts and application*. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

ROPER, N. (2008) Systemic conflict transformation: Reflection on the conflict and peace process in Sri Lanka, in: Körppen, D., Wils, O. and Schmelzle, B., *A Systemic Approach to Conflict Transformation*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.berghof-foundation.org/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

ROUSSET, J. and Söderholm, A. (2015) *Conflict Analysis in the United Nations: A review of the current state of information exchange between OCHA, DPA and DPKO*. London School of Economics and Political Science, OCHA.

S

SENGE, P. M. (2006) *The Fifth Discipline: The art and practice of the Learning Organization* (Updated Edition). New York: Currency Doubleday.

SLOTIN, J. *et al.* (2010) *Power, Politics, and Change: How international actors assess local context*. International Peace Institute. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.ipinst.org/2010/06/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SDC) (2005) *Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management: Integrating conflict-sensitivity and prevention of violence into SDC programmes – A handbook for practitioners*.

T

TSCHIRGI, N. (2003) *Peacebuilding as the Link between Security and Development: Is the Window of Opportunity Closing?* International Peace Academy Studies in Security and development. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.un.org/esa/peacebuilding/Library/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

TIME MAGAZINE (2012) *Civilian Massacres and Koran Burnings: A Tale of Two Misdeeds in Afghanistan* March 22, 2012.

U

UK FORESIGHT HORIZON SCANNING CENTRE (2009) *Scenario Planning – Guidance Note*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

UN WOMEN (2015) *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A global study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*. [Online]. Available from: <http://wps.unwomen.org/~media/files/un%20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

UN WOMEN (2010) *Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice*. New York.

UNITED NATIONS (2015) *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace*. Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture. A/69/968–S/2015/490.

UNITED NATIONS (2015) *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace. Politics, Partnerships and People*. High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENTS OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND FIELD SUPPORT (2013) *Understanding and Integrating Local Perceptions in Multi-Dimensional UN Peacekeeping*. Policy, Evaluation and Training Division Policy and Best Practices Service. New York.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (2013) *Issue Brief: Infrastructure for Peace*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (2014) *Supporting Insider Mediation: Strengthening resilience to conflict and turbulence. Guidance Note*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325 (2000), *S/RES/1325 (2000)*. [Online]. Available from <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

V

VALLACHER, R.R. *et al.* (2010) Rethinking intractable conflicts: The perspective of dynamical systems, *American Psychologist*. 65(4), pp. 262-278. [Online]. Available from: <http://ac4.ei.columbia.edu/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

VAN BRABANT, K. (2010) Peacebuilding How: Good practices in conflict analysis. *Interpeace*. [Online]. Available from: <http://dmeforpeace.org/learn/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

W

WALLACE, M. (2002) The Learning Process of the Local Capacities for Peace Project, *Development in Practice*. Aug. 12(3/4), pp. 480-489. [Online]. Available from: Taylor & Francis Ltb., EBSCOhost.

WALLENSTEEN, P. (2002) *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global system*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

WILKE, A. and MATA R. (2012) Cognitive Bias. In: V.S. Ramachandran (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Human Behavior*, vol. 1, pp. 531-535. Academic Press.

WILLIAMS, B. and Hummelbrunner, R. (2010) *Systems Concepts in Action: A practitioner's toolkit*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

WITLIN, L. (2008) Of Note: Mirror-Imaging and Its Dangers, *SAIS Review of International Affairs*. Winter-Spring 2008, 28(1), p. 89.

WORLD BANK (2006) *Effective Conflict Analysis Exercises: Overcoming organizational challenges*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

WORLD BANK (2011) *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development*. [Online]. Available from: <http://go.worldbank.org/QLKJWJB8X0> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

WORLD BANK (2015) *World Development Report 2015: Mind, Society, and Behavior*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2015> [Accessed: 26 May 2016].

Y

YAMIN, S. and Malik S. (2014) *Mapping Conflict Trends in Pakistan*. United States Institute of Peace.

AUTHORS

Fabio Oliva

Fabio Oliva is currently working as Peace and Development Advisor for the United Nations in Guyana. Previously, he worked for 7 years as Programme Officer in Peace & Security at the United Nations System Staff College. His areas of expertise are conflict analysis, peacebuilding, prevention of electoral violence, analysis of non-state armed groups and capacity building. He has supported UN Country Teams and Peace Operations in Afghanistan, Guinea, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Nepal, Mauritania, Somalia, and Sudan (Darfur). Prior to the UN he worked with Geneva Call in the Philippines (Mindanao) conducting consultations aimed at the political transformation of Islamic armed groups. From 2003 to 2006 he served in Nepal as conflict analyst for the Swiss Development Agency. He holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. During his doctoral research he was Visiting Scholar at the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) of Columbia University in New York and Visiting Fellow at the Royal University of Phnom Penh in Cambodia.

Lorraine Charbonnier

Lorraine Charbonnier has recently graduated in International Relations from the University of Turin (Italy). Her master thesis, entitled *The Evolution of Conflict Analysis: Towards a Systemic Approach*, focused on the role played by complexity science and systems thinking in overcoming the impasse of analytical methodologies and peacebuilding strategies vis-à-vis complex violent conflicts. In 2015 she collaborated with the Peace & Security Team at the United Nations System Staff College, whereas currently she is conducting a field research on nonviolent conflict transformation and gender issues in India. Her research interests include alternative approaches to conflict analysis and peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and systems thinking applied to social sciences.

ANNEX I

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CONFLICT ANALYSIS FRAMEWORKS

This annotated bibliography has been written with the purpose of complementing the handbook with an overview of existing frameworks for conducting conflict analysis and other related assessments that might be valuable when working in contexts of deteriorating security, impending crisis or violent conflict. At the time of writing this handbook, no exercise of this extent appears to have ever been carried out.¹

The annotated bibliography is divided into two main sections. The first part focuses specifically on conflict analysis and impact assessment frameworks. The second part presents other issue-specific – and partially conflict-related – assessments. The different entries are reviewed in chronological order. Consistently with the overall objective of the handbook, summaries and annotations concentrate mainly on conflict analysis methodologies and processes rather than on other aspects or components of the different frameworks.²

Despite the commitment to be as inclusive as time and the availability of resources allowed, in view of the broadness and vitality of the field, the selection of frameworks should not be interpreted as exhaustive.³ Nevertheless, it seeks to sketch the big picture of constantly evolving approaches to conflict analysis that practitioners and academics have developed so far.

¹ In 2004 a consortium of INGOs did produce an overview of conflict analysis methodologies but it focused only on a few analytical frameworks (see Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: Resource Pack).

² To review the specific conflict analysis tools, please refer to Part II of this handbook for a thorough description.

³ Due to the large number of available documents, the annotated bibliography only covers resources in English.

1. Conflict analysis and impact assessment frameworks

A Measure of Peace: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) of development projects in conflict zones

International Development Research Centre, **1998**

Bush, K.

The declared purpose of this working paper is to encourage “more self-consciousness in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of [...] development initiatives in regions characterized by potential, latent, or manifest violence” (p. 5) and to introduce the Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) framework conceived by Kenneth Bush. The PCIA is intended here to help practitioners develop a more sensitive approach to the environment in which they work and to anticipate and evaluate the impact – either positive or negative – of their actions therein, thus enhancing the efficiency and pertinence of decision-making processes. Accordingly, “Pre-Project Considerations” and “Post-Project Considerations” determine the overall framework.

The first part of the PCIA is described as an “assessment of environmental factors” and includes a preliminary risk assessment (p. 12). It is followed with the analysis of other factors relevant to the design and the implementation of a specific development project, notably location, timing and political context (pp. 12-14). The document also identifies “five areas of potential peace and conflict impact” to consider: 1) institutional capacity to manage/resolve violent conflict and to promote tolerance and build peace; 2) military and human security; 3) political structures and processes; 4) economic structures and processes; and 5) social reconstruction and empowerment (pp. 25-32).

However, apart from a list of guiding questions, the PCIA methodology introduced by Bush falls short of providing concrete tools to assess conflicts. Nevertheless, this early attempt to develop a more systematic approach has had a significant influence on the evolution of mainstream conflict analysis frameworks.

Tools: *Guiding questions sorted according to “five potential peace and conflict impact areas”.*

Early Warning for Preventive Measures (EWPM) Training Manual

United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), **1998 (1st edition) and 2003 (revised 2nd edition)**

The Early Warning for Preventive Measures (EWPM) methodology has been developed by the UNSSC in order to provide UN staff, Member State rep-

representatives, civil society organisations and regional organisations with adequate professional and analytical skills to: 1) identify causes and stages of conflict; 2) systematically structure early warning analysis; 3) identify and integrate a range of preventive measures; 4) use existing mechanisms for inter-departmental coordination; and 5) improve quality and effectiveness of policy recommendations.

With these aims, UNSSC delivered a workshop-based analytical process composed of the following methodological steps. Firstly, the EWPM framework investigates the current conflict context and dynamics by conducting a situation analysis. At this stage the objective is to develop a shared comprehensive situation profile by taking into consideration several factors belonging to political, social, environmental, economic, external and historical dimensions, *inter alia*. This first step should reflect human rights concerns and include the identification of available capacities for peace. Secondly, EWPM methodology focuses on conflict causation and human security. Accordingly, it is suggested to undertake a categorisation of potential causes of conflict and differentiation between proximate and structural causes. The next step consists of the analysis of conflict dynamics in terms of causal interaction, especially among structural conflict causes. Afterwards, it is considered crucial to undertake an actor analysis to understand whether key actors play a positive or a negative role with regard to the issues identified in the previous step. Based on the findings of the situation, causal and actor analyses, the user is supposed to develop a preventive measures⁴ matrix which reflects what needs to be done in a specific country or regional context in terms of preventing the eruption of violence and addressing structural causes of conflict. The last step of the process consists of developing a two-track scenario: one track showing what might happen if no preventive measures are implemented and the other showing how the situation might look if the measures are implemented.

Tools: *Guiding questions, conflict dynamics diagram, situation profile matrix, Iceberg, Venn diagram, Nugget visual model, preventive measures matrix, scenario building.*

Conflict Vulnerability Analysis: Issues, tools and response

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 1999

Samarasinghe, S. et al.

The Conflict Vulnerability Analysis (CVA) proposed by USAID aims to “assess how vulnerable the particular entity – country, region, state, community – is to violent conflict” (p. 2). In other words, this framework attempts to com-

⁴ Within the UN system, “preventive *measures*” refers to a wide range of interventions, including: preventive peacebuilding, deployment, humanitarian action, peace-making, development and disarmament. A collection of various preventive measures represents a preventive *action*.

plement risk management with an evaluation of how and to what extent a country, region or community is able to cope with the risk factors identified through the analysis. The main assumption underlying the CVA is that social fragmentation, state collapse and structural factors of fragility increase the likelihood of violent conflict. Therefore, to understand the dynamics of conflicts in a country it is crucial to assess both the vulnerabilities and capacities of that country. In order to do so, USAID defines a seven-step methodology, which includes the conduct of a CVA (steps 1-5) and the design of conflict-sensitive policies and programmes (steps 6-7). Overall, USAID's framework utilises checklists and ranking scores to carry out the analysis.

The first step aims at identifying and defining "population groups by both their geographic location and the basis of the group's identity" (p. 2). The result is a "current conflict map", which includes information on the situation, notably the actual level and time frame of existing conflicts (p. 20). The next two steps consist of the identification and assessment of conflict risk indicators taking into consideration: 1) structural risk factors; 2) social tensions and fragmentation factors including inequality and politicisation of differences; and 3) the viability of the state (pp. 21-27). After measuring the population's capacity to manage and contain conflict, the analysis phase ends with the determination of anticipated population's vulnerability to violence. Lastly, according to USAID, a complete CVA includes a more action-oriented identification of sensitive response options on the basis of which conflict policies and programmes should then be developed.

***Tools:** Curve of conflict (i.e. levels of violence and phases of conflict), selected early warning systems, conflict mapping by means of matrixes and guiding questions, conflict risk indicators, checklists, "Do No Harm" questionnaire.*

Conflict Prognosis: A Conflict and Policy Assessment Framework – Part Two

Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael", 2000

Van de Goor, L. and Versteegen, S.

This paper seeks to address the criticisms against conflict prevention and early warning – and their supposed poor operationalisation – by offering a response-oriented framework for the analysis of conflicts and the design of suitable policies to address them. The goal is to bridge the gap between theory and practice. A Conflict and Policy Assessment Framework (CPAF) is thus presented as "an attempt at eclectically bringing together research findings on causes of conflict, the dynamics of conflict, (prospective) policy analysis, as well as issues of political decision-making" (p. 5). The CPAF is mainly conceived as a state-centred approach, which generally assumes state failure as a critical source of conflict and, consequently, focuses on issues such as governance, state-society relations, political systems and identity.

As a starting point, the CPAF envisages the establishment of a baseline for subsequent analyses and monitoring. This is done through a country profile providing key conflict-relevant information. As regards the conflict assessment, the CPAF builds on the conceptual framework of the Fund for Peace's *Analytical Model of Internal Conflict and State Collapse* (1998). This model stipulates a number of indicators and areas to evaluate the volatility of the situation. Hence, conflict analysis within the CPAF focuses on the investigation of those indicators that might have a destabilising effect. The last section of the CPAF is devoted to linking the analysis to planning and implementation.

Tools: *Tables concerning conflict indicators and related "potential aspects of conflict" and "problem areas".*

Working with Conflict: Skills and strategies for actions

Responding to Conflict, **2000**

Fisher, S. et al.

Working with Conflict represents one of the milestones of conflict analysis methodologies, upon which many other organisations and institutions have regularly drawn for their own analytical frameworks. Indeed, the authors themselves define this book as a practical tool to inform practitioners on "ideas, methods and techniques for understanding and working with conflict" at every stage, from the analysis of the context to the evaluation of interventions and the resulting "lessons to learn" (p. XV). It also identifies several cross-cutting issues that need greater attention because of their relevance in conflict settings (i.e. power, culture, identity, gender and rights). The manual is very rich in examples and graphic representations of the different conflict analysis tools. It also provides a multi-dimensional and versatile conceptual framework that has gained significant traction in the past 15 years.

Tools: *Stages of conflict, timelines, conflict mapping, the ABC triangle, the onion, the conflict tree, force-field analysis, pillars, the pyramid, multi-level triangles, mapping for entry points, the grid, the wheel, impact mapping, the strategy circle, the value tree, spectrum of strategic options, checklist for programming, assessing organisational capacity, the radar chart.*

Benefits/Harms Handbook

CARE International, **2001**

CARE International introduces a rights-based approach to humanitarian and development work by stimulating practitioners to reflect more systematically and be accountable for both positive and negative impacts of a project. With

this intent, the benefits-harms analysis puts human rights as the main criterion for impact assessment. In specific terms, this methodology is based on three categories of human rights – namely 1) political, 2) security, and 3) economic, social and cultural rights. The analytical tools contained in this handbook are organised according to this conceptual structure. However, they are also classified according to the functions they perform. CARE International distinguishes *profile* tools for the analysis of the situation, *impact* tools and *decision* tools to support project design. Among these, profile tools are most compatible with conflict analysis models since they “are designed to help programmers think holistically by asking them to consider, in an efficient way, the political, security, economic, social, and cultural rights environment in any given context” (p. 18).

Tools: *Profile, impact and decision tools based on three human rights categories (i.e. triangles), guiding questions and matrixes sorted according to the type of tool and human rights category under consideration.*

EC Checklist for Root Causes of Conflict

European Commission (EC), **2001**

This checklist represents the basis for a statistical analysis based on the following indicators of potential root causes of conflict: 1) legitimacy of the state; 2) rule of law; 3) respect for fundamental rights; 4) civil society and media; 5) relations between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms; 6) sound economic management; 7) social and regional inequalities; and 8) geopolitical situations.

Although it cannot be considered a complete conflict analysis framework, the EC checklist for root causes of conflict can be seen as a basis for conducting a more structured and comprehensive analysis at a later stage. In fact, it might represent a tool for systematising information according to the selected indicators and be subsequently used as an *aide-mémoire* to identify areas requiring more attention both during the analysis and implementation phases.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Conflict Analysis and Response Definition: Abridged methodology

Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER), Centre for Conflict Resolution and West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, **2001**

The methodology presented can be defined as a “quick tool” starting from the analytical assumption that “(a) conflict trends - (b) peace trends +/- (c) stakeholder trends = overall trends” (p. 2). In this sense, conflict analysis needs

to investigate features and trends of each component through: 1) review of conflict indicators (i.e. conflict causes and triggers in the areas of politics, security, economy and socio-culture); 2) analysis of peace indicators, defined as systems, processes and tools sustaining peace within a given society; and 3) stakeholder analysis. Based on this information, a “summary analysis” is developed, which draws attention to linkages and synergies between peace and conflict factors, actors and trends. The final step involves the formulation of three plausible scenarios – a best-case, a status quo, and a worst-case scenario – that can be used to map “potential programmatic entry points” (p. 7).

Tools: *Conflict and peace indicators, tables.*

Development in Conflict: A seven step tool for planners

Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER), International Alert, and SaferWorld, 2001

Nyheim, D. et al.

The framework presented in this handbook falls within the category of PCIA approaches. It is based on the project management cycle and inspired by International Alert’s “guiding principles for conflict transformation work”⁵ (p. 4) with the explicit purpose of “assist[ing] development and humanitarian organisations in analysing situations of (potential) conflict and identifying strategic opportunities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding” (p. 3). Overall, the analytical framework is divided into three different sections: analysis (steps 1-2); strategy (steps 3-4); and implementation (steps 5-7).

The first step of the analysis section revolves around the identification of conflict factors and key indicators in order to map the broader context of the conflict and monitor it thereafter. Generally, at this stage, the main focus of issue-based conflict analysis is on “the historical and spatial dimension of the conflict” and on relevant areas, such as governance, economics, security and socio-cultural conditions. The correlations and linkages between issues and conflict factors are then captured in a diagram. The second important step consists of a stakeholder analysis, which provides insights on the interests, relations and peace agendas of involved actors as well as information on their capacities for peacebuilding. Lastly, the handbook includes considerations on both trend analysis and risk assessment in order to strengthen the sustainability of the project intended.

Tools: *Guiding questions, issues matrix and diagram, stakeholder matrix, tables, conflict and peace indicators.*

⁵ “International Alert has identified the following guiding principles [...]: primacy of people in transforming conflict, humanitarian concern, human rights and humanitarian laws and principles, respect for gender and cultural diversity, impartiality, independence, accountability, confidentiality, partnership, institutional learning” (Nyheim *et al.* 2001, p. 4).

Conflict Analysis for Project Planning and Management: A practical guideline

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), 2001

Leonhardt, M.

In this document GTZ defines its framework for an action-oriented conflict analysis aimed at increasing understanding of “the problem areas in which external organisations can make a meaningful contribution to reducing the potential for conflict and advancing the peacebuilding process” (p. 17). The analytical framework is organised into nine steps overall, concerning both analysis *per se* and planning. This guide describes each analytical step separately and suggests matching guiding questions and analytical tools. Moreover, an annex to the document complements the framework with additional recommended tools and methods for conflict analysis.

A conflict analysis begins with outlining a conflict profile, which forms the basis for developing conflict indicators and more nuanced analyses at a later stage. Stakeholder analysis is then suggested in order to identify interests, positions and relationships of the groups involved in or affected by the conflict. The next step is a causal analysis, which is divided into: 1) the identification of conflict causes and factors prolonging factors; and 2) the prioritisation of such causes and factors. All together, these initial assessments should lead to the definition of trends and opportunities representing the final task of the conflict analysis.

Tools: *Conflict profile, conflict phases, timeline, conflict arena, conflict mapping, conflict pyramid, conflict layer model, conflict tree, conflict pillars, trend analysis (i.e. table), conflict scenario, capacities and vulnerabilities analysis (i.e. table), institutional analysis and conflict grid, capacity analysis (i.e. guiding questions and diagram), “Do No Harm” analysis model.*

Conflict Impact Assessment for Development Projects: A practical guideline

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), 2001

Leonhardt, M.

This document is intended to offer pointers and suggestions on how to assess “the conflict-related risks of projects and assist the gathering and evaluation of action-oriented information about the impacts of development projects on the conflict” (p. 10). In other words, the purpose of this GTZ guideline is to enhance the understanding of the interrelations between a given project and the context in which it operates and, consequently, to facilitate the design of appropriate projects, basically in line with the “Do No Harm” principle. The as-

assessment consists of four steps: 1) conflict analysis; 2) risk appraisal; 3) impact assessment; and 4) adaptation. According to the goal of each step, GTZ suggests related guiding questions and methods to perform the analysis.

The document recommends “conflict monitoring” as the methodology for analysing conflict (p. 41). This involves an in-depth analysis of conflict actors, conflict causes, issues at stake and coping strategies. Given the overall goal of the framework, a great deal of attention must be given to “observing the actual changes of the conflict situation over a certain period of time and examining to what extent a connection can be made between these changes and the work of the project” (p. 40). In order to enhance the understanding of the actual circumstances, it is suggested to combine both qualitative and quantitative aspects (i.e. conflict indicators).

Tools: *Guiding questions sorted by topics and issues, peace and conflict indicators, conflict barometer, timeline, trend line, conflict mapping, conflict index, conflict tree, the ABC triangle, impact matrix, capacity analysis, activities-portfolio analysis, “Do No Harm” analysis model.*

Peacebuilding: A Caritas training manual [Module Three]

Caritas International, 2002

Neufeldt, R. et al.

This manual is designed for peacebuilding trainers to assist and support their activity. For this reason, rather than a complete framework for conflict analysis, it provides exercises and materials to enhance knowledge on critical topics and develop skills for practitioners.

More than the others, the third module concerns conflict – metaphorically compared to a fire – and ways of analysing it. The manual includes three main analytical tools, borrowed and adapted from other sources. The main focus is on stakeholders and those factors that either escalate conflict or promote peace. In addition, Caritas International thoroughly reflects on the notion of “power” and on the different types of power that actors may have at their disposal.

Overall, this manual can be considered valuable to introduce “peacebuilding in development work [...] with core concepts, peacebuilding skills, and ideas to connect peacebuilding to programming” starting from the analysis of the conflict situation (p. 1).

Tools: *Guiding questions and analogies, the 3P's, the who, what and how of conflict, conflict map, conflict web.*

Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance notes

United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), **2002**

In this guidance note DFID presents its framework for assessing conflicts and improving the effectiveness of its aid programmes by developing policies and programmes that are more sensitive to peace and conflict dynamics.

The Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) is intended to be a flexible framework that can – and should – be adapted to the context. However, DFID supports the user with a methodological basis and useful case studies. The methodology to conduct the SCA is based on the following three analytical stages: 1) analysis of the conflict; 2) analysis of international responses to the conflict; and 3) development of strategies and options. It is important to note that, given the SCA's general propensity towards political economy approaches, "greed" and "grievances" theories of conflict causation are inherent assumptions of the assessment, especially in its first component, i.e. conflict analysis. This analysis is intended to investigate different aspects of a conflict through several steps, the first of which serves to disclose the underlying structures of conflict in the security, political, economic and social sectors. Afterwards, analysts should compile a contextual analysis and map out the sources of tension. Then they are asked to identify linkages between these factors and consider different levels of analysis (i.e. international, regional, national and local levels). Next, the structural analysis has to be complemented by an actor-oriented one. This step identifies conflict actors and analyses their interests, relations, capacities, peace agendas and incentives/disincentives. Importantly, this stage should include external actors even though the subsequent analysis of international responses will further clarify the interaction of aid interventions with the conflict. Another key component of the analytical framework focuses on conflict dynamics. According to DFID guidelines, this entails analysing trends, triggers and factors that might influence – either by accelerating or slowing down – the path of a given conflict. These considerations will then enable conflict analysts to predict the likelihood for conflict to escalate, de-escalate or remain stable, thus building potential scenarios.

Tools: *n/a*

The Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF): Identifying conflict-related obstacles to development

World Bank, **2002**

Sardesai, S. and Wam, P.

This note introduces the Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF) developed by the World Bank to identify the sources of violent conflicts and promote conflict-sensitive approaches as a way to improve development assistance. More spe-

cifically, the World Bank focuses here on its contribution to conflict prevention worldwide and on the role of conflict analysis in “guid[ing] a development strategy that addresses potential sources of conflict and identifies opportunities to strengthen conflict resiliency” (p. 1).

The framework outlined is organised around six key areas, namely: 1) social and ethnic relations; 2) governance and political institutions; 3) human rights and security; 4) economic structure and performance; 5) environment and natural resources; and 6) external forces. Each of these variables is further explored according to selected dimensions (i.e. history/changes, dynamics/trends, public perceptions, politicisation, organisation, link to conflict and intensity, and link to poverty). Although very comprehensive, the CAF does not provide any specific analytical tools to conduct the analysis.

