



FRAMEWORK FOR CONFLICT-SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING IN IRAQ

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List of Abbreviations

ACT	Act to End Violence Against Women
AMS	Association of Muslim Scholars
BPI	Baghdad Peace Initiative
BWI	Bosnian Women's Initiative
CARE	Centre for Applied Research in Education
CDA	The Collaborative for Development Action
CIE	Centre for International Education
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
CMM	Conflict Management and Mitigation (USAID)
CPRN	Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Network
CRC	Constitutional Review Committee
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSOs	Civil society organizations
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICS	Italian Consortium of Solidarity
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFMC	Inter-Faith Mediation Centre
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCRI	Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
LAS	League of Arab States
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
MNF-I	Multi-National Forces in Iraq
NCCI	NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
PACT	Palestinian Adolescents Coping with Trauma
PAL	Pro-Active Leadership
PCDCR	Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution
PCIA	Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
QIPs	Quick Impact Projects
RPP	Reflecting on Peace Practice Project
SCG	Search for Common Ground
SIIC	Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TDS – SL	Talking Drum Studio – Sierra Leone
UIA	United Iraqi Alliance
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

UNAMI HRO	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Office
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIP	United States Institute for Peace
VAW	Violence Against Women
YP	Youth Project

Definitions of Terms

Arbitration	Formal deliberation with binding results for contending parties.
Coexistence	Living peacefully with other nations, religions, etc., despite fundamental disagreements.
Conflict	Refers to a perceived divergence of interests among parties. ¹
Conflict Management	<p>Divided into three approaches in this paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflict management encompasses conflict settlement. It refers to all outcome-oriented strategies for achieving sustainable, mutually acceptable solutions and/or the cessation of “direct violence”, without necessarily addressing the underlying causes of conflict;• Conflict resolution refers to all process-oriented activities that aim to address the underlying causes of direct and structural violence;• Conflict transformation refers to the outcomes, processes and structure-orientated long-term peace building efforts that aim to truly overcome forms of direct, structural and cultural violence.
Cultural violence	Refers to the social legitimatisation of direct and/or structural violence employed against a particular group or groups.
Direct violence	Refers to instances of open hostility causing bodily and/or structural damage.
Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)	Physical removal of weapons, disbanding of armed groups and reintegrating former combatants into society.
“Do no harm” Imperative	Promoting greater awareness of potential negative violent repercussions which may occur due to the implementation

¹ J.Z. Rubin and D.G. Pruitt, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement*, Random House, New York, 1986, p. 201.

of certain types of humanitarian or development assistance, the contribution of aid agencies to these repercussions and methods which can be used to in aid agency programming to anticipate and minimize such repercussions in advance.

Good Offices	Beneficial acts.
Intractable	Refers to the condition of conflict wherein the “ <i>conflict has persisted over time and refused to yield to efforts - through either direct negotiations by the parties or mediation with third party assistance - to arrive at a political settlement.</i> ” ² Factors that contribute to intractability are: protracted time, identity degradation, conflict profitability, absence of appropriate timing and polarisation. ³
Mediation	Deliberation between conflicting parties intended to bring about reconciliation or agreement.
Peace Capacity	Refers to the existing conflict settlement/resolution mechanisms in a community which constitute an existing ability to resolve disagreements in a culturally and contextually appropriate manner. Leveraging local peace capacities may contribute to more sustainable solutions.
Reflecting on Peace Practice Project (RPP)	The Collaborative for Development Action, Inc.’s analysis of agencies working to prevent or mitigate violent conflict intended to improve their effectiveness.
Structural violence	Refers to economic and political structures which contribute to injustice and/or the continuation of poverty.
Third party	Refers to persons or organizations that are not direct participants in the conflict.

² Fen Crocker, Osler Hampson and Pamela Bell, *Grasping the Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractable Conflict*, USIP, Washington DC, 2005, p. 6.

³ Ibidem, p. 48.

Introduction

One of the basic underlying assumptions of conflict transformation theory is that conflict is an inherent part of development and social change, which has the potential for both constructive and destructive outcomes. Years of experience and research around the world have shown that humanitarian and other aid interventions can exert a positive impact on conflict by a) strengthening mechanisms and resources for managing or resolving differences and b) addressing factors which are causing tension within a given community (i.e., tension which could lead to or is already resulting in violence). However, such initiatives can also produce side-effects, which may negatively impact on conflict dynamics when implemented with insufficient consideration of the context, for instance, deep-seated, pre-existing cleavages within societies. Consequently, such aid initiatives may actually exacerbate inter- or intra-group tensions.

To mitigate this risk, NGOs and UN agencies funding or implementing programmes/projects in Iraq should recognise the importance of conducting aid initiatives with conflict sensitivity. First, conflict sensitivity requires making an explicit effort to gain an understanding of the unique context and conflict dynamics in the target area. Second, the relationship between causes of conflict and programmes/projects in that same area need to be identified and analyzed in order to understand how these factors interact with each other. As such, conflict sensitivity calls for a concerted effort to ensure that humanitarian and development initiatives maximize positive impacts on the amelioration of conflict whilst also “doing no harm”.

Whether working specifically *ON* conflict (i.e., to address conflict issues) or *IN* conflict (i.e., applying a conflict sensitive lens to ensure that programming does not have a negative impact on the conflict at hand), assistance and relief actors have a significant role to play in supporting conflict management. Analysis, design, implementation and monitoring of projects addressing conflicts relating to gender relations, respect for human rights and the environment should consider the situation in the target community and its surroundings.

The violent and destructive forms of conflict in Iraq have many underlying causes. This paper aims to provide an overview of the underlying causes of conflict in Iraq. It also suggests a set of guidelines to the international humanitarian and development community to effectively include conflict management activities in future interventions. Whilst recognizing that humanitarian reconstruction and development activity cannot by itself create peace or avert violent conflict, this paper advocates that conflict management initiatives should be incorporated as a mainstream, fundamental component of funded programmes. As such, this paper calls on donors to increase funding for such initiatives.

Additionally, this paper offers support to organizations by providing a basic survey of both successful and unsuccessful activities undertaken at different stages of conflict escalation. This can be viewed as a helpful guide or framework for what could potentially be replicated in Iraq, where conflicts are numerous and exist at different levels, with various actors, stages and intensity. Donors are encouraged to explore the various

manners in which conflict management activities could be integrated into humanitarian and development programming, provided additional resources are made available.

Finally, this paper urges consideration of conflict and contextual analysis in the design of all projects. It stresses the importance of tracking and responding to conflict sensitive indicators throughout the planning and implementation phases (as part of the monitoring plan), since conflicts evolve and are often subject to rapid change. Donors should thus add flexibility to project agreements and encourage analysis of developments during implementation and subsequent modifications to maximize the effectiveness of future programmes.

I. Background to the conflicts in Iraq

1. What Constitutes Conflict in Iraq?

Iraq has possibly one of the worst records of violence in today's world. According to data provided by the Iraqi Ministry of Health, a total of 34,453 civilians were killed and 36,685 wounded in 2006 only.⁴ There are indications that acts of violence and number of civilian casualties have dropped in the later part of 2007.⁵ Nevertheless, the level of violence and its impact on the civilian population continues to be of grave concern.

Violence in Iraq is multifaceted and operates on a variety of levels including: insurgency and terrorism; armed groups perpetrating acts of violence for political or sectarian reasons; organized crime; counter-insurgency and military operations by Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Multi-National Forces in Iraq (MNF-I); and intra-sectarian (Shi'ite against Shi'ite and Sunni against Sunni) and tribal violence. The ISF continue to face serious challenges in maintaining law and order.⁶

Reports are suggesting that cases of domestic violence, including "honour killings", are on the rise in Iraq.⁷ Data are available concerning the situation in the Region of Kurdistan.⁸ According to the Kurdistan Regional Government's Ministry of Human Rights, incidents involving violence against women in the Kurdistan Region had increased by 18% in the first five months of 2007.⁹ In November 2007, the Head of Basrah Police

⁴ UNAMI HRO, *Human Rights Report, 1 November–31 December 2006*, pp. 2, 4, <http://www.uniraq.org/FileLib/misc/HR%20Report%20Nov%20Dec%202006%20EN.pdf> (further: UNAMI HRO, *December 2006 Human Rights Report*); see also Iraq Body Count, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/> and Gilbert Burnham, Riyadh Lafta, Shannon Doocy, Les Roberts, *Mortality after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: a cross-sectional cluster sample survey*, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD, USA and School of Medicine, Al Mustansiriya University, Baghdad, Iraq, published in *The Lancet*, 11 October 2006, www.thelancet.com/webfiles/images/journals/lancet/s0140673606694919.pdf.

⁵ UNHCR, *Addendum to UNHCR's Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Iraqi Asylum Seekers*, Casualty Statistics, pp. 27-29, December 2007, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=4766a69d2> (further: UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*).

⁶ Ibidem, Executive Summary.

⁷ UNHCR, *Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Iraqi Asylum-seekers*, August 2007, pp. 120-124, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=46deb05557> (further: UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*); IRIN, *IRAQ: Domestic violence against children on the rise*, 24 May 2007, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=72350>.

⁸ See UNHCR's Governorate Assessment Reports for Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk, September 2007, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/iraq?page=governorate>.

⁹ UNAMI HRO, *Human Rights Report, 1 April - 30 June 2007*, para. 38, p. 14, <http://www.uniraq.org/FileLib/misc/HR%20Report%20Apr%20Jun%202007%20EN.pdf> (further: UNAMI HRO, *June 2007 Human Rights Report*).

denounced a steep increase in violence against women during 2007 in the second-largest Iraqi city.¹⁰

The use of torture and violations of minimum standards of due process have been consistently reported by UNAMI HRO.¹¹ All sides to the conflict have been implicated in serious violations of the laws of war, including war crimes (e.g., the killing of civilians, the killing of incapacitated Iraqi combatants, the use of torture or other forms of inhumane, humiliating or degrading treatment, the deliberate targeting of civilian areas such as schools or hospitals and the abduction and execution of civilians).¹²

The intensity and type of conflict varies significantly across the different regions of Iraq. For instance, Sunni insurgent violence is less common in the South given the area's more homogenous population of mostly Arab Shi'ite Muslims. Here, the more prevalent types of violence include, intra-Shi'ite fighting; violence against women; violence associated with organized crime; tribal violence; and sectarian attacks on Sunnis and other religious minorities. Although the civilian populations of Basrah, Baghdad and Baquba may be similarly affected by violence as a whole, the root causes of this violence are derived from different sources.¹³ Accordingly, the activities intended to address this violence may be significantly different for each location.

a. Sectarian violence

Sectarian violence has escalated after the attack on the Al-Askari shrine in Samarra in February 2006, killing many and displacing nearly 1.2 million people.¹⁴ In addition, UNHCR estimates that there are more than two million persons displaced outside of Iraq, mainly in neighbouring countries. Displacement occurs as a result of violence targeting members of the opposite sect, including attacks on civilian targets such as places of worship, schools, markets and bus stations as well as death threats, abductions or the murder of individuals. In recent months, sectarian killings have dropped due to a number of factors, however, fears remain that violence could flare up again.¹⁵ The schism between Sunnis and Shi'ites is also a result of the politics of the former regimes and has been exacerbated by post-2003 emphasis on religious and ethnic identities.¹⁶

¹⁰ <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=75396>, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7095209.stm, and Al-Jazeera English video report available on: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gj3W-wHYBKA>.

¹¹ UNAMI HRO stated that “*continuing reports of the torture and ill-treatment of detainees held in particular at pre-trial detention facilities under the authority of the Ministry of Interior in Baghdad*” remain a major concern; *ibidem*, p. 23.

¹² Robert Perito, *Reforming the Iraqi Interior Ministry, Police, and Facilities Protection Service*, USIP, February 2007, http://www.usip.org/pubs/usipeace_briefings/2007/0207_iraqi_interior_ministry.html; see also UNHCR, *Country of Origin Information Iraq*, October 2005, pp. 144, 146-148, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=435637914> (further: UNHCR, 2005 *Iraq Report*).

¹³ For an overview of the security situation in various areas of Iraq, please see UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to the Eligibility Guidelines*, see above footnote 6.

¹⁴ See Cluster F, *Update on Internally Displaced Persons*, 21 November 2007.

¹⁵ UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, p. 19, see above footnote 6.

¹⁶ See *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 47, see above footnote 7

b. Violence targeting minorities

Ethnic and religious minorities have continuously reported extreme acts of violence and discrimination on the basis of (perceived) political and religious views; suppression of freedom of expression and religion; and violations of the right to freedom of movement by various armed groups.¹⁷ Media and human rights reports frequently report on attacks against minority communities such as Christians, Kurds, Turkmen, Yezidi, Shabaks, Palestinians and Ahwazis.¹⁸ There are also reports on systematic attacks against persons because of their sexual orientation.¹⁹

c. Insurgency and counter-insurgency

Armed conflict between the ISF and the MNF-I on the one hand and Sunni insurgency groups on the other, continues to result in civilian deaths, destruction of property and displacement. The insurgency has taken root among those Sunni tribes who perceive themselves as being politically and economically marginalized after the fall of the former regime.²⁰ Since the end of 2006, a number of Sunni tribes and insurgent groups have turned against Al-Qa'eda in Iraq and its allies and started to fight alongside the MNF-I in what are now known as *Sahwa*, *Awakening Movements*, or *Sons of Iraq*.²¹ This has led to a reduction in violence in several areas of Central Iraq, but has also led to increasing violence among Sunni groups.²²

In their attempt to suppress the insurgency, the MNF-I/ISF have engaged in large-scale military operations, mainly in Baghdad, Al-Anbar, Diyala, Salah Al-Din, Babylon, Ninewa and Kirkuk Governorates. The ISF have engaged in large-scale arrests and detention, attacks on civilian targets and prolonged detention of detainees under inhumane conditions.²³ The same is true for MNF-I/ISF operations targeting unruly

¹⁷ Ibidem, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, p. 45, see above footnote 7; UNAMI HRO, *June 2007 Human Rights Report*, p. 5, see above footnote 9.

¹⁸ UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 57, see above footnote 6; UNAMI HRO, *June 2007 Human Rights Report*, pp. 8, 15, see above footnote 9.

¹⁹ UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 125, see above footnote 6.

²⁰ UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, p. 37, see above footnote 7.

²¹ In early 2007, the US military started to support and train these groups, which it calls “concerned local citizens” or “auxiliary security forces”. It encouraged these “awakening” movements to spread into other Governorates, including Baghdad, Diyala, Salah Al-Din, Ninewa, Kirkuk and Babel [Babylon], where the Sunni insurgency has led a violent campaign against the MNF-I/ISF and Iraqi civilians. Such “concerned citizens” man checkpoints, conduct patrols and provide the MNF-I/ISF with intelligence on insurgent activities, using their local knowledge and contacts. AQI responded to the “awakening” movements by announcing an assassination campaign against leaders of Sunni tribal and insurgent groups, as well as civilians cooperating with them or criticizing AQI. It said it had formed “*special security committees*” to “*assassinate the tribal figures, the traitors, who stained the reputations of the real tribes by submitting to the soldiers of the Crusade.*” It also posted a list of names of tribal leaders on the internet, some with photos. The faces of those killed were crossed out. A significant number of tribal leaders have been assassinated in 2007 by AQI. See, UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 13 and 14.

²² Ibidem, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 14, see above footnote 6.

²³ UNAMI HRO in its last report said that it continued to receive reports of the alleged involvement of ISF in extra-judicial killings in several incidents in Baghdad; UNAMI HRO, *June 2007 Human Rights Report*, pp. 5, 9-10, see above footnote 9.

members of the Mehdi Army (so-called “Special Groups”), e.g. in Sadr City and Diwaniyah Governorate.

d.Organized crime

Fighting over natural resources and corruption affect the Government’s ability to deliver services and undermines government institutions and the rule of law. Criminals have reportedly infiltrated political institutions and parties as well as the ISF.²⁴

e.Domestic violence

Domestic violence in Iraq is inadequately researched, although some women’s NGOs suggest that a high level of family abuse, including “honour killings,” goes unreported throughout the country.²⁵ The ongoing conflicts alongside economic and social destitution further aggravate the vulnerable situation of women and children. Most reports concerning “honour killings” come from the Region of Kurdistan, where political actors, civil society groups and the media started to openly discuss this issue. However, “honour killings” are known to occur throughout the country and are reportedly on the rise.²⁶

2. Causes of Violence

There are a number of reasons why the various conflicts continue to persist in Iraq:

a. Prolonged political vacuum

Ongoing conflict, inter-communal violence and a lack of reconciliation on the political level have prevented the re-establishment of security, reconstruction and the provision of basic services.²⁷ This has created an atmosphere of disillusionment with the political process, discrediting it and most, if not all, of the actors involved. This may also provide a breeding ground for the recruitment of disillusioned, unemployed and marginalized youths into armed groups and criminal organizations.²⁸

²⁴ UNAMI HRO, *June 2007 Human Rights Report*, p. 26, see above footnote 9.

²⁵ UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 121–123, see above footnote 7.

²⁶ UNAMI HRO, *June 2007 Human Rights Report*, p. 14, see above footnote 9; UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 129, see above footnote 7; *ibidem*, *2005 Iraq Report*, p. 139, see above footnote **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

²⁷ Among others, UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 22-23, see above footnote 6; International Crisis Group, various Iraq reports, available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2436&l=1>; Greg Hansen, *Taking Sides or Saving Lives: Existential Choices for the Humanitarian Enterprise in Iraq*, Feinstein International Centre, June 2007, pp. 10-14, [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SJHG-74Q429-Full_Report.pdf/\\$File/Full_Report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SJHG-74Q429-Full_Report.pdf/$File/Full_Report.pdf).

²⁸ The link between unemployment and recruitment into armed groups has been widely documented for other contexts. See, for example, UNIDO, YEN and UNOWA, *Best Practices, Policy Environment, Tools, and Methodologies for Youth Employment in West Africa*, January 2007, p. 19 at http://www.unido.org/file-storage/download/?file_id=61681.

b. Weak law enforcement and justice system

The dissolution of the former Iraqi Army and the extensive De-Ba'athification process left Iraq's institutions deprived of experienced personnel. Recruitment was often inefficient, driven by sectarian motives²⁹ and lacked proper vetting procedures. As a result, state institutions lack the appropriate level of trained expertise, both technically and in terms of human resources management. This is especially problematic with the Iraqi Police, where thousands of policemen are illiterate or possess a criminal background. Further confounding the situation, part of the ISF appears to have been infiltrated by political parties and their militias.³⁰

c. Redress for past injustice

Former members of the dissolved Ba'ath Party and the former regime's security agencies are facing persecution in many parts of the country.³¹ The lack of a visible and transparent transitional justice programme has led some people affected by the human rights violations of the previous regime to "take justice into their own hands."³²

3. "Conflict Promoters"

Several actors involved in the political process continue to practice violence at the same time, thereby acting as both peace and conflict promoters. Many Iraqis tend to blame the "occupation" and the presence of foreign forces for the violence in Iraq, citing extensive use of force as an example of destructive foreign influence on the Iraqi society. The MNF-I has also supported armed some Iraqi groups (i.e., Sahwas) against others in order to improve the security situation in the Centre of Iraq.³³ Similarly, certain militias are on the one hand associated with political parties, while on the other hand they are involved in violence against each other or their opponents.³⁴

²⁹ Bryan Bender and Farah Stockman, *Iraqi forces fail to recruit Sunnis. Concern grows over security units joining sectarian strife*, International Herald Tribune, April 12, 2006, available at <http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/04/12/news/sunnis.php> and Edward Wong and Sabrina Tavernise, *Sectarian Bloodshed Reveals Strength of Iraq Militias*, New York Times, February 25, 2006, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/25/international/middleeast/25militia.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&oref=slogin.

³⁰ UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, p. 12, see above footnote 6; ibidem, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 40, see above footnote 7.

³¹ UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to the Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 6, 35, 41, 44, 45, 67 and 76, see above footnote 6; ibidem, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 96, see above footnote 7.

³² Ibidem, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 100-101, see above footnote 7.

³³ Nancy A. Youssef and Leila Fadel, *Critics: Arming Sunni militias undercuts Iraqi government*, McClatchy Newspapers, 17 June 2007, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/world/story/16989.html>.

³⁴ See, for example, Charles Crain, *Will the Shi'a Militia Truce Last?*, Times, 30 November 2007, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1689540,00.html?xid=feed-cnn-world>, which says "(B)ut since joining the national political process in 2004, the Sadrists have proven willing to engage in politics when it suits them and resort to violence when they feel it is necessary."

Parts of the ISF, in charge of establishing law and order, are stricken by corruption and under the influence of militias and have become a major factor of insecurity by exercising violence against Sunnis and other minorities.³⁵

While some religious leaders promote reconciliation among Iraq's different groups and have repeatedly condemned sectarian violence, others have been accused of inciting such violence. In the past, there were also credible allegations that some mosques were used to illegally detain and torture members of the opposite sect.³⁶

4. Affected Populations

The majority of the Iraqi population is affected by violence, but the precise extent of the effect and trauma remains a matter of speculation. Individuals and groups affected include the following:

- a. Women and, in particular, children, might be the greatest victims of the current situation in Iraq, considering their especially vulnerable position in Iraq's male-dominated society. Some studies suggest that most Iraqi children (outside the three Northern Governorates) have been directly exposed to acts of violence.³⁷ As part of the stricter interpretation and implementation of Islamic values and traditions, women have come under intense pressure to dress or behave in accordance with Islamic rules.³⁸
- b. Religious and ethnic minorities are victims of persecution and discrimination. The three largest Iraqi constituent groups, Shi'a, Sunni and Kurds, all constitute minorities in various parts of Iraq. In addition, Iraq hosts minority groups such as Christians (Assyrians, Chaldeans and Armenians), Turkmen, Sabaeen-Mandaeans, Shabak, Yazidi and Kaka'i.³⁹
- c. Professionals such as police officers and recruits, academics, journalists, lawyers, aid workers and human rights defenders, have often been singled out for persecution.⁴⁰

³⁵ UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 43-44, see above footnote 6; Reuters, *US report warns of new ethnic cleansing in Iraq*, 18 October 2007, <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N18437055.htm>.

³⁶ UNAMI HRO, *December 2006 Human Rights Report*, p. 10, see above footnote 4.

