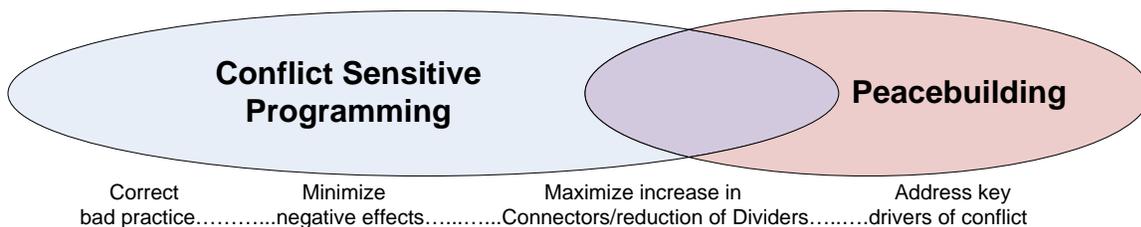**DNH Guidance Note: Peacebuilding and DNH**
September 2011

I.   Introduction

Do No Harm was originally focused on the experience of development and emergency relief workers *in* contexts of conflict. The DNH Framework was developed as a *conflict-sensitivity* tool, not a *peacebuilding* tool. For years, the DNH Project explicitly emphasized DNH as a conflict-sensitivity tool and that DNH was not meant as a tool for direct conflict resolution. However, people will always use tools in their own ways to accomplish their needs.

DNH users went ahead and applied DNH towards peacebuilding anyway...and with success!

Programs of any sort that actively, or even aggressively, seek to reduce dividers and promote connectors can become peacebuilding programs *in effect*. At its most active application, therefore, DNH overlaps with peacebuilding.

Correct   Minimize   Maximize increase in   Address key
bad practice………...negative effects…...…...Connectors/reduction of Dividers…..…..drivers of conflict

Key Issue regarding Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding requires a thorough analysis of driving factors and a robust strategy that addresses these factors directly. It is important to note that there is a difference between dividers/connectors and driving factors of conflict/peace. Supporting connectors and reducing dividers is not necessarily the same as dealing with the driving factors. In other words, not all connectors and dividers are made equal—some will be more relevant for peacebuilding because they will be more connected to drivers of conflict and peace. The more directly and actively programs work to reduce dividers and strengthen and broaden connectors, the more the program shades into peacebuilding. But in order to be effective peacebuilding work, the focus should be connected to key drivers.

Key Issues regarding Peacebuilding and DNH

First, all programs—of any type or focus—must be conflict sensitive, including peacebuilding programs. Peacebuilding programs can and do violate conflict sensitivity principles! Keep the following guidelines in mind when applying DNH to your peacebuilding program.

- Peacebuilding efforts themselves must be conflict-sensitive. Do not assume your approach is conflict-sensitive. Do a DNH analysis of the peacebuilding programme.
- Dividers and Connectors Analysis is a good way to start analyzing a context.
- If peace is your goal, Connectors are important and *must* be supported. But not all connectors are key for peace writ large; some connectors relate to and can influence key driving factors of conflict and peace more than others.

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- People are not Dividers or Connectors. Their actions and behavior affect Dividers and Connectors (example: A politician is not a divider, but he or she can increase existing divisions by favoring one group over another).
- For more information, see *"DNH Guidance Note: Using Dividers and Connectors".*[1]

II.   Applying DNH to Peacebuilding Efforts

1. Assume that the context is dynamic.
2. Examine the context through a dividers and connectors lens.
3. Analyze dividers and connectors regularly. We have seen daily analysis used to good effect. Analysis should be done at least weekly in informal ways.
4. Look hard for opportunities to apply DNH.
5. Do not try to create connectors! Instead, build on existing connectors in the context.

For more information on these five points, read "DNH and Peacebuilding: Five Lessons." [2]

III.   Using DNH in Peacebuilding Programming

DNH has been used by peacebuilders in the following ways:
- As an initial conflict-analysis tool
- For conflict-mapping and identifying stakeholders
- As an early warning system by tracking how Dividers are trending
- For identifying areas of shared interest and concern
- To transform mindsets, bringing people to a place where they form and improve relationships with "the other"
- As a tool for focusing constructive dialogue around shared problems
- To help motivate people to work on peacebuilding themselves
- To assist organizations with their strategic positioning in relation to conflicting parties, in order to establish credibility and relationships (which can support a subsequent expansion into peacebuilding)

Four Misconceptions and Assumptions about Peacebuilding and Conflict-Sensitivity

The following beliefs or assumptions are simply not true:
1. Conflict-sensitive humanitarian assistance will help bring peace.
2. Peacebuilding equals conflict-sensitive development.
3. Development will promote conflict prevention.
4. Peacebuilding is conflict sensitive by definition.