Tools: *n/a*

Developing Capacity for Conflict Analysis and Early Response: A training manual

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), **n.d.**

This manual represents a step-by-step guide for trainers, aiming to “introduce participants to the theories and practice of conflict analysis and early warning, and provide them with opportunities to develop the skills and abilities to effectively design and implement early response and mobilisation” (p. 5). In order to achieve this, the training manual provides useful materials to facilitate training activities and suggests a structured outline for a five-day workshop. The first part of the manual is mainly theoretical: firstly, it explores social and political perspectives of conflict and then it focuses on some of the main conflict theories, namely human needs theory, rational theory, political theory and transformative theory. The second part specifically concerns conflict analysis, response design and related challenges.

In this framework, the purpose of conflict analysis is to enhance the understanding of “the multi-faceted, multi-layered, multi-dimensional nature of conflict” (p. 27). For this reason, the paramount role of conflict analysis is heavily emphasised and one of the main tasks of potential trainers is explicitly to generate awareness and “shared understanding on the importance of conducting analysis in any conflict situation” (p. 27).

Tools: *Summary tables, guiding questions, context analysis matrixes, conflict tree, causes of conflict matrix, peace flower, peace analysis matrix, phases of conflict (i.e. curve of conflict), stakeholder matrix, scenario-building.*

Conflict Impact Assessment: A guide for practitioners

Field Diplomacy Initiative, **2003**

Reychler, L.

The Conflict Impact Assessment System (CIAS) methodology is described as a pro-active approach to identify “the future consequences of a current or proposed intervention on the conflict dynamics and peacebuilding process” (p. 12). At the policy level, the CIAS methodology helps in assessing and evaluating the “cross-impact of activities in different domains or sectors, at different levels, in different time frames and layers” of a conflict (p. 45). To achieve this goal, a CIAS proposes conducting a stakeholder analysis – focusing mainly on groups’ interests, positions and resources – and a “needs assessment for sustainable peacebuilding” that adopts checklists based on the following “sustainable peacebuilding blocks”: 1) effective communication, consultation and negotiation; 2) consolidated democracy; 3) sustainable social free market; 4) cooperative security; 5) integrative climate; 6) multilateral cooperation; and 7) peacebuilding leadership (pp. 50-61). Similarly, at the sectoral and project level, needs assessment follows a conflict analysis that summarises, in a conflict matrix, information on tensions and violence in the country and in specific areas or sectors. Lastly, CIAS methodology contemplates a “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints” (SWOC) analysis and a socio-political map about the context. This is intended to support the design of concrete solutions to address the needs identified.

Overall, CIAS provides a quick methodology to increase the understanding of conflict dynamics and enhance practitioners’ conflict sensitivity. However, depending on the situation, it might need to be complemented with more in-depth analyses.

Tools: *Stakeholder matrix, political mapping, conflict matrix, needs assessment matrixes for specific sectors, impact assessment through guiding questions and matrixes, monitoring and evaluation checklist, the violence square.*

Conflict-related Development Analysis [First edition]

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), **2003**

The development of a conflict analysis toolkit by UNDP is an effort to reflect changes and advancements in the research on conflict causation. It aims at “better understand[ing] the linkages between development and conflict, with a view to increasing the impact of development on conflict” (p. 21).

The Conflict-related Development Analysis is composed of three different stages, namely: 1) analysis of conflict; 2) analysis of current responses; and 3) identification of ways forward. Each stage is divided into several steps and related tools. The analysis of conflict comprises the review of background situa-

tion, conflict causes, actors and dynamics, and the development of scenarios. Throughout these steps a great deal of attention is given to economic, political, social and security dimensions as well as to different levels of analysis – i.e. international, regional, national, sub-national and local. The analysis of current responses starts with the mapping of ongoing interventions related to the key issues identified in the conflict analysis. This analytical stage evaluates the extent to which development work addresses the causes of violent conflict and supports ongoing or contingent peace efforts. On the basis of the information gathered and analysed, the third stage of the Conflict-related Development Analysis framework is intended to eventually identify possible gaps and strategies to address the analytical findings, with a particular focus on planning and programming processes.

***Tools:** Guiding questions and tables, matrix of conflict causes, actor analysis matrix, conflict scenarios, matrix of current responses, development and conflict table, development and formal peace processes table.*

Conflict-sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: Resource pack [Chapter Two]

Africa Peace Forum (APFO), Center for Conflict Resolution (CECORE), Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA), Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER), International Alert, and SaferWorld, **2004**

This “resource pack” offers an overview of current practices and available frameworks in relation to the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity in development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding actions. Within this context, conflict analysis is seen as a central component of conflict-sensitive practices (i.e. planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). According to the authors, conflict analysis deepens the understanding of conflict and the interaction between context and interventions, hence informing practitioners with a comprehensive snapshot of the context in which they operate. As a consequence, the second chapter of the resource pack is dedicated exclusively to explaining what conflict analysis is and how to conduct it efficiently.

The proposed approach seeks to mainstream different methodologies and tools derived from earlier frameworks. Furthermore, it provides key questions to guide the analysis. At its core, the chapter briefly highlights “the common key features of conflict analysis”: the conflict profile, actors, causes and dynamics (pp. 2-5). A conflict profile provides an overview of the context and its main characteristics. This early assessment is complemented by the identification of significant actors and the review of “potential and existing conflict causes, as well as possible factors contributing to peace” (p. 3). From this analysis it should be possible to discern the interactions between different factors and determine the conflict dynamics in order to foresee the evolution of conflict (i.e. scenario-building). Additionally, it is argued that monitoring and

measuring changes in the context require specific “conflict-sensitive indicators”, namely conflict indicators, project indicators and interaction indicators (pp. 5-6). The document provides a sample of useful indicators to regularly update the analysis, and underlines that adapting the methodology to the case under scrutiny is of critical importance.

Tools: *Guiding questions, specific tools refer to other frameworks.*

The ‘Do No Harm’ Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Assistance on Conflict: A handbook

Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) - Collaborative Learning Projects, 2004

In accordance with the “Do No Harm” principle, the assessment framework presented in this handbook not only focuses on identifying relationships, unpacking the context and analysing conflict interactions, but it also emphasises the role of resource transfers and implicit ethical messages in affecting the conflict environment. For similar reasons, it considers the relevance of cross-cutting issues such as human rights and gender throughout the entire assessment process.

The handbook proposed a seven-step approach that embodies both the examination of the context and the analysis of negative and positive impacts of assistance programmes providing guidelines and suggestions to support decision-making and project design processes. The specific components of the framework are: 1) understanding the context of conflict; 2) analysing dividers and tensions; 3) analysing connectors and local capacities for peace; 4) analysing the assistance programme; 5) analysing the assistance programme’s impact on dividers and connectors; 6) considering programming options; and 7) (re)designing the project (pp. 3-5).

Overall, this handbook should be seen as a guide suggesting important aspects and lessons learned about the analysis of a conflict situation that need to be taken into consideration before and during any intervention. However, it does not provide appropriate tools or a clear process to engage with such analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Inter-agency Framework for Conflict Analysis in Transition Situations

United Nations Development Group (UNDG) – Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) Working Group, **2004**

The UN inter-agency framework for conflict analysis has been developed with the intention of contributing to the creation of a common analytical framework to look at the causes, dynamics and consequences of violent conflicts, to assess post-conflict needs and to enhance conflict-sensitive programming in transition contexts. The methodology assumes three main analytical stages, namely 1) conflict analysis; 2) analysis of on-going responses; and 3) strategic and programmatic conclusions for transition planning.

The conflict analysis stage starts with the identification and classification of key conflict factors. In this regard, it is argued that it is convenient to distinguish both proximate and structural factors according to their thematic dimension (i.e. security, political/governance, economic or social) and level of analysis (i.e. international, regional, national, sub-national or local). Similarly, cross-cutting issues such as human rights, environment and gender have to be integrated. Furthermore, the process must involve the prioritisation of critical issues and their interrelationships and synergetic effects. An important next step consists of analysing the actors involved in or affected by the conflict and focusing on their short-term interests and motivations, hidden agendas, relationships and resources available or required to achieve their desired goals. Additionally, it might be useful to identify their capacity for peace or their potential for maintaining the status quo. Coherently with the findings, a comprehensive analysis requires the joint assessment of ongoing responses as well as of “their impact in relation to the set of priority conflict factors identified during Stage 1” (p. 11). This inter-agency framework mostly uses matrixes, diagrams or tables as tools to recap and deliver information gathered.

Tools: *Matrix of proximate and structural conflict factors and diagram, actor analysis by means of a matrix, analysis of capacities for peace through a matrix, mapping and assessment of ongoing responses (i.e. matrixes), guiding questions.*

Early Warning and Early Response Handbook – Version 2.3

Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction (CPR) Network, **2005**

This handbook is intended to support the design of a Conflict Diagnostic Framework. The process starts with conflict analysis designed to understand the causes of conflict and the history of existing tensions. This provides an initial overview of the conflict profile. Likewise, the definition of a peace profile aims to identify on-going peace efforts, structures and processes. After that,

the focus switches to stakeholders' motivations and interests.

The whole analytical process follows guiding questions suggested by the CPR Network. The resulting findings are placed into dedicated matrixes organised according to relevant thematic sectors. By means of these matrixes it is then possible to identify key factors and trends that help develop possible scenarios and define objectives for possible interventions. Eventually, the information gathered is incorporated in a conclusive matrix that summarises the analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions and tables tailored for every specific step of the analysis.*

Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) Handbook – Version 2.2

Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction (CPR) Network, **2005**

In order to assess the impact of development interventions on potentially fragile communities, the CPR Network proposes its own version of the Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA). The purpose is to “ensure that the impact of [the] engagement will, as a minimum ‘do no harm’, and as an optimum, have a positive effect on the conflict dynamics of the community in which the project is taking place” (p. 1).

Similarly to the Conflict Diagnostic Framework introduced by the *Early Warning and Early Response Handbook* (2005), the framework described in this handbook uses profiles, as well as impact and decisions tools inspired and adapted from the work of other agencies. Compared to CPR Network's previous document, however, PCIA includes the analysis of community profile and the assessment of actions, attitudes and responsibilities. At its core, impact assessment consists of analysing the impact of external engagement (e.g. aid or humanitarian interventions) on critical sectors, namely political, economic, social, cultural and security. Decision tools include the assessment of external or internal factors that support and constrain actions aiming at tackling identified issues and problems in a conflict-sensitive manner.

In conclusion, this handbook is purposely intended to complement the CPR Network *Early Warning and Early Response Handbook* (2005) with a more operational approach towards conflict sensitivity in the field.

Tools: *Guiding questions and tables tailored for every specific step of the analysis.*

Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management: Integrating conflict-sensitivity and prevention of violence into SDC programmes – A handbook for practitioners [Conflict Analysis tools tip sheet]

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), 2005

This document presents seven conflict analysis tools to “make one’s subjective perceptions [about conflict] transparent” and, thus, “support orientation for future action” (p. 1). SDC differentiates among three different approaches to conflict analysis focusing on different aspects of conflict and proposing diverse methods towards conflict resolution. The *Harvard Approach* focuses on actors’ positions and needs, and it appears to be more negotiation-oriented. The *Human Needs Theory* sees the genesis of conflicts as a result of unsatisfied needs that have to be analysed in order to understand the conflict itself and look for potential solutions. The *Conflict Transformation Approach* rests on a more constructivist narrative and emphasises “the different perceptions, and the social and cultural context in which reality is constructed” (p. 1). A comprehensive conflict analysis as construed by SDC should pull together all these approaches and employ the analytical tools accordingly.

Interestingly, SDC brings forward systems thinking in conflict analysis by focusing on conflict dynamics and introducing the concept of “system boundaries”. Indeed, SDC acknowledges that “every conflict is a sub-system in a larger system – its context (or super-system)” and that “depending on where we set the boundaries, the conflict will present itself differently” (p. 2).

Tools: *Conflict wheel, conflict tree, conflict map, Glasl’s conflict escalation model, conflict perspective analysis (developed by INMEDIO – Institute for mediation, consulting, development), needs-fears mapping, multi-causal role model.*

Conducting a Conflict Assessment: A framework for strategy and program development

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2005

With this paper, USAID introduces its Conflict Assessment Framework and equips users with some theoretical foundations to conduct a conflict assessment. In fact, USAID seeks to harmonise the best research available on conflict and to organise knowledge on conflict causation. In this regard, the distinction between motives, means, opportunities and triggers is particularly useful. This framework also provides a clear overview of relevant factors to consider in a conflict analysis and it groups them into five broad areas: 1) incentives for violence; 2) access to conflict resources; 3) institutional and social capacity for managing violence; 4) regional dynamics; and 5) windows of opportunity and vulnerability (p. 29). After investigating the causes of a

given conflict, the next step, according to USAID, consists of mapping existing programmes that are currently addressing the causes of conflict. This exercise should suggest new interventions or recommend changes in the current configuration of the assistance.

Although conflict diagnosis is supported by a checklist of guiding questions covering a broad range of issues, it is important to note that this framework seems to be strongly influenced by political economic approaches, especially the greed vs. grievance debate. Even more importantly, the methodology lacks suggestions for practical tools to analyse conflicts.

Tools: *Checklist of questions.*

Conflict Analysis Framework

World Bank, **2005**

The rationale of the Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF) developed by the Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction team (CPR) of the World Bank is the need to promote the integration of conflict sensitivity into its strategies, policies and programmes.

In order to evaluate whether a conflict analysis is required or not, it is necessary to undertake the assessment of conflict risks in a given country. This is done by means of a risk-screening process based on relevant indicators selected in accordance with findings and research concerning conflict causation and escalation: violent conflict in the past ten years; low per capita gross national income; high dependence on primary commodities exports; political instability; restricted civil and political rights; militarisation; ethnic dominance; active regional conflicts; and high youth unemployment (p. 6). Similarly, the CAF approach is based on the assessment of critical variables. Significant variables and related indicators are divided into six main categories: 1) social and ethnic relations; 2) governance and political institutions; 3) human rights and security; 4) economic structure and performance; 5) environmental and natural resources; and 6) external factors (p. 7). Following a desk study of existing information, each category needs further scrutiny with respect to its history and changes, dynamics and trends, public perceptions, politicisation and organisation. Moreover, the CAF is intended to investigate the impact of a given variable on the conflict and explore its links to poverty. Findings and descriptions are summarised in a table, which provides an overview of the country's general performance and highlights consequent priority problem areas.

The peculiarity of the World Bank's framework is the focus on poverty throughout all stages of the analysis. As argued in the document, "the conflict analysis framework intends to contribute to enhancing the Bank's capacity to support country and regional efforts to analyse and address conflicts in the framework of poverty reduction strategies and other development strategies" (p.

3). In addition, the World Bank places more emphasis on structural analysis rather than stakeholder profiling or mapping.

Tools: *Tables based on specific problematic issues or areas.*

Manual for Conflict Analysis

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), **2006**

Sida's manual distinguishes between three different – but intertwined – levels of analysis, which correspond to the organisation's types of engagement in a given country: the strategic, sector and project levels. At the strategic level, conflict analysis focuses on conflict structures, actors and dynamics, giving particular emphasis to causal and trigger factors, institutional responses and actors' interests in terms of greed and grievances, their expectations and fears, and their power basis. This step is followed by a scenario analysis to increase both flexibility and adaptability in the planning and implementation phase, as well as to identify opportunities and risks for engagement. At the sector level, the analysis includes more sector-specific information in order to seize the "opportunity for tackling structural causes of conflict and thus for working to prevent conflict" (p. 19). Conflict analysis at a sector level and related future actions require a closer partnership between the country and the development agency involved. Conversely, project-level conflict analyses are placed within the "Do No Harm" framework. As such, they are primarily concerned with assessing the impact of projects and evaluating the extent to which projects are conflict-sensitive. In order to do so, Sida identifies four steps: 1) identification of dividers and sources of tension among people and their patterns; 2) identification of connectors and factors that connect people and their patterns; 3) measurement of the impact of the proposed project on dividers and connectors; and, if needed, 4) redesign of the project (pp. 25-26).

Overall, this manual is intended to advocate for conflict analysis methods in development cooperation processes as they "improve the effectiveness of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in places affected by violent conflicts and insecurity" and "provide a better basis for assessing the potential of conflict-sensitive interventions" (p. 5). Despite these goals, however, it might be argued that Sida's manual merely provides broad guidelines for conducting conflict analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Effective Conflict Analysis Exercises: Overcoming organizational challenges

World Bank, 2006

Sardesai, S. and Wam, P.

This is a study conducted by the World Bank to examine the process by which conflict analysis has been conducted and applied by several development organisations in about twenty cases. As stated by the authors, “the study thus looks to past experiences with conflict analysis exercises to provide recommendations for future practices” (p. ii). Although neither the methodological frameworks nor the analytical tools used to conduct the analysis are included in the study, main findings and reflections included in the final document touch upon: 1) the “rationale for conflict analysis” (p. 7); 2) the “analytical scope and techniques” of conflict analysis (p. 7); 3) the differences between “single- and multi-agency assessments” (p. 9) and between “limited conflict analysis” and “comprehensive conflict analysis” (pp. 18-19); 4) the “role of host government” in the whole process of analysis (p. 10); 5) the “outputs and dissemination” strategy (p. 11); 6) the “applications of conflict analysis” (p. 13); and 7) the “challenges encountered” during the process (p. 15).

Overall, conflict analysis exercises are considered “to be the entry point in conflict-affected countries”. As such, the authors urge more efforts to make the analysis “operationally relevant” on the one hand, and more integrated with larger analyses on the other hand (p. 27).

Tools: *n/a*

Mainstreaming Gender in Conflict Analysis: Issues and recommendations

World Bank, 2006

Anderlini, S. N.

This paper calls for greater inclusion of gender perspectives in conflict analysis. It argues that existing frameworks often fail to identify the gendered aspects in the nature of conflict causes, the impact of conflict, and peacebuilding. Therefore, it provides recommendations and suggestions as to how to better reflect gender issues following the analysis phase. In particular, it is argued that analysis frameworks should systematically integrate gender variables into their structure and collect disaggregated data in relation to gender. The tools used to perform the analysis should also be gender-sensitive.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Conflict Prevention: Analysis for Action (CPAA)

United Nations System Staff College, **2007**

The CPAA is an iterative toolkit that aims to: 1) support stand-alone conflict analysis processes and assess a country situation; 2) provide the analytical framework for UN inter-agency conflict assessments; 3) help mainstream conflict prevention into programming and strategic planning (e.g. UN Development Assistance Framework, Post-Conflict Needs Assessment); and 4) provide scenarios and entry points for interventions both at the programmatic level (agencies) and strategic levels (peacekeeping, preventive diplomacy, mediation).

The CPAA is a four-step analysis approach: situation, causes, stakeholders, and conflict dynamics. However, it goes beyond these so-called “static” elements of analysis (causes, stakeholders) and looks at the principles of systems thinking to delve deeper into the complexity of the relationships among the issues under scrutiny. The toolkit also devotes considerable attention to the stakeholder analysis with a wide range of complementary tools. The CPAA is a modular toolkit that allows for both short-term and quick conflict analysis processes, as well as more thorough and participatory efforts. A recent iteration of the toolkit (2014) has strengthened the critical stage that enables the translation of analysis findings into responses, which was not fully developed in the earlier version of the framework.

Tools: *Issue matrix, timeline, levels of conflict, iceberg, problem tree, conflict pillars, onion, stakeholder matrix, conflict mapping, Lederach pyramid, connectors and dividers, mapping of infrastructures for peace, prioritisation bar chart, etc.*

Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA): A methodological framework for the conflict- and peace-oriented alignment of development programmes

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), **2008**

Leonhardt, M. et al.

According to GTZ, within the broader Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA) framework, Peace and Conflict Analysis helps establish a solid basis for conflict-sensitive policy development and planning. As such, it represents the first step of the methodology. Its general purpose is to understand the overall context and “those social and political conflicts that impact negatively on a country’s development” (p. 46). Depending on GTZ’s type of engagement, Peace and Conflict Analysis can be implemented at the country level as well as at project or programme level, and at various stages. In general, “it analyses the conflict *inter alia* by describing the causes, actors, trends and scenario, and relating these aspects to development cooperation” (p. 44). Therefore,

it involves the following steps: 1) conflict profile; 2) stakeholder analysis; 3) analysis of factors; and 4) trends analysis and scenario-building. As stated by the authors, it is important to achieve a dynamic understanding of the conflict and to balance the analysis by identifying not only conflict factors and actors, but also “the existing structures and processes for conflict management, the options for action by ‘actors for peace’, and external factors that promote peace” (pp. 50-51).

The PCA in general, and Peace and Conflict Analysis more specifically, combine experiences and methods from other frameworks; for instance, most of the recommended tools belong to previous GTZ guidelines and, notably, to the work of Fisher *et al.* (2000). However, the PCA also incorporates under the same umbrella other important elements such as risk management and security analysis. The latter is intended to identify and analyse potential threats, possible vulnerabilities and the capacity to cope with them.

Tools: *Guiding questions and checklists, specific tools refer to other frameworks.*

Conflict Analysis: Practical tool to analyse conflict in order to prioritise and strategise Conflict Transformation programmes

Inter-Church Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Kerk in Actie, and Transition International, **2008**

Specht, I.

This manual provides a practical methodology to analyse conflicts in order to “have joint ownership and common understanding about the goals and social change desired as an alternative to violent conflict” and support conflict transformation (p. 5).

According to the author, conflict analysis implies a consultative process aimed at answering and discussing 13 key questions in order to assess both structures and agencies of a conflict. These questions primarily concern the underlying and proximate causes of conflict and conflict-related stakeholders at every level. Particular emphasis is given to people’s attitudes, behaviour and context, according to Galtung’s ABC triangle. Next, it is important to investigate how a given local conflict relates to other conflicts operating at the national or regional level and “what are the horizontal and vertical linkages between [other] actors in society” (p. 21). The peculiarity of this approach is its focus on specific social aspects such as the role and frustrations of youth, the human rights situation, gender dynamics, and the role of religion and religious actors. Finally, a further step in the analysis is devoted to recognising which connectors might lead to a positive change in society. In this regard, the author considers indispensable an analysis of potential for peace and change following a list of questions similar to those used to assess the conflict.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Quantitative Global Model for Armed Conflict Risk Assessment

Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission (EC), **2008**

Burnley, C. et al.

With this model, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the EC provides a statistical approach to quantitatively assess the likelihood of an intra-state conflict depending on the performance of the country under consideration. The rationale behind the development of this model is that “tools for automated quantitative analysis of information are more and more required in the framework of early warning systems, to support political decision-makers in making timely evaluations of the risk of severe crises” (p. i). In this sense, the JRC focuses the analysis on economic and socio-demographic indicators as well as on distribution of resources, geographical features, regime type and history. As such, the method outlined in this document “can be used for estimation of conflict probability and for prediction of conflict for countries for which structural data exists” (p. 77). However, it is recognised that factors leading to conflict are usually highly context-specific and that “certain structural conditions may [only] exacerbate already existing political tensions in a country” (p. 77).

Tools: *n/a*

NZAID Conflict-Risk Assessment Guideline

New Zealand’s International Aid and Development Agency (NZAID), **2008**

Rather than developing its own framework for conflict analysis or impact assessment, NZAID usually borrows from the methods developed by other organisations while providing guidance on how to choose the most appropriate methodologies and tools. As noted by NZAID itself, the importance of incorporating conflict awareness into its activities has been acknowledged only recently. As a consequence, this document provides a first introduction to conflict-risk assessment and needs to be complemented by a more comprehensive framework in order to be suitable for a complete assessment of risk factors in a conflict situation.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF)

United States Government’s Reconstruction and Stabilization Policy Coordinating Committee, **2008**

The Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) developed by the US government is intended to support policy and planning decisions in the areas

of conflict prevention, mitigation and stabilisation by prompting a common understanding of societal and situational factors and dynamics within a conflict environment. Weak and failed states and their role in causing or prolonging conflict are the main underlying concerns of this framework.

A complete ICAF analysis requires both a “Conflict Diagnosis” and a more action-oriented “Segue into Planning” (p. 6), which aims at integrating diagnostic findings into the planning process. Conflict Diagnosis involves four analytical steps. The assessment starts with evaluating the context of the conflict and related significant issues. Afterwards, the focus switches to core grievances and sources of resilience, either social or institutional. In this respect, particular attention is given to identity groups and how societal patterns and institutional performances influence their grievances and fears. A further step comprises the identification of key actors and their capacity to affect the societal patterns or institutional performance, whether driving or mitigating the conflict. The last step of the analysis aims at prioritising drivers of conflict and mitigating factors and considering potential windows of opportunity or vulnerability – mainly in terms of “events [that] threaten to rapidly and fundamentally change the balance of political or economic power” (p. 13).

The methodology outlined in this paper is mainly centred on listing relevant factors but lacks practical analytical tools and process guidelines to conduct an effective and in-depth conflict analysis.

Tools: *n/a*

Aid for Peace: A handbook for applying Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) to PEACE III projects

International Conflict Research Institute and University of Ulster, 2009

Bush, K.