³⁷ See, among others, Michael Howard, *Children of war: the generation traumatised by violence in Iraq*, The Guardian, 6 February 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,2006738,00.html>; IRIN, *IRAQ: Sectarian violence shows no mercy to children*, 1 March 2007, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70471>; as for women, see UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 121-125, see above footnote 7.

³⁸ Ibidem, pp. 127.

³⁹ UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 47-96, see above footnote 7.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, pp. 110-121.

- d. Violence targeting areas of large gatherings of people such as mosques or markets affect Iraqis of all walks of life. In addition to the actual loss of life, many more are maimed and/or likely to bear lasting psycho-social effects. Violence also prevents reconstruction and provision of services.
- e. Youth and young men are especially vulnerable to the effects of widespread violence and disorder. Widespread unemployment and social upheaval puts them at risk of becoming involved with armed groups and criminal gangs. This is especially the case in the absence of other more constructive opportunities. Peer and even family pressures may also play a role in encouraging their gravitation towards violence.⁴¹

5. “Peacemakers”

Strong government institutions and non-partisan security forces are crucial for the establishment of law and order. In addition, the support of civil society actors and religious and tribal personalities is required in order to effectively implement law and order. Without this support, government institutions will lack legitimacy amongst the Iraqi population. Activities related to peace and reconciliation also make a contribution to law and order. It is important to note that in today’s Iraq, those engaging in promoting peace and reconciliation do so with a considerable risk to their lives. A number of persons, including tribal and religious figures noted for their activism promoting reconciliation between Sunnis and Shi’ites, have been assassinated.⁴² Their killing also serves to intimidate other potential peacemakers in the country. Local and international organizations, though facing enormous security challenges, may also have a positive effect on alleviating the current situation of violence in Iraq.

Potential peacemakers in Iraqi civil society include:

- Academic institutions
- Businessmen
- Human rights/civil rights/humanitarian organizations
- Labour unions
- Media
- Neighbourhoods/communities
- Personnel of youth centres
- Professional groups
- Religious leaders
- Teachers and educators
- Tribal leaders
- Women’s groups

⁴¹ IRIN, *Youth in crisis: Coming of age in the 21st century. IRAQ: Youth involved in anti-US attacks and kidnappings*, February 2007, p. 50, <http://www.irinnews.org/pdf/in-depth/Youth-in-crisis-IRIN-In-Depth.pdf>.

⁴² UNAMI HRO, *June 2006 Human Rights Report*, pp. 4, 6 and 9.

6. Capacities for Peace

Traditional forms of conflict management and restorative justice are deeply rooted in Iraqi heritage. These mechanisms are a result of longstanding interactions between the different communities and act as a safety valve to reduce tensions and provide stability and peace within the community.

One such traditional mechanism is called “Al-Fasil” (or “Tribal Arbitration”). “Al-Fasil” originates from Bedouin culture and it is practiced, or at least accepted, by all of Iraq’s different ethnic and religious groups and in all of Iraq’s Governorates. The Iraqi Law on Criminal Proceedings leaves space for the use of tribal justice or other forms of extrajudicial procedures⁴³ and cases are referred to governmental courts when tribal arbitration is unable to reach a verdict.

“Al-Fasil” deals with a variety of legal issues including, but not limited to, murder, theft, honour crimes, land disputes, as well as other types of inter-tribal conflict.⁴⁴

The process of “Al-Fasil” involves consulting the leader, or “sheikh”, of the clan or tribe. If the conflict is wider and involves more than one tribe, the case is referred to a “sheikh of sheikhs”. The family of the victim and the family of the offender are usually directed by wise tribal leaders of the two conflicting parties. These tribal leaders possess conflict transformation skills, e.g., negotiation, mediation and facilitation, which are transmitted from generation to generation.

“Al-Fasil” however, can contradict national laws as well as certain precepts of Islam and international human rights law. The outcome, for example, might result in the killing of the alleged offender and/or of members of his/her tribe. This practice goes by the name of “Al-Th'aar” (vendetta) and may lead to conflict escalation. Also traditional conflict resolution involving women or girls may result in serious violations of their human rights, e.g., when a girl is given into marriage as compensation.⁴⁵

Since 2003 and throughout the escalation of the various conflicts in Iraq, a number of international organizations and UN agencies have trained various key members of the Iraqi civil society in techniques of conflict management. As a result, some national civil society organizations are now working to empower individuals to understand and practice conflict management. It is hoped that this will help to reduce existing tensions and conflict both within and among communities (see Annexes 4, 5 and 6).

⁴³ UNHCR, *2005 Iraq Report*, p. 123, see above footnote 24.

⁴⁴ For further information on “Al-Fasil” in Iraq, see A Glimpse of Iraq, *Art of Compromise*, 2 October 2004, <http://glimpseofiraq.blogspot.com/2004/10/art-of-compromise.html> and Oussama Safa, *Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation in the Arab World. The Work of Civil Society Organisations in Lebanon and Morocco*, in: Berghof Handbook, Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, available online at http://www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/safa_handbook.pdf.

⁴⁵ UNHCR, *August 2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, p. 37, see above footnote 7; *ibidem*, *2005 Iraq Report*, p. 124, see above footnote 24.

II. Actors and Actions in Conflict Management

1. Introduction

This section provides a discussion on the relevant actors and their actions in the context of conflict management. Conflict management refers to the overall endeavours of all actors to settle, resolve and transform conflict. It is an umbrella term that comprises the sum of all actors and actions working towards these stated goals. Conflict management, therefore, is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted. Its nature allows for different degrees of specialization among the different actors. As such, conflict management involves actors such as national governments, international organizations, NGOs, religious organizations and grass-roots movements. This section will also introduce the different classifications of actors. Additionally, it relates the effective conflict management action to the intensity of the conflict, its stage, actors and interventions.

2. Actors

The following divisions are meant as guidelines to classify different types of actors who engage in conflict management activities. These definitions are not absolute classifications as sometimes actors may engage in activities at a variety of levels or involve a combination of actors.

a. Track I

Track I refers to actors on the state and international diplomatic levels. Track I is the realm of career diplomats, foreign ministers and other such organs of state. Track I, however, is not limited to state-actors. Inter-governmental organizations such as the UN or international financial institutions are often considered Track I actors. Thus, the principal actors in this field are military and political leaders and decision-makers. Strategies employed range from official and non-coercive measures such as good offices, fact-finding missions, facilitation and negotiation/mediation to more coercive processes such as power mediation, sanctions and arbitration. Their outcome can be in the form of ceasefire agreements, peace accords or decisions to withdraw armed forces and cease violence. While the more coercive strategies of conflict settlement usually include short-term involvement of third parties, non-coercive measures are undertaken from a longer-term perspective.

b. Track II

Track II refers to actors who engage in conflict management activities but do not operate in an official capacity, though there may still be governmental linkages. Examples of such actors are international NGOs that are supported by foreign aid budgets, foundations and technical experts. While Track I actors generally work towards official agreements, Track II actors may focus more on specific projects aimed at increasing cooperation or understanding across or within national borders. Track II actions are not dependant on Track I outcomes. Indeed, Track II actors often engage in activity because of a lack of Track I activity. Track II actors may also be considered “middle actors” since,

traditionally, these actors maintain relationships with both grassroots and official figures/leaders.

c. Track III

Track III refers to actors who engage in conflict management activities at the grassroots level with no linkage to governmental organizations.

3. *Non-violent Actions of Conflict Management*

The following actions represent peaceful intervention to a conflict situation. It is therefore important to understand how these actions will impact upon the dynamics of the situation. To effectively engage in any of the following activities, preliminary work is required in order to understand the conflict at hand. This involves analysis of the conflict, its dynamics and context, as well as awareness of the potentially negative repercussions of intervention. Guidance for this type of "context analysis" may be found in Annex.

a. Conflict Settlement

Conflict settlement refers to all outcome-oriented strategies for achieving a cessation of "direct" violence without necessarily addressing the underlying causes of conflict. The priority of conflict settlement focused activity is to end open hostility. This may be achieved by opening lines of communication with the parties in conflict in order to search for mutually agreeable conditions to stop direct violence.

b. Conflict Resolution

Refers to all actions oriented towards overcoming the cause of conflict, but not, necessarily changing the social structures of the populations involved. Conflict resolution related activities are non-coercive and may take the form of facilitation and consultation. These may be channelled through communication, workshops and problem-solving sessions. All these measures seek to increase the interaction of the parties in conflict in an effort to build relationships and counter negative images/perceptions. In the end, the underlying causes of a specific conflict may be addressed and dealt with, but there may still be a likelihood of future conflict because the fundamental nature of interaction among the parties has not been changed.

c. Conflict Transformation

Refers to all actions oriented towards changing the nature of the relationships amongst different groups. To this end, activities are not necessarily related to a particular conflict, but operate in the context of a larger conflict. For example, opening a community centre for joint activities does not address issues relating to a singular event, but rather encourages increased interaction and communication among groups who live in a conflict situation. By building relationships among different groups, it is hoped, that they see each other as partners rather than enemies and resort to non-violent, integrative solutions to possible problems arising among them. The goal is to change a relationship that is prone to conflict and destructive into a relationship that is beneficial, co-operative and constructive. Thus, conflict transformation activities involve enhancing cooperative relations, encouraging non-violent mechanisms to deal with differences, empowering

local populations to work out future disagreements among themselves without outside intervention.

4. Nature of Conflict Management

It should be recalled that conflict management is the sum of all actions contributed by all actors engaged in a particular conflict. In the Iraqi context, there are numerous conflicts which, while seemingly unrelated, occur within the political boundaries of Iraq. Even though there is not yet a comprehensive conflict settlement in place, conflict resolution or transformation activities are possible and desirable for programmes and organizations.

5. Summary of Actions

Table 1: Three actions involved in Conflict Management

Approach	Focus	Objective	Success	Key words
Conflict Settlement	Interests	Social order/ status quo	Sustainability of solutions	Stop
Conflict Resolution	Human needs	Social change	Shared interests	Meeting agreed solutions
Conflict Transformation	Interests, human needs, social justice, relationships	Stable peace	Change of social fabric and structures	Shared solutions, build relationships and capacities

6. Summary of Actors and Measures

Table 2: Types of actors and their intervention actions

Level	Actors	Potential Measures
Track I	Political and military leaders, representatives of conflict parties	Fact-finding, diplomatic relations, “good offices”; facilitation, negotiation, mediation; power mediation, arbitration, sanctions
Track II	NGOs, professionals, academics, cultural/religious leaders	Facilitation, consultation, cultural exchanges, capacity building, acting as go-between for government and grassroots
Track III	Local grassroots organizations, NGOs	Capacity building, training, development, human rights work, political education

The decision to employ third party intervention and which approach and track to address (or which combination thereof), depends on various factors, including the stage and intensity of the conflict.

7. Levels of Conflict Intensity

The level of conflict intensity refers to the extent of violence used in the conflict as detailed in Table 3. This intensity scale model is adopted from the Heidelberg Institute on International Conflict Research and is based on a scale of five levels.⁴⁶

Table 3: The Five Levels of Conflict Intensity

Conflict Intensities				
State of Violence Intensity Group		Level of Intensity	Name of Intensity	Definition
Non-violent	Low	1	Latent Conflict	A positional difference over definable values of national meaning is considered to be a latent conflict if respective demands are articulated by one of the parties and perceived by the other as such.
		2	Manifest Conflict	A manifest conflict includes the use of measures that are located in the preliminary stage to violent force. This includes for example verbal pressure, threatening explicitly with violence, or the imposition of economic sanctions.
Violent	Medium	3	Crisis	A crisis is a tense situation in which at least one of the parties uses violent force in sporadic incidents.
	High	4	Severe Crisis	A conflict is considered to be a severe crisis if violent force is repeatedly used in an organized way.
		5	War	A war is a type of violent conflict in which violent force is used with a certain amount of continuity in an organised and systematic way. The conflict parties exercise extensive measures, depending on the situation. The extent of destruction is massive and of a long duration.

8. Third Party Intervention

Distinguishing Between Working IN Conflict and Working ON Conflict

Every organization should be aware that intervention has the potential to change dynamics of a given environment. In order to avoid exacerbating existing tensions or creating new ones in areas of intervention, it is important to be aware of the prevailing conflict. Even organizations that do not explicitly focus on problems relating to conflict can alter dynamics of the conflict by their presence and activities. As such, the intervening organization should develop an understanding of how their intervention may impact upon the conflict and develop their programmes accordingly. Organizations, whose primary focus is NOT conflict as such (e.g., NGOs providing healthcare, food or

⁴⁶ Heidelberg Institute on International Conflict Research, *Conflict Barometer 2006*, Crisis - Wars - Coups d'Etat, Negotiations - Mediations - Peace Settlements, 15th Annual Conflict Analysis, Heidelberg 2006, p.1, http://www.hiik.de/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer_2006.pdf.

non-food items), but which operate in areas of conflict, can be said to be working *IN* the conflict.

In contrast to organizations that work *IN* conflict, organizations that work *ON* a particular conflict are primarily concerned with conflict management activities as described in the previous sections. The following will prove an overview of stages of escalation and de-escalation and levels of conflict intensity. Notwithstanding whether an organization is working *IN* or *ON* a particular conflict, it is important to understand conflict dynamics so that conflict management activities can be effectively mainstreamed and incorporated into existing programming.⁴⁷

There are various methods of third party intervention to manage conflict. Mediation is one option and may be complemented by a number of other methods. Mediation may be referred to in many ways, including conciliation, fact-finding, good offices, peer mediation, arbitration, facilitation, adjudication, mediation-arbitration, policy dialogue and consensus building. Mediation activities involve the participation of a third party external to the conflict that facilitates dialogue and promotes the discussion of conflict issues. Third parties operate at many levels and in many different sectors within and between communities. This adds complexity to the conflict situation(s) because some third parties intervene in an official capacity, while others perform in a more informal manner. Some third party interventions operate at the highest levels of decision-making (*Track I*), while others take place at the middle ranges of society (*Track II*) or at the community or grassroots level (*Track III*). In the global domain, third party activities can be included in a wider conception of multi-track intervention.

The following suggests some examples of interventions that can be applied. The list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive.

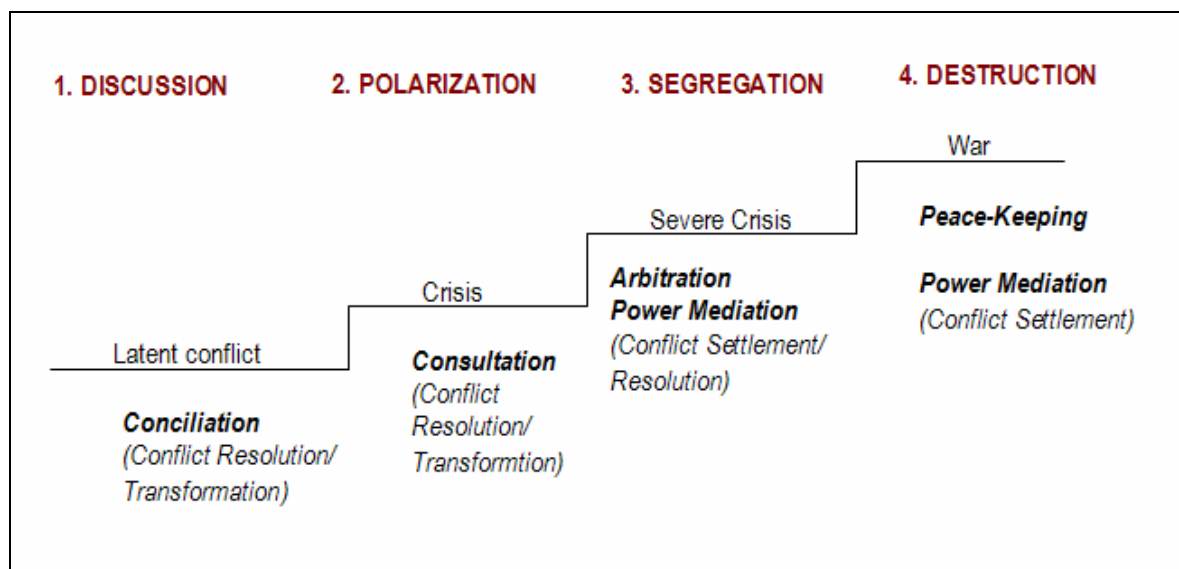
- a. **Conciliation**, in which a trusted third party provides an informal communicative link between the antagonists for the purposes of identifying the issues, lowering tension and encouraging direct interaction, usually in the form of negotiation.
- b. **Consultation**, in which the third party works to facilitate creative problem-solving through communication and analysis, making use of human relations skills and social-scientific understanding of causes and dynamics of conflict.
- c. **Pure Mediation**, in which the third party works to facilitate a negotiated settlement on substantive issues through the use of reasoning, persuasion, effective control of information and the suggestion of alternatives.
- d. **Power Mediation**, which encompasses pure mediation, but also moves beyond it to include leverage or coercion on the part of the mediator in the form of promised rewards or threatened punishments and may also involve the third party as monitor and guarantor of the agreement.

⁴⁷ Refer to Chronic Poverty Research Centre, *Working Paper 6*, <http://www.chronicpoverty.org/resources/cp06.htm>.

- e. **Arbitration**, in which the third party renders a binding judgment arrived at through consideration of the individual merits of the opposing positions and then imposes a settlement which is deemed fair and just.

9. Stages of Conflict Escalation

There are several models for describing the stages of conflict escalation. In this section, a four stage model by Ronald J. Fisher of conflict escalation is presented.⁴⁸ It captures many elements that prove important as the conflict intensifies, parties employ more powerful and contentious measures and the difference between winning and losing becomes greater. The four-stage model of escalation includes: 1) discussion, 2) polarisation, 3) segregation and 4) destruction. Moving from one stage to another means that parties are getting closer to direct violence. De-escalation activities are possible at each of these stages to prevent moving to the next stage. Depending on the stage of conflict escalation, de-escalation activities will be different. Once a conflict reaches the "destruction" or direct violence phase, de-escalation stages involve 1) ceasefire, 2) agreements, 3) normalisation and eventually 4) reconciliation.



Source: Ronald J. Fisher, *Methods of Third-Party Intervention*.

- a. During the first stage of **discussion**, the parties usually maintain a respectful relationship with each another and are jointly concerned with achieving mutual gains on objective interests. At the same time, they are hesitant to move into negotiations, so the third party intervention of *conciliation* is appropriate. This type of intervention can deal effectively with minor perceptual and emotional issues and move the parties into negotiations to manage their differences.

⁴⁸ Ronald J. Fisher, *Methods of Third-Party Intervention*, Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation, Jun 2001. available at www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/fisher_hb.pdf. Ronald J. Fisher is Professor of Conflict Analysis and Management at Royal Roads University, Victoria, Canada.

- b. At stage two, **polarization**, when the relationship begins to deteriorate and negative perceptions (stereotypes) and emotions (hostility) emerge, *consultation* is seen as the lead intervention. If this intervention manages to help clear up the misperceptions and misunderstandings and to diffuse the emerging emotional negativity, the parties can then be encouraged to enter into *pure mediation* in order to reach an agreement.
- c. At stage three, **segregation**, subjective elements predominate with high levels of mistrust and disrespect, limited direct communication, the use of threats and increased use of Manichean “good versus evil” imagery. At this stage, the model proposes that stronger medicine in the form of *arbitration* (if available) or *power mediation* may be required to control the hostility and reduce its the negative effects. It must be noted, however, that the imposition of a temporary settlement or ceasefire at this stage of the conflict does little more than laying the groundwork for further measures, i.e. *consultation*. If improvements do indeed ensue, the parties may be encouraged to employ *pure mediation* in order to broaden and finalize the settlement process.
- d. Stage four, **destruction**, presents the greatest challenge for third party interventions, since the conflict parties basically see each other as “subhuman” and regard the situation as hopeless. In that situation, they are willing to settle for losing less than the opposite side, even if they cannot win themselves - in essence a zero-sum situation. At this stage, parties often see their very survival at stake, e.g. by the loss of jobs, physical abuse or the attempted annihilation of their identity as in a genocide. The following prescribes some form of *peacekeeping* to separate the parties in order to provide an opportunity for other methods to apply. Again, some form of *arbitration* or *power mediation* may be useful for the initial control of hostility and aggression. Then, consultations in the form of intense and prolonged conflict analysis may be necessary to de-escalate the conflict, despite high levels of resentment over past actions. This is where consultation must encourage reconciliation and help the parties understand how they arrived at such a point of escalation. An extended period of destruction will further exacerbate the conflict and lead to a situation in which identity denigration and polarisation are acute. In addition, there will be parties which benefit from the conflict and therefore will resist settlement. As a result, the number and types of issues/disagreements will expand from the “original” scope.

10. **Conflict De-Escalation**⁴⁹

In many ways, the stages of de-escalation mirror the stages of escalation. Conflict does not reach the apex of destruction until certain conditions have been met; just as conflict will not be fully resolved and transformed until similar de-escalation conditions have been met.

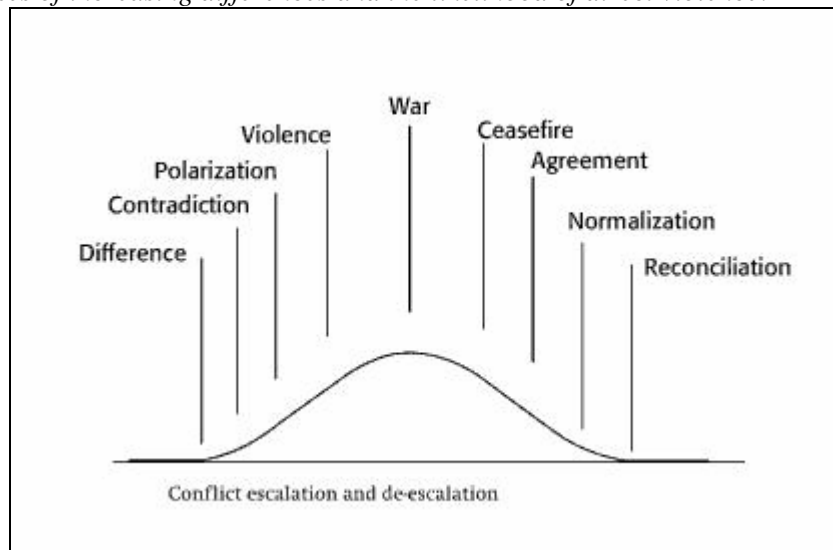
The following model provides a clear progression from war to reconciliation. Just as it is possible to rapidly move up in the level of conflict escalation, it is possible and common to slide backwards due to unexpected events. The process of de-escalations is not steady,

⁴⁹ Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Cambridge UK, Polity Press, 2005, p. 11.

i.e. even when conflicting parties have reached a certain stage of de-escalation, it is not for sure that they will stay there and further move down the scale. In the entire process, there can be unexpected (positive) breakthroughs as well as unexpected (negative) setbacks.