These assumptions are not confirmed by evidence from the field. Although specific programs or projects may well succeed, their success is always based on better analysis and better practice, not their assumptions.

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[1] "DNH Guidance Note: Using Dividers and Connectors" (May 2010)
http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/issue/dnh_dividers_and_connectors_Pdf.pdf
[2] "DNH and Peacebuilding: Five Lessons" (Oct 2009)
http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/issue/dnh_and_peacebuilding_five_lessons_Pdf.pdf

The distinction between conflict sensitive practice and peacebuilding matters, because the lack of clarity and prevailing confusion are now weakening many programs. People are uncertain about why their peace efforts are failing. All too often, one reason is that they are working on false assumptions about conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding or both.

For more information, read *"A Distinction with a Difference: Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding".*[3]

Further Cautions

- DNH applied in a peacebuilding context does not usually address underlying causes of conflict, but it has proven effective in identifying them.
- DNH has not been used as a stand-alone peacebuilding program. DNH has the potential to support or reinforce other tools, models, and techniques used in the peacebuilding field; it is best used in conjunction with tools specifically designed for peacebuilding.[4]
- Repeated exposure to DNH is needed. This is especially important for peacebuilding applications!
- DNH does not offer a framework of *how* to discuss issues that may arise. People may not be comfortable discussing the conflicts around them immediately. An organization may need to do groundwork to increase peoples' confidence and capacity in discussing conflict issues before using DNH to help analyze a context.

Key Questions

If you are using DNH as a peacebuilding tool, ask yourself these questions:
1. Are you working *in* conflict or working *on* conflict?
2. How often are you analyzing the context?
3. Have you identified existing Connectors?
4. If you are supporting Connectors, are you also reinforcing the current "rules-of-the-game"/conflict status quo?
5. Have you identified Connectors that both deepen *and* broaden the quality of interaction between people?
6. How can a Connector you have identified become a force or key driving factor for peace? What kind of support does it need to blossom into this role?
7. Have you identified key driving factors of the conflict? How are they driving Dividers?
8. Are you specifically addressing a key driving factor or factors?
9. Does addressing a particular Divider have an effect on a key driving factor of the conflict? (This is not to say that you shouldn't work on that Divider! Dividers are dangerous and may promote violence. It may be, however, that working on the Divider is not ultimately related to peace.)

Possible Techniques
1. One way of thinking about conflict is as a problem shared by the parties in conflict. Engaging them in analyzing their joint problem using DNH has the potential to refocus their attention

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[3] "A Distinction with a Difference: Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding," Diana Chigas and Peter Woodrow, 2009
http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/article/RPP_Differentiating_Conflict_Sensitivity_and_Peacebuilding.pdf
[4] See the Reflecting on Peace Practice book, *Confronting War (2003), and RPP training manual* (2010) for an in depth explanation of the RPP peacebuilding approach. Both are available on the CDA website
http://www.cdainc.com

away from one another and instead to confront the shared problem together and with a new and shared perspective.

2. Use DNH to identify stakeholders. Who is in conflict? Then use DNH to identify behavior between those groups that contributes to conflict and generate options/alternatives to that behavior.

3. Use DNH to identify Connectors. If peace is your goal, then Connectors must be supported and they cannot be undermined. If you fail to identify them, you will very likely have a negative impact on them.

4. Use DNH with communities. DNH can help develop local ownership of a problem *and* local ownership of its solutions.

> "When local actors take their own initiatives to resist violence or address conflict, that constitutes a contribution to Peace Writ Large, as it reflects local ownership and initiative for peace. In this way, the use of Do No Harm conflict sensitivity frameworks can have greater impacts on Peace Writ Large than their use by international agencies or outsiders."
> —Diana Chigas and Peter Woodrow, *"A Distinction with a Difference: Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding"*.

Definition of "peacebuilding" in this guidance note

The term "peacebuilding" has been broadly used by many groups. In the context of this guidance note, we use peacebuilding to describe interventions taken specifically to mitigate conflicts between individuals and groups. Other frequently used words with a similar meaning include: conflict resolution, conflict management, conflict transformation, and peacemaking. These types of interventions can take a variety of forms (including mediation, arbitration, negotiation, transformative dialogues, facilitated conversations, and directed efforts to address underlying causes). They can occur at several levels ranging from the interpersonal all the way to the international. Recognizing the diversity and nuances of the field, this guidance note will refer to the work within this sphere simply as "peacebuilding."