In this handbook Kenneth Bush again proposes the Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) concept, adapting it to the European Union (EU) Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (PEACE III). Importantly, Bush underlines the need for integrating and mainstreaming genuine PCIA approaches as a common practice within an organisation by arguing that it is mainly a matter of political will rather than a technical issue (p. 43).

In concrete terms, PCIA is a “participatory learning process” divided into three consecutive steps (p. 9). The first step aims at identifying the different conflicts in the area under examination and relevant stakeholders within it, both in terms of “conflict stakeholders” and “peace stakeholders”. In order to investigate their roles, it is necessary to explore their interests, objectives, means and support. This exercise should also disclose the “causes of conflict” and the “opportunities to support peace” (pp. 22-23). A Risk and Opportunity As-

assessment constitutes the next step. In the author's view, this is crucial to recognise trade-offs and balances between risks and opportunities in undertaking a certain action in a conflict-prone setting, thus evaluating the feasibility and appropriateness of the initiative itself. The last step involves an impact assessment of proposed initiatives on peace and conflict dynamics.

Tools: *Mapping conflict and peace stakeholders, risk and opportunity assessment by means of specific tables, peace and conflict impact assessment by means of specific tables.*

Framework for Political Analysis

United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UN DPA), **n.d.**

This document provides some brief guidelines for conducting political analysis in three different contexts, namely: 1) conflict or potential conflict situations; 2) situations in which armed conflict is neither prevalent nor likely; and 3) situations encompassing electoral processes.

With reference to the first category, the objective is the development of strategic analysis and policy options. The overall process to achieve this can be divided into several steps, the first of which concerns the assessment of the conflict's background and broader context – taking into consideration the current and past political situation, trends, social factors, the impact of “non-traditional or new threats to peace”, the role of women and the impact of possible elections (p. 1). In the following step the focus of the analysis is on the nature and behaviour of actors involved, including the personality profiles of prominent individuals. The third step consists of investigating the issues at stake, the causes of conflict and their relevance to the regional countries or the international community. Afterwards, it is necessary to understand how stakeholders relate to these issues. In this regard, according to UN DPA, there are some crucial aspects to consider, notably the social, economic, military and political dimensions. Furthermore, the analysis should consider the involvement of the UN and the role of third parties. In line with this, it appears extremely important to conduct consultations both within UN DPA and with other partners (UN systems partners, parties, NGOs, etc.) Additionally, the framework foresees the assessment of the most likely scenario, including the expected outcomes and consequences for the population. Finally, it is suggested to conclude the process with the formulation of recommendations and options for strategic response and implementation in order to define what is politically feasible and practically achievable.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Peacebuilding How?

Interpeace, 2010

Van Brabant, K.

Peacebuilding How? is a body of notes concerning peacebuilding practices. In line with the objective of this annotated bibliography, only two notes are reviewed, i.e. *Good Practices in Conflict Analysis* and *Systems Analysis of Conflict Dynamics*.

Good Practices in Conflict Analysis aims at introducing conflict analysis by clarifying its purposes and uses. While doing this, Van Brabant underlines some challenges. Firstly, he pinpoints the limitations of looking at conflicts as being divided into different “phases”. Secondly, he shows how different analyses, produced by diverse actors, might actually be conflicting due to the changing context, implicit underlying values and conflicting narratives. The author therefore suggests some general good practices useful to deal with frequent problems in conflict analysis.

With the similar intent of addressing some shortcomings of traditional conflict analysis frameworks, Interpeace adds systems thinking to its approach. Indeed, *Systems Analysis of Conflict Dynamics* introduces and adapts some basic concepts and assumptions from systems theory to complement conflict analysis with a more focused assessment of linkages and synergies, dynamic causality and feedbacks of both conflict factors and actors. According to Van Brabant, systems analysis is an “iterative process” composed of multiple steps: 1) determining the level and/or focus of analysis; 2) getting a diverse group to participate in order to obtain inspiring feedback; 3) identifying driving factors of conflict and prioritising them; 4) expanding the understanding of the driving factors through causes-consequences analysis with the help of a matrix; 5) connecting the various elements into a comprehensive visualisation (i.e. using feedback loops); 6) testing the visualisation; 7) allowing and expressing conflicting analyses; 8) adding key actors; 9) analysing peace factors; 10) trying a virtuous circle vision; and eventually 11) reflecting and discussing options for peacebuilding (p. 4).

Tools: *Guiding questions, systems thinking basics.*

Systems Thinking in Conflict Assessment

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2011

Ricigliano, R. and Chigas, D.

In accordance with USAID’s *Policy Framework (2011-2015)*, this paper aims at increasing USAID’s “capacity for analysing, preventing, and responding to crisis, conflict and instability” by including systems thinking in conflict assessment processes (p. 2). Starting from the assumption that traditional frameworks

for conflict analysis provide only a static snapshot of the actual situation, USAID acknowledges that “the ability to see the whole of a phenomenon in its broader context will provide new and different insights than can be gained by looking at each of its component parts individually” (p. 2). Following this view, systems thinking is seen as a means to overcome common conflict analysis shortcomings and see the “big picture”, thus capturing “the richness and complexity of a conflict context” (p. 4).

As stated in this document, the nature of systems thinking makes it particularly effective for contributing to “the quality and utilization of conflict assessments” (p. 4). In particular, systems thinking “helps analysts move from a fragmented analysis (and programming) to a more comprehensive understanding of a conflict situation that remains comprehensible” (p. 4). At the same time, it can contribute to enhancing strategy and programme development, monitoring and evaluation. In this sense, systems mapping is understood as a powerful tool not only to synthesise analysis, but also to identify key dynamics and possible leverage points for change. Similarly, it may be considered an appropriate tool to support the definition of theories of change.

With this brief overview on systems thinking, USAID aims to foster reflections on the potential of systemic approaches to contribute to and support conflict analysis by presenting basic feedback loops, diagrams and common systems archetypes.

Tools: *feedback causal loops diagrams, systems archetypes, systems map.*

The Practical Guide to Conflict Analysis: Understanding causes, unlocking solutions

United States Institute for Peace, 2011

Levinger, M.

This comprehensive handbook attempts to summarise theoretical and practical knowledge on conflict analysis in order to support practitioners with a “practical reference and field guide” (p. 4). The first part of the work concerns the complexity of contemporary conflicts, especially with regard to their multi-dimensional nature (i.e. strategic, political, socio-economic, psychological and cultural dimensions). It is stressed, indeed, that different perspectives may beneficially contribute to analyses, thus supporting practitioners and decision-makers. Moreover, this section introduces and discusses “macro-level analytical tools for identifying socioeconomic and institutional vulnerabilities that heighten the risks of violent conflict”, notably watchlists for early warning/early detection and conflict metrics instruments (p. 72).

The second part of the handbook focuses on conflict assessment frameworks, which “provide a more organic and holistic portrait of a conflict-prone region, relying primarily on qualitative rather than quantitative data” (p. 72).

To achieve this goal, the analysis makes use of “collaborative analytical techniques”, such as: 1) narrative analysis focusing on parties’ perspectives; 2) conflict maps referring to geospatial, temporal or relational aspects of the conflict; 3) systems maps concerning “patterns of interdependence among actors and institutions in complex social systems” (p. 11); and 4) situation analysis to explore opportunities and threats and framing strategic objectives.

It is worth adding that the author emphasises several times the importance of a collaborative attitude towards conflict analysis, which is seen as both an intuitive process and an “essential skill” for practitioners (p. 174).

Tools: *Guiding questions, curve of conflict, watchlists, conflict metrics instruments, self-assessment, dividers and connectors, two-level game model, narrative analysis, strategic listening, conflict onion, conflict mapping, systems mapping, scenario analysis, situation analysis, trend analysis.*

Guidance note on the use of Conflict Analysis in support of EU external action

European External Action Service and European Commission Service, **n.d.**

This guidance note acknowledges the importance of “a pro-active conflict-sensitive approach” when working in conflict or fragile settings (p. 1). For this reason, it encourages a more systematic integration of conflict analysis in EU planning and programming documents in order to enhance the understanding of conflict dynamics and, thus, the ability to address root causes of conflict. In particular, it is stated that “conflict analysis can strengthen the ability of the EU to plan and implement EU action mindful of its potential impact, positive or negative, intended or otherwise” with specific reference to the security-development nexus (p. 2).

Overall, the framework for conflict analysis outlined here includes: 1) overview of the context; 2) causes of conflict; 3) conflict actors; 4) conflict dynamics; 5) scenario-building; 6) “existing and planned responses to the conflict”; and 7) “the identification of key gaps, options and realistic strategies to respond to the conflict” (p. 4).

Moreover, this guidance note distinguishes between two different analytical tracks, namely a “light-touch Conflict Analysis Tool” and a “conflict-sensitive political economy analysis” (p. 3). The light-touch conflict analysis consists of organising a workshop that should provide a timely overview of a situation by “map[ping] out the key actors and causes of conflict and [...] discuss[ing] possible EU responses” (p. 6). This approach, however, requires a large prior knowledge base and information on the situation and its outputs might need to be complemented by more in-depth analysis. According to this note, at times it could be necessary to conduct a political economy analysis in order to “understand key aspects of the political and economic processes, relation-

ships and dynamics at work in a given country or sector” (p. 7). Similarly, it could be useful to complement conflict analysis with other analytical frameworks, notably sector-specific assessments (governance, human rights, public policy, public financial management, etc.)

However, despite the paramount role accorded to both conflict and political economy analysis, clear procedures, methodologies or tools are not defined in this document.

Tools: *n/a*

Civil Affairs Handbook [Chapter 8: Analysis and Planning]

United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO) and Department of Field Support (UN DFS), **2012**

This handbook has been developed to support UN Civil Affairs Officers on the ground with practical guidance on “key concepts, current practice, lessons learned and tips” (p. 7). In this framework, conflict analysis is seen both as an important skill and a responsibility of every Civil Affairs Officer. This is because exploring conflict dynamics is considered crucial to understand the broader context and plan activities effectively. Indeed, “if the basic facts and interpretation of the local conflict dynamics are inaccurate, the overarching strategy of the mission to fulfil its mandate is likely to be misdirected” (p. 102). For this reason, the handbook encourages civil affairs components in UN peace operations to conduct and update their conflict analyses and suggests a simple model suitable for civil affairs purposes (pp. 104-106).

The first stages consist of detecting factors supporting either peace or conflict (Step 1) and subsequently sorting them in order to identify key driving factors of conflict (Step 2). Next, it is crucial to understand the interactions between these factors. Therefore, this model makes use of a causal loops diagram to better visualise and explore the dynamics among factors (Step 3). It is then possible to include key actors in the diagram to map out the relationships between them and their “influence in improving or making worse any of the dynamics identified” (Step 4) (p. 109). At this point, according to this analytical framework, staff should be able to identify possible leverage and entry points (Step 5). Importantly, this model considers sharing the analysis within the team and with others as a key moment in the overall process (Step 6). The last segment of the model recommends monitoring and revising the analytical findings as the situation changes rapidly and/or the availability of information varies (Step 7).

Tools: *Three-box analysis, causal loops diagram (systems thinking), guiding questions.*

Early Warning-Early Response – Version 3

Peacebuilding Centre, **2013**

Similarly to the earlier CPR Network's version of *Early Warning and Early Response Handbook* (2005), this handbook upholds the Conflict Diagnostic Framework and focuses heavily on the role of communities within the context analysed. It contains guidelines to conduct a Conflict Diagnostic in order to work on conflict and mainstream peace and conflict analysis into programme design and planning. Conflict Diagnostic represents an executive summary of the findings resulting from several analyses conducted separately on issues, factors and stakeholders involved in a given conflict, as well as plausible future scenarios. Additionally, for each component, the handbook provides sector-specific questions to tailor the analyses according to the context and the nature of the conflict.

The methodology outlined in this handbook consists of a multi-step process. The first segment of the assessment looks at manifestations of tensions, proximate causes and root causes of conflict. To facilitate this process, the handbook suggests some guiding questions intended to solicit reflection on significant areas of inquiry, namely legitimacy of the state, rule of law, respect for fundamental rights, active civil society and media, and sound economic management. A similar needs analysis is suggested to identify ongoing peace efforts, existing peace structures, synergies and gaps. Subsequently, the focus shifts to “the potential and actual motivations of various stakeholders and the actions they may take to further their interests” (p. 10). The information gathered throughout the whole process is visually captured in matrixes that are eventually incorporated in a single table, which summarises the main analysis. In this way, the assessment of peace and conflict factors and trends as well as stakeholder dynamics generates a community profile upon which recommendations, strategies and overall objectives should be based.

Tools: *Guiding questions and tables tailored for every specific step of the analysis.*

Conflict Analysis Framework: Field guidelines and procedures

Reflecting on Peace Practice Project – Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) Collaborative Learning Projects, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, and Norwegian Church Aid, **2012**

These guidelines provide a comprehensive framework for conducting a conflict analysis that aims at “integrating actor and issue analysis, as well as both long-term structural and shorter-term analysis of potential triggers”, which can thereby inform programme planning (p. 2).

The first suggested step is to determine the purpose and the context in which the analysis is conducted. These factors deeply influence the whole process of analysis, the information needed and the methodologies used. Giving them particular focus during the preparation phase is therefore critical. For the same reason, potential constraints – especially in terms of time and resources – have to be recognised and engaged from the beginning. The conflict assessment begins with the identification of the arena and level of analysis. After this, it is beneficial to review existing analyses and useful secondary information. To ensure an acceptable degree of objectivity, any information gathered needs to be validated through a “triangulation” process. Moreover, it is useful to categorise data collection in areas of inquiry. However, relying on long lists of questions for conflict analysis should be avoided. The document also suggests taking into consideration gender issues when gathering information and during the analysis itself.

These guidelines then introduce several tools to facilitate the analysis and make sense of the information collected. Given that each tool represents a different approach to analysis, a sequential or combined use of these tools is recommended, depending on the purpose of the process. Generally, the tools included are divided into categories: “actor-oriented analysis”, “issue-related and causal analysis” and “integrative tools” (pp. 24-25). Almost all of the tools recommended are based on prior works, such as, once again, the framework provided by Fisher *et al.* in *Working with Conflict* (2000).

Tools: *Guiding questions; stakeholder analysis matrix, mapping relationships among actors, conflict tree, dividers and connectors analysis (i.e. table), threat analysis visualised through a table, levels of potential change exercise, systems mapping of conflict and archetypes, alternative future stories (scenarios).*

Gender and Conflict Analysis [Second edition]

United Nations Women (UN Women), 2012

This policy briefing claims that, despite the increasing number of conflict assessment frameworks and methodologies, gender relations and gender inequalities are rarely considered properly, even though “bringing a gender lens to conflict analysis, monitoring and transformative responses can make a significant contribution to conflict prevention” (p. 1).

In order to incorporate gender perspectives into conflict analysis it is crucial to give due consideration to gender roles and relations at every stage of the process. First of all, information gathering has to be gender-sensitive. Analysts should gather “information *about* women and men” as well as “information *from* women and men” and develop “gender-differentiated indicators of conflict” (pp. 3-4). Similarly, they are asked to conduct a “context-specific analysis of gender relations”. It is also necessary to investigate the implications of those gender relations on women’s roles as actors in conflicts. With regards to causal analysis, the assessment needs to consider that most of the struc-

tural causes of conflict have a gender dimension and that gender issues might be both triggers and manifestations of conflict. Particular attention must be given to the mutual impact of both conflict dynamics and gender relations, since this might heavily influence both the current and the future situation. Strategic responses and actions should be conceived accordingly, in order to deal with the transformation of gender roles and address gender inequalities.

Tools: *n/a*

Conflict Assessment Framework 2.0

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), **2012**

The Conflict Assessment Framework 2.0 is a revised version of the framework developed by USAID in 2005. As such, the Conflict Assessment Framework 2.0 is influenced by more recent approaches. Among these, systems thinking appears to occupy a dominant role, allowing sharper insights and enhancing the analytical effectiveness of the framework overall. According to USAID, this framework consists of two different stages, the first of which is devoted to the “diagnosis” of the situation, while the second concerns the prioritisation of issues, the identification of entry points and the “formulation of response recommendations” (p. 4).

The diagnosis phase aims at “collecting and organizing data, identifying connections, and distilling patterns” (p. 15). The framework used to diagnose current conflict dynamics combines the analysis of political, economic, social and security factors within a given country context, with a focus on core grievances and resiliencies that are often mobilised by key actors. Indeed, it is argued that understanding patterns of grievance, systems of resilience and key mobilisers is a necessary prerequisite to forecast future conflict trajectories and to anticipate potential triggers or turning points. However, while this handbook provides a sound theoretical framework for conflict analysis, its approach lacks practicality because it does not suggest any clear methodology or analytical tools to perform the analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions and checklists (i.e. diagnostic questions).*

Reflecting on Peace Practice: Advanced Training of Consultants and Advisers

Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) - Collaborative Learning Projects, **2013**

This manual has been developed by CDA – *Collaborative Learning Projects* as part of its *Reflecting on Peace Practice* programme. It provides facilitators, pro-

gramme advisers, technical assistance experts, programme planners and trainers with exercises and tools to include systems thinking in conflict analysis processes (p. 1). In this framework, systems analysis represents a way “to identify dynamic relationships among different factors and has the potential to help bridge the gap between analysis and programming by including analysis of points of leverage and approaches for interrupting or changing the system” (p. 2). Accordingly, the manual is divided into two main sections, the first concerning “conflict analysis using systems thinking” and the second one on “developing program strategies”.

A systemic conflict analysis is considered particularly helpful to integrate multiple existing analyses by examining “the dynamics between the structural causes, proximate causes and triggers of conflict and integrat[ing] both causes of conflict and the actors and their agendas and behaviors” (p. 2). Moreover, since systemic conflict analysis aims to identify leverage points to change the system and transform the conflict, this methodology “can be used as a basis for developing several important elements of an effective strategy” to influence the dynamics of a conflict in a positive way (pp. 17-22). Accordingly, systemic conflict analysis can be also used to map stakeholders in relation to the key factors analysed, thus further enhancing the effectiveness of interventions of areas of concentration and gaps by identifying areas of concentration and addressing planning gaps (p. 17).

This manual suggests three different approaches to engage in a systemic conflict analysis: 1) “build an analysis from the beginning”; 2) “build a systems analysis map based on existing conflict analysis that has been conducted using other tools”; 3) “use ‘systems archetypes’ as the basis for generating a systems map” (p. 5). Regardless of the chosen approach, however, *Reflecting on Peace Practice* emphasises that to conduct a systemic analysis of a conflict it is necessary first to “identify factors for conflict and peace and key actors [...] using any of the standard analysis tools available” and, afterwards, it is crucial to identify and prioritise key driving factors in order to develop relevant causal loop diagrams (p. 12).

Tools: *Three-box analysis, three-box cause-and-effect chart, feedback causal loops diagrams, systems archetypes, guiding questions.*

Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning

Schirch, L., 2014

This book lays out a conceptual framework for integrating and “synchronizing self-assessment, conflict assessment, theories of change, design, monitoring and evaluation to achieve better policy coherence and a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding” (p. 3).

With regards to conflict assessment methodologies, this contribution organ-

ises the analysis process according to common aspects of conflict, notably: 1) the context in which it takes place, including its cultural, social, economic, justice and political dimensions (i.e. where?); 2) the stakeholders involved (i.e. who?); 3) the motivations behind stakeholders' behaviours (i.e. why?); 4) the factors that drive or mitigate the conflict (i.e. what?); 5) the ways the conflict manifested itself (i.e. how?); the history of the conflict (i.e. when?) (pp. 4-5).

Overall, this approach to conflict assessment and peacebuilding planning claims to acknowledge the complexity of conflicts. As such, it "takes a systems-based approach to assessing conflict, seeing the importance of understanding the whole system rather than just discrete elements of a conflict" (p. 22). Another important feature of this work is its focus on the participation of diverse stakeholders in order to mainstream insights offered by insiders and to identify the assumptions made by outsiders about the conflict. A great deal of attention is given to self-assessment. In fact, according to the author, before and while conducting a conflict assessment, analysts should deconstruct their own perspectives and interests in order to recognise potential biases and "identify the ways [they] can change a conflict-affected system by altering [their] own behaviour in the system" (p. 59).

Tools: Guiding questions, summary charts, cycle of violence map, appreciative inquiry, connectors and dividers, institutional capacity and human security baseline, stakeholder mapping, peacebuilding actors and capacity mapping, peacebuilding pyramid (i.e. Lederach's pyramid), onion diagram, comparative charts, conflict tree, systems mapping, power and means analysis, comparative timelines, scenario- building, theories of change samples.

From Principle to Practice: A user's guide to Do No Harm

Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) – Collaborative Learning Projects, 2014

Wallace, M.

This book is a guide to support users in translating the concept of "Do No Harm" from theory to practice, thanks to the remarkable experience in the field of the *Do No Harm Project*. The work goes beyond the description of the historical evolution of the *Do No Harm Project* and draws on past experiences to introduce "lessons learned" and suggestions concerning decision-making in complex and conflict-affected contexts (p. 9).

The "Do No Harm" principle is described as "a holistic perspective that is equally focused on both harm and benefit" (p. 7). As such, it "can be used adaptively to respond to changes in a context and it can be used predictively to anticipate changes in a context" (p. 10).

The rationale of the framework proposed in this book is that it is necessary to understand both the context and the programme in order to evaluate the im-

part of an intervention. To facilitate this, Wallace introduces four techniques to gather information and analyse different aspects of the context, the programme and its impact. More specifically, according to the author a “Dividers and Connectors Analysis (DCA)” provides a focused context analysis, while a “Critical Detail Mapping (CDM) pinpoints project details and needs” (p. 23). Eventually, the impact analysis is done through two similar techniques based on patterns of actions, behaviours and their consequences (ABCs) that are called “ABCs: Resource Transfer” and “ABCs: Messages through the RAFT” (i.e. Respect, Accountability, Fairness, and Transparency) (p. 23). According to the author, these techniques provide a model of human interaction suitable for understanding changes. Overall, it is argued that “Do No Harm” techniques simplify and support the process of analysis and decision-making by encouraging “the ability to observe and act in a rapidly changing context in near real time” without doing harm but rather fostering positive changes (p. 9).

Tools: *Dividers and connectors analysis, “ABCs: resource transfer” model, “ABCs: messages through the RAFT” model, critical detail mapping, guiding questions and checklists.*

Empathy Dynamics in Conflict Transformation (EDiCT): A manual

Responding to Conflict, **2014**

Cameron, L. and Weatherbed, S.

This brief manual argues that a better understanding of empathy-dyspathy dynamics can deepen conflict analysis and support conflict transformation processes. The purpose of EDiCT is to “transform conflict and enmity into empathic understanding” by means of a “web of change” (pp. 12, 17). To achieve this, the manual provides a conceptual framework and introduces a set of tools – i.e. the “EDiCT map” – to examine sources of empathy and dyspathy, understand existing webs among social identities and map empathy dynamics. This methodology is intended to integrate other established methods of conflict analysis with a more specific focus on attitudes and relationships and especially on “how parties to a conflict ‘feel’ about each other” (p. 31).

Tools: *Web of connections, guiding questions, social identity map, empathy-dyspathy matrix, adapted force-field analysis.*

CAST: Conflict assessment framework manual

Fund for Peace, **2014**

This manual endorses a tool called Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST). CAST has been developed by Fund for Peace to measure pressure factors that are likely to worsen state vulnerability and potentially lead to collapse. It can

be used either by applying it manually or by using an expanded automated version (i.e. CAST software). Overall, CAST includes twelve conflict risk indicators associated with social, economic, political and military dimensions, and five indicators concerning the state capacity to cope with the factors of pressure identified. According to CAST methodology, every indicator should be analysed and rated on a scale in order to assess the actual susceptibility of a given state to collapse.

Quantitative indicators are a useful resource to assess conflicts in an objective manner. As stated by Fund for Peace, this methodology provides “a snapshot in time that can be measured against other snapshots in time series to determine whether conditions are improving or worsening” (p. 4). This function also makes it suitable as a tool for monitoring the situation and evaluating possible interventions within the context analysed. In addition, it might be considered a practical way to set baselines for updating conflict analysis.

Tools: *Pressure indicators.*

Integrated Assessment and Planning Handbook

IAP Working Group, 2014

This handbook reflects the UN policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning (IAP) and recommends some methodologies to conduct UN Strategic Assessments. Accordingly, the document seeks to provide coherent guidance “on the basis of accumulated experiences and past practices, and offers flexible tools and critical questions to be asked rather than fixed templates” (p. 7).

The main purpose of a Strategic Assessment is to develop a shared understanding of the conflict situation in order to set priority objectives and identify strategic options for UN responses. To this end, the assessment process should start with a desk review of existing analyses and country strategies, followed by a stakeholder mapping exercise, focusing on the activity of actors in relation to peace consolidation. The next steps to undertake are a conflict analysis, the analysis of priority objectives, the articulation of strategic options and a risk assessment. Conflict analysis is considered an important foundation for planning and prioritisation. In order to be effective, a conflict analysis should include at least the following four components: (1) a situation, context or profile analysis with a particular focus on the political settlement; (2) a causal analysis of conflict factors; (3) a stakeholder analysis; and (4) an analysis of conflict dynamics (p. 26). As noted by the IAP Working Group, recent conflict analysis frameworks include also the assessment of other relevant factors, such as potential shocks or existing capacities for peace.