Before engaging in de-escalation activities, the parties to the conflict must be ready to do so. Otherwise the attempt may fail or even cause the situation to deteriorate.

**Please note that the following diagram depicts the stages of escalation and de-escalation. While the terms for escalation are different than the terms used in the previous section, they refer to the same processes of increasing differences and the likelihood of direct violence.*



Source: Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*.

Each stage represents some form of change in the way groups interact with each other.

Ceasefire: This stage of de-escalation aligns well with conflict settlement activities already described. This is the stage where open war and direct violence are suspended through an agreement. At this stage, trust starts to be rebuilt and confidence-building as well as disarming and demobilisation activities are the appropriate measures to move away from direct violence.

Agreement: This is the phase beyond the ceasefire and initial confidence-building measures. Agreement implies the beginning of a more cooperative working relationship. Activities that are possible at this stage include problem-solving discussions with follow-up implementation. On a high level, it could involve negotiations on power-sharing agreements. On a lower level, it could mean increased access to resources.

Normalization: Moving beyond the agreement phase, normalization brings the parties into wider forms of cooperation, e.g. joint economic development or joint security operations.

Reconciliation: This is the final stage of de-escalation where a wider array of activities and programmes are implemented. Each de-escalation phase has “widened the political space”,⁵⁰ meaning that there is greater ability and a wider array of tools available to analyze and discuss the recent conflict. The goal is to create a set of mechanisms to manage/resolve future disagreements before they escalate into polarization and violence.

The reconciliation stage provides the largest amount of “political space” thanks to new patterns of interaction among the parties during and especially after a ceasefire. It is in this phase that new initiatives and conflict management capacity-building programmes can be successfully implemented. But still, reaching the stage of reconciliation does not guarantee that there will not be future escalation. The diagramme above shows that in the stage of reconciliation, there are still “differences” or low-level disagreements among the parties. Therefore, without robust, effective and culturally appropriate mechanisms to deal with future issues of contention, the situation is prone to renewed escalation. Furthermore, interventions not taking into account the history of conflict and issues of contention may inadvertently lead to escalation rather than de-escalation (see Chapter IV for more details).

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 14.

III. Implementing Conflict Management Activities

In this section, the components of conflict management activities are examined in more depth and key factors that would lead to success or failure are identified and discussed. In addition, potential implications of failure are highlighted. This should prove helpful when evaluating existing programmes and mainstreaming conflict management activities into future programming.

1. *Working to Achieve Mutually Acceptable Settlement to Conflict*

a. Conflict settlement

The level of violence in Iraq urgently calls for positive developments in the conflict settlement process. Given that conflict settlement involves the adoption of a mutually acceptable agreement aimed at stopping direct violence, activities primarily focus on the interests of each party and not necessarily on the underlying causes of conflict. More comprehensive discussions and programmes tackling the underlying causes will take place only after the parties agree to stop direct violence. Ideally, conflict settlements are sustainable in order for any further agreements/discussions to be meaningful and effective. If, for example, a ceasefire is imposed on the parties, it may be impossible to hold it and direct violence may resume quickly. The cessation of direct violence facilitates a return of social order. This then facilitates the implementation of conflict resolution and conflict transformation activities. As discussed in II (d), resolution and transformation programmes may take place in the context of a larger, still unsettled conflict, but the parties have achieved a localized, sustainable cessation of direct violence. In summary, the achievement and successful implementation of a conflict settlement agreement creates a permissive environment for conflict resolution and transformation as well as for socio-economic development.

b. Actors

The potential for conflict settlement exists on all levels of group interaction from grassroots to international. As such, conflict settlement activities are not limited to a particular set of actors - all tracks may engage in conflict settlement activities. Track I settlement will principally involve political and military leaders and the outcome would be in the form of formal treaties and/or ceasefire agreements. Track II settlement activities may involve international organizations working in a local context to solve localized disagreements.

The actors involved in reaching agreements must have the ability and authority to hold them and control their constituencies. Success and sustainability of any conflict settlement agreement depends on the ability of the stakeholders to influence those whom they represent and those who are loyal to them. These actors must be involved in conflict settlement because of their role in ongoing participation in the conflict, their victimisation and their *de facto* or *de jure* authority/control over conflict-affected areas and

populations. The actors must therefore also take on their responsibility to publicly support the conflict settlement agreement and encourage their constituencies to implement it.

Relevant civil society and third party actors can contribute to conflict settlement activities in a supporting role, e.g. through conducting fact-finding missions, facilitation, negotiation, mediation assistance and the provision of good offices. In more coercive measures such as power mediation, sanctions and arbitration, third party actors can play a more aggressive role in achieving a mutually acceptable solution. The participation of third party actors in the conflict settlement process is contingent upon the principal actors' accepting their involvement.

c. Important Qualifications and Moving Beyond Conflict Settlement

When moving from conflict settlement to conflict resolution and transformation, a new set of factors needs to be considered. Conflict resolution and transformation activities involve a wider range of actors than settlement activities, resulting in new dynamics for the conflict management process. In order to successfully engage in conflict resolution activities, there needs to be a solid cessation of direct violence. It is noteworthy that throughout conflict settlement and conflict resolution, acts of violence should not be rewarded. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes should be implemented to ensure that the parties do not resort to violence again. Parties involved in negotiations must also be required to abide by their obligations under humanitarian and human rights law under all circumstances.

Achieving a mutually acceptable solution is crucial in the conflict settlement process. As explained by authors Roy J. Lewicki, David M. Saunders and John W. Minton, all parties must have positive feelings towards an agreement. If they feel it is discriminatory or has been imposed on them, they are, are more likely not to honour their promises or look for other means to recoup their perceived losses.⁵¹

Despite a mutually acceptable solution, there remains a risk of renewed violence if the principal actors fail to commit their constituencies to the obligations under the agreement. Armed groups must be encouraged to utilize non-violent means to communicate their grievances, e.g. to the relevant local, regional or national authorities.

Involvement of Track I actors does not cease when mutually acceptable solutions have been reached and direct violence has ended, but remains crucial throughout the entire conflict management process. The support of and encouragement by influential political, religious, military and tribal leaders is a critical for a successful transition from conflict to peaceful coexistence.

⁵¹ R. J. Lewicki, D. M. Saunders and J. W. Minton, *Essentials of Negotiation*, 2001, p. 59.

2. Resolving Conflict

a. Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution activities deal with non-violent ways to negotiate and overcome conflict. Conflict resolution requires identifying the causes the conflict and finding ways to address these.

Parties to a conflict may have incompatible, non-negotiable interests in issues such as essential human needs, identity and access to or control over essential resources. Therefore, in order to truly resolve a conflict, the solution must go beyond satisfying the parties' immediate interests through conflict settlement. Rather, the roots of the conflict. Must be identified and addressed. Conflict resolution therefore means to go beyond negotiating immediate interests, i.e., promoting increased communication and addressing issues of negative perception, while simultaneously respecting the parties' values and identities.

Underlying causes of conflict are often embedded in a society's perceptions and structures. Comprehensive conflict resolution is likely to require socio-economic or political changes allowing for more inclusion and equal access to resources and basic services. This may then reduce perceptions of injustice and unfair treatment. This, however, is an immense task that may take decades to fully accomplish. On a local level, more can be achieved in shorter periods of time, but to change the overall set-up of a society, more time and sustained commitment is needed.

b. Actors

Conflict resolution often means employing direct interaction between involved parties, e.g. in the form of workshops and/or roundtables. This requires however, that all parties agree to participate. Therefore, all efforts should be made to include all parties to a conflict. If, for example, one party is not invited to participate, it is possible that it would feel excluded from the process and would therefore continue the conflict. Effective conflict resolution requires that the parties understand each others' points of view, discuss and brainstorm possible solutions and find common interests in order to reach an agreement. Indeed, one of the lessons learned from the Coexistence project in Afghanistan was that "[T]he greatest challenge to the coexistence scheme remains the long term engagement to the process of *all the actors involved and not just the local community*"⁵² (emphasis added). Depending on the context of the conflict (international, national, local or some combination thereof), actors may be drawn from all tracks.

Examples of such actors are:

- a. Unofficial representatives of the conflicting parties;
- b. Civil society groups, including academic institutions and "civil mediation" or "citizen diplomacy" groups, local and international conflict resolution;
- c. NGOs, experts and advisors.

⁵² Briefing Note on UNHCR Sub-Office Kabul's Coexistence Activities in the Central Region. Available upon request.

In the case of Track I actors, there may be unofficial contacts among the parties in order to discuss common interests and possible ways to resolve the issues. Alternatively, Track I actors, if all parties agree, may directly engage with each other in conflict resolution activities.

Please also see examples in Annex 5.

c. Activities

Conflict resolution can be accomplished through diverse procedures, including the consultation of influential elites or community leaders or the facilitation of joint sessions aimed at sharing basic needs, concerns and perceptions. These steps aim at building relationships and confidence, establishing lines of communication and exploring solutions that could meet both sides' interests and needs. The specific steps to achieve an atmosphere of trust and dialogue will differ from context to context. Hence, it is crucial to understand not only the culture(s) of the parties involved, but the history of the conflict and the issues at stake, i.e., thorough conflict analysis prior to programme implementation including joint meetings with conflict parties.

For further concrete examples, please see Section D.

3. From Solving Issues to Transforming Perceptions

a. Conflict transformation

Conflict resolution entails finding agreed solutions to disputed issues, while conflict transformation includes changing social structures and modes of interaction in order to move from simple coexistence to partnership. Conflict transformation also seeks to end *cultural* violence stemming from negative perceptions about different peoples and groups.

An initial set of questions needs to be answered in order to implement conflict transformation activities:

- What is the representation that is proposed (by leaders at different levels and echoed by media) to Group A and Group B?
- What kind of perception does Group A have of Group B as an ethnic/religious group and as human beings and vice versa?
- What do they think motivations and hidden agenda of the other group are?
- Is there any trust between the groups?⁵³

⁵³ Looking at the Norwegian-Israeli-Palestinian experience of People-2-People, much of the success (or lack of success) of a *Track III* intervention is due to the level of (mis)trust between the groups. This may vary with time and external factors as conflicts escalate or de-escalate; see Lee Perlman and Nadia Nasser-Najjab, *The Future of People-to-People*, Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture, May 2005.

- What is the relationship between the groups?

The answers to these questions will probably indicate that a various groups have a various perceptions; this is where analysis of the stages of conflict is needed in planning for the next step.

A second set of questions, then, will be:

- Is this perception distorted?
- If so, what interventions would possibly change this distorted perception?

Any intervention will have to be appropriately tailored to the particular group in order to change such perceptions, and, in doing so, de-escalate the conflict.

Often distorted perceptions are rooted in existing structural violence (i.e., social/economic/political injustice). Therefore, perceptions will only successfully be changed if a parallel effort is made to modify the underlying causes of this violence. The conflict resolution approach will thus deal with finding agreed and shared solutions to the problems. It is important to consider the opportunity for positive change that any conflict entails.

b. Actors

Actors involved in conflict transformation can be from any of the tracks. However, these actors tend to include local communities, grassroots and indigenous organizations and NGOs.

Please see Annex 6.

c. Activities

These efforts should not be carried out in isolation from previous interventions at other levels, which served to stop or limit the violence, keep the truce/ceasefire intact and find integrative and positive methods to solve the underlying causes of conflict. Transformation activities must be combined with the total efforts of other actors to fundamentally change the perception and mode of interaction among conflicting parties.

Depending on the type and stage of conflict, perceptions held by groups and individuals in Iraq vary greatly. Therefore, as conflict resolution intervention will vary according to the issue(s) at the root of the conflict, so, too, will conflict transformation interventions vary in their efforts to modify perceptions.

In the case of Iraq, differences among groups have been exploited by actors to further their own political or economic agendas, causing conflicts at different times between

different groups.⁵⁴ Conflict resolution interventions need to go beyond the conflict built by conflict promoters by exacerbating sectarian differences and focus instead on the social, political and economic instabilities at the root of the conflict.⁵⁵ Any intervention aimed at conflict transformation, however, will have to address the newly developed perceptions of ethnic and religious differences.

*Resolution and Transformation: A Brief Comparison of Perspective*⁵⁶

	Conflict Resolution Perspective	Conflict Transformation Perspective
The key question	How do we end something not desired?	How to end something destructive and build something desired?
The focus	It is content-centred.	It is relationship-centred.
The purpose	To achieve an agreement and solution to the presenting problem creating the crisis.	To promote constructive change processes inclusive of -- but not limited to -- immediate solutions.
The development of the process	It is embedded and built around the immediacy of the relationship where the presenting problems appear.	It is concerned with responding to symptoms and engaging the systems within which relationships are embedded.
Time frame	The horizon is short-term.	The horizon is mid-to-long range.
View of conflict	It envisions the need to de-escalate conflict processes.	It envisions conflict as a dynamic of ebb (conflict de-escalation to pursue constructive change) and flow (conflict escalation to pursue constructive change).

For further concrete example, please see Section D.

4. Summary Table: A Planning Tool for Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation Interventions

Lessons learned: conflict resolution and transformation in other operations

As outlined earlier, Iraq suffers from many simultaneous conflicts at different stages and intensity in various areas. As learned from other operations and evaluation studies, conflict transformation interventions are not an option in some stages of conflict. In other cases, however, it is possible and advisable to intervene, even if only to create a base for building trust, thereby increasing the effectiveness of conflict resolution initiatives. It is, therefore, useful to consider examples of successful resolution and transformation interventions in other contexts and to identify stages of conflict, in which these

⁵⁴ International Crisis Group, *The Next Iraqi War? Sectarianism and Civil Conflict*. Middle East Report N° 52, 27 February 2006, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3980>.

⁵⁵ B. Crawford, R. Lipschutz, *"Ethnic" Conflict Isn't*, IGCC Policy Brief, March 1995, <http://igcc.ucsd.edu/pdf/policybriefs/pb02.pdf>.

⁵⁶ Paul Lederach and Michelle Maiese, *Conflict Transformation*, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation/?nid=1223>.

interventions can be effective. Still, implementation of any activity in Iraq should be preceded by an in-depth analysis of the context which takes into consideration the actors and communities involved.

The table below summarizes scenarios, perceptions of the groups involved and the level of trust among them. Based on such analysis, recommendations are made for possible projects to be implemented and projects to be avoided at certain stages of conflict. Thus, the table, though not exhaustive, can provide guidance to choose appropriate and effective interventions without creating new conflicts or exacerbating existing conflicts.

Annexes 4, 5 and 6 include more detailed information and references to the activities detailed in the following table.

Stage	Definition	Level of trust between groups	Projects to Implement	Projects to Avoid
<i>Preventing conflict</i> Calm community surrounded by conflict	No major tensions within the community, but the external environment is in a state of conflict.	Trust present within the community. Media portrays violent conflict as endemic in inter-group relations.	Transformation: Coexistence QiPs: prevention of escalation (media campaigns to prevent negative change in perception, support to leaders emphasizing peace), building capacity for conflict resolution within the communities (mediation, negotiation, etc.), responsible journalism training. <i>Common narrative:</i> the way students from different groups learn their common history at school, establishing and enhancing economic and business cooperation between groups on a larger scale, youth integration (sports, arts, music), awareness raising on IHL, protection of civilians and the right to access services.	
Latent conflict	Tensions over resources or ideas not expressed, violence is not used.	Nascent in-/out-group formation.	Resolution: Recognise issues of conflict before they explode, building capacity for conflict resolution (mediation, negotiation, etc.), Middle East Reconciliation Project for communities dealing with returnees and IDPs, find solutions to potential causes of conflict (inclusive working groups composed of technical experts from all parties) Transformation: Media campaign to prevent negative change in perception, support to leaders emphasising peace, coexistence QiPs, Northern Nigeria project/ involvement of religious leaders and institutions, cultural exchange. <i>Common narrative:</i> establishing and enhancing economic and business cooperation between groups on a larger scale, youth integration (sports, arts, music), awareness raising on IHL, protection of civilians and the right to access services.	
Manifest conflict	Tensions over resources or ideas openly expressed, violence is not used.	“Us-versus-them” mentality.	Resolution: Mediation, conflict resolution at a community level. Transformation: Limited co-existence QiPs (groups brought together after separate preparation), Northern Nigeria Project/involvement of religious leaders and institutions, media campaign, support to leaders emphasising peace, awareness raising on	

Stage	Definition	Level of trust between groups	Projects to Implement	Projects to Avoid
			IHL, protection of civilians and the right to access services.	
Crisis	Limited militia led violence/ limited involvement of population in violent conflict.	Coherent enemy image. Attribution of collective characteristics to counterpart. Self-image as only reacting to counterpart.	Resolution: Mediation, conflict resolution at a community level, agreeing on solutions. Transformation: Media campaign. Nigeria project/mosques, coexistence QiPs only for population abstaining from violence (groups brought together after separate preparation), awareness raising on IHL, protection of civilians and right to access services.	Coexistence QiPs for population involved directly or indirectly in violence.
Severe Crisis	Widespread use of violence by armed groups.	Level of trust continues to deteriorate, the media contribute to the deterioration of the enemy image, but most civilians have not dehumanised nor lost complete trust in the other group.	Transformation: Media campaign, psycho-social support for victims and perpetrators of violence, entertainment activities for children/adults to minimise the impact of trauma, coexistence QiPs only for population abstaining from violence (groups brought together after separate preparation), awareness raising on IHL, protection of civilians and the right to access services.	Coexistence QiPs for population involved directly or indirectly in violence.
Severe Crisis	Widespread use of violence by armed groups and civilian population.	Malice an important motive, dehumanisation of other group, perception of the other group as morally corrupt is entrenched.	Transformation: Media campaign, psycho-social support for victims and perpetrators, Middle East Reconciliation Project, entertainment activities for children/adults to minimise the impact of trauma, awareness raising on IHL, protection of civilians and the right to access to services.	Coexistence QiPs and any project that brings conflicting communities together.
War	Protracted violent conflict, in which force is used in an organised and systematic way. Destruction is massive.	Counterpart prepared to do anything. Counterpart not considered human - one group can even accept its own destruction if counterpart is also destroyed.	Track III: awareness raising on IHL, protection of civilians and right to access to services, relief activities should consider ways not to exacerbate conflict.	Coexistence QiPs and any project that brings conflicting communities together.

Stage	Definition	Level of trust between groups	Projects to Implement	Projects to Avoid
Post-Conflict	Violent conflict is ended. Issues of conflict are not solved.	Leaders/media are divided into those who are starting to support peace and those who are fuelling more conflict. Trust is compromised by the past and could hinder the peace-making process.	<p>Resolution: activities (agree on sustainable solutions to issues of conflict), reconciliation courts.</p> <p>Transformation: Media campaign to reinstate the perception of common ground and trust, development of shared interpretation of past:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - school curriculum - government - media. <p><i>Common narrative:</i> reconstruction will incorporate coexistence, transformation of perception in projects, ensure that all parties to the conflict equally benefit from projects, coexistence QiPs, children and youth in extracurricular activities for reconciliation, Proactive Leadership Programme (Cyprus), conflict resolution workshops, trauma counselling, Middle East Reconciliation Project.</p>	

5. Recommendations for Conflict Resolution and Transformation Projects

1. Analysis of the conflict, issues and actors is necessary when planning interventions.
2. Identification of the stage of the conflict in the target community is necessary prior to planning and implementing the projects.
3. The phase of the conflict in a community can change quickly; continuous monitoring is needed and planning should be adjusted accordingly.
4. In some phases of the conflict, resolution and/or transformation activities are not advisable. In those cases, ways should be found to lobby for Track I actors to reach ceasefire agreements in order for conflict resolution and transformation initiatives to take place. Conflict-sensitive approach is still necessary in aid and development activities.
5. *Track II* and *III* actors engage in complementary activities and, when possible, should be carried out in coordination with each other.
6. It is important to understand the particular stage of the conflict because engaging in activities that bring conflicting groups together without appropriate preparation could do more harm than good. In the same context, however, professional and technical experts can be brought together to find solutions to issues, keep the negotiation space open and restore hope.

IV. Mainstreaming Conflict Resolution Practices into Aid and Developmental Work

1. Why mainstreaming?

Field experience from various conflict situations and numerous studies show how aid and development work can exacerbate tensions at the community level. Although most root causes of conflict and underlying tensions at a societal or community level are caused by

reasons outside the influence of aid or developmental agencies, the implementation of aid or development work can create new tensions or aggravate pre-existing divisions among the various groups.

External influence can have a devastating effect on a society and, inadvertently, serve as a catalyst or flashpoint for pre-existing tensions. A body of knowledge has been developed by various practice and theory-oriented organizations to facilitate the successful implementation of aid and development projects without creating new tensions or aggravating existing conflicts. In addition, field experience shows that it is possible to implement aid and development programmes in ways that have a positive effect on the conflict, for example, by strengthening links between conflicting parties.

In its “Do No Harm Handbook,” the Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) noted:

*“Assistance can have important effects on inter-group relations and on the course of intergroup conflict. In a Do No Harm implementation project area, for example, one NGO provided 90% of all local employment in a sizeable region over a number of years. In another, the NGO estimated that militia looting of assistance garnered US \$400 million in one brief (and not unique) rampage. Both of these examples occurred in very poor countries where assistance’s resources represented significant wealth and power.”*⁵⁷

The premise of this concept is that the work of the UN and international NGOs can be planned and implemented in ways that avoid exacerbating pre-existing tensions between people and communities. In addition, such organizations may be able to strengthen connections between people and groups otherwise divided by conflict.

The following chapter outlines a set of lessons on the interaction of aid and conflict. These lessons are the result of field-based experience gathered by CDA from a wide variety of aid programming undertaken by international and local NGOs, UN agencies and donors in dozens of conflict situations around the world.

2. The Seven Lessons⁵⁸

1. Assistance becomes a part of the **conflict context**. It is not neutral, but becomes a part of the context.
2. There are two realities in any conflict situation: **dividers and connectors**. Dividers are those factors that people are fighting about or cause tension. Connectors bring people together and/or tend to reduce tension.

