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Better Programming Initiative (BPI) Conflict Sensitive Programme Management (CSPM)

Handout: Part 2 – The 3 steps cycle methodology and tools



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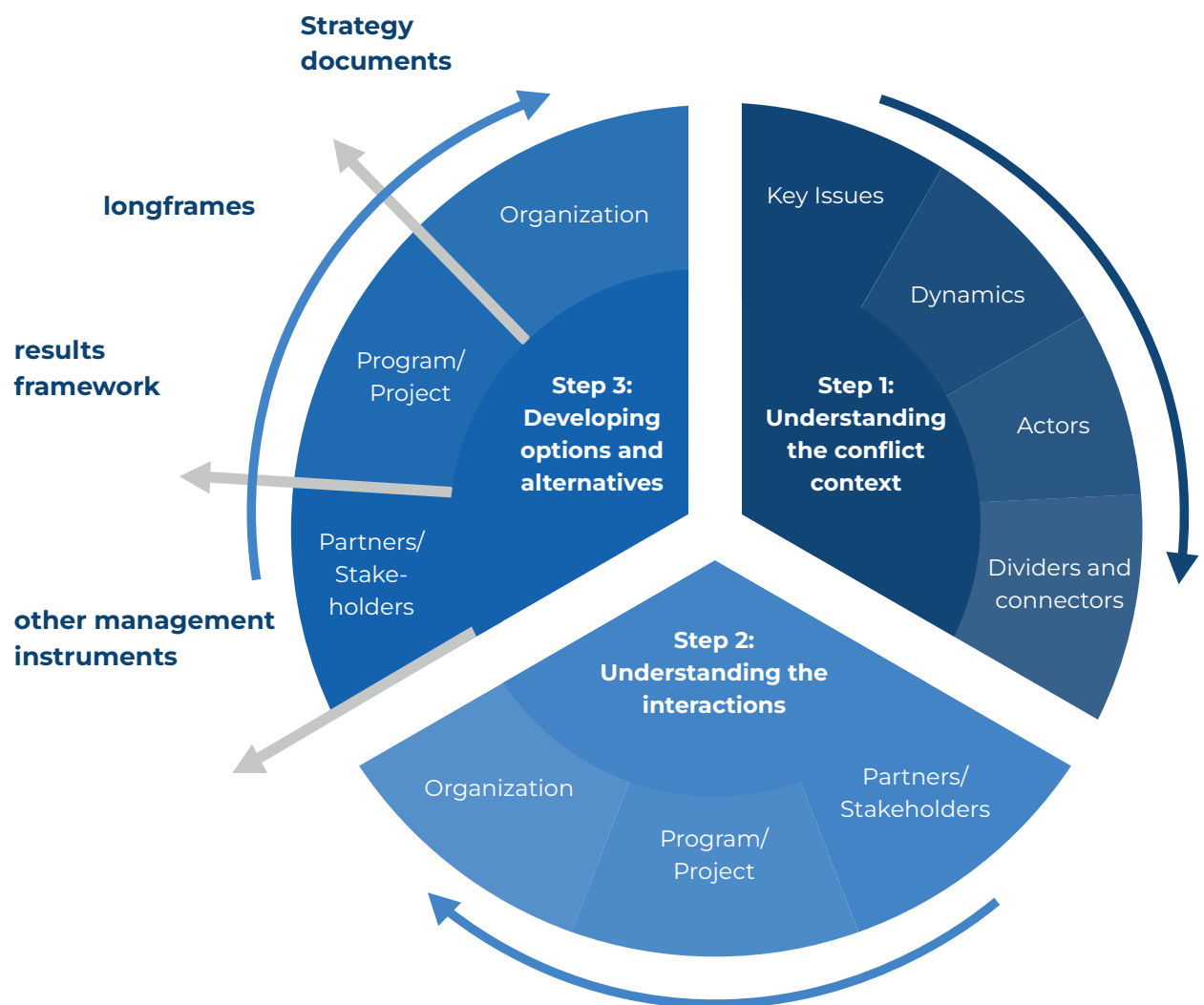
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1. The 3 steps cycle of conflict sensitivity

As a method for integrating conflict sensitivity into programmes and projects, the Better Programming Initiative (BPI) relies on the “3 Steps Cycle of Conflict Sensitivity”¹. The cycle reflects the basic requirement of conflict sensitivity to take context as a starting point and to act upon this understanding in a context-appropriate way.

3 steps cycle of
conflict sensitivity



¹ The 3 Steps Conflict Sensitivity Cycle was developed jointly by Swisspeace, Swiss Development Cooperation, and several Swiss NGOs in 2013.

2. Step 1: Understanding the conflict context

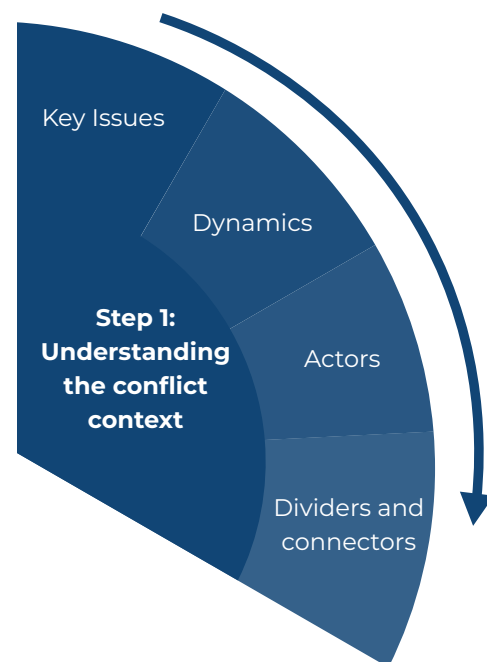
Analysis of the conflict context

Each context bears latent or open social tensions or conflicts. The conflict sensitive context analysis is a systematic method to identify and understand social tensions, violent or latent conflict, violence, and vulnerabilities of the context in which the programme or the project takes place.

We thereby look at a specific context from a conflict or fragility perspective:

- Identifying the key issues that lead to these tensions, risks, or violence
- Identifying its dynamics
- Understanding which actors are present in the context and what is their (power) position
- Identify elements that divide and elements that connect society and enhance resilience and social cohesion in the local community.

This analysis has to be periodically reviewed and updated to identify developments in the context.



How to do a conflict-sensitive context analysis

Which is our context? → Determine the context to be analysed

Which context has to be analysed depends on where the intervention takes place:

- For projects: area where the project is planned.
- For regional strategy and country programme: region/country which the strategy or the programme is addressing.

It is important to consider the surrounding areas in the context analysis because there may be spill over effects in your intervention area.

How do we analyse the context? → Methods to analyse the conflict context:

Given the difficulty of obtaining reliable information for undertaking a conflict-/fragility-context analysis, it is useful to use a mix of data gathering according to the given framework of time and funds.

Useful **methods** are:

- Desk research: secondary reports for background data
- Consultation: interviews, focus groups, community consultations, surveys, etc..