Tools: *n/a.*

Working with Conflict: A faith-based toolkit for Islamic Relief [Section Three]

Islamic Relief, 2014

This section of *Working with Conflict* focuses on “conflict mapping”, defined as a tool for in-depth conflict analysis at community level intended to support project management and conflict transformation (pp. 2-3). In the view of Islamic Relief, conflict mapping seeks to integrate risk, stakeholder, context and conflict analysis in a single framework built on other assessment methodologies and several peace and conflict theories (Galtung’s ABC triangle, greed vs. grievance debate, etc.)

The methodological framework is divided into “preparatory steps” and “participatory mapping” (p. 9). The preparatory process begins with a situation overview, which represents the basis for group discussions and brainstorming concerning overlapping conflicts and issues involved. Subsequently, the analysis includes geographical mapping based on local maps to identify recurrent patterns and areas of tension or safety. To clarify and understand the history of conflict it is then suggested to develop a timeline of events and link the chronology with related conflict stages, in accordance with the level of tension and violence. In the next steps, the process should include an in-depth analysis of stakeholders and their interests, resources, roles and capacities. Relationships among actors also need to be understood and visually captured through a relationship mapping exercise. Lastly, a tree analysis is used to identify key issues and “reveal the dynamics and connections” between factors underpinning the conflict (p. 18). While the preparatory phase consists primarily of a desk study conducted before meeting with affected communities and stakeholders, the participatory mapping involves them directly. In doing so, it represents an approach that builds ownership and enables a more accurate analysis by validating and enriching the previous understanding with the perspectives of local stakeholders. Interestingly, participatory mapping offers greater insights into specific societal aspects, such as gender or religion. Furthermore, it entails issue-specific mapping exercises, focusing, for instance, on the environment or the role of the media (pp. 23-27).

Tools: *Guiding questions, geographical mapping, stages of conflict timeline, relationship mapping, ABC triangle, five-dimension tool.*

Gender-sensitive Political/Conflict Analysis Framework

United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA), 2014

This brief paper provides guidelines and suggestions to support political officers in mainstreaming gender during political and/or conflict analysis processes. The proposed framework seeks to deepen the understanding of gender

roles and dynamics in a specific context. In particular, it focuses on the role of women as active agents in conflict and post-conflict situations, thus trying to overcome the general tendency to see them solely as victims. Another important concern raised in the document is represented by gender-based injustices and violence. Accordingly, UNDP lists a set of guiding questions to conduct a gender-sensitive analysis in an organised manner that is in line with the general structure and focus of most conflict analysis frameworks (i.e. context profile, causal analysis, stakeholder analysis, the analysis of peace and conflict dynamics, scenario-building and response definition).

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Conflict-related Development Analysis [Second edition]

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2015

This revised and expanded version of Conflict-related Development Analysis represents an attempt to better understand and capture the complexity of conflicts without sacrificing the quality and clarity of the analysis. In fact, as stated by UNDP, “it is important to strike a balance between simplicity/clarity and complexity” during the whole analysis process (p. 76). Like the first edition, this document includes guidelines, methodologies, tools and guiding questions to conduct a complete Conflict-related Development Analysis to facilitate project and programme design and ensure more informed responses.

Starting from the preparation and information validation, the process of conflict analysis within the broader context of Conflict-related Development Analysis requires several steps. First of all, conducting a situation analysis should give an overall sense of the conflict and the baseline for further analyses. Subsequently, the effort shifts to assessing political, security, economic and social factors that underlie the dynamics of both peace and conflict. The next component of conflict analysis is an actor-based analysis concerning, especially, the interests and motivations behind stakeholder behaviour. This information should be complemented with a mapping exercise that focuses on relationships between actors and on their linkages with relevant issues. According to UNDP, another important step is the assessment of conflict dynamics and drivers of change, which “helps to identify the relationship between factors that may drive conflict or support peace engines and stakeholder involvement, and aims to provide a multi-dimensional understanding of conflict” (p. 69). In doing so, the analysis of conflict dynamics identifies trends and patterns of the conflict and hence represents the basis for building possible future scenarios. Moreover, in view of constantly evolving situations, dynamics analysis and mapping might be informed by an assessment of opportunities and risks. In line with this, UNDP encourages the use of benchmarks and indicators allowing more coherent updates of the analysis and monitoring of the conflict.

Tools: Guiding questions, situation analysis table, the iceberg, factors assessment and matrix, stakeholder mapping, stakeholder matrix, conflict and peace dynamics visualised through tables and graphics, scenario-building, current responses mapping, opportunities and risks assessment visualised through tables or graphics.

Conflict Scans: Guidance note for the Conflict Scan methodology

Search for Common Ground, 2015

Institutional Learning Team

The Conflict Scan methodology is a light approach to conflict analysis aimed at analysing and identifying conflict dynamics and evolution for planning purposes. In fact, a conflict scan is meant to provide a snapshot of a current conflict situation in order to design peacebuilding initiatives and rapid responses in line with “Do No Harm” and conflict sensitivity principles.

As stated, the “methods used in scans vary based on the context and conflict”. Therefore, this brief guidance note does not describe any specific tool to conduct the analysis. However, it pinpoints some of the main features of conflict scans: 1) action-oriented; 2) quick; 3) small in scope; 4) brief; 5) accessible; 6) developed with communities (through results-sharing and validation); 7) targeted at diverse actors; 8) responsive to the volatility of conflicts and changing contexts; 9) mainly based on qualitative data; and 10) conducted by trained people (p. 3).

According to Search for Common Ground, “scans maintain a wide understanding of conflict and peace that is inclusive of all types of conflict and peace dynamics happening in an area” (p. 6). Moreover, conflict scans should be used to foster dialogue and to “prioritize gathering information about perceptions and relationships, focusing on how these have changed in recent months” (p. 7). In fact, unlike more traditional conflict analyses, “scans prioritize information about what has changed recently, rather than broad ongoing trends” (p. 4). In this sense, conflict scans are generally designed to be harmonised with other deeper analysis and research that already exist.

Tools: n/a

Gender and Conflict Analysis Toolkit for Peacebuilders

Conciliation Resources, 2015

Tielemans, S.

Based on direct field experiences and a participatory approach to conflict analysis, the toolkit developed by Conciliation Resources is intended to pro-

vide peacebuilders with practical guidance on mainstreaming gender in conflict analysis. The toolkit explores the concept of gender in order to conduct informed peace and conflict analysis. According to the authors, the toolkit can also be used as reference for conflict analysis training.

In this framework, gender is seen as a system of power, which represents “a factor that determines who has access to power, authority and resources” (p. 9). As such, gender power relations are necessarily influenced and affected by both armed conflicts and peacebuilding activities. It is therefore important to look at gender to make interventions more effective, to avoid unintended consequences and ultimately to promote gender equality. Accordingly, gender-sensitive conflict analysis is useful to understand the links between gender and conflicts; by doing so, it can identify opportunities and capacities for peace.

The toolkit provides a list of guiding questions suitable to complement existing conflict analysis methods with reflections that include gender in the different stages of the analysis. Specifically, the first set of questions concerns the analytical process itself; it covers sources of information and information gathering as well as the process of documentation of analysis. The second set of questions focuses on the content of the analysis, notably the context of the conflict, the actors involved, the issues at stake and the drivers of conflict as well as its dynamics, patterns and peace opportunities.

Finally, the last section of the toolkit provides guidance on practical exercises to explore gender in relation to peacebuilding by “put[ting on] ‘gender spectacles’ before planning the process and content of the analysis exercise” (p. 32).

Tools: *Guiding questions, exercises: “Good man, good woman”, “Ensuring women’s participation in peace processes”, “Masculinities and peacebuilding”, “Gender and conflict analysis”, “Gender roles and norms”.*

Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts: Local perspectives on large-scale conflict

World Vision, 2015

Garred, M.

This book introduces and thoroughly explains the “Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts” (MSTC) framework for conducting conflict analysis. The term “turbulence” refers to unstable contexts that are either suffering from overt forms of violence or undermined by more hidden forms of structural violence. Accordingly, “the aim of MSTC analysis is to identify key factors and trends that cause conflict to evolve in a destructive direction, toward physical and structural violence” (p. 43).

Importantly, this framework draws on the acknowledgement that too often conflict analyses are solely expert-led. Including local perspectives and local

knowledge is crucial to: 1) improve the overall quality of conflict analysis; 2) increase the application of findings; 3) model political inclusion; 4) advance inter-agency coordination; and 5) strengthen the capacity of civil society (pp. 32-37). For this reason, the MSTC approach claims to use “participation as its core methodology and local knowledge as its primary source” (p. 29).

The methodology consists of a workshop based on ten different tools. The first part of the workshop investigates factors contributing to turbulence from the past up to the present day (i.e. rapid historical phase analysis, actor groups and characteristics analysis, intergroup relationships analysis, symptoms and root causes of instability analysis, political economy of instability, MSTC mapping). The second half of the workshop concerns potential future developments of the situation, notably identifying strategic needs of the context, forecasting likely scenarios, and identifying strategic implications and priorities relevant for planning purposes (i.e. trigger events and scenarios analysis, strategic needs, operational and advocacy implications analysis, integration with strategy and priorities).

Overall, the rationale of this framework consists of analysing conflict in an inclusive, participatory way in order to overcome the tendency to conduct solely expert-led conflict analyses. In fact, the main purpose of MSTC is to offer “an approach that bridges the ‘participation gap’ that exists within macro-conflict analysis, builds local civil society, links macro and micro programme work, links cross-sector programming and provides the space to nurture multi-agency efforts” (p. 21).

***Tools:** Guiding questions, the MSTC analysis cycle, the MSTC river, rapid historical phase analysis, actor groups and characteristics analysis, intergroup relationships analysis, symptoms and root causes of instability analysis (tree diagram), political economy of instability, MSTC mapping, trigger events and scenarios analysis, strategic needs, operational and advocacy implications analysis, integration with strategy and priorities.*

Conflict Analysis Practice Note

United Nations (UN), **2016**

This practice note is an internal resource to support UN staff in undertaking conflict analysis processes in order to inform strategies, programming, and advocacy. Its starting assumption is that all decisions making on UN engagement and programming should be based on an up-to-date, evidence based understanding of the conflict,

The document lists and briefly describes five key characteristics of conflict analysis: 1) reflect “Do No Harm”; 2) flexible and timely, 3) collaborative and inclusive; 4) participatory, and 5) balanced in terms of comprehensiveness and incisiveness. From a more practical standpoint, this note provides an over-

view of the core components – or minimum elements – of conflict analysis, namely situation profile; analysis of conflict factors, stakeholder analysis, and conflict dynamics/drivers of change analysis (p. 4). Importantly, this document introduces systemic conflict analysis as a step further in the study of conflict dynamics and in the identification of effective entry points for intervention.

Moreover, the added value of this practice note lies primarily in that it offers a useful guide to existing resources on the subject matter. Several approaches are mentioned and integrated under a unified framework, which is likely to ease the development of shared views and strategic priorities along with UN system-wide planning exercises. Yet, further links to existing tools for conflict analysis are provided at the end of the document. Similarly, the last section of this practice note offers guidance concerning the steps of analysis, the finalisation and dissemination of findings, as well as the integration of scenario-building and risk analysis and management.

Tools: *Conflict tree, Iceberg, power analysis, social network analysis.*

2. Issue-specific and other conflict-related frameworks

A User's Guide to Poverty and Social Impact Analysis

World Bank, **2003**

According to the World Bank, Poverty and Social Impact Analysis “refers to the analysis of the distributional impact of policy reforms on the well-being or welfare of different societal groups, with particular focus on the poor and vulnerable” (p. 1). Tools and methods presented in this guide have the objective of identifying stakeholders, assessing institutions, analysing social and economic impacts, assessing risks and providing support for the monitoring and evaluation phase.

Although it does not necessarily deal with conflict and violence, Poverty and Social Impact Analysis might provide conflict analyses with valuable insights and tools, given the potential link between poverty and conflict.

Tools: *Specific tools refer to other frameworks.*

Scenario Analysis with International Futures

Frederik S. Paradee Center for International Futures, **2004**

Hughes, B. B.

International Futures is a forecasting modelling system for analysis and scenario-building that aims at contributing to decision and policy analysis. Within the framework introduced in this working paper the analyst is asked

to perform five sets of activities: 1) identify values and goals; 2) build and use models to support decision and policy analysis; 3) analyse key variables and processes and “examine how they are likely to unfold” (p. 5); 4) consider uncertainty explicitly; and 5) explore potential for intervention and leverage. The objective is thus to examine key variables and to identify processes and transitions in order to “lead to or supplement thinking about dynamics interaction patterns, possible turning points, shocks, and surprises” (p. 5).

While it does not deal specifically with conflict situations, the International Futures model might be used as a valuable tool to analyse the dynamics and trends of variables affecting a conflict, thus enhancing the reliability of conflict analysis and conflict scenario-building.

Tools: *Scenario tree software.*

Drivers of Change (DoC)

United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), **2004**

The Drivers of Change (DoC) approach seeks to better understanding political and economic systems and, in particular, the role of institutions, in the belief that “institutional performance is important to understand change processes” and their impact (pp. 1-2). The DoC framework falls within the context of poverty reduction strategies carried out by donor countries. DFID encourages reflections concerning six broad issues: 1) institutional factors – through a basic country analysis; 2) dynamics of change; 3) role of external forces; 4) links between change and poverty reduction; 5) operational implications; and (6) organisational incentives. The overall goal is then to identify those drivers of change that create incentives for change by considering the interaction between structures, institutions, and agents in a given context.

It is important to note that conflicts are often about changes and that institutions have or might have a paramount role in a conflict situation. Therefore, even though the DoC approach cannot be considered a framework for conflict analysis, it may provide useful insights.

Tools: *n/a.*

Common Country Assessment and UN Development Assistance Framework

United Nations Development Group, **2004**

These guidelines refer to the UN country programming process in relation to development assistance and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As a consequence, this framework is not a conflict analysis. However, it might represent a convenient source of information and reference document.

The UN programming process is generally based on the Common Country Assessment and the UNDAF. The first consists of an assessment of development challenges and the analysis of “the major determinants and options for addressing the challenges” (p. 6). The latter is a document that sets development priorities for a five-year period and clarifies expected results and roles of different actors. The UNDAF is signed by the UN Country Team and the National Government. Programmes and projects are then designed according to – and later monitored and evaluated by referring to – the findings of both the analyses.

Tools: *Causal tree, checklists.*

Participatory Vulnerability Analysis: A step-by-step guide for field staff

ActionAid, **n.d.**

This guide is intended to support practitioners and communities in analysing vulnerability to hazards and shocks. Indeed, ActionAid’s Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) “is a qualitative way of analysing vulnerability, which involves participation of vulnerable people themselves” (p. 11). As a consequence, it aims not only at delivering more targeted assistance interventions, but also, and especially, at empowering communities themselves to cope with their vulnerabilities and develop resilience, which is undoubtedly important in conflict settings.

Before the analysis phase, the process requires the preparation and review of existing information in order to uncover possible gaps. Moreover, it is necessary to carefully map the stakeholders that need to be involved. PVA uses “four analytical steps: 1) situation analysis; 2) analysis of the causes of vulnerability; 3) analysis of community action and capacity; and 4) drawing action from analysis” (p. 4).

Tools: *PVA information needs analysis table, historical profile/timeline, vulnerability map, seasonal calendar, problem tree, concept mapping, coping ability matrix, Venn diagram, vulnerability matrix, scenario-planning, checklist.*

The Stability Assessment Framework: Designing integrated responses for security, governance and development

Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael”, **2005**

Verstegen, S. et al.

The Stability Assessment Framework (SAF) is defined as an analytical tool for stability analysis and strategic planning, integrating three different aspects of

policy, namely governance, security and socio-economic development.

The process outlined to perform a stability assessment based on SAF includes three major steps: the preparatory stage, the mapping and analysis process and the workshop activities to consolidate a Joint Stability Assessment (p. 10). Overall, SAF methodology builds on the framework provided by the Fund for Peace in *An Analytical Model of Internal Conflict and State Collapse* (1998). The analysis phase is intended to “take a comprehensive view on the governance, security, and socioeconomic development characteristics of a country and to assess how the combination of these factors affect (in)stability” (p. 23). In order to achieve this, several steps need to be performed. Firstly, an “indicator trend analysis” concerning security, governance and development indicators as well as potential triggers and hazard zones is required (pp. 25-35). Secondly, it is necessary to analyse the effectiveness and legitimacy of the state and its core institutions, notably military, police, judiciary, parliament and civil service (pp. 36-46). In this regard, SAF suggests useful guiding questions. The third part of the assessment is represented by a “political actor analysis” that looks “into the agendas, strategies, networks, and support base of actors that have the potential to impact significantly on the level of (in)stability in a country – for better or worse” (p. 24). Eventually, the last step involves the assessment of the current policies and ongoing activities of international actors.

Tools: *Indicators of instability, rating sheets, guiding questions, political actor sheet.*

Countries at Risk of Instability: Risk assessment and strategic analysis process manual

United Kingdom Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, **2005**

This brief manual describes the process for assessing risk levels in a country, focusing on both internal and external risks of instability. In this regard, the framework outlined suggests a list of core factors to consider in the analysis, in addition to other country-specific factors; these elements represent shocks and triggers as well as stabilising factors, thus building capacity and resilience.

According to this manual, a Strategic Assessment Process should involve three components: risk and impact assessment; option generation and analysis; and the delivery of key inputs to decision-makers. Risk and impact assessment is in turn divided into several main steps. While the first step concerns a “structural analysis of the dynamics of country stability”, the second one focuses on risk analysis *per se* (p. 11). A further step aims at identifying and mapping “key instability indicators and possible warning indicators” (p. 11). This should facilitate the exercise of building scenarios of instability and risk together with “developing a vision for the country” in accordance with UK national interests (pp. 30-33). Depending on the situation, the general analysis

may need to be complemented by more subject- or sector-specific analyses (inequality, poverty, natural resources, governance, etc.)

Tools: *Guiding questions and tables.*

Framework for Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis: Designing strategic responses towards good governance

Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael", **2007**

In its entirety, the Framework for Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis is intended to facilitate the design of an effective governance and anti-corruption strategy within the context of development assistance. Given that governance, institutions, and the role of the state in societies are critical aspects to consider even in conflict situations, this framework might support conflict analysis as well. Indeed, the Power and Change analysis – one of the main components of Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis – seems to be appropriate to gather and structure available country information and to assess the effectiveness and legitimacy of governance in that country. The purpose of the Power and Change analysis is to investigate the causes behind poor governance and the challenges regarding it, mainly focusing on state-society relationships, either formal or informal. The analysis is based on the assessment of three dimensions: 1) "foundational factors"; 2) "rules of the game"; and 3) "here and now" (pp. 6-7). The first dimension includes "factors that shape major characteristics of a political system" such as territorial integrity, history of state formation, sources of revenue, social and economic structures, geostrategic position and geographical features (pp. 8-9). "Rules of the game" refers to "key aspects of the political system that affect the quality of governance" and it focuses on both formal and informal factors, particularly emphasising political competition, institutionalisation, the distribution of power between executives and other groups, and state-society relations (pp. 10-15). Lastly, the third dimension assesses the current context, actors and stakeholders.

Tools: *Guiding questions sorted according to different dimensions and sectors of society.*

How to do a VCA: A practical step-by-step guide for Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), **2007**

Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) is a method of investigation developed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Socie-

ties (IFRC) to assess risks and vulnerabilities of people in order to help them to increase their capacities to cope with hazards and disasters, thus enhancing their resilience. This guide aims at supporting practitioners in conducting local-level VCAs with a framework to gather information and systematise collected data in a participatory way. According to IFRC, “VCA can take on a number of different forms, from a quick information gathering process to a more complicated and detailed participatory course of action” (p. 33). Interestingly, besides the triangulation of information, the VCA framework assumes that the community must validate both data analysis and interpretation.

Tools: *Guiding questions; vulnerability and capacity's tables.*

State-Society Analytical Framework

Initiative for Peacebuilding, 2008

Building on the frameworks for governance assessments, the State-Society Analytical Framework investigates and reports “not only on complex power dynamics and the nature of state-society relations but also on how externally-financed activities [...] impact on them” (p. 2).

The process of analysis starts with briefly outlining the “foundational factors” that shape the current situation, notably the geopolitical position, geography and climate, political historical backdrop, social system and impacts on politics and the economy, and sources of revenue (pp. 3-4). Afterwards, the focus switches to formal and informal “rules of the game”, in particular political competition, power-sharing, and state-society relations (pp. 4-5). This step allows discernment of key changes and trends, “particularly those that have the greatest impact on governance” (p. 9). Eventually, the State-Society Analytical Framework includes the assessment of “here and now” issues such as the capacities and interests of specific stakeholders or events and time-specific pressures (elections, natural disasters, etc.) (p. 10).

Overall, this analytical framework might complement a more specific conflict analysis with further details concerning governance issues or potential difficult state-society relations.

Tools: *Guiding questions sorted according to different dimensions and sectors of society.*

Analysing and Addressing Governance in Sector Operations [Chapters Three and Four]

European Commission (EC), 2008

The European Commission considers democratic governance a key priority for sustainable development and aid effectiveness. As a consequence, it de-

veloped a framework to analyse the governance situation in a given country and core governance issues in sector operations more systematically in order to achieve better results in development cooperation. The sector governance analysis methodology is composed of several steps, focusing on different aspects: 1) the context; 2) the actors; 3) governance and accountability relations; and 4) reform readiness and major trends.

Given the significant role often attributed to poor governance and aid mismanagement as factors increasing tension or worsening conflicts, further assessment in this sense is required when planning or implementing an intervention in fragile contexts.

Tools: *Guiding questions, actor and stakeholder mapping, mapping of governance relationships and context by means of tables and graphics.*

Fragile States Assessment Methodology (FSAM)

Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael", 2008

The Fragile States Assessment Methodology (FSAM) is very similar to the earlier Framework for Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis. However, the theoretical basis of FSAM is the nexus between security, socio-economic development and governance. This, in turn, leads to a more direct application to conflict analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions sorted according to different dimensions and sectors of society, SWOT diagram.*

User's Guide on Measuring Fragility

Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2009

Fabra Mata, J. and Ziaja, S.

This guide focuses on eleven indices to measure and assess fragility at the country level. The aim is to provide an overview and a comparative analysis of such indicators in order to investigate their "conceptual premises, methodological approaches and possible uses" (p. 1).

Since the early 1990s, state fragility is conceptualised as a global threat and often linked to violence and conflict. As a consequence, a "catalogue of indices on fragility" like the one proposed by DIE and UNDP might be useful for complementing conflict analysis.

Tools: *Fragility indices from other sources.*

Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis

United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), **2009**

In this note, DFID acknowledges the importance of taking discrimination and exclusion issues into consideration when assessing the context of a given country or planning a poverty reduction strategy. In this sense, Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis (GSEA) complements other analyses by identifying “the processes and mechanisms that prevent [excluded groups] from accessing the social, political and economic opportunities they need [...]” (p. 3). Additionally, GSEA makes it possible to assess current and potential risks linked to gender inequality and social exclusion, and thus it might inform scenario-building and facilitate more effective interventions.

DFID’s analytical framework for GSEA “focuses on three spheres of people’s lives: society, state and the market”, since “each of these operates according to certain processes, structures and incentives that can increase the exclusion experienced by certain groups” (p. 10). According to DFID, exploring the interactions between formal and informal institutions belonging to these three areas is helpful to understand the causes and consequences of discrimination, inequality, and exclusion – factors that in turn might lead to conflict. DFID does not provide a comprehensive methodology for GSEA, although it lists key questions to guide the analysis.

Generally, GSEA is intended to inform and support development assistance programmes. However, the relevance of discrimination and exclusion issues within a conflict situation makes this kind of social analysis useful even in frameworks for conflict analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions sorted according to specific topics and areas of inquiry.*

Interagency Security Sector Assessment Framework: Guidance for the US Government

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), **2010**

This document provides guidance for conducting a security sector assessment in the context of programmes and interventions performed in countries receiving international assistance. The aim of the Interagency Security Sector Assessment Framework (ISSAF) is to enhance coordination and effectiveness by providing “a common foundation for [US government] agencies to assess a country’s security and justice context and make strategic program recommendations” (p. 2). This conceptual framework is intended and designed “to measure the quality of security sector governance and the capacity of the government to deliver security, public safety and justice services” (p. 6).

