



**The Practice of Conflict Sensitivity in Kenya: Beyond the Concept
A Documentation of Case Studies**



October 2009

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Acronyms

| | |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAIK | Action Aid International Kenya |
| CBO | Community Based Organisation |
| CHAD | Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department |
| CIAS | Conflict Impact Assessment Systems |
| CSA | Conflict Sensitive Approaches |
| CSC | Conflict Sensitivity Consortium |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| DNH | Do No Harm |
| DOSS | Directorate of Social Services |
| ECHO | European Union Humanitarian Aid Department |
| HAP | Humanitarian Accountability Project |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person(s) |
| MSTC | Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NSC | National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management |
| PCA | Peace and Conflict Assessment |
| PCIA | Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment |
| PEACENET | Peace and Development Network Trust, Kenya |
| RBA | Rights Based Approach |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| WVK | World Vision Kenya |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This exercise was made possible by the active involvement of all eight Kenya consortium members. These members participated in the initial deliberative process, self-assessment and validation exercises. We specifically thank their focal persons – Yusuf Artan (AAIK), Tom Onyango (CAFOD), Miriam Warui and Michael Adams (Care Kenya), Simon Rynn, Jacqueline Mbogo, and Bonita Ayuko (Saferworld Kenya), Job Ochieng (Save the Children UK), Amos Kibire (SKI), Nancy Kanyago (Plan International Kenya), and Tobias Oloo and Emmie Auma (WVK) for coordinating efforts at the organisational level.

We also want to express our vote of thanks to Michelle Spearing (CARE Regional Office) and Sarah Dalrymple (Saferworld UK) for their invaluable support during the process.

There were partner organisations that were equally involved – the Anglican Church of Kenya’s Directorate of Social Services (DOSS), PEACENET (through Phillip Ochieng) and Oxfam (through Messrs. Daniel Kiptugen and Long’ole James).

Two donors equally accorded us their time in this process: We are thankful to Robert Masibho (ECHO) and Dan Silvey (DFID) for their perspectives on CSA and its application. We especially appreciate DFID’s financial support for this engagement. The Kenyan Consortium thanks the UK Consortium, which stayed involved and supportive through the Coordinator, Sarah Brown.

Mohamed Aliow
Consortium Coordinator

1. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This report captures the outcome of document review of case studies on conflict sensitive practice in Kenya and a series of self-assessment exercises among members of the Kenyan Conflict Sensitivity Consortium (CSC). In executing this mandate, the process was initially guided by the definition of conflict sensitive approaches (CSA) as contained in the UK *Conflict Sensitivity Consortium Benchmarking Paper*:

A conflict sensitive approach involves gaining a sound understanding of the two-way interaction between activities and context and acting to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts of interventions on conflict, within an organisation's given priorities/objectives (mandate).

Ultimately, as will later be highlighted, the Kenyan CSC adopted their definition of conflict sensitivity.

This report is therefore a culmination of a reflective process that has been helpful in highlighting areas of improvement and/or fine-tuning for members' conflict sensitive policies and practices. The main objectives of this exercise were:

- a. Document case studies on conflict sensitive practice
- b. Facilitate self-assessment exercises among consortium members
- c. Propose a unified/integrated conflict sensitivity assessment tool

These three broad objectives inform the structure of this report.

Conceptualizing Conflict Sensitivity

The discovery by researchers and practitioners in the 1990s that aid can inadvertently be counterproductive in conflict situations¹ necessitated more effective approaches and tools for working in zones of conflict. The search for more effective approaches yielded the Do No Harm (DNH) and Conflict Sensitive approaches. Further, the peace community has invented new methods of evaluating projects such as the Conflict Impact Assessment Systems (CIAS), and the Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA).

PCIA and DNH matured in to more comprehensive, methodological assessment approaches, with comparable objectives. While DNH was widely implemented by a variety of international and national NGOs and donor agencies, PCIA equally spread in its original form and newer terminological forms, such Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA) were used. The development of

¹ For example, see, A. De Waal, *Famine Crimes. Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*. African Rights and the International African Institute, James Currey, Oxford, 1997; P. Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*. Connecticut, Kumarian Press, 1998; M. Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – or War*, Boulder Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers;

the Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding (CSA) by a group of international and national organizations in 2004, aimed at integrating PCIA, DNH and other less-known organic approaches into a comprehensible resource pack.

In order to have a common appreciation of CSA in the Kenyan CCS, it is important to appreciate that it is composed of organisations straddling humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and multiple mandates.

A second important point worth underscoring is that the membership is at varied levels of practicing and/or comprehending conflict sensitivity. This in effect necessitated a nuanced exposition of the concept as a basis for establishing a common foundation for its appreciation and practice.

The final guiding criterion for how CSA would be understood was the varying needs for which different organisations expressed interest in conflict sensitivity. Some of these needs included:

- Qualitative, programmatic needs – the need to improve on qualitative aspects of programming;
- Conflict resolution needs – the expectation that the practice of conflict sensitivity shall lead to better intra-organisational harmony, and more skilful ways of working in conflict areas; and
- Reversing Sermonising tendencies – the need to re-orient organisational focus toward building external actors’ CSA capacities at the expense of internal capacities, while at the same time the need to “drink the water we preach”. This need is closely related to the first one above.