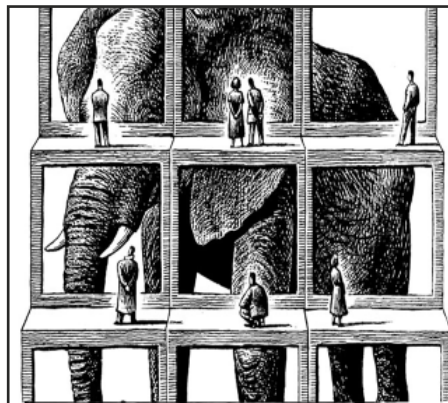
Workshop and focal group discussions or community appraisals are good ways to use the introduced tools.

It is crucial that the context analysis is done in a participatory and conflict-sensitive way as it is an intervention as such and may trigger (further) tensions.

Of the many existing tools, we propose the following six tools that are often applied and proofed to be very useful for analysing the conflict or fragility context:

- Conflict Profile
- Conflict tree
- Actors Mapping
- Dividers and Connectors analysis
- Fears and Interests analysis
- Worst Case Scenario

Intro to Tools



Each tool helps study
a part of the context
(or one dynamic)

... a set of them will help
you understand the
whole

BPI Training Module 6

The use of different tools to do a context analysis is like looking at an elephant from different perspectives: It is still the same context we are looking at, but the different tools help us look closer at different aspects of the same context. As this image suggests, it is important to remember that each tool helps study a part of the context (or one perspective or dynamic). **When you combine the right set of tools, you start getting closer to a complete picture of the context.**

After having completed the conflict context analysis, interpret the findings in a participatory and inclusive way focussing on the following key questions:

1. What does the analysis tell you?
2. What new insights do you get about your context?
3. Are there any lessons learnt?

Conflict context analysis tools

Conflict analysis tools can be very helpful in analysing the dimensions of a conflict and to gain a deeper insight about the conflict context. Their visualization potential helps to depict a complex situation and thereby, make it more assessable. The tools are helpful early in the process of project planning for finding possible entry points for action, but can be applied throughout the project cycle and assist to find ways of adapting activities and identify new actors.

Tool 1: Conflict profile²: Key issues, and dynamics

Key issues of conflict are seen to drive the conflict today. Without them the conflict would not exist or would be completely different. Identifying key issues of conflict helps avoiding long lists of political, social, historical, economic etc. factors of conflict, and to hold “chicken or egg” discussions regarding root or causes, triggers, etc..

Dynamics are the longer-term trends shaping the conflict constellation and shorter-term events that have an influence on the evolution of the conflict and fragility. Understanding conflict dynamics will help identify windows of opportunity, particularly if using scenario building, which aims to assess different possible developments and think through appropriate responses.

The **Aim** of the profile tool is to identify social tensions, risks, and violent conflicts in the area of our intervention, their underlying key issues and dynamics.

Attention: Do not just search for “big issues” like riots, open violence, etc.. It is also minor things that count as they do have the potential to escalate.

Conflict profile matrix: The key questions:

Conflict issues/factors	Sources of conflict/tensions	Dynamics → ↑ ↓
What type of open and latent tensions, risks, vulnerabilities, and violent conflicts exist in the intervention area and/or in areas nearby? What are they about?	What are the causes or sources for these tensions, risks, and violence?	What triggers these risks, tensions and/or violent conflicts? What is their history? Are there patterns and trends? How will they most likely develop in the future? Why do they exist?

² The conflict profile is also called “Conflict matrix”

Task: Identify which tensions/conflicts exist in the intervention area (refer to the questions above):

- a) Explore issues and conflict factors
- b) Analyse the sources of conflict and/or tension
- c) Analyse the dynamics and indicate its trend
- d) Present the different elements in a table.

Gender perspective:



Do the conflicts or tensions described affect or involve men, women, boys, and girls differently? If so, please provide details.

Do women and men play different roles (negative or positive)?

What issues and dynamics are particularly important from a perspective of men, women, boys, and girls?

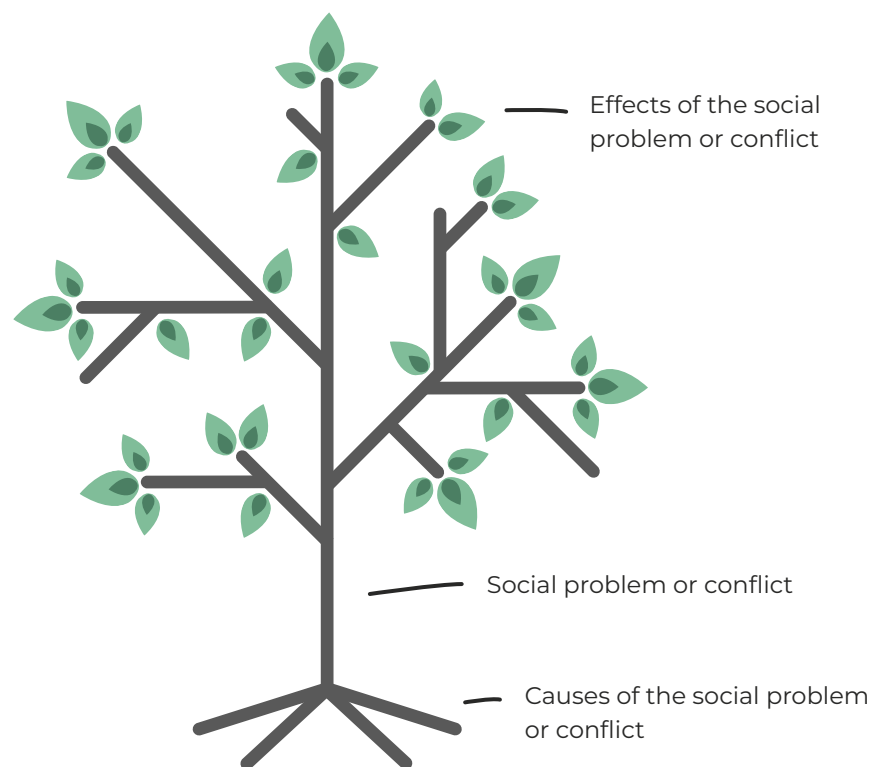
Is there a gender dimension of the root causes (i.e. demographic stress: unemployed young men; history of armed conflict: legacy of gender based violence (GBV), widows, children born of rape)?

Example of a Conflict profile exercise

Conflict issues/factors	Sources of conflict/tensions	Dynamics → ↑
Tensions and struggles over access to resources and fertile land.	Scarcity of resources due to erosion and effects of climate change	Violent clashes between member of low land and high land communities →
Tensions and conflict among population groups and between these groups and the local government.	Most of the fertile land in hands of large land-owners.	Violent clashes between community members and landowners ↑
	Traditional structures and conflict resolution mechanisms do not work anymore.	Growing mistrust among population groups and local government. ↑
	Local government is perceived as too weak to maintain security	Growing insecurity and restricted movement decrease livelihood options. ↑

Tool 2: Conflict Tree³

The Conflict Tree is an alternative analysis tool to the above presented Conflict Profile. While both tools have the same aim, they use slightly different terms and images



Aim: To analyze the factors of a conflict: structural/root causes (roots), the core problem/conflict issues (trunk) and the effects/symptoms of the conflict (branches).