After having collected the information required, it is necessary to begin with a background review leading to an initial identification of security concerns

and problems. The analysis should then address contextual factors linked to violence, grievances, drivers of conflict and mitigating factors in order to evaluate security needs. These early steps provide basic information to “map the host-country actors, institutions, and procedures that are relevant to the threats, issues and challenges identified” (pp. 8-9). This exercise includes the assessment of both formal and informal power structures and the role of “transnational security bodies and processes” (p. 9). Afterwards, ISSAF needs to focus on assessing governance and capacity of the security sector and prioritise issues and opportunities. The next step looks more closely into the relationships and linkages between key actors, their resources and their overall power (i.e. stakeholder analysis). Importantly, ISSAF includes a risk assessment that takes into consideration “the impact of foreign assistance on security and public safety” in line with the “Do No Harm” approach (p. 13). Eventually, the last step of ISSAF is to “provide recommendations for strategy and program” (p. 13).

Tools: *Guiding questions according to different areas of inquiry.*

The PAPEP Experience: Strengthening Political Capacities for Development

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2011
Regional Bureau of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios Project (PAPEP, for its Spanish acronym) “is a high-level knowledge network for strategic political analysis and advice for development” (p. 3). PAPEP aims at producing prospective political scenarios and fostering debates among policy-makers and collective reflections on sensitive issues in order to contribute to development cooperation, strengthen national capacities in development management and enhance public policy impact and results. Moreover, its developers claim that “PAPEP actively contributes to the strengthening of Democratic Governance (DG), Human Development (HD) and Human Rights (HR)” (p. 6). Accordingly, PAPEP might have an impact in several areas of engagement, notably prevention and management of crises, promotion of democratic dialogue, formulation and implementation of public policies, institutional reform and third party strategic planning.

As a research and analysis framework, this approach to political analysis is action-oriented in that it provides both “analysis inputs’ (the analysis results), and ‘action inputs’ (political interaction and dialogue)” for political interaction and decision-making (p. 20). More specifically, the PAPEP prospective approach consists of “analysing possible socio-political and economic changes through time and anticipating their impacts” in order to inform socio-political and economic stakeholders with a more dynamic and wider understanding of

current as well as long-term challenges (p. 22).

Concerning methodological aspects, PAPEP is unusual in that it makes use of both quantitative and qualitative tools to gather the information required to build the prospective scenario. In fact, according to this framework, primary information should be collected from the “leaders and the people’s voices”, and secondary information should be produced by using “expert’s knowledge” (p. 23).

Tools: *Information collection methods.*

Nutrition, Governance and Violence: A framework for the analysis of resilience and vulnerability to food insecurity in contexts of violent conflict

Households in Conflict Network, **2012**

Rather than describing a practical framework to conduct conflict analysis, this paper provides the theoretical background to stimulate further research and develop more in-depth assessments on how individuals and households cope with violence and conflict, especially regarding food insecurity. The rationale for “a framework to explain household resilience in maintaining food and welfare security in contexts of violent conflict” is the assumption that short-term coping strategies might have a significant impact on development in the long run (p. 2). Moreover, it is argued that a better understanding of factors affecting levels of vulnerability to poverty and to violence, together with significant institutional factors “will provide useful entry points for policy interventions aimed at improving the resilience and food security of individuals and households affected by conflict and violence” (p. 17).

Given the importance of issues linked to food security and vulnerability in contexts of instability, violence, or conflict, it might be worthwhile including the findings of this type of analysis into conflict assessments.

Tools: *n/a.*

Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA)

Inter-Agency Standing Committee, **2012**

The Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) framework aims at overcoming some of the difficulties facing humanitarian actors in the early aftermath of a disaster. The main purposes are to provide “the foundations for a stronger and better-coordinated assessment culture during crises” and to “support the identification of strategic humanitarian priorities” during the first two weeks of an emergency (p. 4). The contribution of this framework is thus

the delivery of clear and organised guidelines to gather information, identify information needs, and collect, collate and analyse primary, and especially secondary, data.

All the stages of the assessment process should be coordinated by a specifically designed structure intended to “support the design, coordination and harmonization of assessments, and ensure joint analysis and dissemination of results” (p. 7). Additionally, the activity of this coordinating structure should facilitate the final inter-sectoral analysis, eventually defining the humanitarian priorities.

To begin with, the scope, scale and level of assessment and its objectives have to be defined. After this, it is necessary to gather relevant information and data by means of a secondary data analysis and a community level assessment. The first is oriented towards a quantitative assessment, while the latter focuses mostly on qualitative information. Both of them, however, are intended to answer key questions regarding eight broader “themes”, namely: 1) drivers of the crisis and underlying factors; 2) scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile; 3) status of populations living in affected areas; 4) national capacities and response; 5) international capacities and response; 6) humanitarian access; 7) coverage and gaps; and 8) strategic humanitarian priorities (p. 9).

Overall, this process leads to a big picture of the situation (i.e. the “Preliminary Scenario Definition”) in the first 72 hours after the crisis, followed by a more consolidated and comprehensive “MIRA Report” two weeks after the disaster. According to the scope of this bibliography, it must be noted that, in certain situations, the guidelines of MIRA might a valuable and time-saving framework to gather and organise data during the very early phase of the preparation for conducting a conflict analysis. Furthermore, available MIRA Reports can be considered an additional source of information for conflict analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions and checklists (i.e. investigation form template).*

Institutional and Context Analysis: Guidance note

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2012

Melim-McLeod, C.

This note represents an attempt to create a framework – other than political economy analysis – to assess incentives and constraints that stakeholders face during development interventions. According to UNDP, the Institutional and Context Analysis (ICA) refers to “analyses that focus on political and institutional factors, as well as processes concerning the use of national and external resources in a given setting and how these have an impact on the implementation of UNDP programmes and policy advice”, thus playing an important role in their success or failure (p. 4).

ICA can be applied to both country programming and project formulation. At the country level, the analysis focuses on “incentives, relationships and the distribution and contest of power between groups and individual women and men” (p. 10). In other words, the analysis is mainly oriented towards the identification of influential political actors. To achieve this, mapping key actors and analysing their incentives and constraints are the first tasks to perform. Moreover, other relevant factors have to be considered. In this regard, UNDP lists some key questions concerning “state control and distribution of resources”, “outside forces at work”, “legal system”, “social structure”, and “political structure” (pp. 13-15). At the project level, ICA should examine specific areas and problems that the project itself will address. This requires a more in-depth understanding of “the enabling (or disabling) environment in a certain area” (p. 18). The core of the assessment is again represented by the analysis of stakeholders influencing the project and institutions – formal and informal – that shape their activity. As already noted, such “engagement analysis” has the objective of investigating stakeholder incentives and constraints in order to determine the most effective way to engage with them and “foster coalitions for change” (p. 21). In addition, the analysis aims at identifying entry points and potential risks.

This framework might provide interesting insights concerning crisis and post-conflict settings. Therefore, depending on the features and nature of certain contexts, it could be considered valuable during a conflict analysis.

Tools: *Guiding questions.*

Planning Toolkit

United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO), **2012.**

These guidelines are intended to enhance the effectiveness of both “UN peacekeeping in general and [...] specific rule of law and security institutions components” (p. 3). In fact, the Planning Toolkit provides practical guidance specifically on the planning aspects of UN programme management in order to address current gaps and challenges. As explained in the introduction, the toolkit is supposed to “facilitate compliance with existing UN planning obligations, and improve the quality and impact of component plans in UN Field Missions” in accordance with existing policies (p. 3). To achieve this goal, the guidelines focus on: 1) roles and responsibilities in planning processes (section A); 2) needs assessments (section B); and 3) specialised planning tools (section C).

Tools: *Summary tables and graphs, glossary of planning and programme management, guiding questions, templates, good practices, suggested indicators and checklists.*

Note on the Fragility Spectrum

G7+, 2013

This note introduces the Fragility Spectrum produced by five of the G7+ countries, namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Timor-Leste. The Fragility Spectrum builds on the idea that, because features of fragility and resilience are context-specific, a bottom-up approach to fragility assessment is more appropriate to understand the unique nature of fragility and to avoid misrepresentations. As a consequence, G7+ countries focused on country-owned and country-led descriptions of fragility and developed a diagnostic tool enabling countries to analyse and describe their own fragility and their progress in improving their specific situation: “the Fragility Spectrum has been developed by fragile states, for fragile states” (p. 3). This self-assessment framework is based on local knowledge and aims at supporting “a country to understand its current position in the overall transition process, and to adjust its planning to the needs of that specific stage” (p. 3). The outcome of the Fragility Spectrum is represented by a table that visually captures country descriptions concerning the five “Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goal” areas (i.e. inclusive politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenues and services) and the five different stages of fragility identified (i.e. crisis, rebuild and reform, transition, transformation, and resilience) (p. 5). Moreover, several indicators to measure progress are listed accordingly.

Although limited to the examination of one single aspect, this tool can support conflict analysis processes and increase ownership and participation therein, in particular when it concerns the assessment of how fragility and progress appear within a specific local context.

Tools: *Fragility spectrum and selected indicators based on “Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals”.*

Power Analysis: A practical guide

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), 2013

Pettit, J.

This guide is intended to clarify what power means and how power analysis can be useful in certain settings and domains, including both development and humanitarian fields. In fact, power analysis might complement other assessment frameworks with sharper insights, deepening understanding and knowledge about local contexts and power relations. As stated by Jethro Pettit, “power analysis considers the social, economic and political dimensions of power and how they are interrelated. It examines actors, structures, institutions and norms – from the visible to the invisible and informal” (p. 11).

Power analysis may thereby help to identify, among other things, possible perverse and unintended consequences, actors constraining or blocking desired changes, entry points and – more importantly for conflict-related assessments and relief activities – it “can help to identify where (at which level) and with whom (which actors and agencies) responsibility lies for addressing the causes and continuation of conflict” (p. 21).

Before performing a power analysis, it is crucial to define its purpose, as the assessment can take different forms and hold different functions. Then specific issues need to be identified in order to be properly investigated and addressed. To simplify this step, the author lists “three clusters of issues and questions about power”: 1) structures and norms, including structural inequalities, identities, gender, culture, beliefs, discriminations and perceptions of relevant topics; 2) actors, institutions and organised interests; and 3) politics and contestations concerning critical issues such as representation and governance, responsiveness, accountability, activism, conflict and violence (pp. 24-31). Each cluster is linked to a different dimension of power. As a consequence, the same source argues that a multi-dimensional approach is required in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the maintenance and change of power relations from various perspectives. Overall, Sida methodology avails itself of tools that have been adapted from other sources and divided into four categories according to their focal point of analysis: 1) sources and positions of power; 2) forms of power; 3) spaces and levels of power; 4) political economy.

***Tools:** Guiding questions and checklists, mapping exercises from other sources, specific tools for analysing forms of power based on other frameworks (e.g. the power cube, powerhouse, power matrix, adapted onion model).*

Practice Guide: A combined approach to Political Economy and Power Analysis – Discussion note prepared for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and Institute for Development Studies, **2013**

Mejía Acosta, A. M. and Pettit, J.

This guide compares and subsequently combines “two complementary frameworks for understanding power and its effects on relations between key development actors”: Political Economy and Power Analysis (p. 6). This approach seeks to integrate different understandings of power as well as insights and methodologies belonging to both these perspectives in order to gain a more nuanced analysis of “the array of key actors and their interests, and the enabling and constraining structures and context in which their actions take place, including the visible and underlying norms and discourses,

and the formal and informal motivations leading to cooperation or contestation" (p. 6). Indeed, as noted by the author, political economy analysis focuses more on key actors and their interests and motivations, while power analysis is more concerned with underlying norms and behaviour. Together, they provide a comprehensive framework exploring both agency and structure and combining the different dimensions of power relationships between stakeholders (i.e. visible, hidden, invisible and informal dimensions of power).

According to these premises, the core of the analysis consists of four elements: 1) "the formal and visible structures, norms and rules of the game"; 2) "the informal and invisible structures, beliefs and narratives"; 3) the actors, interests and strategies; and 4) "the processes of cooperation and contestation" (p. 15). Eventually, the framework outlined in this practical guide suggests key questions to investigate each component, in order to gain a complete overview of power relations and political dynamics relevant not only for development initiatives, but also – perhaps indirectly – for conflict-related and humanitarian actions.

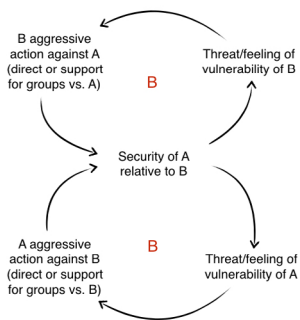
Tools: *Guiding questions.*

ANNEX II

SYSTEMS THINKING AND EXAMPLES OF CONFLICT ARCHETYPES¹

ARCHETYPES

Escalation or Mutual Threat and Vulnerability



The mutual threat and vulnerability archetype occurs when two or more parties take action to protect or further their own interests, but in so doing create a vicious cycle of escalation of conflict. An arms race is a typical “mutual threat and vulnerability” situation. Both parties are trying to maintain a level of security that is reasonable. In response to a worsening of its security situation (perhaps relative to Party B), Party A feels threatened and responds with action that is intended to reduce the threat to itself. But Party A’s action worsens B’s security (or perception of it) and increases the sense of threat to Party B, who then takes action to improve its security.

The interaction of the two balancing loops of A and B produces a vicious cycle of escalation – an arms race; each party’s action to keep its security at a tolerable level triggers a threat to the other (CDA 2013, pp. 34-35).

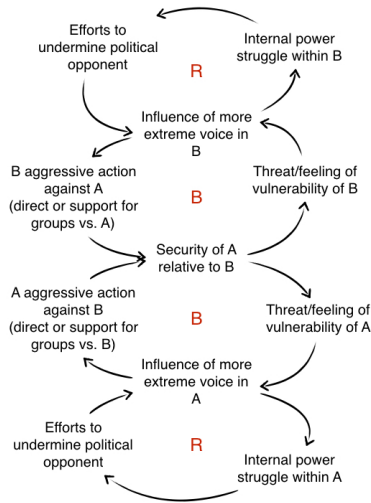
Escalation and Intractability due to Ethnic Outbidding

This is a variation on the mutual threat and vulnerability archetype. Here the escalation dynamic is driven by internal political competition, which may not

¹ This annex borrows heavily from Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) - Collaborative Learning Projects (2013) *Reflecting on Peace Practice: Advanced Training of Consultants and Advisers*.

(necessarily) have anything to do with the issues at the centre of the inter-group conflict.

This archetype was identified by Norbert Ropers in his work in Sri Lanka, where in the post-colonial period, the Sinhala majority has pursued efforts to reassert their identity and dominance on the island – to the exclusion of minority groups, principally the Tamils.



In this archetype, politics within one or both of the parties to a conflict is characterized by a continuous struggle for power and access to resources and patronage systems. Each political party's primary objective is to undermine or defeat the other, and any move towards peaceful settlement with the other group is attacked by the party in opposition – regardless of which party that is.

The result of the interaction between this intra-group political dynamic with the inter-group conflict dynamic is the strengthening of the most nationalist voices on the other side. As each side, pushed by its more hawkish factions, takes aggressive action, a self-perpetuating escalatory dynamic similar to the one in the previous archetype results.

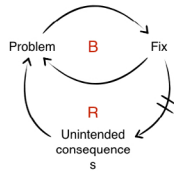
Each group seeks to gain or maintain success (in terms of its identity or territory) vis-à-vis the other. The success of the 'other' is seen on each side as a threat to its own identity and success, reducing support for the peace process and strengthening voices for more confrontational or aggressive action (CDA 2013, p. 35).

Fixes that Fail or Policy Resistance

When practitioners find themselves asking why a problem they thought they were addressing is worse than before, then this archetype might be at work. This archetype shows the dynamic of how trying to address a problem symptom "backfires," i.e., it makes the initial symptom worse.

International policies in Kosovo prior to the recognition of Kosovo's independence are an example. The problem symptom was lack of cooperation and tension between ethnic Albanians and ethnic Serbs in Kosovo. International resources for multi-ethnic projects and international pressure on ethnic Albanians to take action to integrate ethnic Serbs into political, economic and social life in Kosovo, in the form of conditionalities for negotiations of the status of Kosovo, did initially serve to reduce nationalistic actions and to promote

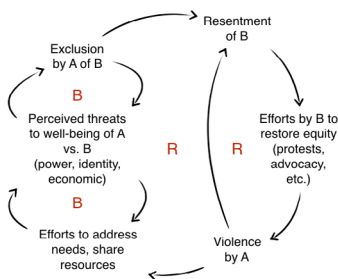
cooperation and positive action. An inadvertent consequence of this policy, however, was to increase Albanians' perceptions that their needs were being ignored in favour of Serbs' needs, that the past injustices perpetrated by Serbs were not being addressed, among other things. As a result, ultimately, rather than reducing nationalism and resistance to integration of Serbs, the policy strengthened them, especially as more extremist groups gained greater popularity and public resentment mounted (CDA 2013, p. 36).



Shifting the Burden or Exclusion

This archetype illustrates how difficult it is to change systems of political, economic, social and cultural exclusion, which represent problems of power, identity and security.

In this archetypal dynamic, a 'quick fix' to a complex problem is adopted—one that is obvious and immediately implementable. The solution usually relieves the problem symptom, at least in the shorter term, but has several negative side effects. It is essentially an "addiction" structure – in which parties try to make the problematic symptom better, but, in so doing, disguise the real problem, and even make it harder to resolve in the long run.



Competition for power (driven perhaps by fears of loss of identity, security, economic opportunity or greed and 'zero-sum' perceptions of power) lead one group to exclude others, rather than working with the other party/parties to address the needs of all. In

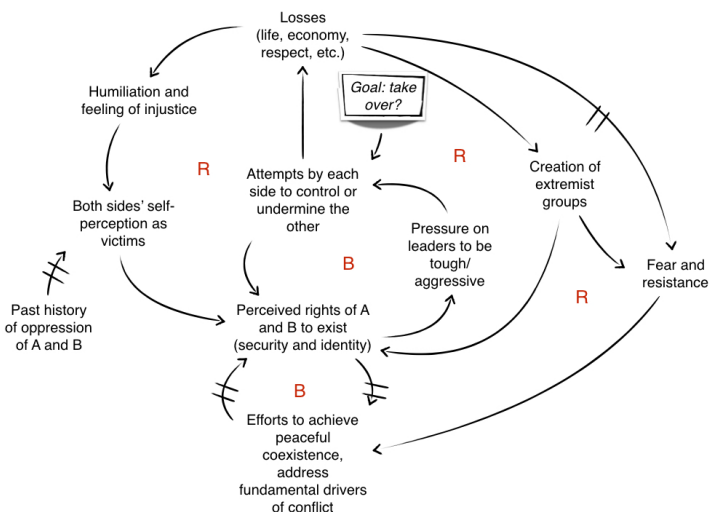
the short run, exclusion alleviates the problem, and reduces pressure on the dominant party to implement the fundamental solution of inclusion and satisfaction of the needs of the other. A side effect of exclusion, however, is to undermine the parties' ability to undertake that fundamental solution, as it leads to a cycle of resentment and grievances from the excluded group(s) (coupled

with mistrust) that make it more difficult for the parties to work together to address the needs of the excluded party. The excluded party may take action to restore equity, provoking a repressive reaction by the dominant party that leads to violence and further exclusion, and making efforts to address the problem through power-sharing, development, etc. even more difficult (CDA 2013, pp. 31-32).

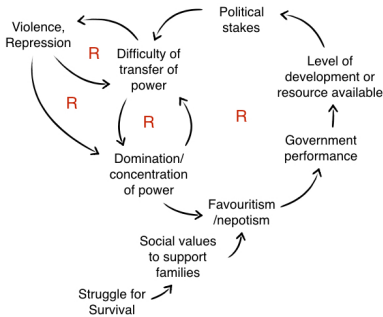
Protracted Identity-Based Conflict

This archetype, created by David Peter Stroh, illustrates the dynamics of protracted identity-based conflicts. Both sides see the conflict as a battle for the right to exist, in part because each side has claims to the same thing (e.g., land). In asserting and protecting their right to exist, each side tries to control or undermine the other, through military action/armed resistance, containment policies, etc.). Both sides become dependent on (Stroh says “addicted to”) a strategy of control and retaliation, which they pursue and which temporarily diminishes the threat to their existence.

Yet this strategy has two unintended consequences: first, it increases their insecurity (threat to their right to exist) – retaliation results in losses and feelings of injustice, which reinforce each side’s perception of itself as a victim and their perceptions of the conflict as a battle for survival (a fix that backfires to a certain extent). Second, the strategy elicits a violent response from the other side (an escalation dynamic), which undermines the parties’ ability to achieve a fundamental peaceful resolution of their conflict, which may include power-sharing, reframing of rights, etc. Mistrust and hatred build between the parties, extremist groups are strengthened, and perceptions of what is possible narrow (CDA 2013, pp. 36-37).



Favouritism and the Struggle for Power



This archetype shows dynamics of how corruption and favouritism can lead to violent conflict. It is essentially a vicious cycle dynamic.

Favouritism (in distribution of resources, for example) negatively affects government performance, as poorly qualified people are hired into government and overgrown bureaucracies consume increasing proportions of the budget, and consequently depletes resources and levels of development.

The diminishing level of development raises political stakes and exacerbates struggles for power amongst groups or parties. The outcome of a struggle for power is either domination by one group – which can then practice favouritism towards its own group and reinforce a vicious cycle – and/or eventually resistance by the group that does not benefit from the favouritism (CDA 2013, p. 32).

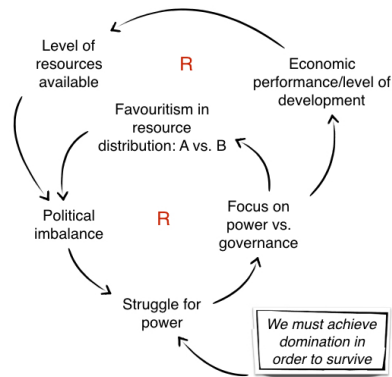
Struggle for Power

This archetype is closely related to patterns of exclusion and favouritism, but exists also as a dynamic on its own.

A combination of historical and structural causes – such as colonialism, selfish interests, or centralization of power in the state – unleashes a struggle for power among the elite, who focus on maintaining power rather than on governance.

This leads the ‘winning’ group to dominate, favouring its own group over others and creating a political imbalance that is resisted by the losers, thus perpetuating and escalating the struggle for power.

Another vicious cycle also results: the struggle for power can lead to poor management of resources and poor economic performance, reducing the level of resources available and exacerbating the struggle for power (for fewer and fewer resources).



In addition, if the elite is willing to use any means to retain power, they may support violence against the others – through mobilization of ethnicity, support of militias, manipulation, etc. Impunity can contribute to this dynamic – as both a product of the struggle for power and a reason why elites may be willing to use violent means to retain power (CDA 2013, p. 33).

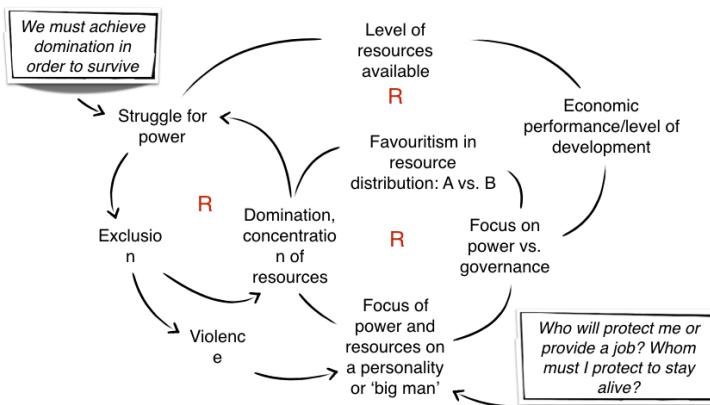
‘Big Man’ Patronage and Struggle for Power

Several emerging archetypal patterns in conflict situations revolve around elite power struggles’ favouritism (or patronage or corruption). A variation on the previous archetype can be called the ‘Big Man Patronage and the Struggle for Power’ archetype.

Here it is not merely the struggle amongst elites, but the focus of power and resources on a ‘big man’ that unleashes the struggle for competition that can lead to violence. The “big man” model could be rooted in and perpetuated by peoples’ struggle to survive, and the belief that protection and patronage of the ‘big man’ is needed for survival.

The favouritism inherent in the ‘big man’ model reinforces the concentration of power and resources in the hands of the “big man” and in turn unleashes a struggle for power and a pattern of exclusion by the dominant group that increases the stakes in maintaining (or getting) power, and the likelihood of violence (CDA 2013, p. 33).

Concurrently, patronage and favouritism negatively affects government performance (as poorly qualified people, for example, are hired into government and overgrown bureaucracies consume increasing proportions of the budget), and leads to diminishing availability of resources and poor development. This, in turn, raises political states and exacerbates elite competition (Ricigliano and Chigas 2011, p. 18).



