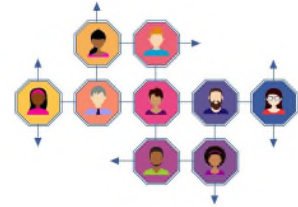


Conflict sensitivity and analysis

Good Governance and Peacebuilding



The Hague Academy for
local governance

Learning objectives



At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- ▶ Define the related concepts of conflict and violence
- ▶ Discuss the key principles of conflict sensitivity
- ▶ Explain the importance of having a conflict sensitivity perspective in Human Security
- ▶ Apply a conflict sensitivity tool for conflict context analysis

Speaker's note:

Explain the learning objectives of this session

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:



UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT & VIOLENCE



Speaker's note:

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

How would you define the terms 'conflict' and 'violence'



Speaker's note:

- Divide the participants into small groups (4-6 participants) and give each group a flipchart(sheet) with the words Conflict, Peace and Violence in the centre
- Ask each of the groups to define these terms, either with short words or sentences (10 min)
- Ask each group to nominate a representative to share their team's thoughts (10 min)

Time: 20 minutes

Background information:

Conflict: the definition

A conflict occurs when:

- ▶ two or more parties,
- ▶ convinced of the incompatibility of their interests (perception)
- ▶ adopt hostile attitudes
- ▶ or take actions that harm the ability of others to pursue their interests

(Mitchell, 1981; Neufeldt, 2002)

broadcast sign
def·i·ni·tion n. 1.
The teacher gave de
the new words.

Speaker's note:

- Explain the definition of conflict
- Compare the definition to the elements of the brainstorm
- Explain that conflict is an ambiguous concept

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

This means that a conflict exists when opposing parties believe their interests do not match. As a result, they adopt unfriendly attitudes towards each other or they try to prevent the other party from reaching their interests. In this definition, the conflict becomes violent when parties no longer seek to reach their goals peacefully, but instead resort to violence in one form or another.

Does this definition match some of the elements from the own brainstorm? It is very well possible that participants defined conflict in a different way. Conflict is an ambiguous concept. It takes on different meanings for different groups and in different contexts.

Conflict

Fact of life

Inevitable

Generally resolved peacefully

Often leads to an improvement of the situation

Speaker's note:

Explain how conflict can be approached in a positive way.

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

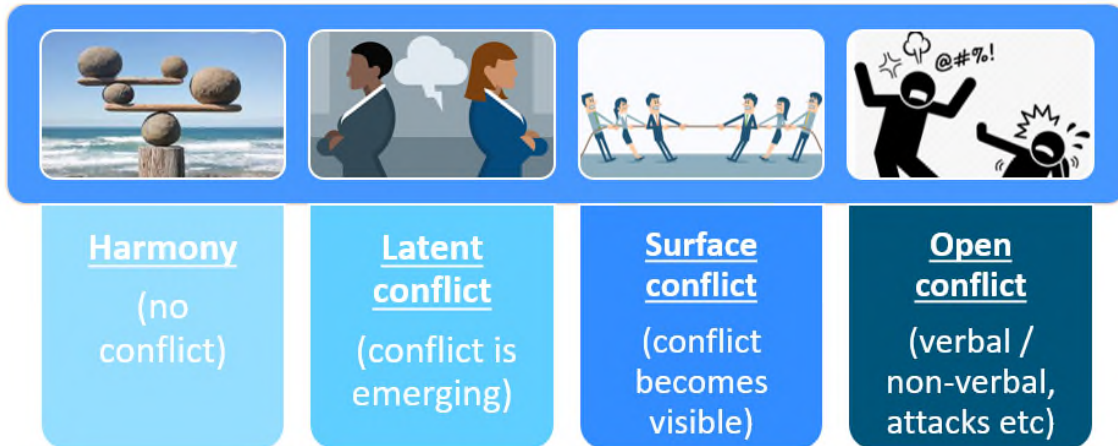
In particular, conflict tends to be understood as a negative phenomenon, synonymous with violence. But we can also take a broader and more positive approach to understanding conflict. This approach sees conflict as a natural phenomenon with many dimensions that can indicate change within society.

This positive approach focuses mainly on the prevention of violent conflict or the management of differences in a peaceful and constructive way. So here the focus is on the need to strengthen structures, processes and mechanisms within society that enable the peaceful and constructive management of differences.