CSA Relevance in Different Mandates

The Conflict Sensitivity Benchmarking Paper developed by the UK Consortium addresses the utility of CSA in different consortium mandates (p. 5 – 6). Additional points to be made include:

- Development mandate: Development and conflict are inversely related – more violence portends under-development. Development interventions, while aimed at reversing poverty, may unwittingly cause conflict, hence development doesn’t necessarily equal peace. The RBA (development) approach adopts a holistic approach to combating poverty, and aims at enabling people realise their rights. This might inadvertently lead to conflict (with the political elite). Given that RBA places emphasis on accountability and participation, this meets with the emphasis CSA places on accountability, participation, inclusion and supporting local capacities.
- Humanitarian mandate: Humanitarian assistance risks being an instrument of war and such interventions are faced by risks of exacerbating conflict.
- Peacebuilding: While peacebuilding aims at achieving harmonious existence and environments this doesn’t immunize such interventions from conflict insensitivity. Peacebuilding interventions can exacerbate conflicts through lack of participatory

approaches, non-systematic context analysis, and lack of planning when implementing peace projects and so on.²

Analytical Framework

The 1990s' analyses of impacts of actors' interventions in conflict prone areas yielded a humanitarian critique that triggered introspection and self-assessment among aid agencies leading to a search for new approaches that weren't counterproductive (didn't do harm). This quest to develop reliable monitoring, evaluation and learning methodologies yielded operational approaches and tools grounded in the "Do No Harm" philosophy. But the 1990s debate and subsequent introspection among actors bore two broad schools of thought.

The first constitutes the humanitarian maximalists, who argue that conflicts require responses addressing not only symptoms but also their root causes, hence the broadening of humanitarian mandates to include developmental and peace building objectives (in addition to the traditional focus on humanitarian needs).³ This triggered institutional changes, as in the case of the transformation of the emergency aid department of DFID to the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (CHAD).⁴ Among maximalist approaches to humanitarian assistance is the Do No Harm framework.

The second school of thought, referred to as humanitarian minimalism, reaffirmed the core beliefs and principles of humanitarianism hence pushed for a return to basics. It recognizes the need to ensure that aid "does no harm", but holds that it is not part of its mandate to try and 'do good' but be neutral, impartial and adhere to international humanitarian law. The 'back to basics' school believes the key challenge is one of reaffirming the original principles of humanitarianism, developing accountability and improving standards of relief delivery. This has yielded Red Cross Code of Conduct (developed in 1994), the SPHERE programme (launched in 1997) and the Humanitarian Accountability Project.⁵

This documentation and self-assessment exercise adopted a middle-ground approach, recognizing that the debate between maximalists and minimalists is unnecessarily polarised. They both have positively contributed to increasing sensitivity to qualitative aspects of program implementation. The sensitivity aspect is what formed the thrust of the entire process.

Methodology

This assignment had two tiers – documentation of case studies (on conflict sensitive practice in Kenya) and facilitation of individual self-assessments among all consortium members.

² See, APFO et al, *Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack*, Chapter 1

³ J. Goodhand and P. Atkinson, *Conflict and Aid: Enhancing the Peacebuilding Impact of International Engagement: A Synthesis of Findings from Afghanistan, Liberia and Sri Lanka*. International Alert. 2001.

⁴ J. Macrae and N. Leader, *The Politics of Coherence: Humanitarianism and Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era*. Humanitarian Policy Group, 2000.

⁵ J. Goodhand and P. Atkinson, Op. Cit.

The case studies heavily relied on secondary data sourced from consortium members. Such information included relevant project documents such as proposals, project reports, strategic plans, members' conflict-sensitive assessment tools, relevant publications and available organizational audio-visual recordings. Follow up internal consultations with agencies were conducted to enrich secondary data collected and get views on an integrated conflict sensitive assessment tool. Further, deliberative meetings were held with two donors (DFID and ECHO), and three partners (DOSS, PEACENET, and Oxfam) to have an external view on the practice of conflict sensitivity.

The second phase of the assignment – self-assessments – involved facilitation of separate participatory one-day (or, upon members' requests half-day) sessions with the staff of each consortium member. The broad aim of the activity was to share experiences on the concept of conflict sensitivity and how it was applicable organizationally. Besides skills sharing, the self-assessments had enriching reflective value as well as helped in informing Consortium-wide application of conflict sensitivity.

2. OUTCOMES

Introduction

The documentation exercise found that there is a level of caution among some members with regard to the application of conflict sensitivity. This concern emanates from the fear among some members that conflict sensitivity could mean one of two things (or both) – integration of some conflict resolution (peacebuilding) slant within an organisation’s mandate/priorities, or adoption of additional (bulky) tools that could tie down organisational efficiency in executing their mandate.

A conceptual understanding that appreciates conflict sensitivity as concerned about how to do business in our respective mandates, rather than a shift of mandates, would be helpful in breaking the ice. A possible reason for this confusion between peacebuilding and CSA might be the word “conflict” in “conflict sensitivity” or “conflict sensitive approaches”.

“Conflict sensitivity is not what you do; it is the way that you do your work. It is both an art and a science” – A participant’s take on the delineation between conflict sensitivity and peace building

The *Benchmarking Paper’s* definition’s strength is in it underlining that CSA is executable within an organisation’s given priorities. After all, the core principles of CSA – embracing a participatory process, inclusiveness, impartiality, transparency, accountability, respecting local ownership, partnership, timeliness, complementarity and coherence – are as well embraced by all organisations regardless of their mandates.

The definition formed the starting point for members to debate on a Kenyan definition. Through a series of individual member self-assessment exercises, and later at the joint consortium (validation) workshop, attempts were made at reaching a consensus on a common understanding of CSA. The annexes to this report capture the spectrum of definitions. But two main definitions of conflict sensitivity were finally settled on:

1. CS is a deliberate awareness and practice to ensure that our processes and actions minimize negative and maximize positive effects of our interactions with (within) a given context
2. CS is a deliberate awareness and practice that our processes and actions minimize negative and maximize positive effects as we interact with our operating contexts

A synthesized definition of the two above means:

Conflict sensitivity is a deliberately systematic practice that ensures that our processes and actions minimize negative and maximize positive effects within a given context, based on the awareness about the interaction between the said processes and actions and the particular context.

