

Guidance Sheet on Conflict Sensitive *Do No Harm* Programming

Introduction

This guidance sheet addresses all project relevant staff at CBM Bensheim Office, Country Offices, and partner level involved in project planning, development, implementation, and evaluation to ensure conflict sensitive programming in CBM interventions. The aim of the approach introduced with this guidance is to avoid and minimize potential negative and conflict-triggering practices of CBM and its partners' project interventions that could spark (further) tensions and conflicts. Thus, this guidance outlines why and how the "Do No Harm" (DNH) principle must be applied in CBM projects.

CBM's humanitarian and development assistance projects aim to reach and actively involve persons with disabilities, addressing specific needs while promoting and facilitating their full inclusion in mainstream services, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings. In these contexts, it is essential to address and analyze the question of which unintended negative effects the project interventions might potentially have. These adverse effects shall be analyzed with representatives of the respective CBM Country Office, the project partners, and project beneficiaries. Conducting a DNH analysis is of crucial importance as CBM and project partners are operating with beneficiaries often living in already volatile environments with a potential for further violent escalation. The DNH approach is a means to find and promote solutions and programming options to minimize unintended negative effects which shall be applied continuously in each phase of the project management cycle.¹

Terminology and Obligation

As a humanitarian and development actor, CBM adheres to a set of established principles and seeks to be neutral in its interventions. By defining DNH as a principle, CBM and its partners are subject to the obligation to "prevent and mitigate any negative impacts of its actions on affected populations"². The principle of DNH can be seen as a tool to define the interaction of our intervention and the operational context to avoid negative and conflict-triggering practices as well as to strengthen positive conflict-reducing effects.

Analytical Framework

The analytical DNH Framework provides a descriptive tool to identify relevant information to understand how assistance affects contexts and conflict settings to help predict the impacts of different project activities. The primary context analysis tools for a DNH application are Dividers and Connectors, being characterized as follows:

Dividers	Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conflict-stimulating factors • to be minimized and avoided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive and conflict-reducing factors • strengthened as local capacities for peace

¹ A video introduction on the Do No Harm principle can be found here [Do No Harm Principle - YouTube](#)

² <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/44765/humanitarian-principles>

Strengthening connectors and avoiding negative effects, in turn, will boost the community and relevant stakeholder acceptance of CBM's and Partners' interventions and protect CBM staff, partner staff as well as beneficiaries.

As a condition, a thorough analysis of the context relevant to the project must be conducted during the planning and implementation stage of the project.³

- ➔ For example, the planning workshop for a new project should include a session on a DNH analysis as a participatory team exercise which should be documented.⁴

The below descriptive seven points serve as a guidance on key categories relevant for the identification of impacts as part of the analytical framework:

The Do No Harm Seven-Step Process Diagram



(Source: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects)

Step 1: Context Analysis

- Understand the geographical and political space, the conflict(s) and reasons
- Identify which conflicts are dangerous in terms of their destructiveness and violence, which groups and actors are involved

³ An analysis after project determination can be done as well (lessons-learned / evaluation)

⁴ Usually, most institutional donor proposal templates include a section on DNH that must be filled out as part of the concept note and / or full proposal. The time to be scheduled for the analysis session depends on the complexity of the context and actors involved.

Step 2: Analyze Dividers and Tension

- Identify the source of tension (e.g., historical, social, political, religious, economic etc.) including root causes (e.g., historical perception of injustice) and proximate causes
- What factors divide groups and stimulate conflicts? Internal or external promoted powers?
- Typical dividers include systems, institutions, actions, values, interests, experiences etc.

Step 3: Analyze Connectors and Local Capacities for Peace

- Identify sources of cohesion and trust reinforcing normalcy (e.g., historical, social, political, religious, economic etc.)
- What factors keep people together?
- Typical dividers can also be typical connectors and strengthen local capacities for peace

Step 4: Analyze the Assistance Program: Unpacking Aid

- Study the details of the intervention: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
- Review the details of the program as they determine the impact
- Examine why and how decisions are made, who benefits (most) and who is excluded

Step 5: Analyze the Impact by Using the Concepts of Resource Transfer and Implicit Ethical Messages

- Analyze the interaction of the program with identified Connectors and Dividers
- Who gains and who does not gain from the assistance? In what way could the project reduce or increase dividers / connectors? Any opportunities to reinforce connectors missed?
- What resources are brought into the conflict? What impact does the resource transfer have?
- What messages are conveyed through the way in which CBM and its partner(s) work? Are there impacts that stem from implicit ethical messages?