We can also derive another lesson from this approach: violent conflicts are not inevitable and they do not happen overnight. Conflict is a dynamic process. It may take different forms and can run through various stages of escalation and de-

escalation. This all results from the complex combination and overlap of various causes of conflict.

Forms of conflict



Speaker's note:

Explain the different forms of conflict

Ask the participants in plenary to give examples of the three forms of conflict from their own context

Time: 10 minutes

Background information:

Our starting point is that there is no standard type of conflict. In that sense, each conflict is unique. As we have seen, a conflict exists when the interest and behaviours of both parties are not compatible. Let's take a look at the different forms of conflict.

Harmony

In the ideal scenario, the interest and behaviour of both parties are compatible. Harmony is often a short-term phase that exists as long as the interests and behaviour of parties do not generate tension.

Latent conflict

In the latent phase, the conflict is emerging. Tensions are felt because of interests and

behaviour that are diverging. Yet, these tensions do not manifest themselves visibly. They do have the potential to intensify, but can also decrease if properly managed.

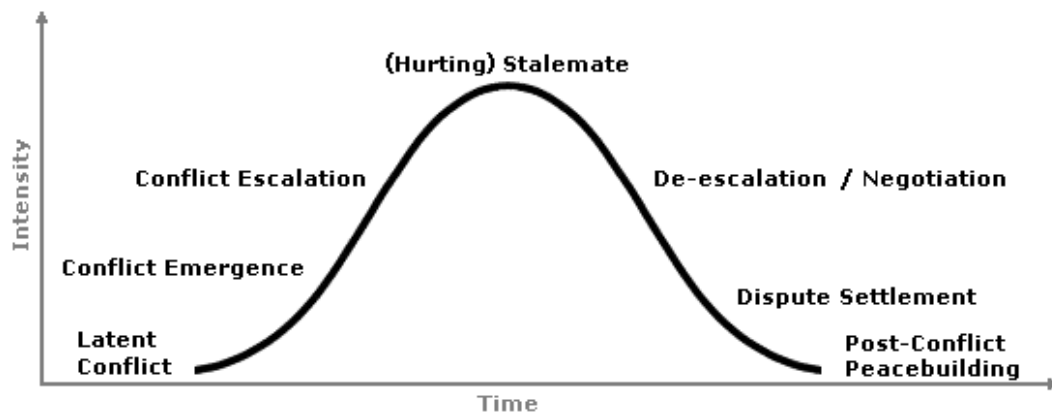
Surface conflict

When conflict surfaces, the disagreement between two or more parties becomes visible. This is a result of changes in behaviour becoming more manifest.

Open conflict

In the last form, open conflict occurs when incompatible interests and behaviour have resulted in verbal or non-verbal aggression and attacks.

Stages of conflict



Speaker's note:

Explain how conflicts move through different stages.

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

As we have seen, the potential for conflict exists whenever people have different interests. This is the **latent conflict stage**. Only a triggering event leads to the beginning of the conflict: the **conflict emergence stage**.

Emergence may be followed quickly by settlement or resolution. In that case, a solution is found to put a halt to the escalation curve. If that is not the case, the **conflict escalates** further, which can become very destructive.

Escalation, however, cannot continue indefinitely. Escalation may lead to a stalemate, a situation in which neither side can win. If the pain of continuing the conflict exceeds that of maintaining the confrontation, the parties in a **hurting stalemate**. This stage often presents an ideal opportunity for negotiation and a potential settlement.

The **de-escalation stage** can be temporary or part of a broader movement towards **dispute settlement** or resolution. Finally, if and when an agreement is reached, **post-conflict peacebuilding** efforts work to repair damaged relationships with the long-term goal of reconciling former opponents and rebuilding the social fabric of a society.

Conflict and violence

A conflict can become violent when there is:

- ▶ a lack of dialogue;
 - ▶ a feeling of not being listened to, feelings of marginalisation and frustration;
 - ▶ a persistent injustice or fear of a wider community.
-
- ▶ **Violence is one of the possible responses to specific conflict situations.**
 - ▶ **This does not imply that violence is unavoidable. Violence is not inevitable and it must not be confused with conflict.**

Speaker's note:

- Present the slide
- Ask participants in plenary if they can give examples of local conflicts that have become violent for the reasons described on the slide
- Make sure to note that violence is not inevitable