⁵⁷ CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, *The Do No Harm Handbook, The Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Assistance on Conflict*, November 2004. p. 1.

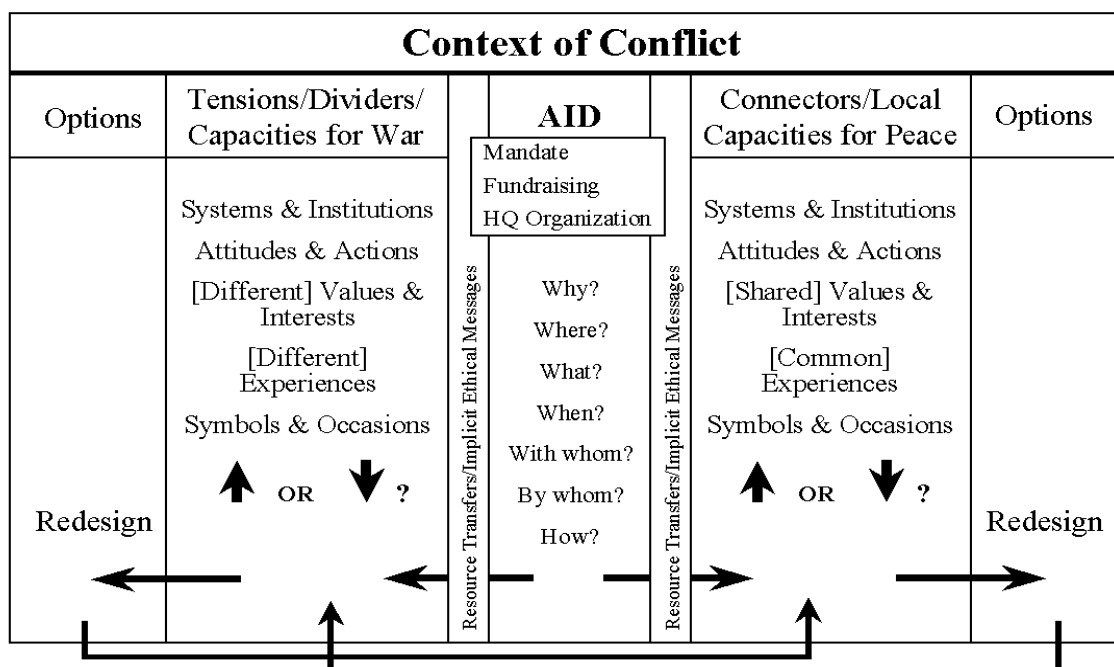
⁵⁸ CDA, *The Seven Lessons*, http://www.cdainc.com/dnh/the_seven_lessons.php.

3. Assistance has an **impact** on both dividers and connectors. It can increase or reduce dividers or increase or reduce connectors.
4. **Resource transfers** are one mechanism through which assistance produces impacts: what aid agencies bring in and how they distribute it.
5. **Implicit ethical messages** are the other mechanism of impact: what is communicated by how agencies work.
6. The **details** of assistance programmes matter: what, why, who, by whom, when, where and how.
7. There are always **options** for changing assistance programmes to eliminate negative impacts (increased conflict) or to improve positive contributions to peace.

CDA has developed the following “**Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Aid on Conflict**”. It guides humanitarian and development practitioners step-by-step through a systematic analysis of the context of conflict and how the context interacts or potentially interacts with a particular aid project or programme. Throughout the life of the aid activity, the Do No Harm Framework involves analyzing:

- a. The aid project or programme (Why? Where? What? When? With Whom? By Whom? How?);
- b. The tensions and connectors that prevail in the context or programming environment;
- c. The interactions between different aspects of an aid programme and the prevailing tensions and connectors between people and groups in the aid context;
- d. Options for doing aspects of the aid programme differently so as to avoid increasing tensions or weakening connections between people or decreasing tensions and strengthening connectors.

Framework for Considering the Impact of Aid on Conflict



Source of the diagram: Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - or War*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, February 1999, p. 74.

CDA also compiled aid agency experiences using Do No Harm into an “Options Manual”, which contains concrete examples of how aid interacted positively or negatively with conflict in a variety of settings. This manual also describes how projects and programmes were then adapted to avoid negative impacts and optimize positive impacts on conflict.⁵⁹

3. Implications: Lessons from reconciliation and conflict resolution studies

Conflict resolution essentially exists at two levels: one as a self-standing activity involving various levels of diplomacy and engagement (*Tracks I, II and III*) and the second as an element embedded into the work of aid and developmental organizations in the field, i.e., mainstreamed into their programming and programme execution. Mainstreaming assumes, therefore, that programmes in areas of potential conflict (also referred to as latent conflict or conflict-prone areas) should consider the following questions:

- How does assistance impact on the social dynamics in the area of engagement (by identifying the groups and the way these groups interact with each other)?
- How can the existing groups work together in a project that the community has identified as needed?

⁵⁹ Mary B. Anderson, *Options For Aid in Conflict*, CDA, 2000, <http://www.cdainc.com/publications/dnh/options/OptionsManual.pdf>.

- What additional support (e.g., psycho-social or trauma support, communication skills improvement training), other than planned assistance, is needed to overcome local prejudices and to create an environment more conducive to co-operation?

In 2001 and 2002, UNHCR, with the help of several partners, undertook a pilot project called “Imagine Coexistence” in five active conflict and post-conflict situations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda.⁶⁰ The Project encouraged local communities to devise strategies that would help them overcome the paralyzing divisions among the community groups (i.e., Tutsi and Hutu, Serbs and Croats) as an essential element necessary for the improvement of their socio-economic situation. This is, of course, with the understanding that the perpetrators of atrocities and crimes were removed from the social scene.

The key lessons from the “Imagine Coexistence” study, which were also confirmed by other studies, illustrate the following:

- Mainstreaming conflict resolution is about consultation and learning about the needs of the community, social dynamics and the manner in which activities can consider existing social dynamics and reinforce non-discrimination and tolerance.
- While economic activities are frequently stressed by the community members as key needs, issues of bias, tensions and hatred are not always addressed. Therefore economic activities also need to be complemented by behaviour-changing activities.
- Activities designed to address psycho-social or behavioural problems prove to be effective in changing the attitude of opposing groups towards one another. In other words, where people have suffered collective or personal trauma, they often need time and space to reconcile and recognise that the other group has also suffered fear and trauma.
- Reaching out to as many people as possible has an effective awareness raising component, although it has been shown to have a limited impact on reducing or mitigating conflict unless the key decision makers (such as authorities, religious figures and other influential members of the community) are also engaged in the process. Some organizations (notably CDA) warn against engaging women without simultaneously engaging prominent members with power to affect change.

4. Approaches for conflict resolution practices

While each organization and agency will face different constraints and opportunities given their structure, mandate, resources, relationships, etc., the following suggestions can provide guidance on how to mainstream conflict resolution practices into humanitarian and development initiatives. These points are intended as general guidelines that should be adapted as needed. Furthermore, while the points below are clearly linked to each other, they should still be considered as distinct (i.e., challenges to implementing any of the points should not inherently prevent action on the other suggestions).

⁶⁰ For more information, please see The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, USA, *Imagine Coexistence*, July 2002, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/chrcr/pdf/imagine.pdf>.

- a. The concept and language of conflict sensitivity should be incorporated in the organization's mission statement (ideally this will be organization-wide but if that is not possible, at least at the country level). This makes it clear to staff, donors, stakeholders and other partners that conflict resolution is not merely an add-on activity for the organization. Rather, it should be considered fundamental that the organization's initiatives are implemented with full awareness of the complex interaction between the conflict at stake and projects in the target area. In effect, the organization seeking to maximize positive impacts and minimize any potential negative impacts on the conflict.
- b. In this regard, it is important to note the need for clarity *within* the organization itself regarding its goals and its approach to mainstreaming conflict sensitivity. According to Maria Lange of International Alert, this should include consideration of five components: commitment and motivation, organizational culture, capacity building, accountability and the external environment.⁶¹
- c. Prior to developing or implementing any programmes, a conflict analysis should be conducted either as a separate activity or (ideally) as part of a broader context analysis and/or needs assessment. The format and approach to conducting this analysis can vary according to the capacity and structure of the organization (and can be part of a joint initiative with other organizations active in the same area).

The following components should be considered in the analysis:

- i. **Profile** of the area, including boundaries and basic geographic, economic, political and social data.
- ii. **History of conflict** and past violence.
- iii. **Factors contributing to conflict** and the **dynamic linkages** between these factors: (see Annex 1 for guiding questions)
 - Economic;
 - Political/institutional;
 - Social;
 - External.

Where possible, these factors should be further identified as proximate or structural factors.
- iv. **Triggers:** what events have set off violence in the past? What future events could set off violence?
- v. **Actors:** Who is engaged in conflict? Who is affected by conflict?
 - For each actor identify interests, positions, capacities and relationships;
 - Actors should be identified as specifically as possible (i.e., large heterogeneous groups should be broken down);
 - International development and humanitarian organizations should be included in the actors' analysis (or even the organization specifically).

⁶¹ For a thorough discussion on this topic, please see Maria Lange, *Building Institutional Capacity for Conflict-Sensitive Practice: The case of International NGOs*, International Alert London, May 2004, http://www.international-alert.org/pdfs/institutional_capacity_ngos.pdf.

- d. **Peace Capacities** (What systems or mechanisms exist that are already or could be used for resolving conflict? Which groups or individuals have the potential to build peace and how can they be supported?)

Data used to undertake such an analysis should come from as many diverse sources as possible (formal and informal) and, if possible, should rely on local sources. Particular attention should be paid to *local perceptions* and *sudden shifts* in conflict factors as these can indicate vulnerability to violence. The collection and analysis of this information should be done in a transparent manner (with consideration that sometimes security conditions will make this difficult). It is important to recognize that not only the final output of this process of collecting and analyzing of conflict data is relevant (i.e., an analysis report or a situation briefing). The process itself, including the dialogue with staff and stakeholders, the practice of reflection, the consideration of multiple perspectives, etc., can contribute to conflict transformation and peace building.

- e. The findings of the conflict analysis should be directly and systematically linked to the decisions that are made regarding programming and implementation strategy. Whether the organization's initiatives aim to explicitly support conflict transformation and peace building, or intend to address identified humanitarian and development needs in a conflict-sensitive manner, the strategy for implementation should consider its potential impact on the conflict and local peace capacities.
- f. Systems for Monitoring and Evaluation during the project cycle should incorporate consideration of the conflict in the target area. Due to the dynamic nature of conflicts, it is important that conflict analysis is understood to be an ongoing effort. Conflict-sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation should refer to the initial analysis of the conflict and include questions such as:
- How has conflict evolved or changed over time (identify any trends)?
 - How has conflict affected implementation of the project or programme?
 - How has the project affected conflict and peace in the target area?

N.B.: The Search for Common Ground Resource Manual on Monitoring and Evaluation provides some useful tips on how this can be done; see the list of resources in Annex 11.

The organization/institution involved in these types of activities should recognise that its impact on the conflict is not just a result of specific projects. Rather, its presence and operations can also affect conflict dynamics as a result of other factors, including the attitudes and behaviour of staff, implicit ethical messages, communication patterns, raised expectations, etc. (*see discussion in RPP overview in Annex 1*). Therefore, the organization/institution should make a continual effort to educate staff on the importance of conflict sensitivity at all levels. This can be achieved by including a discussion of these issues during new staff orientation or in staff meetings, incorporating appropriate language in employee policies and procedures, specific training, awareness posters, etc.

Annex 1: The Reflecting on Peace Practice Project

The following are excerpts from the webpage of the US-based Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) project entitled *The Reflecting on Peace Practice Project* (RPP).⁶² In the words of the CDA, the RPP is an experience-based learning process that involves agencies whose programmes attempt to prevent or mitigate violent conflict. It seeks to analyze experiences at the individual programme level across a broad range of agencies and contexts, ultimately aiming to improve the effectiveness of peace-building activities.

1. Introduction⁶³

a. The importance of understanding the situation

Peace practitioners strongly assert that it is crucial that they understand the context in which they implement peace building programmes. However, the RPP process revealed that there is no consistent practice or accepted methodology for conducting such analyses. In fact, some good programmes did little or no analysis and some programmes that did thorough analyses ran into difficulties by creating or exacerbating divisions among communities. Therefore, while everyone acknowledges the importance to develop a deep understanding of the situation, there is no clear guidance about what kind of analysis to perform, or how best to do it.

RPP participants did note certain trends:

- Practitioners sometimes do only partial analysis, often focusing primarily on how their particular approach or methodology would best fit.
- People often depend on their intuitive understanding of the situation, rather than any formal or written analysis.
- Analyses are often performed only at the front end of a programme, with little effort at ongoing analysis, other than the natural process of noting events and changes.

b. Why context analysis?

As they assert the necessity of understanding the situation, peace practitioners note that some analysis is needed in order to avoid costly mistakes, find the correct programme focus (which issues and participants), identify priorities and strategic points of intervention and match agency skills and resources to the situation.

⁶² CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, *The Reflecting on Peace Practice Project*, <http://www.cdainc.com/rpp/docs/ReflectingOnPeacePracticeHandbook.pdf>.

⁶³ Ibidem, *Context Analysis*, http://www.cdainc.com/rpp/context_analysis.php.

Some kinds of partial analysis can have negative consequences. For example, when analysis is driven by a particular theory of change or based on a pre-set model of how to achieve peace, it may incorporate only confirming evidence and obscure as much as it reveals. Similarly, when performed at a great distance or with only limited local input, partial analysis can produce misguided programmes.

c. Three crucial questions

Although RPP did not reach agreement regarding any particular framework(s) for analysis, they did identify several questions which, if not addressed, may cause problems.

What is the conflict NOT about?

It is important to identify those areas where competing groups do agree, share common understandings, continue to interact productively, or mutually recognize a common interest. Examples include ongoing trade/commercial relations, common infrastructure and shared religious or ethnic background. Peace building programmes must reinforce, support and build on these kinds of elements.

Peace practitioners must also avoid the easy or popular assumptions about the nature of the conflict because such suppositions may prove to be wrong. For instance, government leaders and the media might characterize a conflict as being rooted in religious differences, when, in fact, the conflict is more closely associated with economic factors. In such circumstances, programmes that approach the issues as religious based may miss the mark.

What needs to be stopped?

Each situation of actual or potential violent conflict includes actions, situations and dynamics that need to be stopped. Context analysis must clarify how the war system or injustice system should be interrupted and who might resist such attempts. Must the trade in arms be stopped? Recruitment of young people? Exploitation of natural resources to support warring? Misuse of the media to target certain groups or distort facts? Funding from diaspora groups?

What are the international/regional dimensions of the conflict?

How do the policies and actions of forces outside the immediate local context (village, province, nation) affect the conflict? How might such factors be addressed? What kinds of local-international cooperation are needed to handle these external issues?

d. An experimental approach to cross-agency analysis

The RPP Utilization Phase will work with peace practitioners to further explore how best engage in context analysis. In particular, it will be promoting cross-agency sharing of perspectives and information as inputs into joint analysis, as well as

working with various tools, frameworks and models for analysis to determine which ones work best in different settings and with different levels of analysis.

2. *Negative Impacts*⁶⁴

a. **The imperative to “Do No Harm”**

There is no perfect peace programme. Movement towards peace – both at the macro level and the project level – often occurs as “two steps forward, one step back,” rather than linear progress. Things beyond peace practitioners’ control may go wrong. Peace practitioners also make mistakes. While many peace practitioners assert that it is better to try something and risk failure than to avoid risks by doing nothing, RPP’s review of experience suggests that negative impacts are not merely “*inevitable bumps along the road to peace.*” Peace practice can do actual harm by making a situation and the lives of people living in conflict worse rather than better.

Additionally, RPP found, these negative impacts are not inevitable. Experience shows that there are predictable ways negative impacts occur. Consequently, with greater awareness of how negative impacts occur and how peace agencies contribute to them, practitioners can anticipate and minimize them in their work.

b. **Six categories of negative impact**

What negative impacts arise from peace efforts? And how do peace agencies contribute to them? RPP found four broad categories of negative impacts of peace efforts. These impacts are usually inadvertent, occurring despite the passion, commitment, competence and high ethical standards of practitioners. Yet, while not all negative impacts are avoidable, RPP found common ways in which programme approaches, decisions and actions contribute to creating or worsening them.

Worsening Divisions between Conflicting Groups

Some programmes exacerbate divisions and tensions among groups by confirming or reinforcing prejudice, discrimination, or intolerance. This is the most common negative impact that emerged in the experienced reviewed in RPP. Agencies inadvertently contribute to this in several predictable ways:

- *Inadequate analysis and skills.* Agencies underestimate the depth of divisions, do too little consultation with participants beforehand, do inadequate analysis, or take on volatile situations that are more than they have the skills or experience to handle. As a result, they are not prepared to deal with problems.
- *Agencies inadvertently become advocates for one side.* Agencies may openly become advocates for one side, or, more indirectly, they may choose to work in ways that favour one side over another. When agencies focus exclusively on a particular, often marginalized, group, they may increase tensions by appearing to favour them.

⁶⁴ Ibidem, *Negative Impacts*, http://www.cdainc.com/rpp/negative_impacts.php.

- *Agencies neglect to monitor the after-effects of bringing people together across lines of conflict.* As a result, they may be unaware when participants are unhappy with the programme or neglect to manage the problem, leaving “spoilers” to spread views that reinforce prejudice or divisions with the other side.

Increasing Danger for Participants in Peace Activities

Peace work is dangerous. People who participate in peace activities are often trailblazers in a hostile environment. They are vulnerable to attack – physical, social, economic, or psychological – by people opposed to their activities and in this sense, consciously choose to take risks. But agencies – especially outside agencies – may further increase danger to participants either by creating false expectations of security or by creating additional real danger to participants. This can occur in the following ways:

- *Agencies create a false sense of security.* Agencies’ aura of expertise and protection may lead people to take risks they would not otherwise take.
- *Agencies put people in dangerous situations.* For example, when foreigners ask to be taken to places local counterparts feel are dangerous, the latter agree out of a sense of hospitality. Participation in an agency programme or affiliation with the agency may also draw attention that makes people become targets.
- *Agencies give counterparts unrealistically high expectations and/or insufficient follow-up support.* Local counterparts may be more vulnerable to attacks, or may suffer psychological burnout and trauma.
- *Agencies do not explicitly analyze and discuss with local partners how the risks each face are different.* Often, foreigners are safer than local people because they can call on their home governments for protection or attract the attention of the international media.

Reinforcing Structural or Overt Violence

Peace efforts can be conducted in ways that reinforce asymmetries of power behind the conflict or legitimize a status quo that systematically disadvantages some groups relative to others. Agencies contribute to this when they:

- *Assume that simply bringing people together in equal numbers will “level the playing field” in conflicts marked by deep asymmetries of power.*
- *Agencies accept conditions placed by the more powerful side in a conflict, or influential outside states, in order to conduct a program.* This often occurs in organizational matters, such as control over movement, visas, decisions over participant selection, use of names or symbols that are politically sensitive, etc. When agencies accommodate such demands, they may be perceived by the less powerful side as reinforcing power asymmetries and skewing the programme in favour of the more powerful side.
- *Agencies fail to challenge behaviour that affirms perceptions of superiority and inferiority of people in conflict.*

Diverting Human and Material Resources from Productive Peace Activities

Sometimes peace efforts may not do overt harm, but make peace more difficult by diverting the attention, resources and time of local people into activities not directly related (in the eyes of local people) to what drives the conflict.

- *Agencies come in with preset ideas (and models) and focus on issues that are not the most relevant or productive (in the eyes of local people).* For example, agencies may come in with preset ideas of what the main issues in conflict are or what is needed to build peace and do not listen to what local people want or need. In addition, agencies, believing people must deal with the past, may focus too much on “talking about past conflict” rather than on actions people can take to change the situation.
- *Foreign agencies, because of their access to greater resources, hire local activists to run their programmes, pulling their energies away from promising local initiatives and approaches.*

Increasing Cynicism

The ways in which agencies work with local communities and donors can inadvertently cause people to become cynical about the effectiveness of such efforts. This can both undermine agencies’ initiatives and the broader impact of these initiatives and lead donors to reduce support for peace work.

- *Agencies create unrealistic expectations about what can be achieved.* When the expected results do not occur, perceptions of failure amongst communities and donors are exacerbated.
- *Agencies are not fully transparent about their activities with communities, enabling rumours and suspicions to reinforce cynicism.*
- *Agencies recast established aid and development activities as “peace building”.* As they adopt new peace vocabulary without essentially changing the content of the programmes, they create cynicism about agencies’ real (profit) agendas.
- *Agencies assume that competence in one area translates into competence in others.* As a result, they design bad programmes.

Disempowering Local People

Most peace agencies seek to empower local people to take action for peace. However, they can unintentionally and unconsciously disempower local people and communicate an implicit message that local people cannot make peace without outside help.

- *Agencies counsel patience.* International agencies often counsel patience, saying “peace takes time,” with the aim of supporting local people to maintain confidence and persist in their activities in the face of ongoing conflict. However, this may also undermine people’s urgency to push bold new initiatives and reinforce a sense of powerlessness to end the conflict.
- *Agencies do not address local people’s needs.* Agencies teach people things they already know or introduce topics in which they believe people need training before consulting them. Agencies also often present models for dealing with

conflict authoritatively, without giving people the space to examine if and how, these approaches fit their situation. When agencies do this - often unconsciously - they convey the message that the outsider knows best.

- *Agencies foster dependence on outsiders.* Agencies can give the impression that they are “taking care of the situation,” causing people to think problems are being handled. Or they implement programmes in a way that fosters dependency on outside “experts” who are constantly brought in to run activities.
- *Agencies undermine effectiveness of NGOs with government.* Foreign agencies that work exclusively with the NGO sector and deliberately avoid offering support to government structures, no matter how weak, may foster resentment and competition between NGOs and governments, undermining NGOs’ positions vis-à-vis their own governments.
- *No exit strategy.* Agencies do not know when to leave and encourage local groups and people to take over.