Resource Transfers (*Actions*) and Implicit Ethical Messages (*Behaviors*) can create or exacerbate conflicts. In general, there are five ways assistance programs can have negative effects on social tension and conflict. Resource Transfers are not only about what we bring into the context, but also about how it is maintained and shared as it can be seen in the following main effects:

- Substitution effect: Does the assistance program ignore or undermine existing systems and structures, thus allowing them to abdicate their own responsibilities?
- Distribution effect: Who will / will not receive support? What impacts will this decision have within the local population (e.g., if target group consists only of persons with disabilities)?
- Market effect: Resources of assistance programs can have an impact on local markets (wages, prices etc.). Does the assistance program lead to a market distortion?
- Legitimization effect: Does the program legitimize a group or actors by working with them?
- Diversion effect: any potential misuse? Are resources likely to be stolen which, in turn, could fuel the conflict?

Assistance Programs also affect the context through implicit ethical messages conveyed by behaviors and attitudes. Thus, the interaction with local partners, actors and beneficiaries must be based on principles such as Respect, Accountability, Fairness, and Transparency.

Step 6: Programming Options

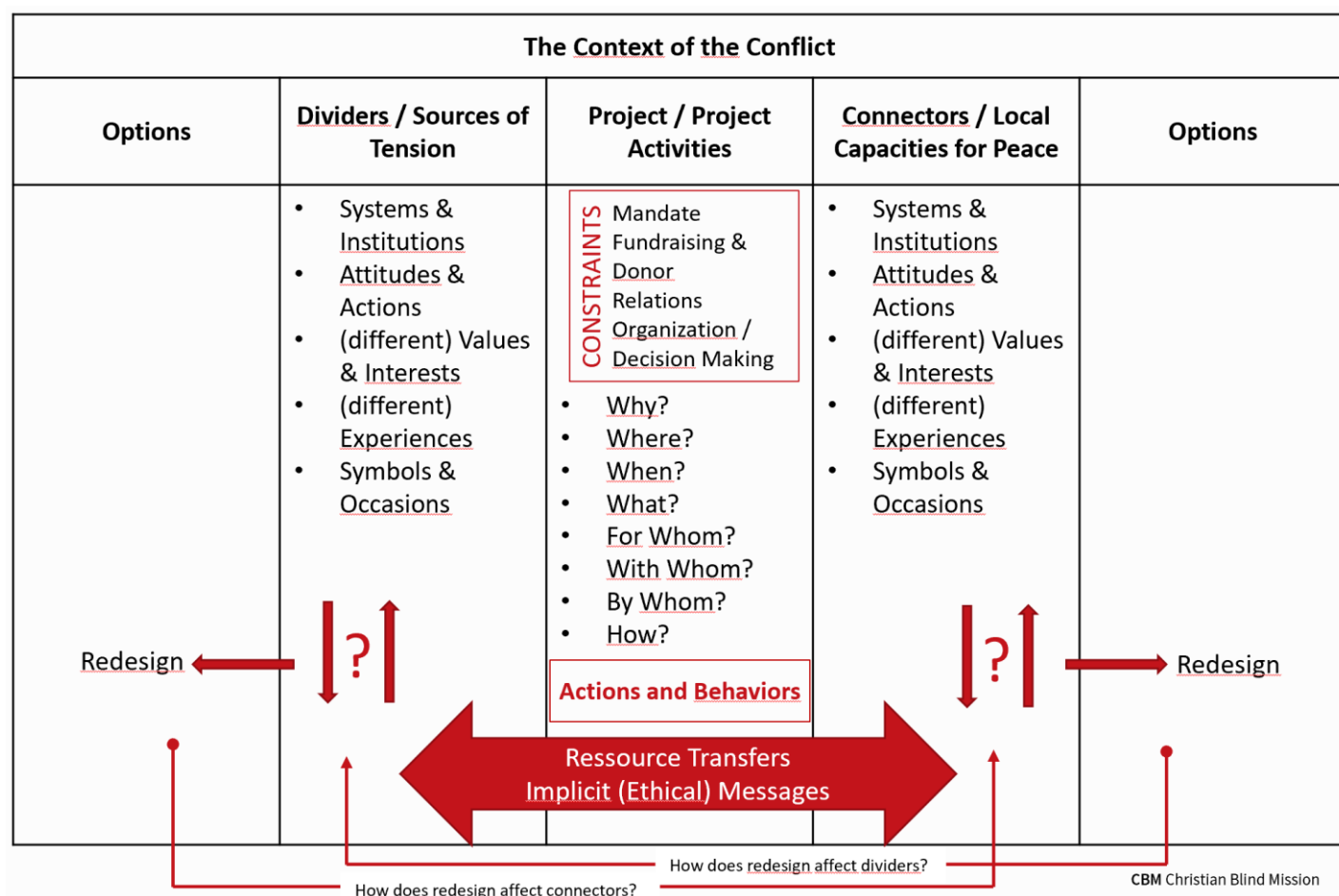
- Develop options so that the program can be realized with as few negative unintended effects as possible, ideally with eliminated negative effects, and strengthened connectors.
- Consider budget implications when developing options.