A breakdown of the definition is worthwhile:

- i. Being deliberately systematic implies intentionally institutionalizing the practice in explicit terms for sustainability

- ii. Processes and actions refer to the totality of organisational policies and practices internally and externally (in agencies' interventions)
- iii. A given context is the environment within which an organisation operates (in terms of physical presence and areas targeted for particular interventions). Being cognizant of a particular context necessitates appropriate conflict/context analysis
- iv. Awareness refers to one's keen and informed attentiveness to the two key factors central to the practice of conflict sensitivity – the context and the effects of processes and actions – and their interaction
- v. Interaction refers to the measurable and/or observable relation between an organisation's practices (and policies) and the context within which it operates

The consensus among the Kenyan consortium members was that the above is a definition of “conflict sensitivity”, while the UK Benchmarking paper defines what a “conflict sensitive approach” is. The line distinguishing them is really thin.

Infusing Conflict Sensitivity: State of the Consortium

Members are at varying levels of comprehension (and practice) of conflict sensitivity, all consortium members have unique systems and processes some of whose components are identical with the ideals of conflict sensitivity. In as much as this may imply that the process of realising conflict sensitive practice may be simplified, it is noteworthy that only a few of the members explicitly recognize conflict sensitivity in their organisational policy documents and tools.

At least three of the (eight) consortium members either explicitly refer to conflict sensitivity in their policy documents or have comprehensively developed tools and guides for conflict sensitive practice. In the rest of the members' policy documents and/or tools conflict sensitivity is implied, either intentionally because they are piloting conflict sensitive practice (e.g. Do No Harm) or unconsciously because their good/best practice ideals mirror those of conflict sensitivity.

It is also apparent that accountability and transparency standards (e.g. SPHERE standards and HAP) are widely embraced and well known, but that is not the case with CSA.

Thus, it is important to note that conflict sensitivity goes beyond celebrating good practices drawing from one's wisdom and/or experience, or even simply having good intentions and/or caring about good/harmless results. For the practice to be sustainable, it needs to be applied systematically and intentionally – as evidently drawn from the Kenyan consortium's definition. As the case studies in Chapter 3 will demonstrate, there are three success stories drawn from member organisation's adoption of CSA. However, the rest of the consortium members lack tools, publications and/or policies that explicitly mention conflict sensitivity, they do have a considerable level of appreciation for the practice. Values of CSA are equally implied and embraced in their policies and practices (e.g. procurement, recruitment, programming, partnerships etc). Some of these are captured in Chapter 3 as success stories.

Further, some have even facilitated capacity building sessions on some conflict sensitive approaches (e.g. Do No Harm) for partners and other stakeholders. Despite such positive initiatives, the big question has been how to effectively infuse conflict sensitivity in the organisation without creating inertia (in organisational operations).

What Options for Infusion?

The fact that an organisation explicitly mentions conflict sensitivity in its policies, develops comprehensive tools of analysis or espouses best practices doesn't necessarily mean successful conflict sensitive practice.

Rather, some key indicators to measure fruitful application of CSA should include its levels of:

- Systematisation (in policies, values, practices, interactions etc)
- Understanding and appreciation among staff (across departments)
- Influence on continuous organisational learning (and adaptation)
- Integration in organisational tools and guides (e.g. in impact assessment tools, needs assessment tools, monitoring and evaluation tools, etc)

There may definitely be numerous options for integrating CSA in daily organisational practice. But all boil down to two major options:

- Whether the consortium members want specific (separate) conflict sensitivity tools to guide their work. This option risks being viewed as tedious.
- Whether consortium members want to apply CSA in such a way that it is sublimated in already existing individual organisational frameworks but still explicitly and unpretentiously recognised.

The Consortium consensually agreed on change objectives that would guide their next steps in relation to conflict sensitivity (see Chapter 4).

Outcomes of Self-Assessments

Each of the eight members of the Kenyan Consortium underwent internal conflict sensitivity self-assessment exercises facilitated by the consultants. Individual self-assessment reports were prepared and submitted.

Thus, for purposes of this main report, only general findings will be highlighted. These include:

- Members had general knowledge about conflict sensitivity, but major challenge lay in how to operationalize the approach in programs/organizations. A frequently asked question was about how to institutionalize CSA in a sustainable way. This was later resolved in the change objectives.
- There was also a general concern that mainstreaming CSA could mean “more work”. Participants in the self-assessment exercises grappled with whether CSA should be a stand alone or integrated in all departments? Alongside this concern was the question of what tools to utilize, and whether it should be rigorous or seminal. Ultimately, it was agreed that the change objectives should provide a good guiding framework for integrating CSA.
- It was found that in most cases among members, there is lack of systematization of CSA. Even in cases where CSA is contained in organizational policy documents, internal (staff)

knowledge of the concept and its use is at best patchy and often times lacking. Overall, CSA is mostly implied in organizational policies and practices.

- With regard to internal CSA organizational knowledge and practice, there is a level of compartmentalization – CSA knowledge and use is centralized among organizational conflict experts

Donors' and Partners' Perspectives

Consultations that were held with two donors in the country – DFID and ECHO – found that conflict sensitivity is yet to rank highly as a critical factor in influencing donor decisions on who to or not to fund. However, both donors (at least the country offices) embrace the aims and ideals of CSA, but pointed out two important facts:

First, that the donors' prioritisation of conflict sensitivity as a key policy consideration is dependent on civil society's concretisation of the concept and its utilisation. While it appears conflict sensitivity is more aggressively advocated for in turbulent and emergency-hit areas (e.g. Sri Lanka), there is need for a deliberate “de-ghettoizing”⁶ of the concept for it to be more broadly appreciated and applied (even in areas perceived to be stable).

Second, donor country offices only implement broader policies formulated from the centre (home country). In the case of the DFID, the White Paper becomes a good statement of intent that will point the donor in given policy directions. ECHO on the other hand, is dependent on the policy position of the European Union as guided by its governance structure. This especially emphasizes the significance of UK-Kenya consortium solidarity and partnership in framing appropriate engagement strategies with donors at the central and country office levels.

In terms of members' interactions with partners, there are mixed findings. Granted, all members have guiding frameworks for engaging with local partners [local NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs)]. In most cases members' policies on partnerships have evolved based on their experiences. However, explicit recognition of conflict sensitive practice in relation to partnerships is lacking.