The Conflict Tree tool serves well as an introductory tool for conflict analysis:

- It is simple and user-friendly
- It helps to distinguish underlying causes and effects
- It is useful to draw attention to the root causes
- Can be adapted in different ways. E.g. to a solution tree: displace core problem with objective, root causes with possible objectives and effects with positive (long-term) impacts.

³ Source: Swisspeace (2017) CSPM online course. Handout; Mena Rodrigo (2018): Manual on Conflict analysis tools.

Task

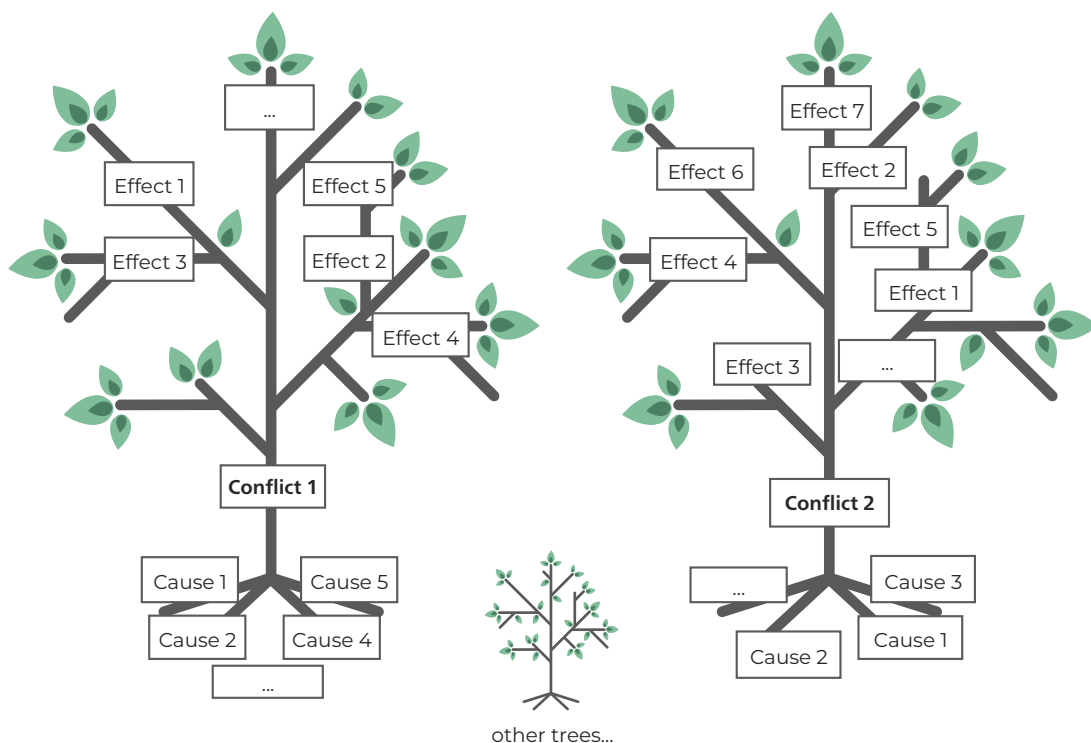
Using the image of a tree, identify social problems or conflicts, its causes, and effects in the project's context:

- The trunk represents a social problem or conflict
- The root represents the causes of the situation
- The branches represent the effects.

In a first step, the identification can be done in small groups or by each participant individually. It is important to ensure that you identify conflicting or problematic situations, not names, to avoid certain individuals or organizations from being identified as sources of problems or conflicts.

In a second step discuss the results in the group and – if necessary – adapt the tree. Use a separate tree for each social problem or conflict. Note that an effect can turn into a cause of conflict at a later stage.

Then, try to reduce the problems or conflicts found until only those most essential are retained. Try to group similar problems or conflicts until they are reduced to a maximum of four conflicts or problems.



Gender perspective

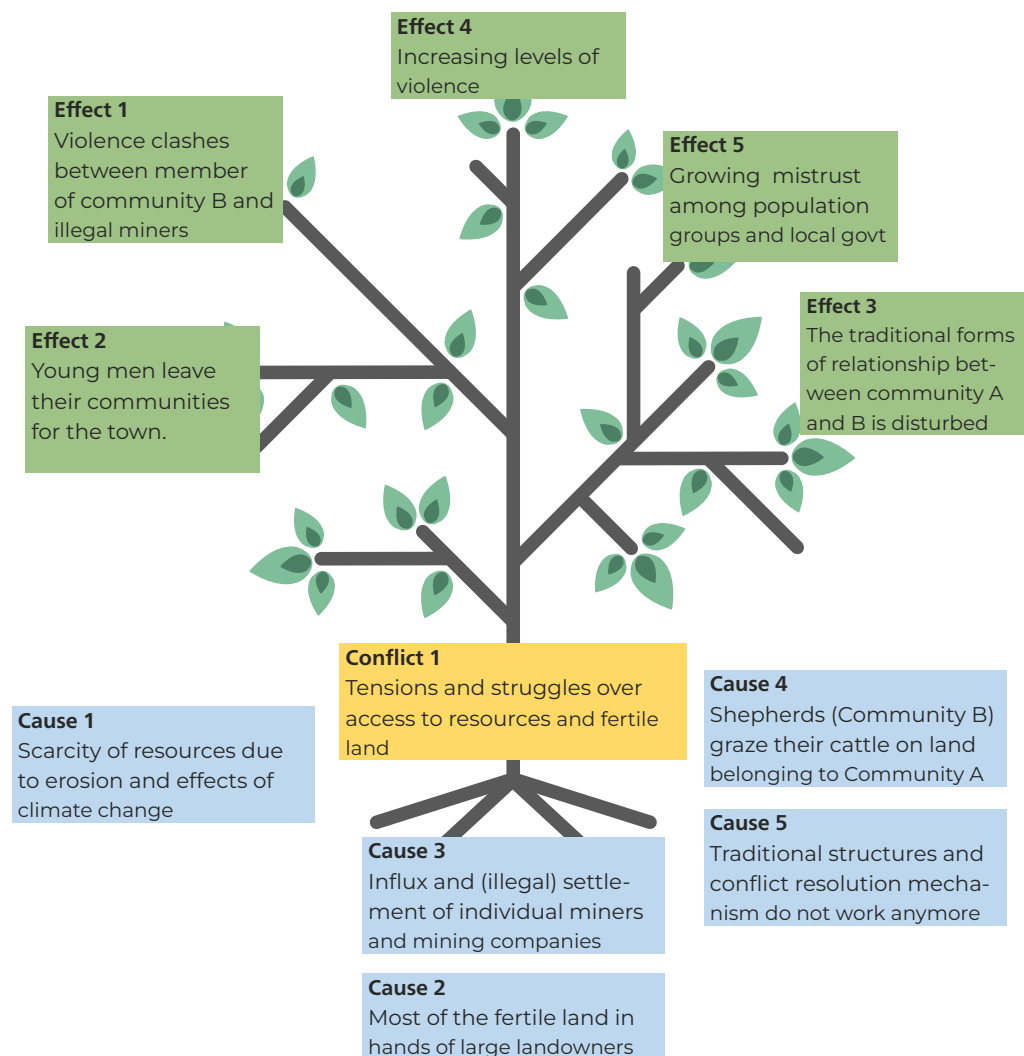


What issues are important for women and men?