Step 7: Test Programming Options and Redesign

- Re-assess the impacts of the new approach to optimize the effects of the assistance program
- How do these options affect the dividers and connectors?

DNH Analysis Matrix

The DNH matrix reflects the findings of the above impact analysis based on the seven steps and shows how these steps are linked to one another. Using the DNH matrix as an assessment tool enables the systematic integration of the insights gained into the project management structure as well as space for reflection during regular monitoring of the project management.



- ➔ Incorporate the DNH analysis into the planning stage of each humanitarian and development project as a team exercise (involvement of PM HQ, CO, Partners, Security & Safeguarding Focal Persons and Regional S&SG Advisors, beneficiaries, stakeholders).
- ➔ Identify non-intended impacts throughout the project implementation and monitoring as it is not always possible to summarize them in the planning stage particularly in fast-changing contexts (e.g., during concept-note stage)
- ➔ During the implementation it is not necessary to have this regular DNH monitoring in form of a formal process (changes and impacts in the project context can also be naturally observed)

- ➔ COs and partners should revisit the analysis during implementation and monitoring which will also foster a culture of reporting difficulties as well.
- ➔ See template and example in Annex I

Distinction between DNH and Risk Management

A good DNH analysis is characterized by a precise distinction between:

Where and how does the given context affect and influence the project/ intervention/ persons?	Where and how does the project/ intervention/ actor affect the given implementation context?
Explanation: when risks outside of the intervention influence the project, i. e., anything from the outside that could interfere and produce dangers	Explanation: when the project itself causes damage (either through Actions or Behaviors)
<i>Example:</i> Civil war in country X, where several groups are involved in the war, hence, security risks such as attacks, roadblocks, armed clashes can affect the project deliverables, timelines and staff or beneficiary security	<i>Example:</i> A project aiming at empowering women in the northern side of the country X which is characterized by traditional gender roles: Women are attacked or disappear due to their participation in the project meaning the risks women face are caused by the project

Be aware of the interactions between possible negative effects and external risks that could arise due to the respective mitigation measures. A mitigation strategy for a safety & security risk can reduce the risk but also create an adverse effect for the project and vice versa.

- ➔ For example, planning and implementing projects without involving the community to keep a low profile due to security risks in volatile project areas can lead to culturally inappropriate implementation strategies and lack of acceptance.
- ➔ Important to examine mitigation strategies for potential risks together with the DNH programming not to exacerbate tension.
- ➔ Share DNH-Analysis including its mitigation strategies with CBM Security and Safeguarding Focal Persons and Regional S&S Advisors to assess the strategies together from a broader perspective.

Unintended adverse effects, in return, can damage CBM's relationships in the respective context, with established consents from CBM beneficiaries, local authorities, and other stakeholders, and damage CBM's community acceptance which is key for CBM's security strategy.⁵

⁵ DNH is also one of CBM's Safety and Security Policy principles. For more information, please refer to [CBM Safety and Security Policy and Guiding Framework Tools and Standards](#).

Annex I Template for DNH Analysis Matrix filled with example:

Options	Dividers / Sources of Tension	Project / Project Activities	Connectors / Local Capacities for Peace	Options
<i>Redesign</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Systems & Institutions</i> • <i>Attitudes & Actions</i> • <i>(different) Values & Interests</i> • <i>(different) Experiences</i> • <i>Symbols & Occasions</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Constraints</i> • <i>Why</i> • <i>Where</i> • <i>When</i> • <i>What</i> • <i>For Whom? With Whom? By Whom?</i> • <i>How?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Systems & Institutions</i> • <i>Attitudes & Actions</i> • <i>(different) Values & Interests</i> • <i>(different) Experiences</i> • <i>Symbols & Occasions</i> 	<i>Redesign</i>
<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>targeting both ethnic groups as well as returning IDPs and non-returning residents in cash for work</i> • <i>reconstruction in different neighborhoods including houses of non-returnees</i> 	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>two different ethnic groups holding each other responsible for the destruction</i> • <i>mistrust between the two ethnic groups</i> • <i>lack of / competition for jobs, resources, food between returning IDPs and non-IDPs as well as both ethnic groups</i> 	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <p><i>Constraints: Donor does not fund unconditional cash programs</i></p> <p><i>Why, where, and when: Returning IDPs in the city of X after the civil war between the two ethnic groups ended</i></p> <p><i>What:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rebuilding destroyed private houses</i> <p><i>With whom: Returning IDPs</i></p> <p><i>How: Cash for work</i></p>	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>common usage of schools, health facilities, places of worship</i> • <i>need for functioning WASH infrastructure</i> • <i>religion and religious practices</i> • <i>traditional leaders settling housing disputes</i> 	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>reconstruction not only of private houses but also community-relevant buildings & infrastructure</i> • <i>Strengthening of local market through local procurement</i>