But it also appears that conflict sensitivity has best been utilized in training partners on the concept. In some cases, like in consultations with PEACENET Kenya and Oxfam, it was felt the consortium should be a good basis for stepping up to the need to internalize the concept and practice of CSA (beyond the training opportunities).

Engaging Donors

From the donor perspective, the donor-civil society interaction has been to some extent symbiotic. For instance DFID relied on Saferworld and PEACENET Kenya to analyse the Rift Valley conflicts with a view to developing an intervention strategy for the region. It is however instructive that DFID underscored the fact that they are seeking new transformative approaches and/interventions rather than a regurgitation of the old approaches.

⁶ Word coined from Kenneth Bush, *A Measure of Peace: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) of Development Projects in Conflict Zones*, Working Paper No.1 to mean here refraining from confining conflict sensitivity to emergencies, turbulent contexts or only equating it to peacebuilding.

A donor engagement strategy needs to be focused not only on the operationalisation of CSA, but on creative ways of refining donor-civil society interactions on the basis of CSA. Caution should be taken to avoid unnecessarily complicated and impossible ideas/approaches.

Engaging Partners

Consortium members may need to put some thought on the best ways of involving partners on issues of CSA. In one forum, there were fears that the consortium might be perceived by partners as donor-driven or UK-driven depending on how CSA efforts are executed in the country.

Suggested Options for Engagement

There are various ways in which donors and partners can be engaged:

1. Sharing lessons learnt/ best practices e.g. round table meetings involving partners, governments, and consortium members
2. Creating an E-library/blogs/websites
3. Documentation/publications
4. Development of follow-on projects after the CS consortium
5. UK-Kenya consortium engagements and sharing via website e.g. minutes in website, documents etc
6. Intra-Consortium Member visits (as part of skills sharing)

3. CASE STUDIES

Introduction

Consortium members have excelled in different areas of their work and approaches. A major challenge to sustainable conflict sensitive practice is the lack of documentation of success stories. This analysis summarises some of the celebrated policies and/or practices among consortium members.

Cases of CSA Integration

For purposes of the case studies, three examples are drawn from members who have reached a milestone in different ways in relation to conflict sensitive practice.

The first example is of an organisation – Skillshare International – that actually explicitly mentions conflict sensitivity in its peacebuilding policy. While this is so, the organisation admitted lacking requisite knowledge and skills on conflict sensitivity.

Case Study 1: Committing to Conflict Sensitivity in Organisational Policy

Skillshare International embraces conflict sensitivity in its policy document on “*Promoting Peace Building and Conflict Transformation*”. The organisation adopts the definition contained in the *Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack*. In the policy document, Skillshare commits to use a conflict-sensitive approach to their sectoral work by ensuring their work is sensitive to their contexts and facilitating the exchange of expertise (between peace building partners and those working in other sectors).

Secondly, World Vision – Kenya (WVK) has very comprehensive conflict sensitivity tools at macro, meso, and micro levels. These include the Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts (MSTC) Analysis and the Local Capacities for Peace/Do No Harm Framework. The organisation’s (WVK’s) knowledge of CSA however appears to be mostly confined to the peacebuilding unit. Further, the aforesaid conflict sensitivity tools are mainly used for analytical purposes, and more might need to be done to fully integrate CSA beyond just one department.

Case Study 2: Utilising Conflict Sensitive Tools

MSTC Analysis MSTC helps one analyse historical antecedents to a conflict, actors and inter-group relations and determines the strategic and operational implications of the trends and dynamics of the turbulent contexts. MSTC Analysis is approached through the use of a set of tools that are used together in the MSTC Analysis Cycle:

- Rapid Historical Phase Analysis
- Actor Group Relationships Analysis
- Symptoms of Instability Analysis
- Political Economy of Instability Analysis
- MSTC Mapping
- Triggers and Scenarios Analysis – Process
- Strategic Implications – Process
- Operational Implications – Process

Thirdly, Saferworld, which was part of a group of organisations that developed the *Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack*, perhaps celebrates that output as one of its most visible on CSA. Drawing from consultations with DFID, this is probably one of the reasons it is relied on (alongside others) to concretely point donors' policies in an appropriate direction in relation to the full integration of CSA. But from the self-assessment deliberations with the Nairobi office, it was apparent that organisational skills on conflict sensitivity might be concentrated in London while the Kenya team lacks such (in-depth) knowledge. Some attention also needs to be put on applying the practice over and above the publication of such a useful resource pack.

Case Study 3: Developing Resource Guides on Conflict Sensitivity

The *Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack* was developed in 2004 by a consortium of six organisations – Africa Peace Forum, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Forum on Early Warning and Response, International Alert and Saferworld. Developing the Resource Pack was based on extensive mapping of conflict sensitive practice and discussions with representatives from government, civil society and donors. It aims at raising awareness on conflict sensitivity and recording indigenous and international practice. It therefore synthesises different approaches such as Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA), Do No Harm, as well as less-known organic approaches developed by practitioners in the South.

Organisational Policies

There are aspects of organisational policies, practices and approaches of consortium members that have been cited as worth underscoring.

The first example is that of Action Aid International Kenya (AAIK).

Case Study 4: AAIK Procurement Policy

The organisation procures for items from communities within which a project is implemented. Where goods and services needed are beyond local business people's ability to supply, they are procured nationally, but this is explained to the local applicants. Through this policy the potential alienation of AAIK from the local community is avoided.

The second success story concerns CARE-Kenya's recruitment policy.

Case Study 5: CARE-Kenya Recruitment Policy

From its work in North-Eastern Province (Dadaab refugee camp), CARE Kenya has developed the practice of recruiting candidates from the host community for certain job opportunities in the area. As such, job advertisements are made locally, and job requirements that would give them a competitive edge developed (e.g. applicant must speak local language etc). This practice evolved out of the realisation that the host community gets disgruntled when such opportunities are given to "outsiders".

Thirdly, CAFOD embraces participatory approaches in implementing activities with its partners.