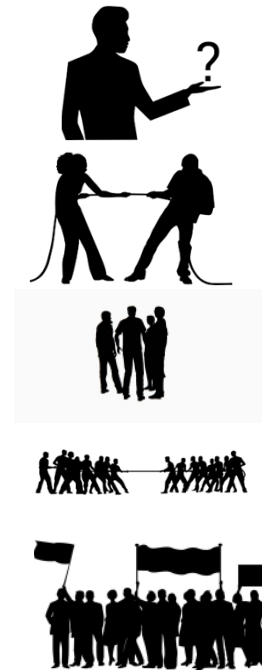
Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

It is important to note that violence is only one of the possible responses to specific conflict situations. Not every conflict turns violent. Violence is thus not inevitable. Remember the stages of conflict? Right after the conflict has emerged, it may be quickly followed by settlement or resolution. In that case, a solution is found to put a halt to the escalation curve and the conflict does not turn violent.

Levels of conflict

1. Intra-personal conflicts
2. Inter-personal conflicts
3. Intra-group conflicts
4. Inter-group conflicts
5. International or inter-state conflicts



Speaker's note:

Explain the levels of conflict.

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

Conflicts exist in all social arenas and in all societies and at various levels. Conflicts can occur on a personal level, in a family, in the community, on a national and on an international level. It is important to analyse at which level a conflict takes place. This can help you in determining what methods and instruments are appropriate to solve the conflict.

We will take a look at the most common categories for conflict levels:

1. Intra-personal conflicts

These are conflicts **within a person**. They might be internal dilemmas or psychological conflicts that a person has. Although intrapersonal conflicts may influence social conflicts, they are not the subject of conflict transformation work, but of psychological work.

2. Inter-personal conflicts

These are conflicts **between individuals**. Inter-personal conflicts are the largest learning field in conflict transformation. They occur frequently between individuals within families, ethnic groups, among friends and between young and old.

3. Intra-group conflicts

These are conflicts **within small groups** (team, organisation, family) or larger groups (religious community, elites in a country). In this kind of conflict, group dynamics add to the normal dynamics of inter-personal conflicts. Inter-group dynamics can influence the way conflict develop enormously. To deal with this kind of conflict, a mediator needs two things. First, the capacity to manage groups. And secondly, the ability to master conflict transformation skills.

4. Inter-group conflicts

These are conflicts **between groups**, such as organisations, ethnic or identity groups. In general, the conflicts on this level are bigger in size than inter-personal conflicts. Simply because more people and parties are actively involved. The dynamics and relations in groups are mostly part of the conflict itself and they affect the progress of the conflicts.

So to deal with this level of conflict, three things are important. Next to the capacity to manage groups and the ability to master conflict transformation skills, one other thing is important. One has to have knowledge about group dynamics. Given the size of the conflicts, there is often a need for more than one facilitator, negotiator or mediator to deal with the conflict.

5. International or inter-state conflicts

These are conflicts occurring **on international or interstate level**. Dealing with this kind of conflict requires professional mediators with a wide range of expertise and diplomatic capacity. We therefore do not deal with these conflicts in this course.

Complexity and conflict

Many conflicts are described as 'intractable'

- ▶ "A complex web of latent and manifest issues that are difficult to analyze and understand, and respond to" Coleman (2000:432)
- ▶ Most conflicts are hybrid conflicts that spill across international, state and societal levels – makes them difficult to resolve.

Speaker's note:

Explain the slide and link it to the previous slide, to make the point that many conflicts take place across different levels.

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

Coleman (2000:432) A complex web of latent and manifest issues that are difficult to analyze and understand, and respond to..

Ramsbotham et al (2005:25) Most conflicts are hybrid conflicts that spill across international, state and societal levels – makes them difficult to resolve..

Conflicts change over time – they are dynamic. Negative and destructive processes at work:

Polarisation – widening of space between groups and the gravitation towards extremes

Escalation – groups embark upon the mutually destructive process of increasing levels of coercion or violence in the threats or actions they direct to each other

Institutionalisation – conflict deeply effects societies: the boundaries between groups become harder; the state loses legitimacy; economy weakens – or war economies become important and vested interests in continuation of war

Hence – complexity - underlying causes – dynamics and changes towards that make conflict more and more difficult to resolve



MANAGING CONFLICT

Speaker's note:

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

Discussion question

What roles can a local government play in managing conflict?



Speaker's note:

Ask the participants to reflect on this question in a plenary discussion.

Time: 15 minutes

Background information:

10 min

Conflict sensitivity for Local Governance interventions

- ▶ Understand the conflict context in which you are operating
- ▶ Understand the interaction between your interventions and the conflict context
- ▶ Act upon the understanding of this interaction in order to avoid negative and maximise positive impacts

Source: www.conflictsensitivity.org

Speaker's note:

Explain the importance of conflict sensitivity to local governance.