3. *Criteria of effectiveness*⁶⁵

a. Challenges of assessing effectiveness

Assessing contribution to “peace writ large” is difficult. Most peace building programmes are discrete efforts aimed at affecting one (often small) piece of the puzzle and no single project can do everything. Outcomes are also difficult to assess. Attribution of social impacts to particular peace activities is even more difficult. As one practitioner noted, “*peace requires that many people work at many levels in different ways, and, with all this work, you cannot tell who is responsible for what.*” Moreover, when the goal of “just and sustainable peace” is so grand and progress toward it immeasurable in its multitude of small steps, it is difficult to know whether or when a particular programme outcome is significant for peace.

Yet every programme that does not fully accomplish the lofty goals of ending violent conflict or building sustainable just structures is not by definition ineffective. Are there criteria for determining which programmes have a more significant impact? Against what benchmarks can agencies identify whether their programmes have contributed to progress? How can agencies judge, as they are planning their programmes, which of the wide range of possible approaches will have more significant impacts on the conflict?

b. Programme Effectiveness vs. Peace Effectiveness

RPP’s review of experience identified two levels of effectiveness:

- *Programme Level.* At this level, agencies assess the effectiveness of a specific activity (e.g., peace education, dialogue workshop, income generation project) in achieving its intended goals. Programme evaluation at this level is often done regularly by agencies, even if not always systematically.

⁶⁵ Ibidem, http://www.cdainc.com/rpp/criteria_of_effectiveness.php.

- *Peace Writ Large Level.* The effectiveness question at this level asks whether, in meeting specific programme goals, an agency makes a contribution to the bigger picture. This requires assessing changes in the overall environment that may or may not result from the project or programme. RPP found that this question was rarely asked; rather, the connection was assumed. Nonetheless, practitioners involved in the RPP process affirmed that they do want to understand the connection between their peace programmes and ultimate impacts and that they are dissatisfied with the way projects are currently assessed.

c. Five criteria of effectiveness

- i. From analysis of the cases and practitioner reflection on their own experiences, the RPP process produced five criteria of effectiveness by which to assess, across a broad range of contexts and programming approaches, whether a programme is (or is not) having a meaningful impact at the level of peace writ large. These criteria can be used in programme planning to ensure that specific programme goals are linked to the large and long-term goal of “peace writ large.” They can be used during programme implementation to reflect on effectiveness and guide mid-course changes. The effort contributes to stopping a key driving factor of the war or conflict. The programme addresses people, issues and dynamics that are key contributors to ongoing conflict.
- ii. The effort contributes to a momentum for peace by causing participants and communities to develop their own peace initiatives in relation to critical elements of context analysis: what needs to be stopped, reinforcement of areas where people continue to interact in non-war ways and regional and international dimensions of the conflict. This criterion underlines the importance of “ownership” and sustainability of action and efforts to bring about peace, as well as creating momentum for peace involving more people.
- iii. The effort results in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances in situations where such grievances do genuinely drive the conflict. Peace practice is effective if it develops or supports institutions or mechanisms to address the specific inequalities, injustices and other grievances that cause and fuel a conflict. This criterion underlines the importance of moving beyond impacts at the individual or personal (attitudinal, material or emotional) level to the socio-political level. This criterion must be applied in conjunction with a context analysis identifying what the conflict is NOT about and what needs to be stopped. To reform or build institutions that are unrelated to the actual drivers of a specific conflict would be ineffective.
- iv. The effort increasingly prompts people to resist violence and provocations to violence. One way of addressing and including key people who promote and continue tensions (e.g., warlords, spoilers) is to help more people develop the ability to resist the manipulation and provocations of these negative key people.
- v. The effort results in an increase in people’s security and their sense of security. These criteria reflect positive changes both at the socio-political level (in people’s public lives) and at the individual/personal level as people gain a sense of security.

These criteria can best be thought of as intermediate-level benchmarks of success applicable to the broad range of peace work being done.

d. The criteria are additive

The experience gathered through RPP suggests that the effectiveness criteria are additive. Peace efforts that meet more of them are more effective than those that accomplish only one of the changes.

e. Four additional questions

To assess the significance of a particular change in a given context, four additional, interconnected elements must be considered:

- i. Is the change from this effort fast enough? Sooner is always better than later in ending violence and injustice. One should always ask whether this effort is more likely to gain results faster than other possible projects, or whether there are other ways to work that could produce results sooner.
- ii. Is the change from this effort likely to be sustained? Short-term gains are undermined over time in conflicts. Peace practitioners should hold themselves accountable to standards that look beyond the end of a particular project or programme.
- iii. Is the change from this effort big enough? If violence is occurring at a national scale, efforts to address it at a very local scale will be valuable, but not as significant as those efforts that affect the national scale. Peace practitioners should always ask: is this effort likely to have the widest possible effect, or is there something else that is more proportional to the actual conflict?
- iv. Are the linkages big or strong enough? The stronger and more strategic the linkage efforts make between levels, the more effective they will be vis-à-vis “peace writ large.” Practitioners should ask: is it possible to make stronger or more strategic linkages between the individual and socio-political levels, or between more and key people? Is there something more that can be done to address or take account of the regional, national and international dimensions of the conflict?

4. Partnerships among outsider and insider peace practitioners⁶⁶

Many agencies work for peace through partnerships between insiders and outsiders. Each side brings perspectives, networks, assets and leverage with particular constituencies that the other does not have. Peace practitioners believe that the key to insider-outsider cooperation is to focus intentionally on the relationship and negotiate explicit partnership arrangements. Peace work begins with forming productive relationships with allies and counterparts and then extending these outward to the people all groups aim to help.

⁶⁶ Ibidem, http://www.cdainc.com/rpp/partnerships_among_outsider_and_insider_peace_practitioners.php.

RPP's evidence shows that good insider-outsider partnerships promote effectiveness. While good partnerships do not always produce substantial impacts on the broader peace, they are necessary, if not sufficient. Bad partnerships put peace work at risk of failure.

a. Defining insiders and outsiders

First, who are insiders and who are outsiders? Are these terms synonymous with locally-based agencies and agencies that come from abroad or foreign agencies? Experience reveals that other dividing lines are far more relevant.

Insiders are vulnerable to the conflict, usually live in the area, experience the conflict and suffer its consequences personally. They include activists and agencies from the area, local NGOs, governments, church groups and local staff of outside or foreign NGOs and agencies.

Outsiders are choosing to become involved in a conflict. Though they may be intensely engaged, they have little to lose personally. They may live in the setting for extended periods of time, but can leave. Foreigners, members of the diaspora and co-nationals from areas of a country not directly affected by violence are all seen as outsiders. Those working with foreign agencies or local people working in the manner of an outside organization can also be seen as outsiders.

In practice there are no pure insiders or outsiders, but rather degrees of “insiderness” and “outsiderness.” Often the relationship can be defined in relative terms—someone is more or less of an insider/outsider than someone else. It is particularly important for those in the relatively outsider role to develop an awareness of how they are perceived.

b. Roles of insiders and outsiders

Local groups undertake most peace efforts with little or no outsider support. However, a partnership of insiders and outsiders working together for peace can produce opportunities for increased effectiveness, if the partnership is well-designed and managed, because conflicts often have both domestic and international dimensions. Partnerships provide another element of linkage—addressing the interlocking elements of conflict and ensuring that solutions on one level are not undermined at other levels.

Insiders and outsiders bring different and distinct qualities to peace partnerships. In broad terms, insiders provide depth of knowledge about the context and connections to the communities affected, including their culture, attitudes and world-view. Outsiders provide breadth of knowledge and connections to external constituencies, ideas, models and resources.

There are no hard and fast rules about which agency should do what. In fact, the roles that insiders and outsiders play often overlap. Partnership planning should address which group can act as an intermediary or provide training or lobby governments or monitor human rights abuses, etc., depending on the context, the geopolitical

environment, the types of agencies and the particular skills and networks of each group.

c. Insiders in peace work

Insiders, as those most in touch with the conflict and its consequences, clearly bring many of the key elements needed for peace work, including:

- i. Clear motivation, passion and commitment to the cause because they experience the costs of the conflict.
- ii. In-depth knowledge of the context, the conflict and its dynamics, the particular people and the internal politics of the groups in the setting and the internal resources that exist for peace.
- iii. Their reputation, credibility and trust with people in the setting. This can translate into ability to gain access to decision-makers, to negotiate, to mobilize constituencies, etc.
- iv. Leverage and the ability to apply political pressure in the setting due to personal influence or the domestic constituencies they represent.
- v. Ability to provide continuity, follow-up and long-term monitoring since they are present in the setting and able to maintain ongoing contact with the people they engage in peace efforts.

Insiders also recognize that they sometimes bring their personal views and biases, precisely because of their intimate connections to the conflict. Personal experiences can make it difficult for an insider to play a neutral role among the parties to the conflict.

d. Outsiders in peace work

Outsiders bring power, resources, certain kinds of influence and access to a wider stage to a partnership. Outsiders add value in a partnership when they:

- i. Lobby, advocate and raise awareness internationally on the local and international causes of the conflict and on peace initiatives by insiders.
- ii. Apply influence and pressure on national political authorities.
- iii. Use channels to leverage with outside constituencies to increase security of insiders through on-site presence, monitoring and reporting.
- iv. Provide comparative experiences and new ideas and techniques from other settings in ways that insiders can decide whether or not to take up.
- v. Host a “safe space” where all sides of a conflict can come together for dialogue, training, conferences, joint work, etc.
- vi. Use external contacts and credibility to mobilize resources.

e. Partnerships gone wrong

In the RPP workshops, insider and outsider practitioners stressed repeatedly that the role of outsiders is to support internal forces working for peace. However, RPP discussions revealed that insiders often feel undermined or weakened by outsiders. Outsiders often:

- i. Bring external models that make it difficult for people in the context to make their own ideas heard, impose “Western” values, devalue or ignore local solutions, show “arrogance” and “neocolonial attitudes.”
- ii. Focus on “perceptual work” at the expense of “structural work,” downplay the conflict and its roots, or try to provide quick fix solutions for historical problems.
- iii. Interpret the need to be neutral between the parties as the need to be silent on the abuses the parties commit.
- iv. Enter new situations with “institutional biases and strengths that can blind them to what is already happening.”
- v. Remain unaware of local realities and political nuance and come armed with easy ethnic or two-party frameworks for conflict.
- vi. Believe, mistakenly, that they are not part of the conflict, lacking awareness of how their own identities relate to the conflict.
- vii. Seek legitimacy in the conflict, becoming stakeholders because they want to be perceived as successful.

At the heart of the challenge facing insider/outsider partnerships is a serious power asymmetry felt by insiders. They feel that the priorities, biases, agendas and analyses of outsiders tend to dominate, especially where the outsider brings funding. On the other hand, insiders can undermine the partnership when they become the sole “gatekeeper” for the peace effort.

f. Principles for effective partnerships

- i. Both should bring their perspectives to joint planning, evaluation, analysis and monitoring. In the best partnerships, insiders and outsiders work as a team in which both perspectives are valued.
- ii. The relationship should be horizontal and based on mutual consultation with equal influence on decision making and involving joint processes for setting strategies, defining goals and evaluating results. Even in a horizontal relationship, the initiative and definition of needs must come from insiders.
- iii. Each agency’s role should be clearly and explicitly defined and those roles should be re-negotiated and re-assessed frequently.
- iv. Partners should take time to identify shared criteria by which to evaluate and improve their relationship.
- v. Partners should take the time to understand and define where their missions diverge. That is, they should explicitly recognize that they have differences as well as a common vision and they should clarify and acknowledge these as valid.

- vi. Together insiders and outsiders should build a sustainable strategy for when outsider funding and programming is phased out.
- vii. Insider and outsider staff are safer if they work together so they should be conscious of their roles in providing security, in different ways, for each other.
- viii. Each bring different and important networks to the work and both should focus efforts on mobilizing the constituencies where they have maximum contacts and leverage.

Annex 2: Coexistence QIPs

The following is an excerpt of the “Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)” published by UNHCR, May 2004.⁶⁷

1. Background

In 2000, UNHCR launched the pilot project “Imagine Coexistence”.⁶⁸ The intention was to explore an approach to ensure the sustainable repatriation and reintegration of people returning to divided and emotionally and economically strained communities. Governments and local authorities may perceive returnees as disruptive and potential sources of new violence and may be suspicious of them. Returnees themselves may face dislocation as they find others living in their homes or no homes to return to. Moreover, returnees may find themselves living side-by-side with those they only recently confronted as enemies.

2. Definition

Coexistence is a first step towards reconciliation. For UNHCR, coexistence may well be a more realistic point of achievement rather than reconciliation and/or forgiveness given the organization’s rather short-term engagement in reintegration activities.

Coexistence:

- Is more than living peacefully side by side;
- Involves some degree of communication;
- Involves some degree of interaction;
- Involves some degree of cooperation.

To achieve coexistence communities and individuals require the capacity and determination to recognize each other’s status and rights as human beings; develop a just and inclusive vision for the community’s future; and jointly plan, design and implement economic, social, cultural, or political development across former community divides.

3. Methodology

“Imagine Coexistence” is a bottom-up methodology, building on UNHCR’s existing connections within local communities following repatriation. It aims at enabling community members to find a reason, or an incentive, to come together. This is vital for people whom otherwise distrust, fear and/or hate one another. Economic opportunities may constitute such an incentive and the chances for promoting coexistence increase when projects encourage members of different groups to work alongside one another. The philosophy behind “Imagine Coexistence” is that by bringing divided communities to communicate, interact and cooperate through the provision of incentives (e.g., job creation), UNHCR can render return more sustainable and prepare the grounds for later

⁶⁷ See above footnote 60.

⁶⁸ UNHCR, *Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), A Provisional Guide UNHCR*, Geneva, May 2004, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=416bd5a44>.

reconciliation work. The latter stresses the need for planning coexistence interventions from the earliest stage jointly with actors in the field of reconciliation.

Initially an awareness campaign is conducted (e.g., community meetings, distribution of flyers) in the selected communities. Subsequently, the implementing partner will train and familiarise the communities with the concepts of Imagine Coexistence as well as project development. Training over a period of two to three months will include sessions on coexistence, communication, cooperation, project development and project management. Participants are subsequently requested to produce project proposals and submit them to a Coexistence Steering Committee.

In principle, coexistence interventions would apply a “**cluster**” approach, where projects, often with a primary income generation focus, are developed in various domains (education, arts, environment, etc.) by executing agencies (local associations, local NGOs and CBOs, private companies, local authorities, informal community groups) through a participatory decision-making process.

The objectives of coexistence projects in the communities of implementation are that:

- An increased number of people will actively work or speak out for coexistence (or a decreased number of people actively engage in or promoting conflict);
- Community leaders are influenced to act on behalf of coexistence;
- Links are established between the community leadership and the general public that makes it possible to communicate more effectively about how to foster coexistence;
- People from different ethnic groups share the leadership of the projects;
- The projects are perceived as joint endeavours by the project staff;
- The projects broaden the social connections among beneficiaries;
- The projects help generate other joint activities;
- Beneficiaries and/or project staff develop an increased level of trust in their relationship with each other.

A Coexistence Steering Committee, made up of: (i) Communities; (ii) Partners; and (iii) UNHCR staff, would review the proposals. On approval by this Committee, grants would be paid out to the communities for their proposed activities/project implementation. The Coexistence Steering Committee will use the criteria below for the selection of projects.

The coexistence projects shall:

- Exist or be created at the community level with local existing partners or groups already formed;
- Involve skill and capacity building;
- Contain an economic development dimension;
- Include joint activity among groups previously in conflict – including both beneficiaries and staff;
- Create a context where relationships can be built and where trauma healing can occur;
- Embody the principle of non-discriminatory treatment;
- Have a ripple effect including the potential for systemic impact;

- Possess sustainable effects and impact beyond the life of the project.

“Imagine Coexistence” is a modified QIPs approach as it involves the funding/support of small projects with quick and discernible impact. However, “Imagine Coexistence” is completely community driven. The micro-projects that the communities develop and present to the Steering Committee should not be disclosed to UNHCR, when the community mobilisation and training is conducted. The community defines its own priorities and plans and design the micro projects accordingly. However, UNHCR and the implementing partners can influence the processes during the training and project formulation phase as well as in the Steering Committee.

4. Examples of coexistence projects

- Launch of small businesses with inter-ethnic workforce and targeting client of all ethnic groups (e.g., fruit drying chamber, PVC bag production, nail production, coffee bar, internet café, drugstore/sales shop, taxi service, brick making);
- Agricultural production (e.g., apple, mushrooms and strawberry production) through training of mixed communities by local agricultural associations and provision of seeds and equipment (e.g., greenhouse);
- Animal husbandry after training of mixed communities groups on participatory approaches. In Rwanda, most groups opted for livestock rearing projects to generate manure for fertiliser. Goats are owned and kept and managed by the community at large;
- Skills training for youth, including journalist and computer training of inter-ethnic groups with the objective of increasing respect for other individuals rights/opinions and enhance objectivity;
- Post-traumatic stress therapy for children of different ethnic groups;
- Birth preparation classes for groups of Croat and Serb women in Drvar, Bosnia;
- Sports projects (establishment of inter-ethnic youth sports clubs, e.g., basketball, handball, judo);
- Inter-ethnic school of folk dancers: production of folk dresses for inter-ethnic dancer group to perform traditional dances of all ethnicities;
- Establishment of local newspaper, which also covers the issue of coexistence;
- Rehabilitation of an existing marketplace to establish a meeting place for all ethnicities;
- Support for activities of local NGOs already promoting coexistence, e.g., acting and dancing performances.

5. How are coexistence projects different from traditional QIPs?

Coexistence projects in terms of the final micro projects in the sectors of income generation, educational, health and cultural activities are not different from QIPs in the same sectors. However, the path towards the development of the micro projects and the selection criteria for micro projects that can be funded under “Imagine Coexistence” are distinct. The substantial training component that precedes the development of the project proposals has a focus on coexistence. It is explicit that only projects that can document clear elements of

coexistence (e.g., individuals of different ethnicity to plan and work together) can be funded. Coexistence projects must work towards the objectives described above.

6. Applicability of the “Imagine Coexistence” concept for QIPs in general

The “Imagine Coexistence” approach can usefully be applied in situations of return to divided communities for QIPs as well. QIPs can be programmed through with a “coexistence lens” allowing for a mainstreaming of the concept in UNHCR’s repatriation and reintegration operations.

In return situations to divided communities, it may be useful to insist on inter-ethnic participation in any QIP and in general the objectives for coexistence projects described above could be applied.

It should be noted however that training of the communities on the concept of coexistence, communication, cooperation and participatory decision making, should precede implementation.

7. Red flags to look out for

When? - Timing: When are communities that only recently opposed each other in conflict ready “to say hello” to each other again and start interaction? UNHCR’s coexistence experiences from Bosnia and Rwanda required four years after conflict before coexistence was discussed, while minority return in some cases had only started a year before coexistence activities were launched. Each situation needs to be assessed.

Is there already ongoing coexistence work: To make UNHCR intervention as effective as possible, a complete mapping of actors in the field involved in coexistence and reconciliation activities needs to be done initially to select the right partners and base the intervention on lessons learned by other actors. In some contexts, religious institutions have considerable experience in coexistence work, but it may also be politicised.

What are the coexistence issues: Coexistence problems may not be between different ethnic groups, but can well be within one ethnic group e.g., between generations or groups of individuals who found refuge in an asylum country and other groups that stayed in the village or became IDPs in the country of origin.

Is coexistence a priority for the authorities? In Bosnia it may have been the case with some of the local authorities, but there appeared to be no commitment (or interest) at the national level for coexistence and reconciliation. In such a context, it may be difficult to involve authorities and obtain their support.

8. Additional information on “Imagine Coexistence”

A complete file of the pilot project as well as guideline for designing coexistence interventions and lessons learned training materiel (CD-ROM) are available from the Reintegration and Local Settlement Section, Division of Operational Support.

Annex 3: “Imagine Coexistence” - Project Description and Evaluation

“Imagine Coexistence”: a UNHCR reintegration effort in divided communities

A. Project description

In spring 2000, UNHCR launched the “Imagine Coexistence”⁶⁹ initiative as a pilot project consisting of two components:

- a. Field component in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda;
- b. Research study to assess the pilot initiative and guide further developments.

In sum, the field component consisted of

*“The “imagine coexistence” pilot projects were then introduced to provide practical opportunities for people belonging to different ethnic groups to cooperate. These special community-based activities focused on income generation and job creation. The need for work was real in most communities and income provided added motivation.”*⁷⁰

*“But while solving the property and shelter issues was central to alleviating the immediate post-conflict tensions, it proved insufficient to bring conflicting groups of people back to live together again.”*⁷¹

B. Context

The outcomes of the research study include a series of recommendations to UNHCR and other actors for future *Imagine Coexistence* initiatives in other contexts. The main conclusions related to context analysis and selection of the appropriate context are:

- a. Coexistence experiences are useful after the violence has been brought under control. Therefore, in situations where the violence is not under control or where polarization is extreme, it is necessary to prepare groups separately before bringing them together, so that their work together is more productive.⁷²
- b. There was no possibility of evaluating attempts to use the same tool in other scenarios at an earlier stage of the conflict.

⁶⁹ Working definition of “coexistence” developed by the research team from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy: “a relationship between two or more communities living in close proximity to one another that is more than merely living side by side, and includes some degree of communication, interaction, and cooperation.”

⁷⁰ Sadako Ogata, *Imagine Coexistence and Peace*, Cape Town, 28 March - 1 April, p. 3, <http://www.jica.go.jp/english/resources/announce/2005/pdf/apr.pdf>.

⁷¹ Ibidem.

⁷² The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, USA, *Imagine Coexistence: Assessing Refugee Reintegration Efforts in Divided Communities*, July 2002, pp. 13, 51, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/chrcr/pdf/imagine.pdf>.

The essence of the first recommendation would suggest using projects similar to “Imagine Coexistence” in situations where violence is under control and polarization is not extreme in order to prevent (or limit) outbursts of violence.

C. Broadening the range of activities

In addition, the research paper recommends to include other projects in the “Imagine Coexistence” initiatives besides income-generation and self-reliance activities. Sports, music and dance, or bringing together professionals to talk about their work (journalists, counsellors and educators) can create a fruitful environment for members of different communities to share time and interests together while avoiding difficult topics⁷³.

Income, in fact, was found

*“(...) neither necessary nor sufficient for coexistence efforts to be successful. It was not necessary for coexistence because there were many non-income projects that produced positive coexistence results; and not sufficient for coexistence to occur, because the income projects with a coexistence benefit were supplemented with activities other than the work environment itself that created the conditions for improved relationships.”*⁷⁴

These initiatives should also be accompanied by expert resources (and therefore training) to allow the conflicting parties to reconcile.