Case Study 6: CAFOD Participatory Implementation

With the exception of its work in Darfur, CAFOD's work is partnership-based. One of its success stories in working through partnerships is the inter-agency intervention in the aftermath of Turbi massacre in Marsabit. In the thick of the conflict, the Church wasn't considered neutral, while a multiplicity of actors wanted to intervene. An inter-faith peacebuilding initiative named the Marsabit Inter-Faith Council was established, which made religion a connector rather than a divider. The Council has grown to have the recognition of community, local leaders, and even the Inter-Religion Councils of Kenya.

The fourth story is about Save the Children (UK) participatory approaches in working with IDPs.

Case Study 7: Save the Children UK Participatory Implementation

In Rift Valley, Save the Children supported both the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the local communities e.g. the seeds distribution initiative. At the same time it engaged IDPs for casual work through a joint selection process by a mixed committee representing different communities. This approach helps to minimize the perception of one group being favored over the other, while at the same time ensuring inclusiveness, hence down playing the existing inter-ethnic animosity. It reduced the chances of having only certain groups or communities engaged, which could in turn, would exacerbate the existing tensions. The practice has contributed to reconciliation among the communities and IDPs.

In humanitarian interventions, agencies contend with the dilemma of restricting provision of relief aid to targeted beneficiaries only, or also aiding host and/or neighbouring communities:

Case Study 8: Relief Food Distribution in Kitale

Program personnel engaged in distributing relief food to IDPs in Trans Nzoia were cognizant of the wider conflict in Mt. Elgon that had spilt over to the region. They knew that solely targeting IDPs in relief food distribution would only reinforce feelings of exclusion among the communities in neighbouring Mt. Elgon and further complicate the conflict. In effect they convinced the Diocese to widen distribution efforts to include Mt. Elgon. This helped in dispelling tensions and enhancing success in the intervention.

There are many more told and untold stories on successes that can be built up on to further entrench the practice of conflict sensitivity. Some of these include:

- Development of detailed tools of analysis and their internalisation e.g. Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts already discussed
- Publication of resource guides and training materials e.g. Resource pack on conflict sensitivity already discussed
- Capacity building forums for partners and staff e.g. training sessions on conflict sensitive practice (such as Do No Harm trainings).

However, an important consideration to make is about letting these success stories inform current and future conflict-sensitive practice among consortium members. Some of the ways these successes can enrich practice include:

- i. Shared learning forums – the consortium can host/organise lessons learnt sessions for members with the aim of achieving shared learning
- ii. Piloting CSA approaches and tools
- iii. CSA analysis – identifying approaches which are ongoing but not recognized

- iv. Organising symposia for feedback from/to consortium members and other stakeholders
- v. Program reviews (redesigning) – based on lessons learnt and skills acquired, members should be open to reviewing their programs and where necessary redesigning them
- vi. Integrating conflict sensitivity in our operations – further integrating CSA in organisational operations would be helpful
- vii. Sharing success stories with donors and other partners can be an effective way of influencing donors’ and/or partners’ perspectives on conflict sensitivity
- viii. Develop template for success stories documentation as a way of sustaining the practice.

Conflict-Blind Programming

There are still challenges of conflict-blind programming that were noted by members and partners. These should serve to provide opportunities for learning and underline gaps in capacities that may need to be addressed rather than being a criticism and exposition of failures. There was an example of a development project – motivated by good intentions – but which unintentionally ignored underlying conflict issues in the project area.

Case Study 9: Conflict Blind Development Project

Some religious leaders in Maralal initiated a road construction project with the noble aim of ensuring accessibility of services (health facilities, market etc) to a community that far removed from these facilities. This effort overlooked underlying land issues and the identity politics between the community that had inhabited the areas the longest and the remotely located community that needed access to the services (who were looked at as guests). The road project was therefore interpreted by the “original” inhabitants as favouring the rival (“guest”) community. It there caused further conflict.

In an illustration of noble intentions that were executed wrongly, the government resettlement and reconciliation programs – dubbed *Operation Rudi Nyumbani* (Operation Return Home) and *Operation Ujjarani Mwema* (Operation Good Neighbourliness) – were questioned by a partner organisation.

Case Study 10: Placing Resettlement before Dialogue

The government coined the terms “Operation Rudi Nyumbani” for its resettlement efforts after the signing of the National Accord in 2008. The government hope to move internally displaced persons (IDPs) from IDP camps back to their farms and/or homes. But coining of the term “operation” gave it a militaristic tone, and demonstrated a lack of appreciation of IDPs. Later, the government began the “Operation Ujirani Mwema”, which didn’t shed the militaristic overtones. Further the government-civil society office responsible for peace building – the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC) – wasn’t provided resources to facilitate dialogue when they were the lead agency for the task (the Special Programs Ministry, which took the lead in resettlement was on the other hand adequately resourced). The IDPs were therefore faced with the prospect of heading back to hostile neighbours. A good number of the IDPs refused to go back home. and opted to stav in the camns.

There are situations in which agencies have learnt to muddle through, framing solutions as problems and/or conflicts arise over time:

Case Study 11: Framing a Coordination Mechanism to Confront Emerging Issues

In the Dadaab refugee camp, agencies are confronted with the growing challenges associated with a long-running refugee problem. The refugee communities' leadership structures are the gateway for any agency's interventions. This over time made the leaders powerful, and with more power, it was abused (e.g. leaders asking for favours). When one agency attempted distributing relief supplies directly to the refugees, it fell out of favour with the leaders. Some of the leaders also tried playing agencies against each other for their own selfish gain. This was compounded by the proliferation of agencies in the camp – all of them utilising the same structures. This challenge brought with it difference in approaches and practices (e.g. some agencies paying participants per diems while others didn't). This created a need for a coordination mechanism that would harmonise standards. As such the UNHCR became the coordinating point for agencies in Dadaab, which meet monthly. A referral system was developed – to point refugees in the right direction for their diverse needs and/or problems.