What are the women's and the men's perspective on the core problem, the root causes and effects?

How do the effects of the conflict affect women and men? What is the gender dimension of the root causes (i.e. demographic stress, unemployed young men, history of armed conflict: legacy of GBV, widowed women, children of rape)?

Example of a Conflict tree exercise



Tool 3: Actor Mapping

Actors such as individuals, groups and institutions are all those engaged in or being affected in a positive or negative way by conflict. Actors differ regarding their goals and interests, their positions, capacities to realise their interests, and relationships with other actors. An analysis of actors enables you to identify those who are driving the conflict, those who are affected by the conflict and those who have capacities to contribute to peace.

Aim: To get a picture of the actors in the context and how they influence the conflict. It shows the different stakeholders (actors) and their relationships.

The tool provides a good visualization and helps to become aware of actors who are otherwise hidden. It shows what is known and what still needs to be found out. Participants may learn about each other's experiences and perceptions.

Key questions

- Who are the different actors?
- What are their relationships: strong alliance, cooperation, cordial relations, no contact, irregular contacts, open conflict, deep-rooted violent conflict?
- What is the positioning of the programme/project? Which actors does the programme/project interact with?
- Where are project partners? What are their relationships?

Tasks

1. Analyse who the relevant actors to the conflict/tension are?

- Write the names of the actors on round cards: smaller cards for less powerful actors and bigger cards for more powerful actors.
- Reflect if there are other parties involved or connected to these actors and write their names also on cards, include marginalised groups and external actors.
- Is your National Society and are the partners included?



Actor: size indicates power



Straight line: connection or intact relationship



Double line: alliance or very strong relationship



Doted line: weak relationship



Zig-zag line: dispute tensions, conflict between 2 parties



Cut line: disrupted, broken relationship (no more interaction)

2. Analyse the relationships between these actors

- Connect the different cards by using various lines reflecting the quality of the relationship (see related image).
- Reflect on the positions of different parties and try to identify alliances, close contacts, broken relationships and known confrontations.

Gender perspective



What are the different and common roles, relations and power stakes of women and men in the conflict context?

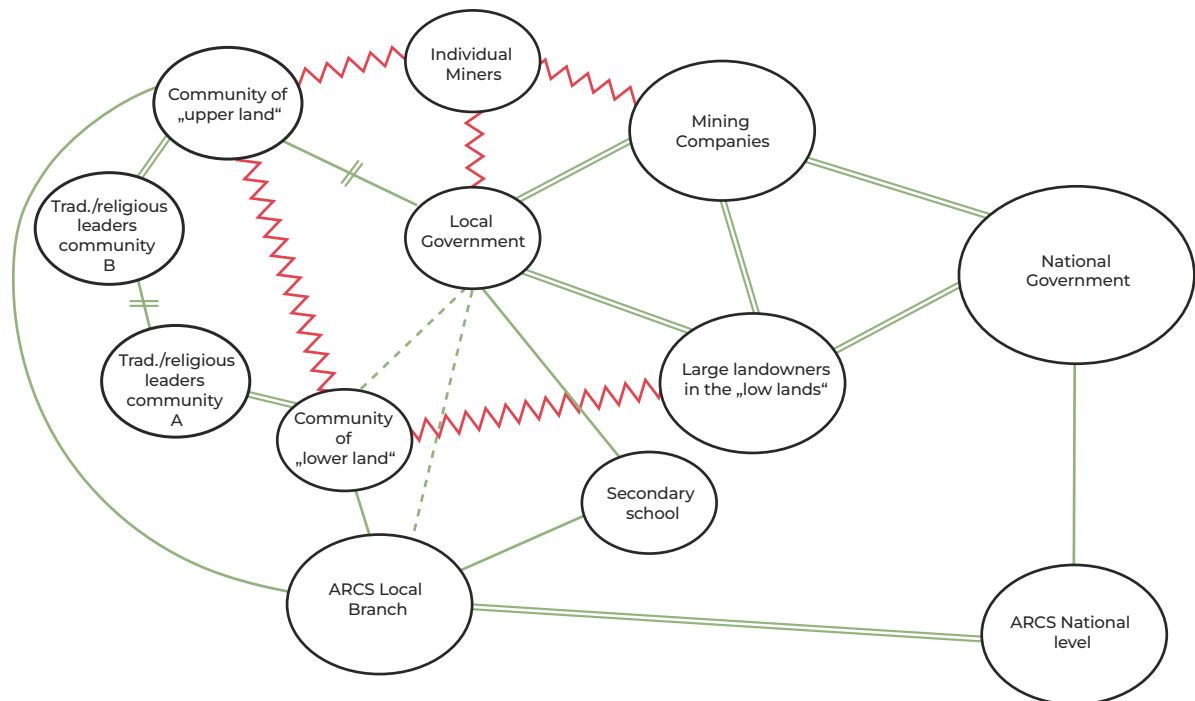
Do certain relationships or groups of actors have a specific impact on men, women, boys, and girls? If so, which ones?

What is the position of men, women, boys, and girls in the context of conflict?

Note: To map all actors of a given context can be a very complex and time-consuming endeavour. It is important to **focus on the area that is of interest** for the particular analysis (i.e. project area, local, regional, or international level etc.).

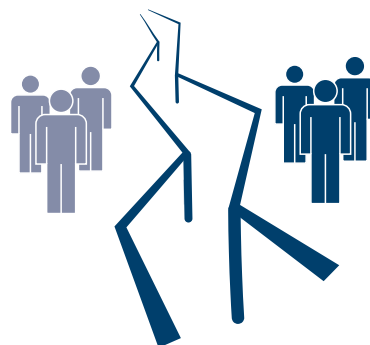
This tool is good to be used in combination with other tools such as the Fears and Interests Mapping tool.

Example of an Actors Mapping



Tool 4: Dividers & Connectors

In every context there are elements in society which divide people and serve as sources of tension. These can relate to systems and institutions, values, behaviour, experiences, or symbols. They deepen divisions, increase mistrust or inequality between societal groups. But in every context, there are always elements which connect people and can serve as local capacities for peace. Connectors relate to institutions, values, behaviour, etc., that bring people together despite their differences or tensions. Understanding dividers and connectors is critical to reduce the risk of inadvertently feeding into tensions and to increase the potential to mitigate conflict and strengthen social cohesion.



Aim: To identify elements in the intervention area that bring people together across lines of conflict/tensions (connecting elements, connectors) and elements that separate people (sources of tensions, dividers).

If we know who the dividers and connectors are, we can make sure that we are not inadvertently strengthening dividers and weaken connectors.