*The following is an excerpt of the “Imagine Coexistence” published by The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, July 2002.*⁷⁵

Checklist of the design, implementation and evaluation of coexistence projects at the community level

1. If possible, adapt the current project cycle to allow for longer implementation.
 - a. Allow one year for choosing implementing partners, conducting community assessment and choosing activities. This will include bringing the community into the planning process, providing initial training and designing an integrative strategy.
 - b. Begin implementation of integrated plan in the second year.
 - c. Allow the implementing partner considerable flexibility and independence in designing a strategy and in choosing and monitoring activities.
 - d. The strategy should include a plan for involving the community in the decision-making on the mix of activities. Income generation is one of the choices, but not the priority. Again, the emphasis should be on the PROCESS used rather than focusing solely on the CONTENT of activities.
 - e. If there is no existing forum in the community for making such decisions, the implementing partner should explore the possibility of creating such a forum. This

⁷³ Ibidem, p. 13.

⁷⁴ Ibidem, p. 26.

⁷⁵ The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, USA, “Imagine Coexistence”, July 2002, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/chrcr/pdf/imagine.pdf>.

must be evaluated for its feasibility and safety and requires an additional assessment of the barriers to collective efforts in a particular locale.

2. Choose an implementing partner according to the following criteria:
 - a. familiarity with and trust of the local community
 - b. strong commitment to and/or good track record in coexistence work
 - c. ability to be self-reflective and creative
 - d. comfortable working in a participatory way with the community
 - e. able to set a positive coexistence example for the local community
3. Give the implementing partner the flexibility to be creative in responding to community needs. This may mean UNHCR taking risks to try something new, or to modify initial goals as more information or experience in a given community is obtained.
4. Before developing a strategy, UNHCR and the implementing partner should conduct a “coexistence” assessment, to include both an historical and current analysis of the following elements in the community, country and region in which activities will occur:
 - Identities of contending groups
 - Power dynamics between and among these groups
 - Key actors, both official and non-official
 - Interests and needs of key actors and groups
 - Role of authorities and relationship of authorities to population
 - Ways in which the communities currently manage conflict (formal and informal)
 - Levels of trauma and how it is being addressed
 - Attitudes and perceptions that identity groups have of each other
 - Risks for group members to engage in coexistence activities
 - Extent to which coexistence activities are already functioning
 - Receptivity to developing coexistence
 - Perceptions of UNHCR, based on its other activities in the country or region
5. To the extent possible, the communities involved in the activities should be partners in the assessment process.
6. This analysis should be updated at various intervals during the course of the coexistence work, as many of the parameters will be changing in the context of a political and social transition.
7. Decide, with the implementing partner, what can/ should UNHCR do that would most promote coexistence in the target communities. In addition to/instead of the funding of micro-projects, this could include designing training, providing space for dialogue, providing opportunities for joint planning and decision-making, convening a network of like-minded organizations, etc. It involves assessing not only where opportunities exist or are needed, but also where UNHCR might have the most leverage/comparative advantage.

8. Consider the possibility of single-identity work (i.e., with one party in a conflict) in addition to joint work (with two or more parties). In some circumstances, where polarization is extreme, it is necessary to prepare groups SEPARATELY before bringing them together, so that their work together is more productive. Such activities should be explored.
9. The implementing partner's strategy should include providing training BOTH in conflict resolution skills and in project design and management. The timing of such training should be decided upon by the implementing partner, according to the assessment findings as outlined above; however, training works best when interspersed with implementation activities and the integrated plan should reflect this combination.
10. Trainings should be conducted by experts who understand the need to create "space for dialogue" as part of the training process and who are competent to facilitate such dialogue. Training should include not only project leaders but also as large a part of the beneficiary community as possible, to expand the impact of the initiative considerably.
11. Determine how both local and regional authorities will be managed in relation to coexistence activities. This includes deciding which of the authorities to include and in what ways. It also means assessing the potential impact of excluding any of the authorities intentionally and how to mitigate the consequences.
12. Encourage transparent and shared management in all of the planned coexistence activities.
13. The scope and number of activities should be carefully calibrated so that the implementing partner can comfortably provide the support and oversight that is required for success. These are labor-intensive activities (in both time and capacity) and it is better to do fewer interventions well than to do many with insufficient resources and support.
14. The implementing partner should be trusted to choose activity leaders, whom they feel are both technically competent and have a sincere interest in coexistence.
15. Technical support, in terms of management and/or substantive consultation, should be made available to all activity leaders who want it.
16. Evaluation should focus on the process as well as the outcome of the initiative. This means doing the following:
 - a. coexistence assessment (see #4 above)
 - b. broad national or regional survey of existing coexistence efforts
 - c. documentation of the implementing partner strategy
 - d. documentation of the community engagement process
 - e. collection of implementing partner monthly reports and final evaluation data

- f. Interviews by outside researchers with activity leaders and beneficiaries, once at beginning of implementation phase and once at the end of the project cycle.
 - g. Interviews with implementing partners and with HCR staff by outside researchers: at beginning of strategy development, at beginning of implementation and at the end of the project cycle.
17. The frameworks developed by the Fletcher School evaluation study (2002) can be used as the starting point for analyzing these data, to focus on tracking changes in relationships, communication, trust and the “normalizing” of conflict, i.e., the ways in which relationships change constructively to allow conflict to occur and be managed without violence. Improvements and modifications may be necessary as the context changes. Copies of these frameworks are available in electronic form from UN Headquarters in Geneva.
18. Progress in coexistence work should be evaluated based on how far relationships have improved from the beginning of the intervention, NOT based on whether they have reached some predetermined end point. This means taking the initial coexistence assessment very seriously, as it will be used as a baseline from which to judge progress.
19. Incorporate a research component into any new initiatives to be sure that the learning is captured and the methodologies are tested and refined. It should also be designed to maximize learning ACROSS implementing countries, so that each locale can learn from the other. Ideally, this research should be done by an organization outside of UNHCR, in order to maximize its legitimacy, ideally in collaboration with local researchers.
20. Provide training for all UNHCR staff who are working with this initiative in:
- conflict resolution and transformation
 - psychosocial dynamics of conflict, including impacts of trauma
 - coexistence assessment and evaluation
21. Assess the ways that the coexistence “lens” can be applied in other areas of UNHCR work; i.e., how contracts are allocated to local companies; etc.
21. Seek ways of working with other international agencies to make the most of scarce resources by building alliances. This can also increase UNHCR leverage in designing strategies that target the larger structural issues hindering coexistence.

Annex 4: Overview of Conflict Settlement Initiatives in Iraq

The following outlines major peace-building efforts in Iraq during 2006 and until October 2007.

The bombing of the Al-Askari mosque in Samarra on 22 February 2006 set in motion a wave of sectarian violence. In the days and weeks that followed, a series of bilateral agreements were reached between political and religious groups with the express intent of de-escalating the situation.

On 25 February 2006, Sadrists and the Association of Muslim Scholars (AMS) released a joint statement condemning terrorism, attacks on people and places of worship and the media response. Additionally, the parties called for the return of mosques occupied since the attack and established a fact-finding commission. The Sadrists concluded a similar accord with the Sunni Tawafuq Party, but added measures regarding the release of detainees taken into custody in the aftermath of the bombing.

On 25 February 2006, the then Special Representative to the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) in Iraq, Ashraf Qazi, convened an emergency meeting of key Iraqi political leaders at his residence. In this context, then Prime Minister Al-Jaafari called on the SRSG to make recommendations on the way forward. Later that day, Prime Minister Al-Jaafari announced a 24-point plan, which reflected previous bilateral agreements to establish a unified and public approach to the crisis.

From 6-11 March 2006, UNAMI brought nine Iraqi political leaders to South Africa to examine their experience with transitional justice and reconciliation. The result was the beginning of a series of meetings intended to develop the Baghdad Peace Initiative (BPI). The first exploratory roundtable was held on 11 April 2006 and subsequent roundtables, bilateral meetings and focus groups were held over the following three months. On 4 October 2006, the UN Secretary-General officially approved the commencement of activities related to the BPI.

On 21-22 April 2006, Jordan's King Abdullah invited Iraq's religious leaders to attend a conference in Jordan for the purpose of reaching a common position on reconciliation. In the days before the conference, uncertainty emerged about the participation of major leaders. The United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) announced a vote to nominate the new Prime Minister during the weekend of the Amman conference, thus decreasing attendance even more. In the end, the conference had little impact.

On 25 June 2006, the newly appointed Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki presented his 24-point reconciliation plan to the Council of Representatives, which became the centrepiece of reconciliation efforts in Iraq. However, the plan remained a set of principles, whose mechanism for implementation was not explained in any detail. The inclusion of an amnesty to armed groups involved in violence was among the most controversial elements of the plan, sparking significant debate within the Prime Minister's own

political block and in the US Congress. The scope of an amnesty and whether to include those who had killed Iraqis or Americans remained unclear by the end of 2007.

The Reconciliation Plan created a 25-person National Council for Reconciliation comprised of members of the Council of Representatives and other influential individuals, with the Minister of State for National Dialogue acting as its chairperson. The National Council for Reconciliation reached out to armed groups and attempted to establish a political dialogue to elucidate their demands. It intended to develop a set of recommendations for the Prime Minister and the National Security Council as to how to implement a comprehensive reconciliation programme. Additional structures envisaged in the Reconciliation Plan such as governorate councils and field offices remained unrealized through October 2007.

The Prime Minister's Reconciliation Plan called for conferences with tribal, religious, political and civil society leaders. On 26 August 2006, several hundred tribal leaders met in Baghdad and agreed upon a declaration in support of the Prime Minister's reconciliation efforts. A conference of civil society leaders was held in Baghdad on 16 September 2006, with approximately 1,000 civil society representatives participating. A meeting of political leaders was set for November 2006.

Efforts to promote dialogue in the Council of Representatives emerged as well. Sadrist member, Baha Al-Araji, with direction from Moqtada Al-Sadr, invited Sunni delegates to establish a parliamentary committee to supplement the efforts of the Ministry of State for National Dialogue. On 20 July 2006, in response to escalating sectarian violence, parties called for a cessation of the killings and declared support for the Prime Minister's National Reconciliation Plan. On the same day, Baha Al-Araji led a joint Sunni-Shi'ite delegation to visit Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani in Najaf.

Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani issued a strong statement against Sunni-Shi'ite violence on 20 July 2006. He made a call *"to all Iraqis of different sects and ethnic groups to be aware of the danger threatening the future of the country and stand side by side against it."* Repeatedly, Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani made significant gestures and statements aimed at reconciliation and peace in Iraq. For example, on 12 May 2006, he cancelled Friday prayers for Shi'ites in the Southern City of Zubayr to show solidarity with Sunnis mourning the assassination of one of their clerics.

Prior to the Samarra bombing, the League of Arab States' (LAS) sponsored the Iraq National Accord Conference with a first Preparatory Meeting held in Cairo from 19-21 November 2005. It was chaired by LAS Secretary-General Amre Mousa and assisted by SRSF Ashraf Qazi. A second Preparatory Meeting followed in Cairo from 25-27 July 2006. Both meetings were attended by a wide spectrum of political, religious, tribal and civil society leaders from Iraq. Yet the initial hope that the LAS would be able to reach out to groups outside the political process was dashed given the mistrust on the part of some Shi'ite factions in the Iraqi Government. As of October 2007, LAS' efforts to promote a reconciliation conference for Iraq had failed.

On 2 October 2006, Prime Minister Al-Maliki announced the Ramadan Accord, which was supported by ten Iraqi political leaders from across the political spectrum (list of signatories attached, Annex 6). The four-part agreement provided for the establishment of a) local peace and security committees in Baghdad, b) a Central Committee for Peace and Security, c) oversight of the media and d) monthly reviews of the plan. Since the announcement of the plan few details have become public and little progress has been seen.

On 19-20 October 2006, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) sponsored a meeting of 29 Iraqi religious leaders. The meeting focused on addressing inter-sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shi'ites. The final agreement ("Mecca Agreement") contained ten points, including edicts forbidding kidnappings, incitement of hatred, attacks on mosques and places of worship and forcing people from their homes. It also called for the release of detainees not charged with a specific crime.

Efforts for reconciliation stalled in 2007. Although the Government maintained its position that it sought to reconcile with those outside the political process, its focus switched from reconciliation conferences and government-backed initiatives to the work of the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) of the Council of Representatives and its legislative agenda. It was hoped that progress on major legislative issues such as federalism, the distribution of oil revenues and reversal of de-Ba'athification would foster reconciliation. However, slow progress and the CRC's inability to meet deadlines have frustrated hopes of significant progress.⁷⁶

Engagement of Iraq's neighbours remains a critical element of reconciliation in Iraq. A preparatory conference was held in Baghdad on 10 March 2007 at an expert level and on 4 May 2007, the Government of Egypt hosted an expanded ministerial conference of neighbouring countries of Iraq in Sharm el-Sheikh. The meeting included representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council, the European Union, the G-8, Bahrain, Egypt, LAS, OIC and the UN. The participants reaffirmed the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and national unity of Iraq. They also committed themselves to the principle of non-interference in Iraq's internal affairs and good-neighbourly relations. The participants endorsed the formation of three working groups and pledged to support them with active participation and technical assistance. They recognized the role of the UN, LAS and OIC in supporting the ongoing political process in Iraq towards national reconciliation.

Throughout spring and summer of 2007, a variety of private, largely foreign initiatives attempted to bring together Iraq's ethnic and religious leaders. The Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East, led by Anglican priest Canon Andrew White, organized meetings to bring together mid-level Sunni and Shi'ite clerics in Baghdad in June 2007 and subsequently in Cairo in August 2007. At the start of September 2007, the Finnish crisis-prevention group Crisis Management Initiative, headed by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari and the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies of the University of Massachusetts in Boston, hosted a four day summit of

⁷⁶ See UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 20, see above footnote 6.

leading Sunni and Shi'ite politicians. The participants committed themselves to a peace process that would aim at curbing religious and ethnic disputes, ending foreign troops' presence in Iraq according to a realistic timetable, providing an amnesty to Sunni insurgents not affiliated with "terrorists" (i.e., Al-Qa'eda) and training an effective police force.

In the last week of September 2007, Sunni Vice-President Tareq Al-Hashemi put forward a 25-point initiative to end inter-ethnic distrust and sectarian violence. On 27 September 2007, he visited Grand Ayatollah Al-Sistani, who reportedly welcomed his initiative. By the end of October 2007, however, it had not gained widespread political momentum.

On 6 October 2007, Muqtada Al-Sadr and Ammar Al-Hakim of the SIIC, whose parties had increasingly become involved in militia fighting, signed a three-point agreement stressing the need to stop bloodshed, unite media efforts and establish a joint committee with branches in the provinces to maintain order between the two factions.⁷⁷

To date, the various reconciliations initiatives, both inside and outside Iraq, have had no real impact on the scale and nature of the violence in the country. In most cases, they have involved statements of principle and intent as well as lists of desired measures with little or no indication of how they will be implemented. As a result, the proliferation of initiatives has led to widespread scepticism.

30 October 2007

⁷⁷ See also UNHCR, *December 2007 Addendum to Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 26-27, see above footnote 6.

1. Timeline - 2006

22 February	Bombing of the Al-Askari shrine in Samarra
25 February	AMS – Sadrist Post-Samarra Agreement
25 February	Tawafuq – Sadrist Post-Samarra Agreement
25 February	Prime Minister Al-Jaafari's 25-point plan
6-9 March	UNAMI/Office for Constitutional Support - trip to South Africa
11 April	Exploratory Process of the BPI begins with First Roundtable
21-22 April	Jordan Meeting of Iraqi religious leaders
20 May	Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki announces Government of National Unity
25 June	Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki presents the National Reconciliation Plan
20 July	Meeting of Iraqi political leaders to address violence
20 July	Joint Sunni-Shi'ite political delegation visits Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani
20 July	Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani issues statement on Sunni-Shi'ite unity in Iraq
25-27 July	Second Preparatory Meeting of the LAS' Iraq National Accord Conference
26 August	Tribal meeting of the National Reconciliation Plan
16 September	Civil society meeting of the National Reconciliation Plan
2 October	Ramadan Accord
19-20 October	Mecca Declaration

Annex 5: Overview of *Conflict Resolution* Projects

a. Conflict Resolution Programme - Palestinian Refugees in Baghdad Initiative

NGOs have implemented a conflict resolution programme focusing on Palestinian refugees and the Iraqi community. Phase I of the training on Conflict Resolution Science was organized and funded by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) for implementation in Baghdad in March 2006. Phase I presented fundamentals of conflict resolution to a group of 16 participants, including seven members of Iraqi NGOs, six members of Palestinian NGOs and the Palestinian community and two members of the Iraqi Government. Phase II of the training was implemented in April 2006 in Erbil. Participants were instructed on handling and organising a workshop; ten participants successfully participated and completed the training.

Activities and outcome

From April to October 2006, the first phase of programme activities began with the support of Oxfam. Six qualified trainers went into the field to conduct an assessment and analysis of the conflicts faced by the Palestinian and Iraqi communities. Existing issues of conflict were identified and the roots and causes of these conflicts analyzed, using face-to-face interviews. A detailed report was drafted to focus on six major issues of conflict, analyzing also the context, factors and perspectives of the different parties to the conflict.

The second phase of programme activities saw the organization of workshops in an effort to bring together the parties as well as individuals capable of exerting influence. The purpose was to promote dialogue on issues of conflict previously assessed. The conflict resolution workshops provided an opportunity to find common ground and agree on solutions and recommendations to solve misunderstandings.

The third phase of programme activities included the involvement of members of the Palestinian and Iraqi communities in social and communal activities. These activities aimed to weave friendly links and build trust among members of these communities. This third phase acted as a conflict transformation step.

b. Middle East Reconciliation Project: International Centre for Transitional Justice

Context and initiative

In the wake of the Second Intifada and unprecedented levels of violence occurring between Palestinians and Israelis, the Middle East Reconciliation Project at the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)⁷⁸ aimed to integrate transitional justice processes into the political agenda of decision-makers and the discourse of civil society actors. The experiences of countries like South Africa and Peru demonstrated the

⁷⁸ IDRC, *Middle East Reconciliation Project: International Center for Transitional Justice*, IDRC Project No. 103378, <http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/11426219461103378 ICTJ.pdf>.

importance of transitional justice as an integral part of peace processes; however, premature reconciliation efforts can inhibit the peace process and exacerbate tensions between conflicting parties.

Intended outcomes

The Middle East Reconciliation Project aspired to produce four positive outcomes in the period of February 2006 to October 2007 [*Timeframe for the project implementation has been extended to include part of 2008*]:

1. The development of a clear understanding by the main actors and policymakers within Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) of transitional justice mechanisms, options and experiences in other parts of the world;
2. Provide accrued knowledge to inform future policies associated with peace negotiations;
3. Improve communication and coordination of civil society organizations, leadership and the international community on issues of transitional justice;
4. Include and make audible the experiences of victims in all transitional justice processes as much as possible.

Activities

To accomplish this goal, ICTJ provided its technical expertise to strengthen local capacity and sensitize key opinion and civil society leaders to the importance of considering transitional justice processes and mechanisms along the road to peaceful settlement of the conflict.

After assessing community needs and identifying key partners and parties who could potentially benefit from capacity building activities, an internal assessment of transitional justice options for Israel and the OPT and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of various processes taking place will be completed. The purpose of the internal assessment is to produce recommendations on future actions to promote a transitional justice agenda in Israel and the OPT, including a possible joint workshop if such an idea is supported by local partners. Other means of achieving the goals of the project include the linking, sensitizing and capacity building of key actors on transitional justice strategies and the development of recommendations for follow-up activities to promote the transitional justice agenda in the region.

c. IPCRI - Bringing Israeli and Palestinian experts together to find solutions⁷⁹

Initiative

IPCRI, the *Israeli Palestinian Centre for Research and Information*, brings together Israeli and Palestinian technical experts in meetings and workshops in order to find

⁷⁹ IPCRI, Work Plan 2007 <http://www.ipcri.org/files/work2007.pdf>.

common solutions to critical issues for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Some of their initiatives are listed below.⁸⁰

Activities and outcomes

STAT – the Strategic Thinking and Analysis Team – is a group of senior Israeli and Palestinian non-officials, who were all involved in various aspects of former negotiations and the peace process. The STAT is convened monthly for weekend and one day meetings and serves as the primary think-tank of IPCRI for the development of policy alternatives for rebuilding the bilateral, internationally supported Israeli-Palestinian political process.

The Economic Working Group – is a group of Israelis and Palestinians representing the private and public sectors. It aims at developing economic policies that will strengthen the economies of both societies, build economic links and mutual interests and coordinate economic policies.

Israeli-Palestinian Water Working group – Since 1989, IPCRI has been convening groups of Israeli and Palestinian water experts. These efforts led to the convening of the 1st and 2nd Israeli-Palestinian International Academic Conferences on Water.

Israeli-Palestinian Business Council⁸¹

This group was created to encourage and facilitate constructive cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian business leaders to reinforce economic relationships and support peace building efforts with a credible and legitimate voice.

The Israeli-Palestinian Jerusalem Working Group⁸² brings together Israeli and Palestinian professionals, working to find solutions to one of the major issues of conflict, i.e., the status of Jerusalem. For example, on 24-27 April 2003, a group of Israelis and Palestinians participated in a joint workshop and drafted a “Road Map for Jerusalem”. This Road Map was shared with the Israeli Government, the PLO and the members of the Quartet.

⁸⁰ For more info, see www.ipcri.org.

⁸¹ See World Economic Forum, *The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting Ends With Concrete Proposals to Tackle Global Issues*, 28 January 2007, http://www.weforum.org/en/media/Latest%20Press%20Releases/am07_closing.

⁸² IPCRI, Israeli-Palestinian Jerusalem Working Group, *Jerusalem in the Performance Based Road Map to a Permanent Two State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, <http://www.ipcri.org/files/jrm.html>.

Annex 6: Overview Of Conflict Transformation Projects

a. “Imagine coexistence” in Baghdad

Initiatives

UNHCR and UNOPS partners are implementing four projects on conflict transformation in two locations in Baghdad. In addition, a workshop funded by UNHCR has been carried out in Erbil to share with implementing partners the modalities of this typology of projects.