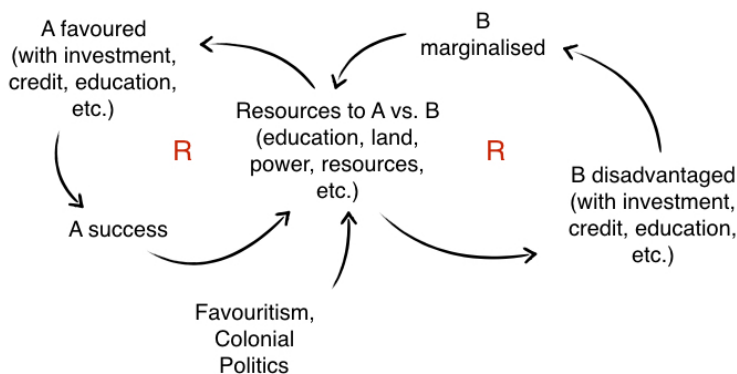
Success to the Successful

This archetype describes one dynamic that inadvertently perpetuates the domination of one group over another, whether economically, politically or socially. It also describes a scenario in which development success (rather than failure) might reinforce conflict. In this dynamic, demands by competing groups for a common resource (land, investment, education, job opportunities, etc.) are linked by two reinforcing loops.

If one group (A) initially gets more resources than another equally capable group (B), it has a higher likelihood of succeeding. A's initial success justifies devoting more resources to A, further widening the gap between A and B. Success to the successful rewards the winner of a competition with the means to win again, while potentially also penalizing the losers.

An example would be domination by one group of the economy – e.g., the business sector, tourism, etc. If that group were, for example, given land under colonial times, it started with some resources. As the economy develops, they use this land to develop tourist facilities, bringing in revenue. This success brings in more investment. Infrastructure development also is concentrated in this area, as it is needed for continuing growth.

In the meanwhile, the groups that did not receive land initially are disadvantaged. They have fewer means to develop businesses, and they become the employees of the businesses of the other group. Their areas become more and more disadvantaged in terms of infrastructure development, further diminishing their possibilities of economic success. If this leads to resentment and frustration, it could reinforce conflict dynamics (CDA 2013, p. 34).



ANNEX III

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

From 15 June 2015 to 31 August 2015, UNSSC carried out a survey concerning the use and practice of conflict analysis directed at alumni of UNSSC Peace and Security Programme’s trainings. The survey received 76 responses. The first table below contains a list and details of respondents (sorted in alphabetical order). To conduct the survey, it was used the online polling tool “Survey Monkey”, whose format has been recalled to present the results of the survey in the following section. Overall, the survey included 15 separate questions: the first seven questions focused on personal information (name, gender, duty station, position, etc.) while the eight questions referred specifically to conflict analysis. The answers collected are listed in the chronological order in which they have been received and that their content has not been modified or changed in any way.

NAME	ORGANISATION	DUTY STATION	POSITION/ FUNCTION
Abdullah AL DURAIBI	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Sana'a, Yemen	Project Manager
Abdulqadir Omer JAMA	Hargeisa Municipality, Republic of Somaliland	Hargeisa, Somaliland	Head of the Department of Planning and Statistics
Adam ZAKARIA	United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)	Korma, North Darfur, Sudan	Language Assistant
Alessandro PRETI	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Colombia	Coordinator – Peace and Development Unit

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

NAME	ORGANISATION	DUTY STATION	POSITION/ FUNCTION
Alexandra GEORGOS	UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)	New York, USA	Human Resources Assistant
Ambimbola AINA	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)	Kosovo	Civil Affairs Officer
Ana IZAR	UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA)	New York, USA	Political Affairs Officer
Anthony THOMSON	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Kabul, Afghanistan	Civil Affairs Unit – Coordination Officer – Extractive Industry Analyst
Antoine HAARMAN	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	New York, USA	Programme Specialist
Archana Aryal	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Kathmandu, Nepal	Acting Head, Democratic Transition Unit
Assadullah MUSAFER	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Jalalabad, Afghanistan	National Program Officer
Augustus M. HOWARD	United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)	Monrovia, Liberia	Associate Human Rights Officer
Bashir Husein DHOORE	Local Authority	Baledweyne District, Hiiraan Region, Somalia	Deputy District Commissioner
Bennett Khamis KENYI	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)	Juba, South Sudan	Information Analyst
Bony MPAKA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	Gao, Mali	Senior Field Coordinator, Humanitarian Access and Advocacy Adviser
Cahyadi Imam SUHADA	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)	Lebanon	Force Commander Special Staff Officer 3
Caroline Alice ONEKALIT	United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)	Robertsport, Liberia	Head of Field Office

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

NAME	ORGANISATION	DUTY STATION	POSITION/ FUNCTION
Cecile PENTORI	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Zimbabwe	Programme Associate Governance Unit
Cissy KINAAWA AYEBI	United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)	Mukjar, Central Darfur, Sudan	Human Rights Officer
Claire VAN DER VAEREN	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Cambodia	UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator
Cynthia PETRIGH	Beyond (peace)	Global	Founder and lead consultant
Dhafer HASAN	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Iraq	Programme Analyst
Dhahawi GARRI	United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)	Nyala, South Darfur, Sudan	Gender Affairs Officer
Evan BWALA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)	Garowe, Somalia	Political Affairs Officer
Fatoumata OUATTARA	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	Bouake, Côte d'Ivoire	Political Affairs Officer
Florian BAALCKE	United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)	Rome, Italy	Head of Security Analysis unit (global)
Gaelle DERIAZ	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Kabul, Afghanistan	Electoral Officer
Gopi PRADHAN	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Afghanistan	Head of Office
Gregory Attila CONNOR	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Timor-Leste	Peace and Development Adviser
Ibrahim WELDA	United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)	Darfur	Civil Affairs Officer
Jaswant LAL	UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)/Police Division	New York, USA	Police Planning Officer

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

NAME	ORGANISATION	DUTY STATION	POSITION/ FUNCTION
Jean Berchmans KABIRIGI	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Civil Affairs Officer/ Reporting Unit
John PEGG	United Nations Secretariat (UNS)	New York, USA	Chief – Planning, Monitoring and Reporting
Joseph OSIRE	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	Entebbe, Uganda	Security Assistant
Joyce MODO	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)	Juba, South Sudan	Security Assistant
Judith VARONA	UN Women	New York, USA	Security Associate
Jules MUSAFIRI	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Security Assistant
Juliano SOUZA RIBEIRO	Agência Brasileira de Inteligencia (Brazilian Intelligence Agency)	Brasilia, Brazil	Coordinator – Intelligence Officer
Kabongo Ntambwe BLANQUI	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Education Specialist
Kamal GUDUL	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Kirkuk, Iraq	Protection Associate
Katarina AMMITZBOLL	Peacenexus	Copenhagen, Denmark	Senior Associate Consultant
Khady Malick TOURE	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Associate Civil Affairs Officer
Kim SITZLER	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs	Cairo, Egypt	Human Security Adviser

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

NAME	ORGANISATION	DUTY STATION	POSITION/ FUNCTION
Kobehi Guillaume TOUTOU	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire	Planning Officer
Ledet TEKA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – African Union Liaison Office	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	National Reporting Officer (NOA)
Line HOLMUNG ANDERSEN	United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU)	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	Reporting Officer and Best Practice Focal Point
Lola VALLADARES	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	Ecuador	National Officer Programme on Gender, Culture and Human Rights
Luqman PATEL	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/Crisis Response Unit (CRU)	New York, USA	Early Warning Consultant
M. Shajjat HOSSAIN	UN Stabilization Mission of the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO)	Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR/RR) Officer
Mahmoud KOROMA	UN Women	Monrovia, Liberia	Program Associate
Maite NIEL	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	Antananarivo, Madagascar	Programme Officer
Masayo KONDO ROSSIER	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	Geneva, Switzerland	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Michiko SUZUKI	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Bamyan, Afghanistan	Head of Field Office
Mohammad DAUD	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Kabul, Afghanistan	National Programme Officer
Mohammad Hassan KAZIMI	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Afghanistan	Civil Affairs Unit Assistant
Mohammad NUSRAT HAROON	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Kabul, Afghanistan	Acting National Manager (Service Delivery Police)
Mohammed AL ROBAYEE	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Baghdad, Iraq	Project Officer

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

NAME	ORGANISATION	DUTY STATION	POSITION/ FUNCTION
Mostafa SHBIB	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	Amman, Jordan	Humanitarian Analysis and Access Officer
Mozammel HAQUE	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Dhaka, Bangladesh	Project Manager, Upazila Governance Project (UZGP)
Nazar Khan TOTAKHAIL	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Jalalabad, Afghanistan	Civil Affairs Assistant
Niina TENHIO	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Kosovo	Programme Analyst
Nombuso HLENGANE	UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)/Police Division	New York, USA	Police Planner
Noor AYESHA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)	Nairobi, Kenya	Political Affairs Officer
Paolo TRIPPA	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Rome, Italy	Senior Field Security Assistant, Training officer and Deputy Travel Focal Point
Paul PARTNER	Joint UNDP/DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention	Prishtina, Kosovo	Programme Specialist – Peace and Development Adviser
Rasmus STERN	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	La Paz, Bolivia	Conflict Adviser Natural Resources Conflicts
Rob WATSON	Frontier Consulting	Johannesburg, South Africa	Freelance
S. M. Ashek HOSSAIN-HOSSAIN	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire	Senior Staff Officer Plan1
Said Abdillaahi AHMED	Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Somaliland	Hargeisa, Somaliland	Capacity Development Consultant UNDP – Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery (JPLG) Project
Sakhorn BOONGULLAYA	United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)	Mawlamyine, Myanmar	Programme Officer and Head of Sub-Office

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

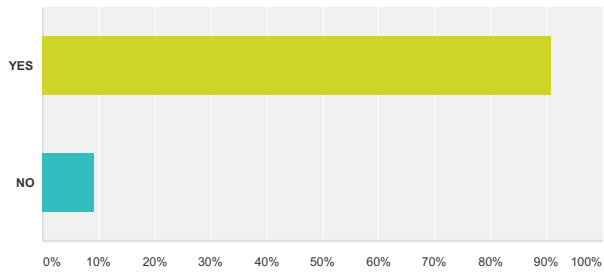
NAME	ORGANISATION	DUTY STATION	POSITION/ FUNCTION
Siril HERSETH	UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA)	New York, USA	Associate Political Expert
Stean TSHIBAND	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Myanmar	Early Recovery Manager/Head of Office
Stephen TALUGENDE	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)	Lebanon	Chief HIV/AIDS Officer
Thet NAING	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Mawla-myine, Myanmar	Education Field Officer
Veronique BRNARD	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Field Safety Adviser
Yuji UESUGI	Hiroshima Peacebuilding Center/Waseda University	Tokyo, Japan	Program Officer/ Training Facilitator

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Conflict analysis survey

Q7 Are you familiar with conflict analysis?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

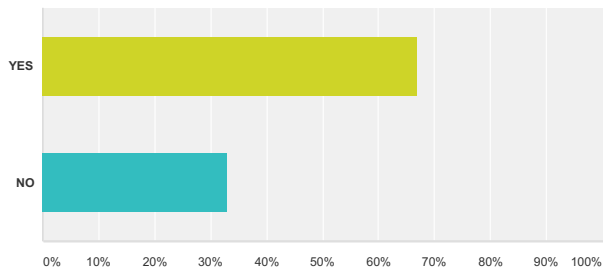


Answer Choices	Responses	
YES	90.79%	69
NO	9.21%	7
Total		76

Conflict analysis survey

Q8 Have you ever conducted conflict analysis?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
YES	67.11%	51
NO	32.89%	25
Total		76

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Q9 What methodology did you use during the analysis process?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	I used Structure Analysis of long term factors underlying conflict, security, political and socio economic. Actors interests, relation capacity, peace agenda. Dynamics triggers for increased violence, capacity institution procured for managing conflict. Analysis internal response Map interests and Politics of internal actors. Assess level of coherence. Analysis impacts of conflict dynamics. Development Actors. Interaction between development internal conflict. Developing Strategic and options.	9/4/2015 9:17 PM
2	I usually use a mix of methodologies, based on the UNDSS ToT I took in 2010 and various other approaches I have learnt on the job.	8/31/2015 12:28 PM
3	I use the Brazilian Intelligence Agency's doctrine of the Intelligence.	8/28/2015 7:33 PM
4	participatory workshop, interview, focus group discussion, use of secondary information	8/27/2015 6:50 AM
5	Conflict mapping and stakeholders Analysis	8/25/2015 11:32 AM
6	stakeholder consultation and conflict mapping for conflict analysis training	8/24/2015 6:52 AM
7	n/a	8/21/2015 12:17 AM
8	I have used conflict mapping and the conflict tree where you analyze the inter-relationships between the different actors and look at both the structural and proximate causes of the conflict as well as the conflict triggers.	8/20/2015 2:03 PM
9	Stakeholder Analysis (including Conflict Map, and ABC Triangle), and Causal Analysis (including Conflict (Problem) Tree, PIN, etc).	8/20/2015 11:08 AM
10	none	8/19/2015 3:34 PM
11	assessing the key actors in conflict situation and their role as spoilers or solvers	8/19/2015 3:05 PM
12	CDA Do No Harm PCNA Humanitarian needs assessment All the tools adapted to the context	8/19/2015 2:55 PM
13	Stakeholder mapping tool and Analysis of conflict dynamics.	8/19/2015 12:05 PM
14	Conflict and Development Analysis (CDA)	8/18/2015 4:23 PM
15	a. Situation Profile. b. Causal Analysis. c. Stakeholder Analysis. d. Conflict Dynamics.	8/18/2015 8:48 AM
16	listening to each party and outstanding the nature of the conflict and studying the motivations behind.	8/17/2015 11:40 PM
17	Combination of structural, actor and dynamics	8/17/2015 4:44 PM
18	Analysis of the stakeholders, root causes of the conflict and possible negotiation options	8/17/2015 4:00 PM
19	I did not conduct conflict analysis	8/17/2015 1:53 PM
20	We can use different methodology such as contacting with community people, CSO and educated people	8/17/2015 1:52 PM
21	A mix of analysis incl the UN SSC	8/17/2015 1:26 PM
22	situation and causes analysis	8/17/2015 1:07 PM
23	N/A	8/17/2015 12:31 PM
24	Nothing	8/17/2015 11:52 AM
25	N/A	8/17/2015 11:34 AM
26	Interviews, Group discussions and meetings, field visits,	8/17/2015 11:16 AM
27	not applicable	8/17/2015 11:06 AM
28	Tree map and interests for stakeholders	8/17/2015 10:52 AM
29	No set method, but would characterize it as a mix of human needs and interest method.	7/25/2015 3:38 PM
30	Not applicable	7/22/2015 5:25 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

31	prior: mapping of districts, main actors and situation profile desk study interview methodology security policy During: Interviews and 'round-table discussions' (with groups in conflict separately) Timeline of (spread) of conflict Mapping and analysis of actors (maps) Analysis of causes (problem tree and ABC models) Drivers and dynamics	7/21/2015 5:49 PM
32	I do not remember the name of methodology. However, I took two training: (1) Applied Conflict Analysis for Prevention and Peacebuilding" in 2012, and "Reflecting on Conflict and Mediation" in 2013 in Afghanistan.	7/21/2015 2:45 PM
33	Identification of conflict indicators	7/20/2015 6:08 PM
34	Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Rapid Response Appraisal (RRA)	7/20/2015 2:58 PM
35	Previous experience and data and conflict causes to inform a larger assessment of future elections	7/5/2015 6:31 AM
36	Not yet been part of the conflict analysis team	7/1/2015 3:40 PM
37	Mixed methodologies	6/27/2015 5:17 PM
38	This was not a conflict analysis per say (in the traditional sense of the term), but a situational analysis behind the development of a comprehensive Peacebuilding Programme. The methodology used during the analysis process was: literature and desk review (including former Programmes' evaluation), stakeholders consultations and focus groups discussion.	6/26/2015 12:15 PM
39	I have been conducting it using participatory methodology as well as desk analysis.	6/25/2015 6:57 PM
40	Follow an iterative implicit planning cycle methodology: a) Situation Analysis (context) b) Identify issues c) List potential options e) Select options i.e. advocacy f) Apply selected options g) Monitoring and evaluation h) Situation analysis (repeat) More often than not this a conceptual method and one does not follow the steps in sequence, as time goes by one's knowledge and experience of the issues solidify.	6/24/2015 7:31 AM
41	Situation Profile and problem tree	6/23/2015 3:09 PM
42	No methodology used - it mainly to identify the various parties involved	6/22/2015 7:20 PM
43	Literature reviews, interviews, research, surveys, mapping organizational linkages through stakeholder analysis	6/22/2015 4:05 PM
44	workshop with regional civil affairs officers to conduct: regional situation profile, causal analysis, stakeholders analysis, the conflicts dynamics and priorities area for intervention.	6/22/2015 10:48 AM
45	Negotiation between two people.	6/22/2015 9:54 AM
46	- to understand the causes of conflict - to take steps and actions to mitigate the conflict etc.	6/22/2015 8:02 AM
47	I have not done so in the field , but had ago at it during the training	6/21/2015 11:18 AM
48	Holding multistakeholder information and planning workshops,Data collection using structured Questionnaires and holding , Focus group discussions, Data entry and analysis and reporting of conclusions	6/20/2015 11:15 AM
49	Conflict analysis in country was conducted by a consultant. I conducted some conflict analysis exercises during training.	6/19/2015 12:37 PM
50	UNSSC	6/19/2015 4:44 AM
51	I did not do any conflict analysis yet, just during the course.	6/18/2015 7:01 PM
52	Analyzing of daily and weekly situation	6/18/2015 1:02 PM
53	Studies, consultation and document review	6/18/2015 1:13 AM
54	the different phases of the conflict (pre- conflict, the confrontation, the crisis, outcomes, post-conflict situation)	6/17/2015 6:24 PM
55	Conflict tree, Actors mapping, the methodology which is called in Spanish "Pilares", analysis of history of conflict and the perception of the conflict by the involved conflict parties.	6/17/2015 5:31 PM
56	..	6/17/2015 4:55 PM
57	Not applicable	6/17/2015 4:39 PM
58	Nested Conflict Analysis	6/17/2015 3:48 PM
59	Political economy analysis, stakeholder analysis	6/17/2015 3:32 PM
60	Group discussion	6/17/2015 2:42 PM
61	stakeholder mapping and analysis, situation analysis	6/17/2015 2:38 PM
62	Conflict (problem) tree	6/17/2015 2:11 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

63	NA	6/17/2015 1:58 PM
64	Never Used any methodology but devised my own way of analyzing	6/17/2015 1:33 PM
65	Not conducted	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
66	Mapping of Conflict was helpful in the process	6/17/2015 1:06 PM
67	Triangulation Desk top research Field based research (through field based security officers) Workshop Outsourcing to commercial research firms	6/17/2015 12:57 PM
68	Interviews, observations and accessing archives related to the conflict	6/17/2015 12:15 PM
69	although i have never conducted conflict analysis process, but i usually consider this aspect while planning and implementing activities.	6/17/2015 11:54 AM
70	- conducting assessment, bi-lateral interviews and presenting data.	6/17/2015 11:46 AM
71	The military process	6/17/2015 11:30 AM
72	Depending on context. Intending to analyze with participants from a broad spectrum of political and social backgrounds.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
73	conflict analysis tools	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
74	The only conflict analysis that I have used is the one between staff members and don't think its relevant to your school.	6/17/2015 11:13 AM
75	DFID/Saferworld for the 2012 Conflict-related Development Analysis Kosovo; UNSSC for mentoring of colleague from EUSR Office Kosovo (2014); UNSSC for development of 2015 UNKT training course.	6/17/2015 11:12 AM
76	UNCT CDA, Conflict and Development Analysis	6/17/2015 11:07 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Q10 Did you use any conflict analysis tools? If so, which ones?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	yes,1.Conflict wheel dynamics,actorscausatives,structure.2.Conflict tree deals difference between structureand dynamics factors,conflicting maping deals an actors and their interrelationsits good tool to start analysing conflict.4.Escating model.5.Conflict prespective6.Needs Fears,maping focusinterests,needs fears means and options6.muty cultural role.	9/4/2015 9:17 PM
2	Actor's mapping, drivers of peace, drivers of conflict, applicable legal framework, do no harm	8/31/2015 12:28 PM
3	No, I didn't use any conflict analysis tools in my work.	8/28/2015 7:33 PM
4	actor mapping, causes and consequences (conflict tree), trend analysis (timeline)	8/27/2015 6:50 AM
5	Mapping, profile, Matrix	8/25/2015 11:32 AM
6	Stakeholder mapping	8/24/2015 6:52 AM
7	n/a	8/21/2015 12:17 AM
8	The tool I use most in conflict analysis is the Conflict Tree which provides details of the root causes and effects of the conflict.	8/20/2015 2:03 PM
9	Conflict Map, ABC Triangle, Conflict (Problem) Tree, PIN, etc.	8/20/2015 11:08 AM
10	no	8/19/2015 3:34 PM
11	Not exactly, but a simple analysis of the actors and factors contributing/ preventing the conflict, and the role of the various actors	8/19/2015 3:05 PM
12	CDA Do No Harm PCNA Humanitarian needs assessment	8/19/2015 2:55 PM
13	Stakeholder mapping tool and Analysis of conflict dynamics	8/19/2015 12:05 PM
14	Matrices for causal analysis and stakeholder analysis Graphical stakeholder relationship mapping Conflict tree diagram	8/18/2015 4:23 PM
15	yes. We could use the tools which appropriate with the problem.	8/18/2015 8:48 AM
16	Yes, peaceful coexsitnce	8/17/2015 11:40 PM
17	Yes, Problem tree and Conflict mapping	8/17/2015 4:44 PM
18	Some of the tools provided by UNSSC courses, such as analysing needs through Mallow's pyramid of needs,	8/17/2015 4:00 PM
19	I did not conduct conflict analysis	8/17/2015 1:53 PM
20	Telephone, private car and local community people and Tribal elders	8/17/2015 1:52 PM
21	The stakeholder mapping, analysis of root causes, drivers and triggers	8/17/2015 1:26 PM
22	yes	8/17/2015 1:07 PM
23	No	8/17/2015 12:31 PM
24	No	8/17/2015 11:52 AM
25	N/A	8/17/2015 11:34 AM
26	None	8/17/2015 11:16 AM
27	No	8/17/2015 11:06 AM
28	No	8/17/2015 10:52 AM
29	No set method, but would characterize it as a mix of conflict tree and conflict mapping.	7/25/2015 3:38 PM
30	I did not have the opportunity to engage in such analysis.	7/22/2015 5:25 AM
31	see above	7/21/2015 5:49 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

32	I have no idea on the name of the tools.	7/21/2015 2:45 PM
33	Conflict wheel method to understand the dynamics, actors, causation, structures, issues and options/strategies of the conflict.	7/20/2015 6:08 PM
34	Questioner Data Collection Analysis Social Mapping Mobility Mapping	7/20/2015 2:58 PM
35	Partly used the UN ERM	7/5/2015 6:31 AM
36	Not yet	7/1/2015 3:40 PM
37	Geographic approach: Mapping of actors, political and community linkage: Who is working for and with Who	6/27/2015 5:17 PM
38	In informal discussions, we used some of the conflict analysis tools (e.g. Iceberg tool).	6/26/2015 12:15 PM
39	The tools I mostly used are: Conflict stages, the conflict tree and stakeholders' mapping.	6/25/2015 6:57 PM
40	An implicit one based upon experience and knowledge.	6/24/2015 7:31 AM
41	Problem Tree	6/23/2015 3:09 PM
42	stakeholder analysis	6/22/2015 7:20 PM
43	Timeline, conflict mapping, Conflict tree, pyramid	6/22/2015 4:05 PM
44	Problem-tree	6/22/2015 10:48 AM
45	Negotiation	6/22/2015 9:54 AM
46	Yes, I did, These tools include: - Structure - Actors - Dynamics:	6/22/2015 8:02 AM
47	Conflict tree/	6/21/2015 11:18 AM
48	General data collection tools were used no specialized or specific conflict analysis tools were used.	6/20/2015 11:15 AM
49	Yes, during the training: stakeholder analysis, etc.	6/19/2015 12:37 PM
50	participatory formats	6/19/2015 4:44 AM
51	the problem tree, the iceberg tool, stakeholders' matrix, stakeholders' map	6/18/2015 7:01 PM
52	No	6/18/2015 1:02 PM
53	Questionnaires for interview and focus groupi	6/18/2015 1:13 AM
54	yes we used the mapping	6/17/2015 6:24 PM
55	Conflict tree. Actors mapping, the methodology which is called in Spanish "Pilares", analysis of history of conflict and the perception of the conflict by the involved conflict parties.	6/17/2015 5:31 PM
56	Only during the conflict analysis training. Have not been able to make use of this knowledge at work yet.	6/17/2015 4:55 PM
57	None	6/17/2015 4:39 PM
58	Stake holder mapping and causal analysys	6/17/2015 3:48 PM
59	-//-	6/17/2015 3:32 PM
60	Time line	6/17/2015 2:42 PM
61	mapping of stakeholders, discourse analysis, media analysis	6/17/2015 2:38 PM
62	Rapid mapping to determine social ecological relationships and characteristics of parties in conflict	6/17/2015 2:11 PM
63	NA	6/17/2015 1:58 PM
64	No	6/17/2015 1:33 PM
65	Not conducted	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
66	Onion Conflict Tree	6/17/2015 1:06 PM
67	Key tool for UN Security Risk Management is the Security Risk Assessment (SRA) • Programme Assessment, Threat Assessment, Vulnerability Assessment, Likelihood, Impact, Risk Analysis As part of the threat assessment the following conflict analysis tools have been used: A: Working with conflict (RTC) in particular • Time line • Conflict/actor mapping • ACB triangle • Pyramid B: Conflict analysis for project planning and implementation (GTZ/GIZ) • Conflict profile • Stakeholder analysis • Causes of conflict	6/17/2015 12:57 PM
68	Yes, the onion	6/17/2015 12:15 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