Dividers & Connectors Matrix with key questions and examples

	Dividers Sources of tensions and fragility	Connectors Connecting elements that foster social cohesion and resilience
Key questions	<p>What leads to tensions in the current situation?</p> <p>What divides people?</p> <p>What undermines social cohesion?</p> <p>Why is this element a divider and what impact does it have?</p>	<p>What brings people together? What do people do together despite tensions?</p> <p>What helps to de-escalate tensions?</p> <p>What builds trust and social cohesion, despite tensions?</p> <p>Why is this element a connector and what impact does it have?</p>
Systems and Institutions	Regime systematically excludes a group from access to basic services	Inclusive education or health system
Attitudes and Actions	Disrespect of cultural differences and insulting behaviour	Friendship across ethnic lines
Values and Interests	Unequal marriage practices between men and women	Shared religious belief, upholding of values of cohabitation across groups
Experiences	Experienced disrespectful behaviour of particular group	Shared experience of disaster and loss
Symbols and Occasions	Nationalistic symbols that clearly manifest the power of one group. Social events excluding specific groups	Symbols that demonstrate unity; sports event bringing together different communities that normally have not much contact

Task

- Brainstorm to identify dividing and connecting factors:
 - Use key questions (see matrix above) or other appropriate questions to collect the factors.
 - Write down the factors. Be as specific as possible (e.g. do not just write "governance" – if governance is a conflict issue, specify why governance makes it a divider).

! Attention: Consider also underlying, latent issues not only the most evident ones.

- Prioritize key factors:
 - Select the most important sources of tensions and connecting elements
 - Create a headline (or title) for each
 - Write in one sentence why it is important
 - For each underscore write 3 – 5 key factors and actors for/against peace/stability. What makes them particularly significant? – write on cards.

3. Use a matrix (see above) for illustration/visualisation, try to group them against the characteristics.

Gender perspective



Do women and men have different roles (as spoilers or transformers)?

Are there any gender-specific dividers/connectors?

If yes, please write them down.

Tool 5: Fears and Interests Analysis

The Fears and Interests Matrix helps to analyse actors' positions (what they say they want in public), interests (what they really want/try to achieve with their positions), needs (what they must have (the minimum)) and fears (needs they fear to lack/lose).

It also contributes to identify the key issues of the conflict according to parties' perceptions, the source of influence of the different parties, the power dynamics between the parties, and to estimate the willingness of the parties to negotiate. It is useful to combine this matrix with an Actors' Mapping. There are always primary stakeholders and secondary stakeholders that should be looked at separately. (Primary stakeholders: Individuals/groups that are needed to resolve the conflict. Secondary stakeholders: Individuals/groups that have some influence/interest but are not directly involved.) This can help to identify entry points for actions that may help reduce tensions between actors.

Aim: To get a deeper understanding of the motivations of actors and to help people to understand each other's perceptions.

Example of a Matrix of Fears and Interests Analysis

Actor in conflict	Position	Interest	Needs	Fears	Behavior	Perception of other
Settled farmers	No passage for nomadic groups and herds	Preserve land, protect crops from damage	Ability to survive, feed families, maintain way of life and culture	Destruction of crops, deprived livelihood	Blocks passage of herds; political mobilization against pastoralists	Nomads are barbarous terrorists; backward thinking
Pastoral nomad groups	Free movement of people and herds as a guaranteed right	Maintenance of traditional rights of passage; access to pasturage	Ability to survive, feed families, maintain way of life and culture	Poaching of animals, deprived livelihood; pastoralist's rights not respected by farmers	Organizes militias to claim rights forcefully	Farmers don't respect culture and tradition; seek to marginalize pastoralists

Task:

Based on the Actors' Mapping select the key actors that are in tension/conflict with each other and analyze their interests, expectations, needs, fears, and options.

Discuss: What do you learn about these actors? Do you see any overlapping in feelings/behavior etc. of actors? Do you see entry points for conflict transformation?

Note: It can be difficult to distinguish between positions, interests, needs and fears.

Gender perspective



Are men, women, boys, or girls affected, involved, perceived, etc. differently?

Are the interests and positions of men, women, boys, or girls the same or different (e.g. to uphold the situation)?

Ask where women and men stand in conflict and what their roles and their power stakes are.

Tool 6: Best Case and Worst Case Scenario

Scenarios provide an assessment of assumptions of what may happen next in a given context and according to a specific timeframe. Scenarios and corresponding action plans are important preparedness measures for the organisation in fragile or conflict-affected contexts, which are often characterized by a high volatility and risk of uprising tensions and violence.

The development of scenarios and subsequent action plans contribute to

- support the National Society's strategic planning
- enhance effective conflict-sensitive interventions
- strengthen the National Society's ability to adapt and respond to changes in the context of its programmes and as an organization
- provide input to the risk and security management.

Generally, there are three types of scenarios

Most likely scenario: a "reality check" on organizational strengths, the available budget, partner organisations, alliances and the key drivers of violence and fragility, resilience and social cohesion with a mixed record on de-escalating and escalating effects of a project.

Worst-case scenario: a further escalation of violence and overall worsening of the social and political context in the form of a high fragility context.

Best-case scenario: a visible reduction of violence, fostering of social cohesion, resilience and strengthening of the local capacities for justice and peace and the wider social fabric.

How to develop a scenario?

Work out the scenario preferably in a group/in your team.

- If a conflict **context analysis** has recently been carried out, it can serve as a starting point and frame of reference. In the absence of a recent analysis, conduct a short one with the team. In particular, ask the following two key questions:
 - What are the current issues of conflict or fragility?
 - What are the dynamics and sources of tension that drive/trigger tension and conflict issues on the political, social, economic, security and environmental levels? (see also template below)
- Set the **validity period** for the scenario planning: Three months, one year, several years? There is no generic timeline recommended as it depends on the specific context. In general, a highly volatile conflict-context would have a shorter timeline (e.g. could even be weeks) than more stable fragile situations (e.g. several months or a year).

For the **worst-case scenario**

- Develop assumptions about a deterioration of the situation: Prioritise the main factors of conflict and fragility in terms of their relevance to the current conflict dynamics.
- Select the top three factors and assess the extent to which the situation may deteriorate if these factors take precedence.
- Ask yourself what changes these dynamics may bring about in the political, social, economic, environmental and security spheres, and consider any other issues that may emerge and require further attention and analysis.

For the **best-case scenario**

- Develop assumptions about how the situation may improve.
- Focus on the connectors and factors/elements that strengthen resilience and social cohesion. Prioritize them according to their relevance to the current dynamics of the context.
- Select the top three factors and assess how the situation may improve if these elements dominate the context dynamics for the time to come.
- Ask yourself what changes this dynamic may bring about in political, social, economic, environmental and security terms, and consider any other issues that seem relevant to the context.

- Determining **probability/likelihood**: The probability scale defines our level of certainty that the described scenario may come true.

Questions to consider:

→ What is the probability that the pessimistic/optimistic scenario may be realized during the defined period: high, moderate, low? Why is this?

- Describe the implications of the scenario: Depending on the scenario developed and its likelihood, adjustment measures should be defined at the programme/project and/or organizational level (offices, management, personnel, administration, finance, etc.). Otherwise, the functioning of the programme/project or the organization may no longer be in line with the context and may even prove to be detrimental.

Questions to consider when assessing impacts:

→ Project: Does the deteriorating (improving) situation require adjustments in planning and activities? If so, what adjustments?

→ Organization: Does the deteriorating (improving) situation require organizational adjustments? If so, what adjustments?

The table below may help you to structure your discussion on different assumptions and trends and while developing a worst-case scenario with your project team.