Outcomes

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and members of the host community participate together in training on conflict transformation and vocational training and are granted small amounts to start new businesses, e.g., managing a sports area, opening or expanding shops with the condition that the business is sustainable and IDPs and host communities jointly participate in the work and jointly benefit from the income.⁸³

b. Income generating projects: cement block factory⁸⁴

Context

Basrah suffers from a severe housing shortage and many extended families share one small house. Costs of building materials have skyrocketed in the last three years and accordingly many cannot afford to build or expand their homes.

Initiative

Millennium for Relief and Development Services built a small cement block factory for ten families, who employ other villagers to work in the factory. Both, the employers and employees, include persons who, as a result of conflict and landmines, have been disabled and face difficulties to find employment. In addition, the high number of returnees in the village led to competition over employment and services between the returnees and the host community.

Outcomes

The factory enabled the workers and their families to make a living from producing cement blocks, while the rest of the village benefited from cheaper building materials for their homes (total of 250 beneficiaries). There is already a long waiting list for people wanting to buy the completed blocks.

c. NCCI Conflict Resolution Training and Workshops

Context

There are few opportunities for members of conflicting groups to meet and discuss issues affecting their lives in an environment conducive to sustainable and peaceful outcomes.

⁸³ UNHCR, Iraq Operation, September 2007.

⁸⁴ UNHCR, Iraq Operation, May 2007.

Initiatives and Outcomes

From 2005 to present, NCCI has taken an active role in providing the space and means to allow Iraqis to activate and strengthen non-violent methods of conflict resolution by implementing four conflict resolution projects.

The first project was a one-week Conflict Resolution Training for staff of NCCI member NGOs. The training successfully built bridges between once divided participants. Participants were so impressed with the training that some of them formed their own institutions for conflict resolution.

The second project was a training of the trainer on conflict resolution methodologies and techniques for trainers involved in conflict management programmes through civil society organizations.

The third project was a three-day Conflict Resolution Workshop with leaders of various layers of civil society and a one-day conference with the international community. The outcome of the project was a declaration of commitment to national dialogue, signed by all participants.

d. National Dialogue Programme⁸⁵ - NCCI-UNDP

Initiatives: The fourth project was the *National Dialogue Programme*, which was a NCCI-UNDP partnership. The more than three hundred Iraqis who participated in one or more of the 12 *National Dialogue* workshops included representatives of academia, the media, the government (including members of the Council of Representatives), civil society organizations (including women's and human rights groups), tribes, religious groups, the judiciary, the private sector and political groups. During the workshops, each group discussed how their roles, influence and initiatives could improve national dialogue and explored peaceful means to resolve their differences. Despite their different perspectives, constructive dialogue occurred during these workshops and participants realized that they were all facing the same hardships. Participants were equipped with the knowledge, attitudes and tools to practice non-violent national dialogues in their home communities. Follow-up activities in Iraq included the introduction of a spin-off national dialogue programme at Baghdad University and a declaration committing to national dialogue developed and signed by religious leaders. The *National Dialogue* Report serves as a guide for peaceful conflict resolution strategies and outlines the participants' main recommendations to restore the rule of law and social fabric in Iraq. The report will be disseminated to targeted groups, depending on their sphere of influence on future strategies for Iraq.

⁸⁵ See, for example, NCCI, *Social mobilization and campaigning for Civil Rights and rule of law*, Workshop held 29 - 31 May 2007, http://www.ncciraq.org/IMG/doc_ND-WS-3.3-recommendations-En.doc.

Global Outcomes

The notion of peaceful conflict resolution in Iraq was introduced to all layers of Iraqi society. Peaceful conflict resolution initiatives are taken by participants. Conflict resolution actors are linked and work as a network.

e. Al-Askari Shrine - Samarra Iraq - UNESCO

Context: Since February 2006, UNESCO and its partners have been preparing the site for the rehabilitation work and the reconciliation process. The attack on the Al-Askari Shrine on 22 February 2006 was a turning point in Iraq after the former regime's fall. The goal behind this attack was to stir sectarian violence among Iraqis. And in fact, sectarian violence escalated after the attack.

Objective: The aim of the project is not only to restore a damaged historical and religious site, but an attempt to counter the spiral of violence, which has killed thousands of Iraqis and led the country to the brink of civil war. It is hoped that the shrine's restoration will positively contribute to the reconciliation process.

Initiatives: UNESCO already initiated activities to contribute actively to the reconciliation process through the restoration of the shrine:

- First, by promoting dialogue between all involved parties, including the Iraqi Government, the Samarra community, Sunni and Shi'ite communities, etc.
- Secondly, by rehabilitating infrastructure in Samarra and other religious sites throughout Iraq.
- Thirdly, by raising public awareness on the project goals.
- Finally, by training Sunni and Shi'ite technical personnel to work together in rehabilitating the shrine.

f. Balad Al-Salam Movement - Iraqi women seeking peace

Context: UNIFEM supports peace initiatives through Act to End Violence Against Women (ACT). ACT aims at empowering Iraqi activists (both women and men) as well as non-governmental and governmental organizations in order to create the basic infrastructure that will help preventing violence against women (VAW) in Iraq. The project hopes to strengthen the ability of local partners, NGOs and the Iraqi Government, to raise public awareness on violence in general and more specifically violence against women. In addition, the project hopes to address the underlying causes of violence. The project should also expand the expertise of the Iraqi Government and heighten its sensitivity to domestic violence.

Initiatives: In September 2006, UNIFEM initiated a discussion between female MPs representing the major political blocs in the Council of Representatives. This took place under the auspices of a regional event, hosted by the International Peace Building Movement of Egyptian First Lady Suzan Mubarak. It discussed government

accountability in applying UN Security Council Resolution 1325⁸⁶. The discussion focused on the role of women in the peace building process, to be precise, defining the commonalities between female MPs as a step forward to create a common strategy.

The discussion triggered a call for a united women's movement working to stop the violence despite their different affiliations/backgrounds. They also continue to hold meetings in Iraq and conducted a press conference to launch the Balad Al-Salam movement during April 2007.

Bass / Balad Al-Salam Movement created the following definition:

Who are we: We are Iraqi women seeking peace.

Movement definition: *Country of peace* is an independent, non-profit women's movement, rejecting violence and discrimination in all its forms, advocating the promotion of human rights and respect for the rule of law and pluralism.

Objectives:

Participation in sustainable peace building efforts and the rejection of violence against women in Iraq.

- Reducing manifestations of violence.
- Increasing the active participation of women in the peace-building process.
- Spreading the culture of peace.

Strategies:

- Expanding participation in peace building activities.
- Stimulating civil society organizations to actively participate in the movement's activities.
- Coordinating with official bodies in furtherance of their peace building efforts.
- Working to enhance and increase the active participation of women in negotiations between parties in conflict.
- Formulating pressure upon political and official bodies to engage women in committees concerned with ongoing peace building efforts.
- Highlighting role models contributing to consolidation of peace in Iraq

Other initiatives in Iraq

g. *The United States Institute of Peace* (USIP) has organized conflict management training courses in conflict management for Iraqi authorities and Iraqi

⁸⁶ "Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed unanimously on 31 October 2000. Resolution (S/RES/1325) is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace". Quoted from: PeaceWomen, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, available at <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/1325.html>.

civil society. This has served to increase the conflict management skills of peace practitioners. USIP also continues to provide funding for Iraqi organizations to conduct conflict management initiatives and to build the capacities of Iraqi authorities and grassroots organizations.

- h. ***The Mennonite Central Committee*** (MCC) funds and promotes conflict management and peace initiatives through a number of Iraqi partners. These partners have engaged in implementing conflict resolution training and launching peace building activities.
- i. Throughout 2004 and 2005, the ***International Centre of Conflict Management of Columbia University***, with the support of USAID, provided a series of trainings focusing on the diverse areas of Conflict Management to a handful of national staff members employed by international NGOs. These trainings led to the creation of the Iraqi Peace Builders Network comprising of individuals who have the knowledge and capacity to replicate conflict management training in Iraq. This network of trainers is composed of individuals settled in diverse geographical locations in Iraq.
- j. ***The Canadian Catholic Organisation for Development and Peace***, in partnership with the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue, has initiated a two-year programme to build the capacity of a number of Iraqi local organizations. Capacity building trainings have included conflict management topics. These Iraqi organizations were further funded to launch conflict-sensitive programmes and peace building initiatives in their target localities.
- k. ***Mercy Hands for Humanitarian Aid***, an Iraqi NGO which launched the Peace Activation and Conflict Transformation (PACT) Centre in 2006. The Centre is dedicated to establish new models which address conflicts within the Iraqi civil society. This is facilitated by training civil society and grassroots movements in conflict management and conducting direct interventions to solve conflicts and promote peace.
- l. ***Un Ponte Per (UPP) “Promotion of non-violence in Iraq and in the Middle East” (Iraq)***. The project’s main goal is to support the establishment of a network of non-violent activists in Iraq. Un Ponte Per..., together with the Catalan Association Nova and the Gandhi Centre in Pisa, organized a series of seminars by international experts in 2006, involving around 40 Arab activists from six countries. The main topics discussed pertained to techniques of non-violence, conflict management, conflict settlement and resolution, non-violent struggle and principles of human rights. An “Iraqi week of non-violence” was called in April 2006 and repeated in May 2007. A website has been set up concerning this initiative (<http://www.laonf.org/>). The network is currently organizing an International Day of Human Rights in December 2007. This activity is financed by UPP and several European NGOs.

m. IPCRI - The Development of Text Books in Peace Education for Palestinian and Israeli Schools⁸⁷

Context

The text books used in Palestinian and Israeli schools have come under great criticism for not only failing to help create a culture of peace, but also for sustaining a culture of hatred. Text books on both sides of the conflict have been found severely lacking and fail to educate Israeli and Palestinian children from a perspective of mutual recognition as entailed in previous bilateral agreements. The issue of educational reform has been highlighted within the framework of the Road Map for Peace and stipulates significant revisions of text books on both sides.

Initiatives

The final goal of this project is the proposed joint production of new multi-disciplinary text books concerning peace and democracy for grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. These text books are to be disseminated in both Palestinian and Israeli schools. The text books will be produced jointly by Palestinian and Israeli educators. The books will be produced in three phases: (1) trial editions, (2) feedback from the field and (3) a first final edition.

Most citizens in areas of conflict long for peace but are affected by sentiments of hatred and revenge for past events promoted by political and community leaders during times of conflict. It is thus essential to intervene with skills-based peace education that helps children and adults to understand the root causes of conflicts and how to address these through peaceful means. Democratization and democratic values will be central in the development of these text books.

n. International Efforts of Religious Leaders: A Common Word. Interfaith Dialogue between Muslims and Christians

At the end of Ramadan (13 October 2007), 138 senior Muslim scholars, clerics and intellectuals addressed an open letter to the Pope and the Christian world. Signatories included well-known figures from every denomination and school of thought in Islam, representing every major Islamic country or region in the world, including Iraqi Shi'ite and Sunni leaders.

The letter is titled *A Common Word between Us and You* and starts with highlighting the common ground between the two religions:

*Muslims and Christians together make up well over half of the world's population. Without peace and justice between these two religious communities, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians.*⁸⁸ “

⁸⁷ See www.ipcri.org.

⁸⁸ A Common Word Between Us and You, *Open Letter to His Holiness Pope Benedict XIV*, p. 2, 2006, <http://www.acommonword.com/lib/downloads/CW-Total-Final-v-12g-Eng-9-10-07.pdf>.

Replies from bishops as well as scholars and academics from different parts of the world were received.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ *Loving God and Neighbor Together: A Christian Response to A Common Word Between Us and You*, Preamble, <http://www.ptsem.edu/NEWS/letter.pdf>.

Annex 7: Mainstreaming Conflict Management Practices into Aid and Development Work

a. First: Do No Harm. Workshop with NGOs and UN aid workers on Local Capacities for Peace in Iraq (NCCI)

The first workshop on Local Capacities for Peace for aid workers engaged in Iraq in three years was held in December 2007 in Amman. Participants were introduced to the reasons and practices for conflict-sensitive analysis when designing, implementing and monitoring humanitarian assistance projects. Participants clearly highlighted the need for providing such training to more aid workers, including NGO and UN staff as well as donors. Possible follow up is a *Train for Trainers* in Arabic for Iraqi aid workers, provided funding becomes available.

b. UPP - Iraq: "Justice Network for Prisoners"

This programme aims at promoting, defending and advocating human rights for prisoners and detainees in Iraq's detention centres and prisons managed by national authorities. It is carried out through a network of 32 Iraqi human rights organizations. The Iraqi NGOs which have taken part in this training course, lasting two years, are currently involved in monitoring activities in prisons, providing legal assistance and spreading the principles of human rights in civil society. The training entailed technical sessions, including reporting and monitoring policies and an exchange visit to detention centres in Morocco to heighten awareness of human rights and conflict management as cross-cutting issues. It is planned to publish a report on the state of Iraqi prisons before the end of 2007. The programme started in 2006 and is currently in its second phase. It is funded by the European Commission through UNOPS.

c. UNICEF – Lebanon - Case Study⁹⁰

"In Beirut, during the heaviest of fighting,⁹¹ all schools were closed and children spent hours in bomb shelters. UNICEF was concerned about the loss of schooling over many months and the psychological stress these children were experiencing. One staff person started a children's educational magazine named SAWA, which in Arabic means "together". She and her colleagues began to print and distribute a booklet of stories, math problems, geography and history to children across Lebanon. They left the two centre pages of the magazine blank and invited children to use them to draw a picture or write a story or a poem to share with other children. They were soon inundated with contributions, which they printed in subsequent editions. Through this publication, which reached many children, UNICEF built on the common experience of all Lebanese families and fostered new connections amongst the Lebanese community."

⁹⁰ Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace-- or War*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, February 1999, p. 30.

⁹¹ Lebanese Civil War, 1975–1990.

d. *Tajikistan – Case Study*⁹²

“In the aftermath of the war in Khatlon Province in Tajikistan, an NGO designed its aid programmes to re-emphasize the history of economic interaction between the two villages of Kulyabi and Garmi, who in the past had worked side by side. In Garmi village, the NGO supported a wool production enterprise and in a nearby Kulyabi village it supported traditional rug weaving. Although the two groups did not work in the same place, they readily agreed that the wool producers would supply raw material for the rug producers. Each enterprise depended on the success of the other for its own success.”

e. *Sarajevo – Case Study*⁹³

“[...] When the war erupted, local NGOs provided critical emergency aid to the war victims. International NGOs, which wanted to remain non-partisan in relation to the conflict, identified these NGOs as partners and recipients of their funds. To demonstrate their even-handedness, however, some external NGOs earmarked their funds for specific ethnic group, i.e., they provided funds to the Serbian NGO for Serbs, to the Muslim NGO for Bosnians and to the Catholic NGO for Croatians. Some local NGOs later commented that, although the international NGOs did not cause the divisions among the communities, their way of targeting aid did reinforce division. They asked whether if the international NGOs had given funds to the group of agencies and had to decide together how to allocate those funds, it might have reinforced and strengthened joint decision-making and common concern for suffering.”

⁹² Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace-- or War*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, February 1999, p. 48.

⁹³ Ibidem, p. 35.

Annex 8: Practical Steps To Create Positive And Constructive Workshops For Iraqis

These steps aim at creating a friendly and constructive atmosphere among the participants of various Iraqi backgrounds. This will defuse any tension that might arise due to the political and security divisions in Iraq and also create an opportunity for them to interact as individuals in a safe and neutral space, hence reducing previous prejudice or perceptions. The key is for the facilitator/organizer to gain the trust and respect of all the participants without being considered hypocritical or biased.

- A. Organizers and facilitators should be viewed by all the participants as neutral, objective and trustworthy. Hence, they should avoid expressing any preference or opinion that might be considered biased by one group. It is preferable to avoid expressing personal opinions on sensitive issues and instead facilitate discussions among participants. Facilitators should avoid criticising any group in order to get closer to another group and be aware that some participants are anxious to know the facilitator's political/religious affiliations, especially if she or he is of Arab origin.
- B. During preparations, the facilitators and organizers should anticipate the lines of division and causes of tension among the participants (if any). This will guide and alert the facilitators when they address a sensitive issue and help them to know the participants' positions.
- C. The organizers should try to select participants from all spectrums of the Iraqi population. If there is a series of similar workshops, the organizers should break-up homogenous groups and not include them all in one workshop unless it is necessary for logistic reasons. Mixing professional backgrounds of participants brings added value to workshops by allowing the participants to network. Bringing together individuals from different communities can allow participants to see different solutions made possible by combining efforts.
- D. The facilitators should identify minority groups and encourage them to participate actively, express their ideas positively, encourage other groups to listen and facilitate inter-group interactions. However, facilitators should also take care not to show extra attention or favouritism to minority groups.
- E. In the case of shared accommodation, ask the participants to permit the organizers to allocate rooms for members of different groups of the same age range. Participants usually resist mixed accommodation initially, but will eventually adapt. Organizers can suggest assigning accommodation for the first two nights and then allowing participants the option of changing.
- F. Facilitators should use the opening session for participants to agree on ground rules. In addition to logistical rules such as non-smoking and respecting time, participants should be encouraged to include rules such as respecting the others'

dignity and point of view, not to interrupt others, to avoid aggressive or accusing statements, etc. In the event of a heated discussion, the facilitator can resort to these ground rules (which are kept posted throughout the workshop) and remind all participants of their collective agreement to these rules.

- G. When breaking up into working groups, facilitators should try to maintain mixed groups. The same applies for seating arrangements. It is natural that the initial preference for the participants is to congregate with those they already know. The facilitator should encourage the participants to regroup in mixed groups either by random selection or creating teams for ice-breaking exercises.
- H. The facilitator should try to strengthen the team spirit of the mixed working groups. This can be done by creating competition games among the teams (and rewarding the winning team with symbolic tokens), asking them to choose their team names or design a logo and by praising their collective performance and outputs. Even if it takes additional time, such team-building exercises are a rewarding “investment”, especially during the first day.
- I. Organizers should include sufficient time for the participants to interact with each other either during the breaks or meals or at the end of the day. It is also suggested to organize a hosted dinner and excursions for all participants.
- J. Facilitators should not suppress disagreements or debates between groups as long as these are conducted in a respectful manner. If the debate becomes prolonged or aggressive, the facilitator should remind the participants of the ground rules and wrap up the discussion using a summarizing technique (restating the opposing positions in non-offensive, positive wording, ensuring equal representation and moving forward to another point).
- K. The closing session of the workshop is a very important opportunity to reinforce the new relationships that have developed and allow the participants to express their appreciation for each other’s efforts. This can be done by various means such as a group exercise (for example, the Crystal Ball Exercise: each participant expresses his/her appreciation for another participant for something he/she contributed positively during the workshop and then throws the ball to him/her, who acknowledges another participant, until all have been recognized).
- L. Organizers should compile a contact list to be distributed to participants at the end of the workshop. To help sustain communication after the workshop, the facilitator can send a “thank you” email to the group applauding their participation and expressing his/her eagerness to stay in contact with the participants.

Annex 9: Iraqi Media List

The following media list has been compiled by UNESCO Iraq based on information provided by NGOs and partner organizations.

State-Run Media	
Iraqi Media Network (IMN):	
1. Iraqiya TV	6. Radio Scheherazade
2. Iraqiya TV2 (in Kurdish, Syriac, Turkman, English)	7. Basra TV and Radio Station
3. Iraqiya Sport TV	8. Al-Sabah Newspaper
4. Republic of Iraq Radio	9. Al-Akhbar Newspaper
5. Radio Al-Jeel	10. Al-Shabakah al-Iraqiyah (weekly magazine)
Journalist Union	
Iraqi Journalists Union	Iraqi Journalists Federation
Broadcast Media (not comprehensive)	
Al-Diyar TV [privately owned satellite TV station]	Ishtar TV
Ashur Satellite TV and Radio [supported by the Assyrian Democratic Movement]	Al-Sharqiya TV [privately owned satellite TV station]
Radio Nawa	Sumeriyah Satellite TV and Radio Sumer FM [independent Iraqi satellite TV and radio network]
Al-Hurriyah TV [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)]	Turcomaneli TV [funded by Turkoman Front]
Kurdsat TV [PUK]	Al-Baghdadiyah [privately owned satellite TV station]
Kurdistan Satellite Channel [Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)]	Radio Al-Mustaqbal [Iraqi National Accord Movement]
Zagros TV [KDP]	Radio Al-Rasheed
Nahrayn TV [linked to Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC)]	UR FM
Dijla TV	Al-Mu'tamar Radio Station [Iraqi National Congress]
Radio Dijla [independent radio station]	Radio Iraq FM
Radio Al-Nas	Al Fayhaa TV
Al Mirbad Radio	Kurdistan Radio
Al Forat TV	Radio Baghdad
Bilaadi TV	

Print Press (not comprehensive)

Al-Adalah [Daily newspaper published by the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC)]

Al-Ahali [Independent, Kurdish weekly newspaper published in Arabic (liberal)]

Aso Newspaper [Kirkuk, independent, Kurdish daily newspaper]

Badr [Baghdad, political daily newspaper published by the Culture and Information Institution of Badr Organization]

Baghdad [Daily newspaper published by the Iraqi National Accord Movement]

Al-Basa'ir [Weekly published by the Muslim Scholars Association in Iraq]

Al-Bayan [Daily newspaper in Arabic published by the Islamic Al-Da'wah Party]

Al-Bayyinah [Weekly newspaper published by the Hezbollah Movement in Iraq]

Al-Da'wah [Weekly newspaper in Arabic published by the Central Bureau of the Islamic Al-Da'wah Party]

Al-Dustour [Independent daily newspaper in Arabic]

Alef Baa' Magazine [Weekly, political, social, published by Independent Alef Baa' Publishing and Advertising House]

Dar al-Salam [Baghdad, political weekly newspaper published by the Iraqi Islamic Party]

Al-Furat [Baghdad, independent daily newspaper published by Al-Furat Advertising, Publishing and Distribution Company]

Al-Haqa'iq [Independent, daily newspaper]

Hawlati [Kurdish, independent, daily newspaper]

Al-Hawzah [Baghdad, weekly religious newspaper published by the Al-Shahid Office Media Centre (describes itself as the mouthpiece of the Shi'i seminary)]

Al-Iraqi [Baghdad, weekly newspaper in Arabic]

Al-I'tisam [Baghdad, political newspaper published by the General Conference of Ahl al-Iraq (Iraq People)]

Al-Ittihad [Kurdish daily newspaper published in Arabic by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan]

Ishraqat al-Sadr [Twice-weekly newspaper published by Al-Sadr Movement]

Al-Mada [Independent, daily newspaper published by Al-Mada Media Establishment]

Al-Manarah Newspaper [Basra, independent, daily newspaper]

Al-Mashriq [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic published by the Al-Mashriq Establishment for Information and Culture Investments]

Al-Mu'tamar [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic, published by the Iraqi National Congress]

Al-Muwatin [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic]

Al-Parlaman [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic]

Roz Baghdad [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic]

Sawt al-Ahali [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic]

Al-Sabah al-Jadeed [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic]

Al-Shabakah al-Iraqiyah [Baghdad, weekly magazine published in Arabic]

Al-Ta'akhi [Kurdish daily newspaper published by the Kurdistan Democratic Party]

Al-Ummah al-Iraqiyah [weekly newspaper in Arabic published by the Iraqi Nation Party]

Al-Zaman [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic, published by the International Al-Zaman Corporation]

News Agencies

Voices of Iraq (Aswat al Iraq)

National Iraqi News Agency (NINA)

Annex 10: The Implications of Do No Harm for Donors and Aid Agency Headquarters⁹⁴

I. Introduction: The Issue⁹⁵

Whose responsibility is it to ensure that international assistance provided in conflict zones around the world does not feed into, exacerbate or prolong those conflicts? Who is responsible for ensuring that aid programmes not only do no harm but also help reduce intergroup hostility and reinforce intergroup connections? Why is it that, though most international assistance agencies acknowledge that aid can be misused and manipulated in warfare so that it often feeds into and prolongs conflicts, efforts to eliminate these negative impacts remain irregular and infrequent? What can be done to change this and who has the power to do so?