69	One of the tools that i used on small groups but i want to see it used on larg scale is the Time Line tool. I guess it could be a project nationwide to have people agree on some issues and dates.	6/17/2015 11:54 AM
70	I used the bi-lateral interviews, district mapping and other softwares such as SPSS for analyzing the report.	6/17/2015 11:46 AM
71	Not a specific one	6/17/2015 11:30 AM
72	Various. Swisspeace / SDC Arabic "Toolbox", conflict trees, conflict mapping, process and actors mappings, etc.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
73	Mainly stake holders analysis	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
74	n/a	6/17/2015 11:13 AM
75	SCA, CDA, EC Checklist, DNH	6/17/2015 11:12 AM
76	Identification of Conflict driver and agent of peace	6/17/2015 11:07 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Q11 What was the purpose or the context of the analysis?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	the purpose or context of analysis closely defined setof communication parameter.	9/4/2015 9:17 PM
2	In the countries mentioned above, I conducted the conflict analysis as part and preparation for my mission (support to a peace process, or Human rights work)	8/31/2015 12:28 PM
3	I didn't use any conflict analysis tools in my work.	8/28/2015 7:33 PM
4	to feed information for programming	8/27/2015 6:50 AM
5	Education and general	8/25/2015 11:32 AM
6	For UNSSCconflict analysis training	8/24/2015 6:52 AM
7	n/a	8/21/2015 12:17 AM
8	It was in relation to border conflict between Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire and the interrelationships between the border tribes and Ivorian refugees living in Refugee Camps in Liberia.	8/20/2015 2:03 PM
9	Project planning and implementation (initiation/induction phase), and training with stakeholders (conflict resolution oriented), and training for peacebuilders (staff preparation).	8/20/2015 11:08 AM
10	none	8/19/2015 3:34 PM
11	This is within the context of my work as a Civil Affairs Officer in my AOR.	8/19/2015 3:05 PM
12	Including do no harm and conflict analysis in the strategic programmes of UNDP and United Nations Maximise the positive impact of development programme in the context of armed and social conflict	8/19/2015 2:55 PM
13	To find out parties to the conflict and what the conflict is all about.	8/19/2015 12:05 PM
14	Inform UNCT strategic positioning / UNDAF revision More strongly integrate conflict sensitivity into response Programme prioritization (in particular conflict prevention / peacebuilding programming) Establish the foundation for ongoing analysis	8/18/2015 4:23 PM
15	strengthening conflict analysis skills	8/18/2015 8:48 AM
16	Bring all together and solve tribal conflict.	8/17/2015 11:40 PM
17	Development of Mission and component concepts	8/17/2015 4:44 PM
18	Putting together proposals for a Special Representative of the Secretary-General to engage at the grassroots level with different actors in a conflict setting	8/17/2015 4:00 PM
19	I did not conduct conflict analysis	8/17/2015 1:53 PM
20	To know the situation and find the way to resolve the problems .	8/17/2015 1:52 PM
21	to undertake a peacebuilding needs assessment and facilitate the development of a peacebuilding priority plan for the UN team in Kyrgyzstan	8/17/2015 1:26 PM
22	design of project document and technical support for the government	8/17/2015 1:07 PM
23	N/A	8/17/2015 12:31 PM
24	Nothing	8/17/2015 11:52 AM
25	N/A	8/17/2015 11:34 AM
26	for HQ reporting of current situation	8/17/2015 11:16 AM
27	not applicable	8/17/2015 11:06 AM
28	To provide analysis on the conflict and its humanitarian impact.	8/17/2015 10:52 AM
29	Drafting 90-day reports, political analysis, briefing notes or trying to better understand situation.	7/25/2015 3:38 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

30	Not applicable	7/22/2015 5:25 AM
31	Programme design	7/21/2015 5:49 PM
32	To explore the causes of the problems, and to solve the issues.	7/21/2015 2:45 PM
33	TO IDENTIFY THE ROOTCAUSES OF THE CONFLICT AND POSSIBLE WAYS OF RESOLVING IT BY INVOLVING BOTH PARTIES.	7/20/2015 6:08 PM
34	Benchmark survey of National and Foreign Armed groups. Midterm survey Impact survey Evaluation	7/20/2015 2:58 PM
35	Preparation of the Mission Pillar 1 retreat	7/5/2015 6:31 AM
36	Not Applicable	7/1/2015 3:40 PM
37	Humanitarian access, getting more humanitarian space and protection of civilian.	6/27/2015 5:17 PM
38	To develop a comprehensive and integrated programme on issues related to Peacebuilding and conflict prevention.	6/26/2015 12:15 PM
39	Program planning and implementation (working in, around and on the conflict)	6/25/2015 6:57 PM
40	It was based upon the premise that if one understood more about the extractive industry being an actual conflict driver the United Nations could advocate for the Government to take steps to reduce the instances of conflict.	6/24/2015 7:31 AM
41	Conflict resolution between two communities	6/23/2015 3:09 PM
42	mission startup to produce its strategic/results framework	6/22/2015 7:20 PM
43	Linking humanitarian action and peacebuilding for entry points, sustainable solutions	6/22/2015 4:05 PM
44	Drafting the 2015/2016 Civil affairs workplan at regional level	6/22/2015 10:48 AM
45	To bring peace between conflicting parties.	6/22/2015 9:54 AM
46	Disputes and dissention among municipal employees	6/22/2015 8:02 AM
47	looking at Darfur conflict	6/21/2015 11:18 AM
48	The MOI was being supported to develop a Peace building Policy and road map document by UNDP-GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY PROGRAMME. Therefore there was need to conduct conflict mapping and participatory peacebuilding workshops in all the six regions of Somaliland in order to get baseline information to help in drafting of the policy.	6/20/2015 11:15 AM
49	Better understanding the underlying sources of conflict and social and political tension.	6/19/2015 12:37 PM
50	To guide programming, to inform UN and stakeholders	6/19/2015 4:44 AM
51	for a course	6/18/2015 7:01 PM
52	Daily and weekly reporting for the Mission	6/18/2015 1:02 PM
53	Identify conflict drivers that fuel conflict and tension and undermine peace and social cohesion	6/18/2015 1:13 AM
54	Syria case study during a training	6/17/2015 6:24 PM
55	To find solutions which involve all conflict parties. Conflict transformation to satisfy all involved conflict parties in a water conflict in north Peru.	6/17/2015 5:31 PM
56	..	6/17/2015 4:55 PM
57	None	6/17/2015 4:39 PM
58	To analyze the conflict situation in the northern border between Ecuador and Colombia, which is the zone where UNFPA is focusing currently; the consequences of Colombian conflict and the difficult situation that women live in this context, specially gender based violence, maternal mortality, poverty and discrimination, among others.	6/17/2015 3:48 PM
59	To inform programming	6/17/2015 3:32 PM
60	To monitor the conflict dynamics	6/17/2015 2:42 PM
61	Provide accurate information about the socio-political and economic situation of a defined geographic area in order to guide UNDP senior management and programme staff on implementation and design of project activities	6/17/2015 2:38 PM
62	Identify needs for programme implementation	6/17/2015 2:11 PM
63	NA	6/17/2015 1:58 PM
64	We have often armed attack in the western part of CDI	6/17/2015 1:33 PM
65	Not conducted	6/17/2015 1:15 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

66	For office internal Report	6/17/2015 1:06 PM
67	Identifying the impact of conflict on WFP operations (current and future [planned]). What security measures (in the widest sense of Avoidance, Control, Acceptance or Transfer) will be needed to ensure programme implication	6/17/2015 12:57 PM
68	To look into how gender elements be integrated in conflict analysis.	6/17/2015 12:15 PM
69	while planning for new projects - one of my duties is guiding the LPAC process.	6/17/2015 11:54 AM
70	the level of insecurity that affected even the secure regions.	6/17/2015 11:46 AM
71	Evaluation of a potential increase of the tension	6/17/2015 11:30 AM
72	Various. Intervention planning, process design, training on tools as a "non-divisive" activity.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
73	To analyst the ongoing peace process in Myanmar	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
74	n/a	6/17/2015 11:13 AM
75	Developmental	6/17/2015 11:12 AM
76	Reprogramming of UN activities	6/17/2015 11:07 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Q12 What was the final format of the analysis (e.g. briefing note, report, political analysis, country profile, strategic assessment, etc.)?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	strategic assessment	9/4/2015 9:17 PM
2	internal briefings, informal reports, introductory part of larger publications	8/31/2015 12:28 PM
3	I didn't use any conflict analysis tools in my work.	8/28/2015 7:33 PM
4	report	8/27/2015 6:50 AM
5	Full report	8/25/2015 11:32 AM
6	A report on conflict analysi as an exercise	8/24/2015 6:52 AM
7	n/a	8/21/2015 12:17 AM
8	Reports and briefing notes were sent to mission leadership and this initiated a strategic assessment mission by the UN Security Council and the Department of Political Affairs who visited the country/ county (Grand Gedeh County) on a fact finding mission and to get hands on experience on issues raised as well as to listen to the refugees. In 2012 there were three refugee camps being run by UNHCR in Grand Gedeh County but by 2014, voluntary repatriation had been done and the camps had been consolidated into only one refugee camp.	8/20/2015 2:03 PM
9	Workshop report	8/20/2015 11:08 AM
10	none	8/19/2015 3:34 PM
11	All of the above. These are done on weekly and specific thematic basis depending on local developments	8/19/2015 3:05 PM
12	Report Country profile Profile of specific territory (territorial conflict analysis) Information System	8/19/2015 2:55 PM
13	Political analysis and briefing report.	8/19/2015 12:05 PM
14	UNCT presentation and final report	8/18/2015 4:23 PM
15	1. Exploring conflict: Impact of values, identity and beliefs in conflict settings. 2. Conceptual framework and analytical tools. 3. Process implications and quality standards. 4. Escalation Stages and Responses. a. Hardening Positions. b. Debate, Polemics. c. From Words to Actions. d. Coalitions (and Images). e. Loss of Face. f. Strategies of Threats. g. Limited Attacks. h. Fragmentation. i. Together into The Abyss.	8/18/2015 8:48 AM
16	Clan issues , Tribal	8/17/2015 11:40 PM
17	Input to Police Planning document	8/17/2015 4:44 PM
18	Most of the analyses I conduct at UNHQ become briefing notes, but they also feed into reports, country profiles, background notes and other products	8/17/2015 4:00 PM
19	I did not conduct conflict analysis	8/17/2015 1:53 PM
20	We have collected briefe informations from different sources such as government authority, CSOs and Tribal elders .	8/17/2015 1:52 PM
21	A report	8/17/2015 1:26 PM
22	reports, concept notes, proposals	8/17/2015 1:07 PM
23	N/A	8/17/2015 12:31 PM
24	Nothing	8/17/2015 11:52 AM
25	N/A	8/17/2015 11:34 AM
26	political analysis and provincial profile	8/17/2015 11:16 AM
27	Not Applicable	8/17/2015 11:06 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

28	briefing and visual products.	8/17/2015 10:52 AM
29	90-day reports, political analysis, briefing notes.	7/25/2015 3:38 PM
30	Not applicable	7/22/2015 5:25 AM
31	Programme framework for CPRU (Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit) Indonesia. Leading to full funded 3-year conflict prevention programme.	7/21/2015 5:49 PM
32	Briefing note, report, political analysis.	7/21/2015 2:45 PM
33	Briefing note and the report	7/20/2015 6:08 PM
34	Strategic assessment Political Analysis Armed group profile	7/20/2015 2:58 PM
35	One-pager	7/5/2015 6:31 AM
36	N/A	7/1/2015 3:40 PM
37	Briefing notes and strategic approach to ensure a better linkage with armed groups.	6/27/2015 5:17 PM
38	The outcomes of the exercise feed into a Programme Document.	6/26/2015 12:15 PM
39	Briefing notes, context analysis and assessment reports, political analysis.	6/25/2015 6:57 PM
40	All these, but far more important are recurrent informal oral briefings of senior Afghan Ministry of Mines & Petroleum officials and political leadership, UN agencies, funds & programmes including UNAMA; national and international NGOs. If one is perceived to be collecting information just for reports such exchanges have a tendency to be quiet limited.	6/24/2015 7:31 AM
41	Report	6/23/2015 3:09 PM
42	analysis was informal	6/22/2015 7:20 PM
43	Report	6/22/2015 4:05 PM
44	First draft of the regional Civil Affairs workplan	6/22/2015 10:48 AM
45	Briefing notes	6/22/2015 9:54 AM
46	Both briefing note and report	6/22/2015 8:02 AM
47	Strategic assessment	6/21/2015 11:18 AM
48	Peace building situational report as the basis for developing National Peace-building Policy and Road Map.	6/20/2015 11:15 AM
49	Report for UNDP and DPA, not disseminated; PowerPoint summary presented to the UNCT; table summary of the stakeholder analysis.	6/19/2015 12:37 PM
50	capacity assessment	6/19/2015 4:44 AM
51	a conflict analysis for the course	6/18/2015 7:01 PM
52	Report	6/18/2015 1:02 PM
53	Report	6/18/2015 1:13 AM
54	Report	6/17/2015 6:24 PM
55	The outcome of the analysis was a strategic assessment and a report how to improve the situation. Strategic action plan to improve the given situation.	6/17/2015 5:31 PM
56	..	6/17/2015 4:55 PM
57	None	6/17/2015 4:39 PM
58	Briefing note	6/17/2015 3:48 PM
59	Country profile with focus on political stakeholders to feed into programming, among other spelling out the theory of change and specific indicators	6/17/2015 3:32 PM
60	Country profile	6/17/2015 2:42 PM
61	regular reports, background analysis chapter in a project document	6/17/2015 2:38 PM
62	Consultative Strategic Needs Assessment	6/17/2015 2:11 PM
63	NA	6/17/2015 1:58 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

64	Political analysis (As this is the root of all conflict)	6/17/2015 1:33 PM
65	Not conducted	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
66	Briefing note and analysis	6/17/2015 1:06 PM
67	Mainly report also briefing note, country profile, strategic assessment	6/17/2015 12:57 PM
68	Briefing note.	6/17/2015 12:15 PM
69	notes	6/17/2015 11:54 AM
70	Assessment report	6/17/2015 11:46 AM
71	Intelligence analysis report with indicators and a warning system	6/17/2015 11:30 AM
72	Various. From just letting them on the flipchart to "Pocket Conflict Analysis" to thematic background.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
73	just a simplest briefing note	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
74	n/a	6/17/2015 11:13 AM
75	Report for CDA 2012; trailing materials for 2015	6/17/2015 11:12 AM
76	Report	6/17/2015 11:07 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Q13 What challenges did you face in conducting conflict analysis (e.g. organisationally, politically, practically or conceptually)? Please provide an example or a brief description.

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	the challenges faces conceptual assumptions is intended as a flexible frame work that can be adopted as needed rather than standardised approach analytical lenses. Political economy approach that focuses the politic and social interest of those engaged the conflict drawing attention of those who benefit of contemination of conflict.	9/4/2015 9:17 PM
2	One of the challenges is that you need the conflict analysis at the start of the mission. But the information and understanding are limited then. You feel like conducting another one upon departure, much richer -but who will read it. Another challenge is about making it relevant and used by partners and colleagues who are not sensitised to the needs and benefits of a conflict analysis (military, humanitarians...), and realise much later that it would have been useful for them to get involved before they launched their project	8/31/2015 12:28 PM
3	I didn't use any conflict analysis tools in my work.	8/28/2015 7:33 PM
4	The challenges we faced was organizational and political. Some of the issues discussed in the workshop or shared by the participants were very sensitive (for example identity based tensions) and it was difficult for UN to share the findings to the external actors or even within the UN system.	8/27/2015 6:50 AM
5	I was the client for this analysis so my role was to give inputs to Tors and make the quality control of the final report. Due to some weaknesses in the team I was involve in the development of questionnaire and data processing.	8/25/2015 11:32 AM
6	Politically. It was to organize among staleholders	8/24/2015 6:52 AM
7	n/a	8/21/2015 12:17 AM
8	In analysing a conflict, it is important that you get to understand the different actors through dialogue to get to know why they play the roles they do. This requires logistical support which was sometimes not readily available.	8/20/2015 2:03 PM
9	Conflict analysis was done with the local stakeholders in the local language which I do not speak. I had to use an interpreter to lead the session and it was very difficult to intervene timely and appropriately in the discussion as it was impossible for the interpreter to interpret every single word which was spoken in the session. Also, it was very difficult for the stakeholders to understand the abstract concepts such as "attitude" and "interest".	8/20/2015 11:08 AM
10	none	8/19/2015 3:34 PM
11	Detailed analysis take time and usually you have a short deadline to make such analysis	8/19/2015 3:05 PM
12	The knowledge of conflict analysis is limited among our colleagues (UN), civil society and state officers Conflict analysis should be a requisite for the formulation and implementation of any development programme in a context of social and armed conflict. It is considered something theoretical and academic and it is not clearly seen the practical use and benefit for communities.	8/19/2015 2:55 PM
13	Lack of political will to share issues of concern.	8/19/2015 12:05 PM
14	Analysis was conducted as an internal exercise due to sensitivities with national stakeholders (and thus framed as a development assessment and planning process). Conducted at the UNCT level, significant coordination was required to gain support to the process – both regarding the methodology and the substantive outcomes	8/18/2015 4:23 PM
15	solving by modifying some aspects contained, adapted to the existing problems.	8/18/2015 8:48 AM
16	The hard mentality and stuobron of the understanding	8/17/2015 11:40 PM
17	So far at my level, the only problems that I have encountered are political in the sense that outcomes being transitioned into strategies are mostly politically based solutions and sometimes lack the practical considerations of a conflict. We also need to understand that the solutions are not always cookie-cutter.	8/17/2015 4:44 PM
18	At UNHQ, one of the main challenges is obtaining accurate information from reliable sources - UNAMI, the mission in Iraq usually provides much of the information used by the desk at UNHQ; therefore, it is usually not first-hand information, but rather an interpretation of the situation by mission colleagues	8/17/2015 4:00 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

19	I did not conduct conflict analysis	8/17/2015 1:53 PM
20	Some time the provincial line ministry didnot provide the relavent information and they saying you should bring official letter from high authorities	8/17/2015 1:52 PM
21	there are many different approaches to conflict analysis the analysis can become quite negative and give a bleak outlook which is not appreciated by the govt or parts of the UN, and we had to limit the focus to UN mandates and therefore issues were excluded	8/17/2015 1:26 PM
22	Political and security challenges were always floating as the stuation in Iraq is very complx in terms of sustainability of development interventions. also the regulare change of stakeholders' positions add another challenge, as this usully requires buidling new networks and trust with the nw comers.	8/17/2015 1:07 PM
23	N/A	8/17/2015 12:31 PM
24	Nothing	8/17/2015 11:52 AM
25	N/A	8/17/2015 11:34 AM
26	practically limited to visiting field where conflict is taking place mainly due to UNDSS restrictions	8/17/2015 11:16 AM
27	Not Applicable	8/17/2015 11:06 AM
28	The main challenge is highly politicized context and lack of sources.	8/17/2015 10:52 AM
29	There is really no consensus on root causes, triggers or interests. Example. Why is Abyei still a disputed area- is it oil, migration or pride over land? Can we envisage a situation where either Sudan or South Sudan give up their claim on the area? Why have the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka not agreed to solve their problems in face of the fact that Khartoum and Juba have practically agreed that this is not a priority issue to them? Abyei practically has no government and is the epitome of misery! Why is the international community allowing this? In the face of the ineffectiveness of the AUHIP, why is the UN still supporting a failed process? Abyei is a small but complex problem which has no easy solutions because stakeholders have varying interpretation of the situation, problems, root causes etc. As such also combines organizational challenges (AU, UN, AUHIP, UNISFA, GoS and GoSS); political (African solutions to African problems platitudes as well as lack of political will to allow/support a course of action that would lead to improving the lives of the inhabitants of Abyei- it implies 'statebuilding'- \$\$\$); practical (Abyei is really the back of the world- so it is easy to forget it as it is hidden). I think if there is near consensus on the problems, it would be a lot easier to 'begin' to tackle it.	7/25/2015 3:38 PM
30	Not applicable	7/22/2015 5:25 AM
31	Lack of experience, and shared view of conflict resolution and conflict prevention as a shared framework. Gender was sufficiently prioritised but inclusion and exclusion issues, economically and socially in each locality, our analysis could be better.	7/21/2015 5:49 PM
32	(I took the conflict analysis training mentioned above. However, in practice, I have not had some cases. Or I have handled some conflict/tension issues through daily work, however, I do not think of / remember which methodologies I took every time. Therefore, my answers on No.7 and No.8 may be between "Yes" and "No".)	7/21/2015 2:45 PM
33	Political interference and reluctance of the informed part of the population to release relevant information required for data analysis.	7/20/2015 6:08 PM
34	It was very challenging for social mapping. Local community was very much afraid about rebel groups. At the preliminary stage the local community was not agree to identify the place of rebel porn area. We discussed and ensure their protection under civil affairs and Military Observer. After they engaged with social and mobility mapping.	7/20/2015 2:58 PM
35	When a full conflict analysis will be conducted, it is likely to face challenges to uncertainties and fluid situation in the country.	7/5/2015 6:31 AM
36	N/A	7/1/2015 3:40 PM
37	Political and organization. Very dangerous to be in touch with some groups for political reasons and for humanitarian neutrality concerns.	6/27/2015 5:17 PM
38	The issue of language and how things are communicated or packaged came up a few times. The process in itself was lengthy to allow for deeper analysis and thinking.	6/26/2015 12:15 PM
39	Organizational orientation and the sensitive nature of the conflict analysis, particularly in complex situations	6/25/2015 6:57 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

40	Organisationally within UNAMA/the donor community/Afghan politically resistance to accepting that the MoM&P and the Government as a whole does not administer control this sector or accept that the writ of government is extremely limited. Therefore, whilst temporarily they may be able to address individual cases of conflict involving particular mines these interventions cannot and are not sustained. This scenario can be used as a proxy to explain the calamity of Afghanistan. How vast amounts of money and blood have been expended that have increased the challenges faced by this country not stabilise it.	6/24/2015 7:31 AM
41	To have all information about stakeholders as its a different culture, different country	6/23/2015 3:09 PM
42	Organisationally & practically - when a mission is being started and planned - my previous experience (now over 5 years old) is the conflict analysis step appears to be missed, not shared or formalised	6/22/2015 7:20 PM
43	Keeping neutrality on political context	6/22/2015 4:05 PM
44	Organisationally: difficult to have the participation of the stakeholders Politically: local authorities hide some sensitive information	6/22/2015 10:48 AM
45	Lack of corporation and poor misinterpretation of words, language barrier, hostility of tribes, lack of love for each other.	6/22/2015 9:54 AM
46	I faced a lot challenges in finding a solution to conflict analysis. The grievances even may exist after concluding the conflict. As a member of an organization when I settled disputes, the other side of the conflict shows me a type of "an inward groaning/ insidious harm."	6/22/2015 8:02 AM
47	Practically it was interesting to look at all parts of the tress symbolizing different factors ie. structural ,manifest and dynamic . However , structural or root cause are difficult to influence in a short time basis,if they are avoided , the conflict may come up later	6/21/2015 11:18 AM
48	Poor collaboration and sensitivity from government officials when dealing with political conflicts involving pro-federal clans in the east of the country. Poor institutional memory and lack of documentation in government offices on resources sharing related conflicts. Lack of cooperation and sensitivity from both the public and religious establishments when dealing with religious conflicts. Poor budgeting and as more time is some time needed to cover sensitive conflicts and remote areas w.	6/20/2015 11:15 AM
49	Political sensitivity	6/19/2015 12:37 PM
50	none above, but in current context lack of buy in, most notably from UNDP Country Office	6/19/2015 4:44 AM
51	-	6/18/2015 7:01 PM
52	Politically, sometimes it is difficult to get authentic information, or many often the information is biased.	6/18/2015 1:02 PM
53	Physical and security access	6/18/2015 1:13 AM
54	Politically : the complexity of the relations between the actors , the alliances, etc.,	6/17/2015 6:24 PM
55	Well, the analysis is always simple if the actors are willing to participate. The implementation of the finding facts, conclusions and steps to improve the situation / transform the conflict is always the big challenge!!	6/17/2015 5:31 PM
56	..	6/17/2015 4:55 PM
57	None	6/17/2015 4:39 PM
58	The main challenge is in the political level, because currently the Ecuadorian Government has an attitude of distrust and suspicion against international cooperation, including United Nations. There is additionally a current conservative in spaces of power and decisions opposed to sexual and reproductive rights, that prevents these issues be addressed within the framework of human rights standards. However, the conflict analysis is very useful for our office and planning our interventions appropriately.	6/17/2015 3:48 PM
59	Conflict analysis tools are useful as a way to structure your analysis mentally and potentially illustratively - but the analysis itself is dependent on the analyst. Also, a conflict analyses can point to various narratives of the situation as well as various strategies to deal with these Additional challenges include lack of sufficient and reliable information; insufficient time to undertake the analysis; the format in which the analysis much be presented, which may lead to a simplification of things; and politically when the analysis points to strategies beyond the organisation you work for (e.g. beyond the mandate and/or resources)	6/17/2015 3:32 PM
60	Politically	6/17/2015 2:42 PM
61	the most relevant data is not said in public and the sources prefer to remain unnamed. The public reality is different from the actual reality, and the international community often doesn't have access (willingly or unwillingly) to multiple sources in order to have a complete picture.	6/17/2015 2:38 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