The same questions may be used for the project planning (= most likely scenario).

Transfer the results into an action plan

The impacts on the project and your organisation identified in the scenario serve as a starting point for adapting our interventions and/or developing an action plan.

- The table of scenarios below may serve in the planning phase as basis for the elaboration of the worst-case scenario in the project document and the risk mapping.
- In complex cases, a more elaborate version of the worst-case scenario might be elaborated and added as annex to the project document.

Worst-case/Best-case scenario		
Project name		
Time frame of the scenario: ...		
Assumptions: What may change in terms of	Likelihood What is the probability that the scenario may happen (high, medium, low) and why?	Implications What are the implications for...
→ Political issues: ... → Social issues: ... → Security issues: ... → Economic issues: ... → Environmental issues: ... → Any other issue: ...		→ our project
		→ our organisation

3. Step 2: Understand the interaction between context and your project/programme

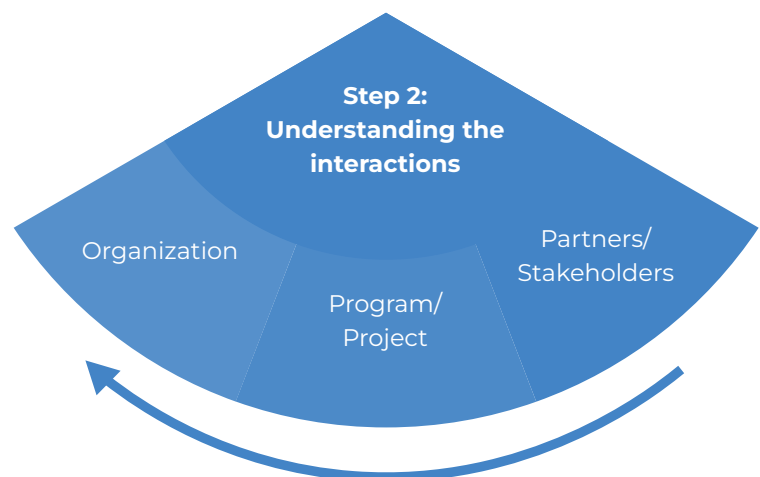
What is an interaction analysis?

An interaction analysis is a systematic method to identify negative and positive impact of our intervention on the (conflict/ fragility) context as well as the impact of the context on our intervention.

It helps to understand:

- If and what element of our intervention risks to do harm
- If and what element of our intervention may do good
- What impact the context might have on our intervention

The interaction analysis is the cornerstone of conflict sensitive programming, and its findings should be linked to the design of each project, programme or strategy, on the selection of partnership and on the National Society's set-up.



How is an interaction analysis done?

The interaction analysis is based on the findings of the (conflict/fragility) context analysis in step 1. It assesses the interactions between the context and the intervention in the following three categories of intervention:

Programme/Project: This refers to everything concerning the implementation of our activities such as the project strategy, objectives, selection of beneficiaries, activities, phases of the project (planning, implementation, evaluation, evaluation, and exit strategy), procurement, the manner how staff interact with the context and the resources our project brings into the context, etc.

Key questions on the programme/project:

- Does it address tensions and conflicts? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Is it likely to stir up, fuel or trigger tensions or conflicts?
- Does it contribute to alleviating existing tensions or conflicts?
- Does it help to weaken divisive factors and strengthen cohesive factors?
- Does it involve the relevant actors, and/or actors contributing to tensions?
- Are we working with relevant governance institutions, contributing to weakening or strengthening them?
- How are our objectives, activities, approaches affected by the context?

Partners/Stakeholders: This refers to our project/programme partners, local authorities, donors as well as other stakeholders that we are in contact with. It is important to know how our partners are situated in the conflict and how they are perceived by the communities, the beneficiaries, and the conflict parties. Equally so, it is important to know how donors are perceived in the specific context and how our organization is interacting with them. What kind of information is shared with them and how?

Key questions about our National Society or IFRC:

- How is it perceived by local actors?
- Do staff reflect the diversity of the context?
- Does our organization allow us to work in a context-sensitive manner (e.g. flexibility of budget and activities in the event of changing contexts, impartial logistical procedures, staff that reflect the diversity of the context, development of conflict sensitivity skills, etc.)?

Partners/Stakeholders: This refers to our project/programme partners, local authorities, donors as well as other stakeholders that we are in contact with. It is important to know how our partners are situated in the conflict and how they are perceived by the communities, the beneficiaries, and the conflict parties. Equally so, it is important to know how donors are perceived in the specific context and how our organization is interacting with them. What kind of information is shared with them and how?

Key questions on partners/stakeholders:

- Do they contribute to aggravating or alleviating the problems, underlying tensions, and conflicts?
- Are they well or badly perceived by conflict actors, local authorities, communities, other stakeholders?
- Do they support any of the parties in conflict?
- Do they influence factors of division and cohesion?
- Are we working with, weakening, or strengthening the relevant governance institutions?

A detailed list of specific questions covering these three categories helps you to identify the potential interactions between the context and our intervention. See next page.

The following table will help you to group the various elements and findings.

Table of Analysis of Interactions between Context and Interventions

Findings of the context analysis of the conflict (Step 1) Choose the analysis findings most relevant for the intervention	Field of observation (categories)	Impact of the intervention on the context, Impact of the context on the intervention (Step 2) Outline the interaction between the context and the project: Positive and negative impacts
1	Program/project	
	Partner/stakeholder	
	Organisation	
2	Programme/project	
	Partner/stakeholder	
	Organisation	
Etc.	Programme/project	
	Partner/stakeholder	
	Organisation	



Be honest in your analysis: some conclusions may be difficult to accept because they imply changes in the program, partnerships, organization.

Some **areas of interventions are particular at risk** to trigger tensions if not addressed in a conflict sensitive way:

Targeting of locations and groups: Even if done in a transparent way, some persons and communities will always be left out or feel being left out. It is important to take existing dynamics of tensions into account when targeting and be transparent about choices made. Likewise, unconscious targeting can go along lines of tensions and unintentionally support conflict actors.

Inclusion and participation: How are inclusion and participation ensured? Do we include the right people or are we just working with the most accessible ones? What is their position regarding tension/conflict?

Procurement and distribution: This can trigger tensions in terms of prices, selection of suppliers, type of items provided etc. May goods provided fuel tensions, put people at risk? Are suppliers involved in any conflict dynamics? Do the prices we pay disrupt the local markets etc.?

Legitimization: Some local actors are inevitably more involved in the project implementation than others. This can lead to a shift in local power-relations which can trigger tensions, or even reinforce current conflict actors. Who are we empowering through our actions, are we creating power-imbalances, are we supporting actors that are causing tensions or conflict etc.?

Coordination: Lack of coordination among different actors, different implementation approaches or duplication can contribute to tensions. Do we have aligned working approaches such as for example remuneration systems? Do we know who is doing what where and how?

List of Guiding questions for the Conflict Sensitive interaction analysis (Step 2)

The following list provides relevant questions related to conflict- and fragility- sensitivity. The questions help to work out the interaction analysis. If translated into local languages and cultural contexts, the questions may have to be adapted.

Note: You do not need to answer all the questions: Choose those relevant for your specific context and intervention.