These are the questions this paper addresses. In it, we argue that there are some clear and identifiable limits to what field workers, alone, can do to prevent aid from "doing harm." Aid donors, agency headquarters and the "superstructure"⁹⁶ of aid are responsible, also, for some processes that feed into, exacerbate and prolong conflicts in aid-recipient societies. It is time for the broader aid community to undertake systematic analysis of aid policies and operating procedures in order to understand how these reinforce the negative impacts, or limit the positive impacts, of aid in conflict. It is time to undertake conscientious adjustments of aid's systems to ensure that aid no longer has unintended conflict-worsening impacts. It is time, in short, for donors, aid agency headquarters and others in the aid superstructure to assume responsibility and hold themselves accountable for the ways in which their decisions and actions interact with conflicts.

In the following pages, relying on the field-based learning of the LCPP, we examine the areas where donor, headquarters or other superstructure actions are implicated in how aid interacts with conflict. We then consider how this can and must change and reflect on why, so far, even those aid donors and agencies that are aware of these issues have, nonetheless, not undertaken earnest efforts to eliminate wrongful impacts.

Field-Based Evidence

So far, most efforts to minimize the harmful impacts of aid have been focused at the field level. To their credit, aid workers in the field have been the first to acknowledge that their assistance can and too often does, "do harm." This awareness gave rise to the Local Capacities for Peace

⁹⁴ Article from: Mary B. Anderson, *The Implications of Do No Harm for Donors and Aid Agency Headquarters*, Fall 1999, http://www.cdainc.com/publications/dnh/the_implications_of_do_no_harm_for_donors_and_aid_agency_headquarters.php.

⁹⁵ Formal consultations with donors and NGO headquarters in Denmark, Canada, Germany, and the U.S. and numerous informal discussions in many other settings provided helpful insights into the issues discussed in this paper. While I should be held accountable for the way the ideas are gathered and written, others should be credited for helping generate the ideas and gather the experience.

⁹⁶ I borrow the term "superstructure" from Ian Smillie, p. 82, *Relief and Development: The Struggle for Synergy*, Occasional Paper #33, Thomas J. Watson Jr., Institute for International Studies, Brown University, 1999.

Project, a collaborative effort involving many NGOs, national government donors and United Nations agencies, intended to improve understanding of how aid and conflict interact. Given the lessons learned through this effort, field staff of many aid agencies in many countries now regularly analyze the impacts of their programmes on the context of conflict where they work and make adjustments to their field level operations to avoid negative impacts thus identified and to promote positive impacts. Aid donors have funded this field-level effort and aid agency headquarters have blessed their staff involvement in it. So far, so good. But, it has become clear that field staff, alone, cannot correct all the harm that aid may do.

There are some policies, arrangements and operating procedures of aid agency headquarters and of donors that feed into and reinforce aid's negative impacts. With all the inventiveness in the world, field workers cannot mitigate or eliminate the harmful effects of these center-driven problems.

There are three ways that aid agency and donor policies or operating procedures cause field programmes to exacerbate conflicts. These are: 1) a centrally-driven focus on and control of aid's inputs that obscures, distorts and undervalues impacts; 2) over-specification of the identity of recipients that reinforces intergroup divisions; and 3) funding and fund-raising approaches that are based on an over-simplification of conflict (demonizing some groups and victimizing others). Some of the negative effects are direct in that they restrict critical and relevant field choices; others are indirect (though no less powerful) in that they shape the modes and tone of aid deliveries. We explain and illustrate each of these below.

1. The Centrally-Driven Focus on and Control of Aid's Inputs

The most important mechanism by which donor or headquarters actions negatively affect field operations in conflict areas is through a centrist-driven focus on and control of inputs. An over-emphasis on the quantity, quality or timing of aid's resource deliveries--its inputs--can (and too often does) obscure, distort and undervalue aid's actual impacts. This problem has two essential parts. The first is direct, having to do with how aid's resources buttress the processes and motives of warfare. The second is indirect having to do with how the emphasis on inputs affects definitions of aid's effectiveness. We look at each effect in turn.

First, aid's resource inputs provided in conflict settings represent wealth and power and wealth and power are the very "stuff" of conflict. They represent both the means and, often, the ends of the fighting.

Field experience has shown that aid's inputs can be and often are, stolen by fighters. In Liberia (where recent looting of food supplies was referred to by some Liberians as "Operation Pay-Yourself"), Southern Sudan, the refugee camps in Goma, Afghanistan during the civil war, Somalia, various sites in the Former Yugoslavia, Chechnya and many many other war locations, the goods that aid agencies import have become part of the spoils and means of war and a focus for intergroup rivalry. Food aid feeds armies as well as civilians; drugs heal soldiers as effectively as they support the health of children. The equipment that aid agencies require to do their work (in particular vehicles and radio systems) can be "harvested" by warriors for war use. To prevent theft, aid agencies frequently hire guards. But, where the guards are supplied by local militias, the result is a steady income for armies to "protect" goods from their own misuse.

Aid's goods can reinforce other aspects of conflict. As many recipients of aid attest, deliveries of aid can prompt attacks on beneficiaries by warring militias. Such attacks are often violent and deadly. Aid's resources can become a factor in conflicting sides' calculations about where and when to strike. The power to control where aid may be distributed can be and frequently is, used to determine population movements and population concentrations. Commanders know the importance of managing aid deliveries for this purpose.⁹⁷

Aid's inputs can exacerbate intergroup rivalries and hostilities. Groups at war always look with suspicion on deliveries of aid to the "other" side, even when there is a clear need for humanitarian assistance. Aid's inputs can affect income opportunities for people in conflict areas and, in some cases, reinforce incentives to continue warfare because there are profits to be made.

Not surprisingly, when the quantity of aid relative to overall economic activity is large, or when the quality of aid's inputs is high, the likelihood that aid will become important to the fighting of a conflict is heightened.

There are many ways to meet the critical needs of suffering civilian populations that are less susceptible to theft or manipulation by warriors. Most of these require on-site ability to manage the amounts, timing and methods of distribution; these decisions are best located in the field. Often, lowering the value of goods (while not lowering their intrinsic usefulness to sustain life) or supplying less in less predictable ways offer the best options for ensuring that goods reach the intended beneficiaries without diversion to war purposes.⁹⁸

The provision of aid, when the inputs are donor or headquarters-driven in terms of type (high value), amount (too much, too concentrated) or timing (must be delivered by the time the next food shipment arrives or by the time the next proposal is due to the donor; emergency aid is available now, development aid will take months to get), obviate the ability of field-based staff to make appropriate decisions and arrangements.

The second way that over-emphasis on the quantity and quality of aid's inputs can negatively affect aid's impact on conflict is through a distortion of the definition of aid's effectiveness. Though the effects of this distortion are indirect, these may be even more pernicious than the direct effects.⁹⁹

When an agency's Board of Directors or top management calculates success in terms of growing budgets or increasing tonnage of goods delivered, they establish performance criteria based on

⁹⁷ And, as we have written elsewhere, the implicit ethical message of this reliance on arms for protecting aid goods is that it is legitimate for arms to decide where and to whom aid goods can be provided. This message can also play into and reinforce warfare.

⁹⁸ LCPP found that field staff can affect whether aid's inputs worsen or reduce intergroup tensions in a variety of localized ways. However, their ability to manage this is directly dependent on how much control they can exert over quantities, types and delivery schedules of inputs.

⁹⁹ Sometimes quantity and quality do represent an important aspect of effectiveness. However, experience shows that often, in conflict areas, they are less important than the how, where, when and with whom decisions of aid delivery.

aid's inputs and the hoped-for results of its delivery rather than on its actual impacts on recipients' lives and societies. When fund-raisers are assessed (and rewarded) according to their ability to increase annual agency income, this reinforces the tendency to equate agency effectiveness with its own growth and financial health rather than with the field impacts of its programming. When donors rely upon and reward with regular and growing contracts, the NGOs that move the most goods the fastest they, too, play into the misdefinition of aid's purpose. When donors apply rigid definitions on the "phases" of wars in their funding allocations, local conflict area dynamics and opportunities are sacrificed to external bureaucratic procedures. This emphasis on center-driven concerns regarding quantity, quality and timing of inputs among aid agencies and donors is conveyed to field staff who recognize that their rewards and promotions are tied to "getting the best/most goods out in the least time." Because they know they are less apt to be asked about their programme's effects on the processes or incentives of warfare than about quantity and timing of aid deliveries, they pay insufficient attention to the context of conflict and to their programmatic options for avoiding harm and reinforcing local capacities for peace.

Even the recent attention of some agencies and donors to the development of impact indicators will not correct this effect if the focus remains on things rather than processes. Where the thrust has been to find measurable, quantifiable indicators for the purposes of reporting to donors, the result of these efforts is to feed the misdefinition of effectiveness--again with an over-emphasis on things relative to relations.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, the emphasis on measurable indicators has created a backlash among some NGOs who resist all attempts to focus on impacts because, they argue, the good they do is not susceptible to measurement.

2. Over-Specification of the Identity of Recipients

When an aid agency's policies or operational arrangements predetermine who shall be the recipients of aid, or which groups in a society shall be the partners for aid delivery and when these predetermined groups exactly overlap with and match one of the sub-groups in a society who are in conflict with other sub-groups, such headquarters-based restrictions limit the ability of field staff to programme without reinforcing inter-group divisions. Sometimes the specification of aid recipients arises from an agency's mandate. For example, by their histories and funding sources, some agencies must work with a specific identity group (e.g., refugees, Red Cross Societies, Christians, Muslims).¹⁰¹

Sometimes, biased intergroup effects are more subtle. For example, if an agency is committed to (or a donor requires) work with "those who suffered the most" and the setting is a post-war environment in which one identity group has "lost" (that is, suffered more than others), the agency's resources may be directed to only one side of the conflict and, thus, reinforce subgroup identities and intergroup competition. Or, if an agency is mandated to work through "local

¹⁰⁰ While shifts in intergroup relations are not measurable in a quantifiable sense, it is possible to assess them with some clarity. It is possible to codify impact assessment techniques that highlight and elucidate the real impacts of aid on physical well-being and on social and political processes.

¹⁰¹ Interestingly enough, one sub-group specification that arises from mandates that does not, as a rule, feed into intergroup tensions is the focus on children. Experience shows that in many war zones, people on all sides can unite around a belief that children should not be forced to suffer from the wars of their elders. Thus, aid agencies with children as their focus can sometimes use their mandated beneficiary definition to reassert intergroup connectedness if they design their programmes to capitalize on this shared value.

village-based groups" (or a donor requires such programming) and villages are inhabited by people of a single religion or ethnicity or other sub-group, the act of partnering can advantage one group over others.

In all cases where aid is intentionally or inadvertently channeled toward one of the sub-groups in a conflict setting, the result very often is that the aid, itself, plays into and reinforces the divisions and intergroup competition that the conflict represents. Aid both is seen to be biased and, in fact, benefits some people more than others. In some cases, such one-sided aid has prompted raids, battles or other overt acts of intergroup violence.

To avoid such effects, field staff need latitude to adjust programming approaches. There are many ways to use the resources of aid to connect people and reassert commonality and empathy across warring lines rather than to feed into and worsen differences. Quite often, this requires some redefinition of target or partnering groups; a process best done in the field in order to ensure that aid's primary goal of meeting genuine needs is also met.

If an agency's headquarters is unwilling or unable to relinquish these choices to field staff, this can and often does, exacerbate conflict. If a donor favors, or insists upon, proposals that specify recipients or local partners in terms that represent sub-groups in a conflict, this can and does exacerbate conflict.

3. Funding and fund-raising that over-simplifies conflict, demonizing some and victimizing others.

Funding and fund-raising approaches that over-simplify conflict miss the critical opportunity to educate legislatures and the public about the nature and complexities of the real conflicts where aid is given. More dangerous, however, is another outcome of some fund-raising strategies.

Warriors are aware of the power of donors and aid agencies to affect broader public opinion and sympathies. Thus, some manipulate the events of warfare and the access they provide aid workers to conflict regions, to make their case to the broader world. In some areas warriors have actually perpetrated atrocities against people under their own control in order to elicit horrified support for their cause from the outside world. When aid agency funding appeals convey guilt and innocence easily, based on pictured suffering, they can encourage this cynical manipulation of aid for conflict purposes.

Most wars are more complicated and messier than this. Care taken at the donor and agency headquarters levels to resist images and stories that over-simplify guilt and innocence can reduce the likelihood that warriors can manipulate aid's messages for their own purposes. Maintaining clarity about authentic innocent suffering and genuine commission of war crimes and interpreting these to the broader world is a responsibility of aid donors and agencies that intervene in conflict areas. Doing so with full integrity requires that the stories and pictures used in raising and allocating funds never cheapen either suffering or criminality.

II. What Can Be Done and Who Can Do It?

It seems clear that some donor and aid agency headquarters policies and operating procedures can cause aid programmes to worsen conflicts. None of this is new knowledge and many directors of aid-providing NGOs and staff of donor agencies are aware of these issues.

Furthermore, donors and agencies know what to do to affect change in their institutions. Donors know how to institutionalize criteria for effective aid in their systems for requesting project proposals and for reviewing project applications. They know how to insist on performance standards among the recipients of their funds.

Likewise, aid agencies know how to integrate and mainstream new operating approaches that they recognize as important. They know how to work with their Boards; educate their donors; hire, train and assess the performance of their staff; incorporate specific wording in all standard project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation forms to affect desired change.

When donors or agencies decide that a shift in focus and modes is necessary for effectiveness (or survival), they know the steps to take to achieve the shift. They have the power to do so. So, why is it that, to date, there is little concerted action within or among aid agencies and on the part of donors to change the aspects of the aid system at the top that feed into, exacerbate or prolong conflict? Inaction is not the result of ill will or a lack of caring among aid personnel. Everyone wants to do an effective job and to achieve the best possible outcomes. Consultations with aid donors and headquarters staff suggest that there are four significant impediments to change.

First is the existence of multiple countervailing pressures. Government donor agencies work at the behest and according to the rules, of legislative bodies which, in turn, are responsive to constituencies with multiple, competing interests. Thus, aid is provided within a political context and is "sold" to a public in terms of these interests (e.g., the national interest, trade to be gained, use of domestic surpluses, etc.). At worst, this means that aid is the captive of narrow, hegemonic purposes; more often it means simply that there is a basic inertia (or habit of expectation) that must be overcome with effort if change is to occur.

Second, there is a sense of powerlessness to affect appropriate changes given the complexity of the problems. How can an agency change its mandate to work with a certain population? If it is a Christian agency and its support comes from church communities, what latitude does it have to change its definition of beneficiaries? If it is designated by the UN General Assembly to work with refugees, it cannot ignore its established purpose. Or, if food is available from the surplus of U.S. mid-western corn farms, how can an NGO turn this down as "too valuable and liable to theft" when faced with acute hunger and no time to find alternative food sources? How can an NGO justify slow and expensive distribution systems when the press is raising the alarm about immediate need and dire waste?

Each donor and each aid agency works within a complicated and multi-layered system. A single donor or agency adopting new approaches when others operate as usual might risk loss of public support or government funds or press criticism. When the purposes and the

accomplishments of the agency are, on the whole, beneficial to war's victims, what risks should it take as it pursues some untested principle?

Third, the fact that the problems described above occur at a distance from the daily, pressured functioning of donors and agency headquarters reduces the imperative to change. Because awareness of any negative impacts of aid, if or when they occur, is at a remove from the direct experience of headquarters staff, Boards of Directors and donors, it is not compelling. One can be convinced that there is a problem in discussion but, in terms of operations, it is easy to put off action because it is difficult to predict if/whether/when a negative impact of sufficient importance will occur.¹⁰²

Finally, the fourth impediment to change affects aid agencies more than donors. This has to do with the fact that some aid agencies are increasingly decentralizing both their operations and their decision-making and enacting inclusive and consultative systems for including broad staff representation in policy dialogue. Thus, they find it difficult and counter to current trends, to undertake centrally driven changes in either policies or operating procedures. Substantive changes in priorities or activities can take months of consultations and become watered down in the processes of including everyone. Oddly, systems undertaken for reasons of democracy and fairness can end up providing excuses for inaction—or, at least, for avoiding radical and difficult choices.

III. Conclusion

These four impediments to change faced by donors and aid agencies explain inaction. But, do they also justify it? It is timely for the aid community to consider this question. Field-based evidence is convincing that the negative effects described above do occur. Weighing the importance of the harm done relative to the importance of the impediments to change is the challenge donors and agencies face. What help can we give them as they take up this challenge?

First, it is worth noting that the impediments to change deserve different weight. Countervailing pressures are real and must be addressed. Bringing divergent interests into focus and alignment is part of the challenge for affecting needed changes in the aid system. Powerlessness because issues are complex deserves less respect. Powerlessness claimed in the face of complexity can become an excuse for inaction. The field of international aid is always complex. Aid fits within and affects, but does not determine, larger political and social forces around the world. The fact that a party has not exerted power in the past is not a predictor of the potential for affecting change in the present and future. Avoiding harm and finding new ways of acting can be difficult, but difficulty does not justify inaction. If something is worth doing, donors and agencies have the power to do it, systematically and effectively.

The last two impediments to change--namely, that the harm done is removed from daily experience and, thus, not compelling and that decentralization ties the hands of headquarters to undertake change--deserve the least defense. Field staff are daily on the line facing the

¹⁰² This is, in fact, one of the reasons that the impulse for the work of the Local Capacities for Peace Project came from field staff. These individuals are daily confronted by the negative realities of aid's impacts on conflicts. They see the goods stolen and used by warriors; they watch helplessly as beneficiaries are attacked by militias. They live with the urgency of the situation and are prompted to take immediate, if risky, actions to correct negative effects.

implications of the impacts of aid. They have noted how center-driven procedures and policies affect their work. They are ready to support donors' and headquarters' efforts to integrate these considerations into center actions. They are eager for donors and headquarters to become increasingly attentive to their experiences and to respect and respond to their distress as they see aid worsening war. They want the center to see this as a daily reality, no less important than other daily priorities.

It would appear that some changes can best be undertaken in concert by groups of donors and/or agency headquarters. Establishing a collective awareness of negative impacts and of what needs to be done to correct these can protect individual agencies from the risks of going it alone and can ensure more widespread and faster change. As we make this point, however, it is also important to note that the changes needed to address the four negative impacts described above are totally within the power of individual donors and agencies. Any agency can establish systems that allow field staff to adjust programme design on site to avoid intensifying intergroup tensions. Each agency is responsible for specifying the criteria by which it assesses effectiveness and, without waiting for collective action, can take stock of which actions of staff its systems reward and which they undervalue. Each agency can ensure that its funds are raised with full integrity for the side effects of its publicity strategies.

Although collective action is preferable and, ultimately, more effective, individual leadership is required. The compelling case for taking action now comes from the field staff of many aid agencies in many circumstances who, again and again, recount stories of how donor and headquarters policies and procedures negatively affect the conflicts where they work. Field staff have been inventive in developing localized strategies for by-passing some of the strictures of central policies and procedures, but they have come up against the limits of their power to bring what they see as needed changes.

This paper has been prompted by the experience and concern of aid agency field staff who have urged us to present these ideas to their donors and headquarters with the hope and expectation, that the evidence gathered from so many places will capture the attention of those at the center of the aid community. They hope and expect, that the cumulative weight of this evidence will compel appropriate change. Even as those in the field have accepted their responsibility for doing no harm, they now await the signal that that responsibility is shared and accepted by their higher-ups.

Annex 11: References on Conflict Management

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- Building Institutional Capacity for Conflict-Sensitive Practice: The Case of International NGOs, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/19>.
- The Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF): Identifying Conflict-related Obstacles to Development, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/114>.
- Conflict and Aid: Enhancing the Peacebuilding Impact of International Engagement. A Synthesis of Findings from Afghanistan, Liberia and Sri Lanka, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/20>.
- Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/98>.
- Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/23>.
- Toward a Conflict Sensitive Poverty Reduction Strategy: Lessons from a Retrospective Analysis, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/115>.
- Conflict-Sensitive Interviewing: Explorative Expert-interviews as a Conflict-Sensitive Research Method, Lessons from the Project, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/66>.
- Conflict, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: Meeting the Challenges, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/22>.
- Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/113>.
- Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/99>.
- DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/111>.
- Development Dimensions of Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/108>.
- Education for All – Nepal Review from a conflict perspective, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/107>.
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- Enhancing the Role of Non-state Actors in Conflict-sensitive Development, <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/node/60>.
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