62	Sociocultural ramifications and sensitivities significantly impacted acceptability of the findings. Organisationally, hitherto low prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the region compounded internal mindset necessary for incorporation of HIV and AIDS in mandated tasks related to outreach to vulnerable populations within operational areas of missions. There are rapidly evolving dynamics, trends and risk prevalence which could trigger increase of new HIV infections due to influx of foreign fighters, widespread sexual violence, rape, sexual slavery, violent conflicts, mobility of refugees, etc.	6/17/2015 2:11 PM
63	NA	6/17/2015 1:58 PM
64	Lack of information regarding present political dynamics in the country and lack of information about the desire and intention of international players especially France for this mission.	6/17/2015 1:33 PM
65	Not conducted	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
66	Time	6/17/2015 1:06 PM
67	Organisationally • Perceptions of capabilities: commercial firms are more trusted than internal resources Practically • Commercial providers lack capacity to tailor analysis to the need of the organisation due to a lack of understanding of the needs and capabilities (no client analysis done). (E.g. Commissioned 2-year-ahead strategic assessment of Syria recommending: Do not travel there...)	6/17/2015 12:57 PM
68	The stakeholders lacked the conceptual framework of integrating gender issues in conflict.	6/17/2015 12:15 PM
69	- there are different factors and actors that contribute to conflict in Iraq. - roots and causes of conflict is different from one area to another - hard to plan on national level. - conflict analysis is not a priority for most of - staff responsible for planning projects and managing them are not Iraqis and they are not familiar with the situation. - conflict analysis is not a priority for most of our organization. - our staff assume that they know enough about the conflict in Iraq.	6/17/2015 11:54 AM
70	Political and traditional administration	6/17/2015 11:46 AM
71	Getting the input from the Commander / Head of mission to determine his priorities and then develop the requirements and indicators	6/17/2015 11:30 AM
72	In my context, tools, facilitation and implementation need to be in Arabic. Getting a reasonable diversity of political / social backgrounds / opinions to participate.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
73	almost zero challenges	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
74	n/a	6/17/2015 11:13 AM
75	The 2012 CDA was particularly challenging in consequence of imprecise and evolving expectations from the requesting department. No significant challenges for later exercises.	6/17/2015 11:12 AM
76	Capacity and willingness of the UNCT	6/17/2015 11:07 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Q14 What did you learn from conducting the conflict analysis?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	I learn from conducting a conflict analysis: 1. can support orientation of future action conflict are dynamics system any intervention became part of the system and should focus on supporting the creative, positive energy in the system or related to the system. Conflict analysis can be based individual or in participatory manner in group. and I also learn the awareness and prevention of conflict.	9/4/2015 9:17 PM
2	Keep it alive and ongoing for the duration of the mission	8/31/2015 12:28 PM
3	I didn't use any conflict analysis tools in my work.	8/28/2015 7:33 PM
4	You cannot just rely on one method. One needs to apply different method to verify/triangulate the information. It is also essential to decide the purpose of the analysis. For example: do you want use for the programming purpose internally or you want to use this as a policy brief among the wider development partners. It helps to identify the appropriate method for CA the participants/informants. who	8/27/2015 6:50 AM
5	conflict Analysis must be systematically include at all stage of Programme	8/25/2015 11:32 AM
6	Without Trust building ,it is difficult to bring them to the round table discussion	8/24/2015 6:52 AM
7	n/a	8/21/2015 12:17 AM
8	It is very important that all stakeholders are understood and consulted for effective analysis and lasting solution to the conflict. Conflict analysis also helps to clarify the inter-relationships between the different actors and provides opportunity for marginalized groups to be heard. It enables one to understand both the content of the conflict and its dynamics because conflict is not static and often times influence by different actors.	8/20/2015 2:03 PM
9	It is almost impossible to identify a simple causal relationship of a specific the consequences (conflicts) as most of them are the product of complicated interaction of different factors and events. It is an interactive process. However, we do not have a sound analytical tools to capture such a dynamic and interactive nature of conflict development.	8/20/2015 11:08 AM
10	i haven't done any	8/19/2015 3:34 PM
11	It helps to understand the conflict dynamics, provide early warning and recommend appropriate interventions	8/19/2015 3:05 PM
12	Conflict analysis is useful is: - the methodology is participatory - there is clear ownership from state institutions and civil society organizations - it is strictly connected to strategic planning (UNDAF, CPD, Strategic initiatives of any UN agency should include conflict analysis) - it is more practical than theoretical	8/19/2015 2:55 PM
13	Gives you a clear picture of what the conflict is all about, this sets grounds for intervention in order to resolve the conflict.	8/19/2015 12:05 PM
14	Deeper understanding of generally known issues (including involvement of specific stakeholders, dynamics of certain conflict drivers, greater geographic granularity in the analysis to inform geo-differentiated responses) and stronger understanding of trends to inform scenarios. In addition to the substantive outcomes of the analysis, the process was a useful internal dialogue tool at the UNCT level to established a shared understanding of the context, and to create foundations for collaborative / coordinated response. This has been an important byproduct of the analysis.	8/18/2015 4:23 PM
15	The Conflict Analysis could also be applied in problem solving by modifying some aspects contained, adapted to the existing problems. Understanding can be achieved due to the use of the method of discussion by taking a sample of some of the case studies.	8/18/2015 8:48 AM
16	People have to be educated and go along with peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding	8/17/2015 11:40 PM
17	That a very thorough CA is absolutely critical to develop credible planning options and determine the best scenario.	8/17/2015 4:44 PM
18	I learnt that a systematic approach to conflict analysis usually yield best results, particularly when the information is relevant, updated and objective	8/17/2015 4:00 PM
19	I did not conduct conflict analysis	8/17/2015 1:53 PM
20	we have learnt many things , such as good coordination , communication skill and others	8/17/2015 1:52 PM
21	A lot and I took away with me that it is a challenging exercise but critical	8/17/2015 1:26 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

22	Things are always dainamic and changes need to be adopted in order to harmonize the work in our organization.	8/17/2015 1:07 PM
23	N/A	8/17/2015 12:31 PM
24	Never done it	8/17/2015 11:52 AM
25	N/A	8/17/2015 11:34 AM
26	development and awareness	8/17/2015 11:16 AM
27	Not Applicable	8/17/2015 11:06 AM
28	To triangulate information and using proxy indicators for validating the information provided.	8/17/2015 10:52 AM
29	Not easy... :)	7/25/2015 3:38 PM
30	Not applicable	7/22/2015 5:25 AM
31	The value of going to the field, to trace - village hamlet to the next - the spread of conflict and seek to understand the drivers. Team work can enable broad reach and pioneering research.	7/21/2015 5:49 PM
32	To clarify the stakeholders, and to explore power relations and possible impacts / consequences for prevention, etc.	7/21/2015 2:45 PM
33	Political, Social and economic differences can easily be resolved by understanding the core root cause of the conflict.	7/20/2015 6:08 PM
34	It could provide more authentic data, if we cross check outcomes between PRA and RRA.	7/20/2015 2:58 PM
35	It appears almost impossible to identify all the potential scenarios, but rather a range of possibilities.	7/5/2015 6:31 AM
36	N/A I really wish I can form part of the analysis team.	7/1/2015 3:40 PM
37	Very Important to realize the kind of connections and players in the conflicts.	6/27/2015 5:17 PM
38	Getting buy-in and reaching a consensus on these issues with all stakeholders involved was critical.	6/26/2015 12:15 PM
39	It is a dynamic and painstaking exercise that requires constant updates	6/25/2015 6:57 PM
40	Conflicts are being driven and financed by natural resources in Afghanistan, these are a symptom of the incompetence of the international community and its articulation/advocacy for a dysfunctional model of governance being applied in Afghanistan.	6/24/2015 7:31 AM
41	That the cultural aspect is more that important to take into account	6/23/2015 3:09 PM
42	Who is who in the conflict and what do they want	6/22/2015 7:20 PM
43	Sensitivity for programming	6/22/2015 4:05 PM
44	An excellente way to draft workplan allowing staff to understand more their job: where and why they have to do what; Whom they need to deal/cooperate	6/22/2015 10:48 AM
45	I learn't that it is not easy to bring two conflicting parties to one immediately it needs time.	6/22/2015 9:54 AM
46	It is a very difficult and mind boggling process to get through, on the other hand it creates ermyly.	6/22/2015 8:02 AM
47	You can use more than one tool to anylase a conflict.some tools are good at anylasing conflict at the beginnining of it like conficlt mapping. so you have to llok at waht stage of the congflcct you intend to anylase and come up with the best tool .	6/21/2015 11:18 AM
48	Somaliiland has potential and underlying conflicts ranging from resources related-water,pasture, land and oil as well as underlying and volatle religious conflicts with different schools of Islamic Thought preparing for a future open war over domination of the citizens. On the other hand the government is totally unprepared with no strong peacebuilding infrastructure, NO CONFLICT PREVENTIONMECHANISMS as well as containment of conflict. There is an urgent need to conduct a religious radicalization survey to alert both government and international community to pr-empt sectoral violence in the coming years.	6/20/2015 11:15 AM
49	Much about the invisible alliances, recent political history, and other such undercurrents. Also a lot about the comparative advantage of the UN in addressing some of them, which can be integrated in programming. But to be effective this requires continued UN system- wide sensitization and training in the use of the tools.	6/19/2015 12:37 PM
50	The importance of causal factors and the need to address these in development programming	6/19/2015 4:44 AM
51	-	6/18/2015 7:01 PM
52	Factual information is needed to make an objective analysis.	6/18/2015 1:02 PM
53	Understand a deepen understanding of conflict dynamic. Feed strategies and sectoral plan	6/18/2015 1:13 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

54	The difficulties faced while analyzing a complex conflict with too many actors involved	6/17/2015 6:24 PM
55	The implementation of the findings of the conflict analysis is the sticking point. The ability to question oneself. It is always easy to advise other actors in conflict resolution but as a advisor in this subject it is very important to question yourself when your trapped in a conflict.	6/17/2015 5:31 PM
56	...	6/17/2015 4:55 PM
57	None	6/17/2015 4:39 PM
58	It is a very useful methodology to analyze the key issues related to the conflict, allow to have a complete view of the problems and to propose different scenarios in which the work of our agency can have greater impact.	6/17/2015 3:48 PM
59	To more clearly distinguish between root causes and manifestations and to have a more structured approach to e.g. approaching various stakeholder interests and motives.	6/17/2015 3:32 PM
60	understand conflict dynamics	6/17/2015 2:42 PM
61	Combination of multiple methods gives the best results.	6/17/2015 2:38 PM
62	Risk prevalence is significantly widespread than previously understood. There is need for a more elaborate analysis to come up with a comprehensively HIV risk analysis to inform legislation and resource mobilisation to incorporate HIV and AIDS issues at all levels of peace and security processes	6/17/2015 2:11 PM
63	NA	6/17/2015 1:58 PM
64	Well I have learned that it is merely impossible to eliminate conflict and that shall remain as utopia. Unless we sort out basic difference about religion and some of the country's will to dominate others. The way UN is structured and presently functioning basing on five veto powers, this can never be used as a impartial platform to conflict resolution.	6/17/2015 1:33 PM
65	Not conducted	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
66	In mapping out the actors we were able to see who is involved in the conflict and why and it also gave us a bit of perspective the reason behind why the conflict was aggravated and the background to it too	6/17/2015 1:06 PM
67	• Application of variety of tools increases input from sources if they are integrated (e.g. workshop), deepens understanding and improves acceptance (buy-in, ownership) • Theories of change are not applied sufficiently • Critical thinking (questioning of own biases) is not very appreciated	6/17/2015 12:57 PM
68	There should be gender awareness campaigns among the actors before conducting such an study.	6/17/2015 12:15 PM
69	consultation and engagement of stakeholders is the key.	6/17/2015 11:54 AM
70	strong support from community in having contribution to their safety and security and assisting the government as well as focusing on demand driven need training for the police.	6/17/2015 11:46 AM
71	It is time consuming	6/17/2015 11:30 AM
72	People open up in small group work and can utter sentences like "I can't believe that is what you are thinking" if they are surprised of specific assessments of colleagues. I like to combine conflict analysis with process mapping to try to identify possible entry points for interventions with specific actors.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
73	all stake holders are not part of the peace process observers of peace building process do not have knowledge of peace building concept, even the UN itself.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
74	n/a	6/17/2015 11:13 AM
75	"Quick and dirty" is of considerably more practical value than "precise but slow". Consultation is a double-edged sword: inclusive process definitely makes the final product more wisely accepted, but can slow the process sufficiently to make the ifnal product too late and of diminished relevance.	6/17/2015 11:12 AM
76	Critical before any programming in post-conflict setting	6/17/2015 11:07 AM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

Q15 In your opinion, what are the main limitations of conflict analysis?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	the main limitations of conflict analysis are: 1. these limitations is an effort to challenge the causes of conflict rather than working in, or around them. 2. Commitment to liberal role. 3. Difficulties posed through its assumption of neutrality.	9/4/2015 9:17 PM
2	It is a "specialised" field, while everyone involved in any way in a peace and security situation should receive a briefing on the process and the outcomes, and be involved as much as possible.	8/31/2015 12:28 PM
3	So, I could not answer these questions because I do not work with conflict analysis. But I have made the course "Conflict Analysis for Prevention and Peacebuilding" at UNSSC because I really want to work with that subject some day, and I hope so that I could work at UN.	8/28/2015 7:33 PM
4	There are organizational limitations. The issues that come through your analysis cannot be shared publicly (in some instances) because of the sensitivities.	8/27/2015 6:50 AM
5	Political sensitivity	8/25/2015 11:32 AM
6	The role, mandate and power of organization, the weather of political situation	8/24/2015 6:52 AM
7	n/a	8/21/2015 12:17 AM
8	Political will to enable allocation of required resources. Conflict analysis is time consuming and required dedication to the process. A honest and impartial analysis is imperative however this is usually influenced by views of the different actors.	8/20/2015 2:03 PM
9	Multiple tools are needed to be employed to understand the conflict comprehensively, but at the same time, once we use multiple tools the conflict analysis get too complicated.	8/20/2015 11:08 AM
10	no idea	8/19/2015 3:34 PM
11	Time and having to use specific format. In reality, this is not usually the case	8/19/2015 3:05 PM
12	- The tools should be more practical than theoretical - The model should be adapted to the local context - There should be connection between analysis and strategic planning - There should be local ownership: conflict analysis should be promoted by local actors - Conflict analysis should be not only the field of some expert, but it has to be included as a tool for all directors and top managers of an agencies	8/19/2015 2:55 PM
13	Insecurity and limited information.	8/19/2015 12:05 PM
14	The main limitations lie in translating the analysis meaningfully into application - basing strategic / programmatic / etc. responses on the specific outcomes of the analysis. Integration between undertaking and applying analysis requires emphasis in all cases.	8/18/2015 4:23 PM
15	- Situation - Condition - Culture	8/18/2015 8:48 AM
16	Political interventions	8/17/2015 11:40 PM
17	CA cannot be done properly within one to two weeks - we need a greater amount of time	8/17/2015 4:44 PM
18	I believe that some of the limitations is that it remains with whoever makes the analysis and it is usually not shared with the main stakeholders for feedback. That could be useful in order provide in-depth insights into the analysis and adjust it accordingly, obtain buy-in and design a more comprehensive strategy	8/17/2015 4:00 PM
19	I did not conduct conflict analysis	8/17/2015 1:53 PM
20	the main limitations is political and economic situation of the country	8/17/2015 1:52 PM
21	The political framework and time. How far should one go back in time, and how long time should one use? Furthermore should it be conducted based on perceptions or a more thorough research or both. We had many different discussions about this.	8/17/2015 1:26 PM
22	one of the main limitation is how far such analyses is connected with the reality and can be translated into action plan for change.	8/17/2015 1:07 PM
23	N/A	8/17/2015 12:31 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

24	No idea	8/17/2015 11:52 AM
25	Broader nature of conflict	8/17/2015 11:34 AM
26	lack of proper academic and field tested tools and methods	8/17/2015 11:16 AM
27	Not Applicable	8/17/2015 11:06 AM
28	It does not answer what is next.	8/17/2015 10:52 AM
29	The process makes it static, while in fact conflict situations are very dynamic. There is simply no resources to update/capture conflict dynamics, triggers, flashpoints in a timely manner. This is true in the 'Sudans' (particularly South Sudan, Darfur) and Somalia. Perhaps less so in the case of Abyei, where quarterly updates would suffice.	7/25/2015 3:38 PM
30	I did not have the opportunity to get engage in such analysis process.	7/22/2015 5:25 AM
31	One thing that has come up a lot is how to strengthen the link between conflict analysis and intervention. How do we go from analysing the context (on paper) to implementing interventions. In addition to the course, may also require practical planning tools, and guidance on most common activities, such as planning for and managing a dialogue process for example.	7/21/2015 5:49 PM
32	Participates with a broad range of perspectives; Security and accessibility; Physical set-up of a space which may affect power relations, Following-up with participants; Capacity of facilitators; Other issues / unexpected issues which may come up.	7/21/2015 2:45 PM
33	- sectarianism, power monopoly and ideological differences.	7/20/2015 6:08 PM
34	Communication with the different foreign rebel groups was main limitation for conduct conflict analysis. Because we have Rwandan, Burundian, Ugandan, Angola, South Sudan, Kenyan, Tanzanian and Central foreign armed group. They have different language. It was very difficult to find out instant interpreter.	7/20/2015 2:58 PM
35	It would be difficult to anticipate a scenario that would happen in the country or region for the first time.	7/5/2015 6:31 AM
36	Curently I wouldn't be in a good position to know the shortcomings hence I last practised during the course in December.	7/1/2015 3:40 PM
37	Political sensibility, safety and security concerns/issues!	6/27/2015 5:17 PM
38	The sensitivities linked to each context makes it difficult to either outline or deal with all the underlying issues. The outcomes of a conflict analysis can be very political / contentious, and need to be managed carefully.	6/26/2015 12:15 PM
39	difficulty to gather relevant information for the analysis, the sensitive nature of the analysis and mindset among organization's staff with an opinion that may reject anything that does not match their understanding of the situation	6/25/2015 6:57 PM
40	Lessons are not learnt and policy is not informed by Afghanistan conflict analysis. The political economy of external military intervention, civilian aid and political dynamics are driven and financed by incredibly short-term calculations. These do not ask let alone answer the very simple question: what does work in Afghanistan?	6/24/2015 7:31 AM
41	Sometimes to have all information for an optimal analysis for the next step i.e. the resolution process.	6/23/2015 3:09 PM
42	Not so much a limitation of conflict analysis but its implementation - the limitation is the lack of incorporating/integrating the analysis with other mission analysis, reports, plans etc	6/22/2015 7:20 PM
43	lack of first hand information	6/22/2015 4:05 PM
44	Lack of time, local/stakeholders involvement.	6/22/2015 10:48 AM
45	poor response from respondents, lack of accessibility to remote areas, language barrier, hostile tribes, etc	6/22/2015 9:54 AM
46	- Taking a longer period to analyse the conflict and get a permanent solution to it. - Needing a longer time to study the case in place before reaching final settlement.	6/22/2015 8:02 AM
47	Choosing the best tool to analyse a conflict and many times conflict analysis may not lead to an objective understanding of the conflict	6/21/2015 11:18 AM
48	Inadequate resources both funding and expertize as well as having appropriate tools.Lack of Cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders both public and non public and some time lack of political commitment.	6/20/2015 11:15 AM
49	Lack of system-wide acceptance as an integral dimension of situational analysis for programming. Should be part of the CCA for UNDAFs. To be good it needs to be discreet. To be effective it needs to be widely understood; the two are somewhat contradictory.	6/19/2015 12:37 PM
50	UN internal politics, lack of funding, government buy-in, existing sources even when outdated	6/19/2015 4:44 AM
51	it can be subjective or the stakeholders taking part in the process of conflict analysis take side	6/18/2015 7:01 PM

RESULTS OF THE FIELD SURVEY

52	It's not always possible to cover every aspect of the conflict of an incident. In the absence of good background of the incident, the analysis might be misleading.	6/18/2015 1:02 PM
53	Dynamic features and changing context	6/18/2015 1:13 AM
54	The gathering of credible informations, security environment	6/17/2015 6:24 PM
55	Always the same tools in conflict analysis. When I took the UNSSC Peace & Security course in 2013, I expected to learn new analysis tools but I learnt same one like if have learnt in the past. Other limitation is the lack of tools/ methodologies how to implement the findings of the conflict analysis. Would be very interesting to learn new ways of doing a conflict analysis, new methodologies, new ways of thinking in conflict resolution and more creative ways how to transform conflicts!!!!	6/17/2015 5:31 PM
56	If you limit yourself to one conflict analysis tool, you might miss out on vital information which would be more clear with the use of other tools.	6/17/2015 4:55 PM
57	N?A	6/17/2015 4:39 PM
58	It is necessary to develop capacities to include gender perspective and women rights in this context. It is known the women are the main victims precisely because of gender roles. The Resolution 1329 of United Nations Assembly should be included in the courses.	6/17/2015 3:48 PM
59	See number 13	6/17/2015 3:32 PM
60	political sensitivity	6/17/2015 2:42 PM
61	It is hard to verify whether the data is accurate especially as the conflict analysis is often done under time pressure. Also international staff has limited access to data (language, lack of trust, willingness of informants to mislead or play political games).	6/17/2015 2:38 PM
62	Time and representativeness of information sources was limited to only internal	6/17/2015 2:11 PM
63	NA	6/17/2015 1:58 PM
64	We have to do the analysis taking certain factors (role of international and regional actors) either grunted or limited by a bigger periphery where root cause can't be addressed, thereby putting us inside a BOX. Being inside a BOX you just cant solve problems which is initiated outside the box - you may play a reactive role which shall never bring a enduring solution.	6/17/2015 1:33 PM
65	In areas where freedom of expression might serve as a challenge to personal security, first hand information cannot be obtained. In addition to that, conservatism may be a big problem or barrier.	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
66	As some situation might not be easy to forecast setting scenario were very helpful	6/17/2015 1:06 PM
67	• Resource-intensity • Conflict analysis is sexy but without proper analysis of client (needs/capabilities/weaknesses etc.) the analysis won't contribute much to change	6/17/2015 12:57 PM
68	I can't see any.	6/17/2015 12:15 PM
69	conflict analysis does not solve the conflict - it is just the first step.	6/17/2015 11:54 AM
70	While people at the community level gives reference to the religion or the wrong interpretation of the religion that supports conflict and causing the illiterate societies to listen to them and obey.	6/17/2015 11:46 AM
71	it has to be updated continuously	6/17/2015 11:30 AM
72	It's a bit of an elite activity to do which does not always seem relevant to people.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
73	not able to implemented as per recommendations.	6/17/2015 11:27 AM
74	n/a	6/17/2015 11:13 AM
75	Diversity of expectations.	6/17/2015 11:12 AM
76	Capacity, fund and time constraints	6/17/2015 11:07 AM



Viale Maestri del Lavoro, 10
10127 Turin, Italy

tel +39 011 65 35 911
fax +39 011 65 35 901

info@unssc.org
www.unssc.org

[@UNSSC](https://twitter.com/UNSSC)
[fb.com/UNSSC](https://www.facebook.com/UNSSC)

Based in Turin, Italy, the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) is the primary provider of inter-agency training and learning for staff of the United Nations system. Its overall objective is to promote and support UN inter-agency collaboration, increase the operational effectiveness of the UN system as a whole and provide UN staff with the required skills and competencies to face today's global challenges.

UNSSC conducts a variety of learning and training activities, in Turin, UN Headquarters as well as at the regional and country levels. All such activities effectively respond to the cross-agency, far-reaching reform agenda of the United Nations.