Lastly, in efforts to stay accountable to their donors, and/or stamp their presence (and hence appear involved in resolving local communities' problems), agencies often brand their projects to be more visible, but this has unintended implications:

Case Study 12: Branding Housing Projects in Resettling IDPs

In the aftermath of the post-2007 polls violence, and with the challenge of hundreds of thousands displaced communities, some agencies played a critical role in helping resettle the IDPs and in construction of homes for a number of them. In many cases the agencies branded their organisational names on such houses. This has had unintended implications: First, perceived aggressor communities also lost their properties and haven't enjoyed similar attention. This has entrenched levels of resentment. Second, in the event of renewed animosities, the branded houses could be easily identified for destruction. This is especially concerning in the context that healing and reconciliation efforts haven't been as prioritised as resettlement efforts.

4. CHANGE OBJECTIVES

Introduction

Before outlining the framework that will guide the application of conflict sensitivity among member of the Consortium, it is important to highlight the multiple challenges in the way of this process. The fact that the Consortium is at its formative stages is in itself a special challenge, and especially given that this study found that the membership is at different stages of understanding and utilising CSA.

Acknowledging the challenges in comprehension and application of conflict sensitivity need not be viewed as failures. Rather, these need honest analytical appreciation with a view to refining CSA to surmount the challenges.

The Challenges

There are several challenges that were identified:

- i. Comprehension
 - Confusion between conflict resolution/peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity: As earlier noted (1.0 Conceptualising Conflict Sensitivity) there is a tendency among some to associate conflict sensitive practice with conflict resolution. This can pose a challenge in executing conflict sensitivity – much energy and focus could be invested in peacebuilding-oriented activities when the intention is to minimise the negative and maximise the positive effects of an intervention.
 - Knowledge gap on conflict sensitive approaches: Even with the goodwill towards practicing conflict sensitivity, there is still some lack of knowledge on the different ways conflict sensitivity can be applied. Consortium members may need a more intense exposure to conflict sensitive practice and approaches.
- ii. Appreciation
 - Lack of interest in the practice: The practice of conflict sensitivity faces the challenge of a possible lack of interest in it, where some could view it as one of the many jargons whose time will pass. Therefore how it is packaged and applied will determine the value members and others will place on it.
 - Comfort that individual organisations' practices are good enough. The challenge herein lies in the need to practically demonstrate the additional value conflict sensitivity brings.
- iii. Operationalisation
 - Problem of applying concept among organisations with different mandates: A number of members talked of the need to find a balance between conflict sensitive practice and their respective approaches (e.g. rights based approaches etc). It will be helpful for agencies to learn about how CSA can be adapted to their different mandates.
 - Restriction of practice to organisations/departments/units with peacebuilding mandates: Even where the need for CSA is appreciated, there is the tendency to place its execution within the responsibility of peacebuilding

programs/departments/officers. While this might mean its more rigorous exposition, it is restrictive while the goals of CSA are to have the practice institutionalised.

- Fear that applying CSA could be bulky, increase number of tools, and bog down staff/members with lots of guides at expense of efficiency.

iv. Capacity

- Expertise/skill
 - Lack of expertise/skill: A good number of organisations lack the skill necessary to apply conflict sensitivity. There is a major need for capacity building.
 - Asymmetrical distribution of skilled staff (e.g. country office lacking skills while organisation has such expertise elsewhere). There are cases (among members), where the Kenyan country office(s) lack skilled staff (on CSA) whereas the larger organisation(s) has the same expertise in other countries. In one instance, staff in one agency felt the execution of their policy-oriented goals in conflict sensitivity is the preserve of the headquarter office. This poses a challenge in sustaining the practice.
- Funds: Most organisations lack financial resources earmarked for CSA. This impedes its application. It was for example felt by one member that the time spent in consortium-related activities was tricky accounting for (in terms of who pays for the time).
- Donors'/partners' goodwill: the successful implementation is partly dependent on the goodwill or donors and partners. The challenge lies in coming up with appropriate strategies to engage them on CSA.

Overcoming Challenges

There are several suggested ways of overcoming the challenges to CSA:

- Incorporate conflict sensitivity into programming through strategic plan and business plans
- Specifically identify areas of integration of conflict sensitivity within organisation and/or programs
- Hold staff individually accountable by setting personal standards/plans
- Continuous/regular capacity building opportunities/educational opportunities to maintain knowledge and sustainability
- Strengthen CSA-related advocacy
- Improve documentation and information sharing
- Strengthen coordination and networking

The Change Objectives

The intense process of consultations, self-assessments and validation of the documentation yielded a framework and/or roadmap that will guide the Consortium's next steps. In addition to members agreeing to the need for a systematic approach to conflict sensitivity, the committed to the following change objectives (a more comprehensive lists of change objectives is annexed at the end of this report, in addition to member-specific objectives contained in individual self-assessment reports):

1. Knowledge/Experience Sharing

- Documentation – Consortium members should document best practices and lessons learnt
- Internal and consortium meetings – actively organise and participate in intra-organisational and consortium CSA meetings
- Consortium-government interaction – the Consortium should broaden efforts for integrating conflict sensitivity by engaging with the government through the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC)
- Information sharing with partners (locally) – the Consortium members should locally share information on CSA with local partners.

2. Capacity Building

- Develop Shared Understanding of Conflict Sensitivity – Members felt that with the adoption of a common definition of conflict sensitivity, this objective had greatly been achieved.
- Continuous training/learning – the Consortium can organise training for members, while members can institute internal mentoring mechanisms to enhance sustainability of knowledge gained.
- Funds – members can consider allocating financial resources for CSA, or jointly fundraise for such funds through the Consortium
- Tool adoption/development/integration – Members agreed that they needed to share amongst themselves CSA tools with the aim of at best developing a harmonised one, and at minimum developing member-specific tools.

4. Cross-Departmental Integration

While members agreed on the need for the integration of CSA across all organisational departments, it was felt that each member organisation should identify the organisational focal point of CSA.