General

- How are issues and dynamics of social tensions, violence or fragility in the project context taken into account in the design of the project?
- How are the main actors influencing these issues and dynamics taken into account in the design of the project?
- How are the main connecting and the dividing elements in the communities taken into account in the design of the project?
- How are the social and political factors enhancing resilience and mitigating fragility and violence included?
- How are potential dynamics of violence or fragility outside the project area taken into account in the design of the project?

Project/Programme

Project details

Selection of geographic area

- Is there a risk that the selection of the intervention area will create new tensions, vulnerabilities, risks, or violence?

Selection of beneficiaries

- Is there a potential that the beneficiary selection could contribute to or trigger tensions, vulnerabilities, risks or violence? How is this danger mitigated, i.e. are any activities planned to address non-beneficiaries too?
- How do you make sure that the needs assessment and selection of beneficiaries as well as communication with beneficiaries are done in a transparent way?
- Do beneficiaries take a specific position on questions of social divisions or violence? Do they openly sympathize with important stakeholders or actors in the given social and political context?

Identification of objectives

- Could the objectives contribute to or trigger tensions, vulnerabilities, risks or violence? How will the project mitigate this potential risk?
- How far do the objectives focus on enhancing resilience and social cohesion in the local community?

Implementation of strategy

- What are the accountability and feedback mechanisms in place to reduce unintended risks or tensions provoked by the project?
- How is flexibility to change the project details ensured in the implementation strategy?
- What kind of exit strategy is needed? How is this strategy transparently communicated with the beneficiaries and communities?

Fine-tuning project activities

- Are there planned activities that may trigger or fuel vulnerabilities, social tensions or violence? If yes, which ones and why?

Partner and Stakeholders

Working with local Partners

- How far are local partners (well-) known or are perceived for taking sides on questions of social divisions or violence?
- Is there a risk that local partners could fuel risks, social tensions or violence?
- How far do you consider local partners as agents for positive change, social cohesion or resilience?

Working with suppliers

- What elements have to be taken into account in suppliers' selection with regard to risks, social tensions, violence and relevant actors?
- Is there a risk that potential suppliers take a specific position on questions of social divisions or violence or are they perceived as taking a position?

Working with donors

- Do donors take (or are perceived to take) a specific position on questions of social divisions or violence?
- How far is there a risk that donor reputation in this project context/ country, donor strategy and its funding sources have a negative impact on how the National Society and its activities are perceived by local and international stakeholders (government, implementing partners, communities, other NGOs or donors, etc.)?

Organization

Human resources

- How is it ensured that staff composition ensures adequate representation of the different religious, cultural, ethnic groups and gender balanced?
- What are the positions of staff on questions of social tensions, conflict issues and violence?
- How far does international and national staff have practice-oriented knowledge and capacities on questions of fragility- and conflict- sensitivity?

Linking with risk and security

- How do you ensure that the security regulations are in line with and (continuously) updated with the conflict- and fragility context analysis?

Budget

- How far does the budget cater for ad-hoc adjustments of the project (due to changes in the context) and regular updates of the context analysis?

External communication

- What is needed to ensure transparent and open communication lines about the project and the project context?
- How is it ensured that the project ensures regular communication with the communities in the project area and non-beneficiaries? And that the information on the project is adjusted to local culture and language?

Perception and relationship of HNS/RCRC Movement

- How do others perceive the National Society/RCRC Movement and its programme, its partners and beneficiaries?
- With which actors groups (military, state authorities, elders, etc.) do you need to have good working relations in order to be able to implement the project?

Monitoring

- How is it ensured that the conflict-/and fragility context analysis is regularly updated and integrated in the National Society's reporting?
- What are the scenarios of possible context changes and how far does the project design cater for them?

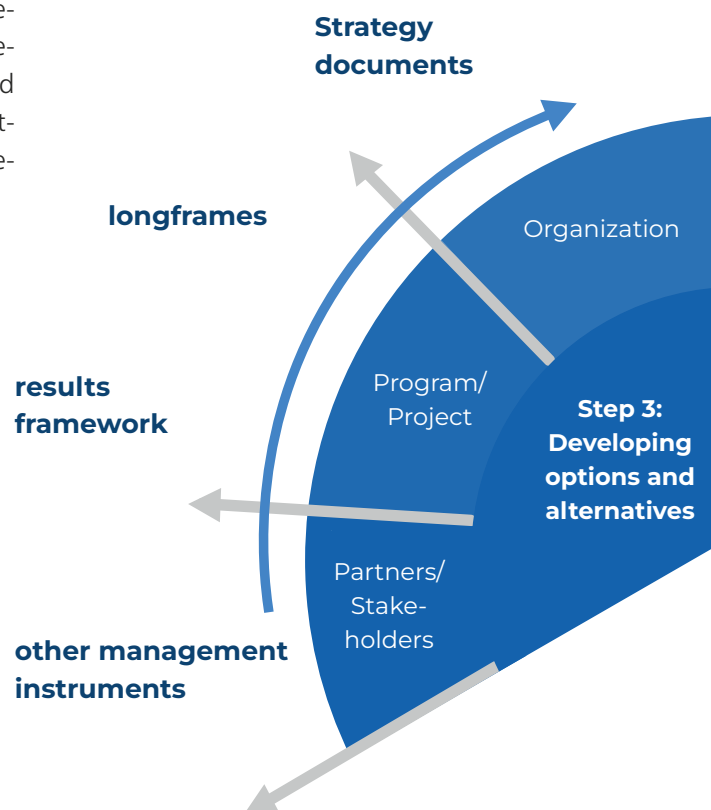
4. Step 3: Developing adaptive options

What is it about?

Once we have identified the positive or negative interaction between the context and our intervention (Step 2), we need to define adaptive options and adjustments to be made.

The **aim** of these adaptive options is to minimise the negative, escalating, and risk-aggravating effects, and to maximize the de-escalating and risk-mitigating effects on the conflict- or fragility context.

This step ends in concrete strategic project and management decisions that have to be integrated in the existing instruments (strategy documents, results framework, log frame etc.)



How are the adaptive options developed?

The main questions to be asked are:

- What needs to be done/adapted to ensure that our intervention is conflict sensitive?
- What adjustments should we put in place to avoid or remedy the negative interactions identified in the interaction analysis (step 2)? → Do no harm!
- What adjustments should we make to reinforce or capitalize on the positive interactions identified in the interaction analysis (step 2)? → Do good!

Analysis of Interaction and Adaptation of the Intervention (step 2 and step 3)

Findings of the context analysis of the conflict (Step 1)	Fields of observation (categories)	Interaction between context and intervention (Step 2) (Positive and negative impacts)	Options and adaptation (Adjust intervention)(Step 3) Develop accommodations and adjustments to be made
1	Project		
	Partners/stakeholders		
	Organisation		
2	Project		
	Partners/stakeholders		
	National Society/ IFRC		
etc.	Project		
	Partners/stakeholders		
	National Society/ IFRC		

Task

The findings of the interaction analysis (step2) show us the potential risks of doing harm but also opportunities for positive impact of our interventions. Develop accommodations and adjustments to be made regarding the project design, partner/stakeholder and our own organisation

- There is no blueprint for Steps 2 and 3.
- The more possible options for conflict sensitive actions you identify (also creative ones) the more possible change-making options you have.
- Then, choose those actions that offer the best chances of being effective and realistic and of being implemented
- Verify that the actions will not - at the same time – make the situation worse.