5. Programming

- Infuse conflict sensitivity in member organisations' assessments e.g.
 - Needs assessments;
 - Baseline assessments; and
 - Reviews
- Carry out Context/Conflict analyses for areas of relevance for the Consortium
- Integrate CSA in members' program cycle

6. Partners/Donors

- The Consortium should organise donor round-tables to sell CSA
- Create an e-Community through which online interactions (interactive website, e-library, etc) can be developed
- Nurture UK-Kenya Consortium engagement
- Enhance intra-Consortium involvement in individual members' activities e.g. development of strategic plans, tool development and testing, conflict analyses etc
- Develop donor engagement strategy

General Recommendations

Given the comprehensive nature of the process – document reviews, self assessments and validation exercises – at which each stage generated a number of recommendations that have been captured; few additional recommendations can be made by the consultants. These include:

- Developing a workable framework of engagement for the consortium – Given that the Consortium is at its inception stages, it is necessary to develop general guidelines that will inform interactions among members in relation to Consortium activities.
- Confidence Building and Buy-Ins – It is doubtful that all members have completely embraced the CSA-integration process. There is need for sustained negotiation on appropriate ways of infusing the practice, as well as the nitty-gritty of full members' participation in the Consortium
- Internal Members' Deliberation on all Reports – It is necessary that an internal deliberative process be planned to examine all the reports (the self-assessment reports, main report documenting case studies and partners' and donors' reports) with the aim of creating intra-Consortium synergy and developing common ground for the Consortium.

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ANNEX 1: CONFLICT SENSITIVITY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

Objectives of the assessment

- To reflect on the experiences of conflict sensitive practice in the organization
- To sensitize staff on conflict sensitive approaches
- To identify gaps and impediments to the practice of conflict sensitivity
- To develop concrete steps that will support organizational CS practice and learning

Reason for conflict sensitive approaches (CSA)

- Understand the context in which you operate
- Understand interaction between your intervention and the context
- Avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts

Conceptualising Conflict Sensitivity

- Take a moment and reflect on your organisational practice. Based on your experience, what would you (in your own words) say conflict sensitivity is? Offer an organisational, group or personal definition.
- Is CS achievable?

Systematising Conflict Sensitivity

- In your opinion, what tangible aspects of your country programme and/or agency demonstrate systematic support for the application of CSA (or aspects of it)?
- In which key organisational policy or other relevant documents is CSA (or aspects of it) spelt out?

Integrating Conflict Sensitivity

- How can conflict sensitivity be best integrated into your work/organisation?
- If in use, share experience.
- How should consortium utilize it?
- How do you interact with and/or utilize the concept in your daily work (if at all)?

Relevance of Conflict Sensitivity

- How relevant is conflict sensitivity to the organization? Kindly highlight how staff in different departments such as Policy, Governance, Communication, Human Resource, Administration, Audit and Finance, Sponsorship, Procurement and Logistics regard CS?.
- Additionally, how is CS applied in different departments? Where it is not applied, are there specific reasons why not and/or why yes?

Effective Application of Conflict Sensitivity

- Are there specific suggestions as to what would be needed to support more effective advocacy for donors to support mainstreamed conflict sensitivity?
- What challenges could impede CS practice? Kindly focus on factors both internal and external to your agency
- What needs to be done to ensure effective application (or sustained application) of CSA within your agency?
- How best do we ensure lessons learnt are infused back to improve organizational capacity? Kindly make recommendations
- Are there any external factors that support and/or have a bearing on your country office's CS practice?

Project Cycle and Conflict Sensitivity

- How best should conflict sensitivity be integrated into the project cycle?
- What guides would be needed for this? Kindly have a holistic view of this, looking at entire cycle, including how the log frame and budgetary process should/do integrate CSA.
- Share on available mechanisms that are or could be utilized for regular reflection and reporting on the interaction of conflict sensitivity and programming

Managing Partnerships

- What is the process for selecting partners/sponsor links or Development Areas?
- What aspects of your partner/sponsor links selection guidelines borrow from CS?
- In what ways does your agency communicate the need to uphold CS ethics & principles among its partners (including private sector partners)?
- Any constraints, gaps and/or blockages in practice and application of CS?
- Any capacity requirements to effectively use and apply CS in your work?
- When and how do you communicate to partners your expectations with regard to conflict sensitivity?
- What actions would be taken if partner's conflict blind (or conflict contributing) programming is uncovered?
- Better still, how does your agency treat a partner whose approaches are disagreeable?
- Do you offer partners any support / training in conflict sensitivity?
- Are all donors equally targeted (i.e. are private donors targeted as well as institutional donors such as the EC)?
- How is conflict sensitivity currently communicated to donors?
- What are key opportunities for raising CS profile amongst donors?
- Have those involved in donor liaison ever communicated about conflict sensitivity?
- Do those involved in donor liaison feel able (sufficiently knowledgeable) to communicate on conflict sensitivity?

Monitoring & Evaluation

- How is your agency's M&E system utilized to assess the practice and application CS? Further how are CS indicators integrated in your M&E indicators?
- If not utilized that way, how can this (CS) be Integrated into Monitoring & Evaluation system?
- How do you insulate yourselves from the danger of conflict blind programming

Human Resource Managing, Procurement and Administration

- How conflict sensitive is the recruitment process?
- How is the staff induction process implemented conflict sensitively? Is there such a plan?
- Are CSA competencies considered during recruitment?
- How do those in procurement, logistics and administration ensure that conflict sensitivity is applied when procuring supplies and goods for projects from an area where resources are scarce?
- Highlight any logistical guides relevant to Conflict Sensitivity
- Any capacity requirements to effectively use and apply CS in your work?
- Are external resource persons or those on secondment briefed on conflict sensitivity when being hired?
- Any constraints, gaps and/or blockages in practice and application of CS?

Organizational Leadership

- How can management create awareness of conflict sensitivity at top levels and within organization?
- Where is CS placed in terms of organizational priority?
- Is there a need to make CSA mandatory in the proposal development process?
- What CSA checklists exist in proposal development? If none exist, how can proposals be systematically screened for CS?
- Share on available mechanisms that are or could be utilized for regular reflection and reporting on the interaction of conflict sensitivity and policy

Prioritisation of Conflict Sensitivity

- Is conflict sensitivity given similar weight to other considerations such as security and financial risk reduction, environmental conservation, gender and HIV/AIDs mainstreaming, and peacebuilding?
- Does the organization have a designated budget line for conflict sensitivity?
- Do staffs involved in budget development priorities including resources for conflict sensitivity?

ANNEX 2: Comprehensive Change Objectives

KENYA CONSORTIUM CONFLICT SENSITIVE APPROACHES DRAFT CHANGE OBJECTIVES

| KENYA CSA CONSORTIUM CHANGE OBJECTIVES | ActionAid | CARE | Saferworld | WorldVision | Skillshare | PLAN | SAVE | CAFOD | Total Votes |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|------------|-------------|------------|------|------|-------|-------------|
| KNOWLEDGE/EXPERIENCE SHARING | | | | | | | | | |
| • Documentation of CSA key success stories and challenges | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop standard template for documenting success stories | | | | | | | | | |
| • Utilize best practice for program development | | | | | | | | | |
| • Encourage/sustain joint planning and coordination during the consortium life and after for reflection on best practices | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop online interactions (interactive website, e-library for consortium members to share best practices and case studies) | | | | | | | | | |
| • Sharing CSA information with partners (locally) through symposium and literature development | | | | | | | | | |
| • To develop a 2 page synopsis on why you think CS is relevant in your organization) | | | | | | | | | |
| • Inform donors on local dynamics by availing to them context analysis and other relevant information on project and context through symposium | | | | | | | | | |
| CAPACITY BUILDING | | | | | | | | | |
| • Adopt common definition of CS | | | | | | | | | |
| • Continuous training/learning for staff development and develop means of storing them for institutional memory | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop standardized CS Tool, adopt and integrate in the organizational system | | | | | | | | | |
| • Training on Conflict sensitivity for partners and donors | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop shared conceptual understanding on CS | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop CSA guide that can be used and is relevant and applicable to multi-mandate organization | | | | | | | | | |
| • Training of Media/Journalist on the importance of CS in their reporting (Conflict | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Sensitive Journalism) | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop CSA training tools that can be used for staff development | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Training Management on CS targeting Managers and Directors to gain buy-in & Ownership of the concept | | | | | | | | | | |

| KENYA CSA CONSORTIUM CHANGE OBJECTIVES | ActionAid | CARE | Saferworld | WorldVision | Skillshare | PLAN | SAVE | CAFOD | Total Votes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
| CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL INTEGRATION | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop guidelines on application of CS in Program cycle | | | | | | | | | |
| • Include CSA competencies in the recruitment package targeting Managers and field coordinators | | | | | | | | | |
| • Audit/analysis of CS in different departments to see its applicability | | | | | | | | | |
| • Tailor-Made awareness of CS among different departments | | | | | | | | | |
| • Conduct Internal inventory of CS competencies | | | | | | | | | |
| • Mainstream CS in all departments | | | | | | | | | |
| • Integration of CSA at planning level and program design | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop and establish baseline for measuring CS indicators | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop CS monitoring and Evaluation indicators | | | | | | | | | |
| • Include CS in procurement policy | | | | | | | | | |
| • Include CS in HR policies | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop mechanism on how to capture CS during assessments | | | | | | | | | |
| • Include CS into M&E systems | | | | | | | | | |
| • Integrate CS into participatory analysis tools | | | | | | | | | |
| • Map where CSA sit in the organization | | | | | | | | | |
| • Integrate CS into Exit/Phase out strategy | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop CS guidebook | | | | | | | | | |

| KENYA CSA CONSORTIUM CHANGE OBJECTIVES | ActionAid | CARE | Saferworld | WorldVision | Skillshare | PLAN | SAVE | CAFOD | Total Votes |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
| PARTNERS/DONORS | | | | | | | | | |
| • UK-Kenya engagement & connectivity in shared learning process | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop partner engagement strategy | | | | | | | | | |
| • Consortium to look for funds jointly in implementing members action points | | | | | | | | | |
| • Intra-Consortium engagement in development of strategic plans, tools, and analyses (visits to other consortium focus country for sharing and learning quarterly) | | | | | | | | | |
| • Support partners in developing clear outcomes and CS indicators | | | | | | | | | |
| • Conduct Donor targeted CSA advocacy | | | | | | | | | |
| • Need to strengthen communication across regional offices and team building and options for regional offices in Africa pushing for wider integration of CS | | | | | | | | | |
| • More focus on CSA in the partner development process | | | | | | | | | |
| • Integrate CS into partner/Sponsor/donor selection process | | | | | | | | | |
| SUSTAINABILITY | | | | | | | | | |
| • Integrate CSA in program planning (analyze conflict structures, where they exist) within the Country strategic planning | | | | | | | | | |
| • Integrate CSA within the institutional framework | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop one standardized conflict sensitivity tools for use by different mandate agencies | | | | | | | | | |
| • Members to map when to do their strategic plan & Lobby for CS inclusion | | | | | | | | | |
| • Operationalize the resource pack | | | | | | | | | |
| • Influence policies and policy implementation process of government and donors to be conflict sensitive | | | | | | | | | |
| • Systematize CSA institutionally | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| • Find balance between Conflict sensitivity and advocacy | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop best practice guidelines | | | | | | | | | |
| • Allocate money, time and space | | | | | | | | | |
| • Have a conflict expert(s) to support application of CSA in the country operation | | | | | | | | | |
| • Develop Internal inventory of CSA | | | | | | | | | |
| • Harmonization of policies (inter-departmental) | | | | | | | | | |
| • Inform donors on local dynamics by availing to them context analysis and other relevant information on project and context through symposium | | | | | | | | | |
| • Contract consultant to develop CS policy direction for the consortium | | | | | | | | | |