The results of step 3 form the basis for the adjustments in the project design (log frame, project planning etc.) or the revision of an already running the project.

5. Shaping the CSPM Process – How to get started

Introductory observations

An adequate conflict/context analysis is the basis of a conflict sensitive approach. In a constantly changing environment, CSPM helps to be prepared for possible changes of the context and the impact the effects of these changes might have on our intervention and vice versa.

The CSPM process can be applied to new projects during assessment and project design as well as to ongoing projects, e.g. during the annual planning or at the beginning of a new phase. Wherever possible, the CSPM assessment should be linked to other assessment processes (such as Protection, Gender and Inclusion, Community Engagement and Accountability or Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment).

Preparatory steps

- Before conducting any conflict analysis, the **reasons for and purpose** of the analysis should be specified.
- The **place and time** period in which the analysis will take place, need to be defined at the early stages of the analysis process. Conducting a thorough conflict analysis requires time and can vary dependent on the scope of the analysis and the size of the project, and the complexity of the context.
- A conflict analysis needs to be conducted by a **team** comprising a diverse set of people with different skill sets and backgrounds: People with knowledge of the context, the organization and project, and the CSPM methodology. Whenever possible include local staff and actors.
- The entire process of conflict analysis entails hard work by the entire team and hence requires adequate **financing and budget**.

Potential costs associated with conflict analyses:

- Travel costs to/from the area and local transport costs;
- Lodging/meals for team members;
- A space for team meetings or workshops;
- Interpretation services (if outsiders without local language skills are involved);
- Salaries/fees for additional team members/consultants not already part of team (if required);
- Expenses of community members or other volunteer participants; and
- If survey research/public opinion polling were to be included, expenses related to conducting such polls or surveys.

- A conflict analysis might require reaching out to relevant actors, such as governmental authorities, private sector actors, other partners in the humanitarian sector, and beneficiaries. It is **important** to carefully consider which actors need to be involved and then to inform these actors about the intended activities in a timely manner, and, likewise, to invite them to participate well in advance to ensure their involvement.

How to get the information

For the development of the objectives and the pre-analysis, it is necessary to obtain existing, relevant information related to possible conflicts in the area of intervention. Reports provide background data.

Secondary sources of information can include reports of multiple agencies and organizations, (news) media sources, and the academic literature.

The most important activity related to the analysis is obtaining information from **primary sources**: From (local) people who participate in the analysis activities. The main objective of the analysis determines which actors are to be included:

Workshop and focal group discussions or community appraisals are good opportunities to use the introduced tools. For in-depth analyses, interviews and surveys are useful methods.

It is crucial that the context analysis is done in a participatory and conflict-sensitive way as it is an intervention as such and may trigger (further) tensions.

Some advice for planning and applying the tools

- Keep in mind that the tools are only able to reflect a very simplified reality.
- All tools can be applied for desk study, but become more meaningful and useful if applied by groups of people in a participatory manner with a facilitator.
- It is advisable to get the assumptions and results of the analysis validated by others, ideally by various actors to the conflict themselves.
- Conduct the conflict- (fragility-) context analysis in a conflict sensitive way:
 - Provide a safe environment for the use of the tools
 - Inclusion and participation are key: Be as participatory as possible. Involve local branch committees and staff members, volunteers, and – potentially – participating national RCRC societies. If possible invite different local stakeholders and communities, partners and peer organisations. If the context does not allow the participation of communities, external stakeholders or partners, conduct it with project/office staff.

- Check if mixed groups or rather groups divided by gender are more appropriate.
- Be aware of how you communicate, which terminologies you use, how you behave, what questions and how you ask. Apply a context-adapted way. E.g. in some contexts words like „conflict“ should not be used; use alternatives and adapt your wording.
- Be sensitive to local customs and issues.
- Be sensitive about who conducts the context analysis: Has the person the skills to do so? May the person's origin, provenance, religious affiliation, sex trigger distrust or discomfort?



Each tool has to be used in a **gender-sensitive** way by a) including the perspectives of women and men and b) by specifically analysing women's and men's issues of conflict and peace. In order to check gender-specific outcomes of analysis, you could let women and men draw the tools separately and then discuss the results in the plenary. The following introductions to the tool include gender-specific questions.

Caution: Do not put people at risk. In middle and high fragility contexts it might be too contentious to include certain set of local actors. Choose carefully who to involve and who not and assess the impact of your selection. At least conduct the analysis with your project team.

Annexe: Templates for CSPM 3 step Cycle

Step 1 Conflict Context analysis tools

Conflict Matrix

Conflict issues/factors	Sources of conflict/tensions	Dynamics
What type of open and latent tensions, risks, vulnerabilities, and violent conflicts exist in the intervention area and/or in areas nearby? What are they about?	What are the causes or sources for these tensions, risks, and violence? Why do they exist?	What triggers these risks, tensions and/or violent conflicts? What is their history? Are there patterns and trends? How will they most likely develop in the future?

Dividers and Connectors

	Dividers/Sources of tensions and fragility	Connectors/Connecting elements of elements that foster social cohesion and resilience
	What leads to tensions in the current situation? What divides people? What undermines social cohesion? Why is this element a divider and how does it work?	What brings people together? What do people do together despite tensions? What helps to de-escalate tensions, what builds trust and social cohesion, despite tensions? Why is this element a connector and how does it work?
Systems and Institutions		
Attitudes and Actions		
Values and Interests		
Experiences		
Symbols and Occasions		

Step 2 and 3: Analysis of Interaction and Adaptation of the Intervention

Findings of the context analysis of the conflict (Step 1)	Fields of observation (categories)	Interaction between context and intervention (Step 2) Impact of the project intervention on the context and impact of the context on the intervention (Positive/negative impacts)	Options and adaptation (Adjust intervention)(Step 3) Develop accommodations and adjustments to be made
Insert the key issues and dynamics of tension/conflict, connectors and dividers identified in step 1.		<p>Analysis of the interaction between the elements identified in step 1 and our interventions. Generic questions:</p> <p>→ Does our intervention contribute to the reinforcement of key issues of tension/conflict? (Risk to do harm)</p> <p>→ Does our intervention contribute to the reduction of key issues of tension/conflict? (potential to do good)</p> <p>→ Does the context have a specific impact on our intervention?</p>	<p>Adjustments to be made in the project design: (logframe, results framework, strategy documents, etc.)</p> <p>Define adaptive conflict and fragility sensitive options, in order to minimize the negative risk-aggravating effects and to maximize the de-escalating and risk-mitigation effects on the context</p> <p>What are the measures/steps to be taken to adapt the project design?</p>
1	Project/programme		
	Partners/Stakeholders		
	National Society		
2	Project/programme		
	Partners/Stakeholders		
	National Society		
3	Project/programme		
	Partners/Stakeholders		
	National Society		
4	Project/programme		
	Partners/Stakeholders		
	National Society		