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

This means that an organisations should be aware of the context they work in, but also understand what the effect of their intervention is on the context and vice versa. This understanding must guide them to make sure the impact of their intervention is positive and does not do any harm.

In this definition, note that the word 'context' is used to define conflict sensitivity rather than 'conflict.' By using the word context, it is implied that all socio-economic and political tensions, root causes, and structural factors are relevant to conflict sensitivity. Why? Because each of these have the potential to escalate in different ways, potentially becoming violent.

Local governments (LGs) are very much aware and conscious of the many forms of conflict in their locality. It also means that LGs have an appreciation of how their

structures, processes, and services are contributing to or addressing the various forms of negative conflict in their respective areas. In practical terms, conflict sensitive LGs use tools to systematically monitor and gain a deeper understanding of existing conflicts. They would also develop strategic policies and programs that can have an impact on human security and address direct and structural violence at the local level.

Understand the conflict context in which you are operating

- Identify all forms of (potential) conflict in the area that affect the communities of the intervention zone
- Assess the socio-political context of these (potential) conflicts, including their role in the past and present

Understand the interaction between your interventions and the conflict context

- Analyse (potential) conflicts to understand root causes, profile, dynamics and interactions between actors

Act upon the understanding of this interaction in order to avoid negative and maximise positive impacts

- Based on a realistic assessment of context and interaction, implement strategies and policies that address the (potential) conflict

Different LG responses to conflict

Kind of response to conflict	Description
Working around conflict	Treating conflict as a negative externality that is to be avoided, so that programmes continue without being negatively affected by conflict.
Working in conflict	Recognising the link between policy/programmes and conflict. Do No Harm : an attempt to monitor the intended and unintended impact of work to avoid contributing to instability and violence.
Working on conflict	Making deliberate attempts to design policy and programmes that seek to exploit opportunities to positively affect conflict dynamics and address key conflict factors.

Speaker's note:

Explain the different responses to conflict from local governments.

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

An awareness of the variety of ways LG's actions relate to conflict (whether "around conflict," "in conflict" or "on conflict") by itself signify conflict sensitivity. At the same time, the way a particular LG is dealing with negative conflict and the consequences of such interaction can become additional input to identifying the most appropriate strategy to adopt to address the conflict. Studies have shown that conflicts usually point to a long local history of poor governance or graft and corruption that include rent seeking practices or illegitimate trade. LGs can contribute or reinforce conflict through poor governance. However, more unfortunate than poor governance is ignorance or lack of awareness of existing conflicts. Local government units may be unwittingly contributing to conflict without any awareness or understanding of their contribution in fuelling such. A conflict-sensitive approach addresses this and contributes to good governance.

Local Governments and working on conflict

The role of local governments focusses more on human security rather than state security.



Speaker's note:

Explain that the role of local governments lies more in the promotion of human security as explained in the next slide.

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

Human Security vs State security		
For whom	State	Individuals and communities (people centred)
Means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard security: military, intelligence, etc. • institutionalised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard and soft security : empowerment and protection through the promotion of human rights and human development • Institutionalised and non-institutionalised
Actors	State institutions	International, national and local governments and civil society
Threats	External (by other states and transnational threats) and internal (by non-state actors) threats to the state	Multidimensional
Budget	Security budget geared towards hard security capacity	Security budget requires investments in preventive efforts involving early warning, community policing, economic development, good governance and conflict transformation

Speaker’s note:

Explain how the focus shifted from state to human security.

Time: 10 minutes

Background information:

The shift to human security has broadened the scope of threats, challenges and issues that security can refer to. Security is not only focused on the state anymore. The human security approach includes a focus on human development as well.

The shifting of focus from the state alone to the individual is recognised as an important paradigm shift in international relations and security disciplines. This shift occurred in the context of the 1990s, in the post-Cold War era. During that time, the type of conflict shifted from conflict between states to conflicts within states, and new and global threats to human security appeared. The paradigm shift to human security ensured attention was given to human development.

Conflict analysis

- ▶ The process of examining and understanding the reality of a conflict from various perspectives.
- ▶ The systematic study of the profile, causes, actors, and dynamics of conflict.
- ▶ The aim is to gain a thorough understanding of the history of the conflict, the interaction between the actors, the intervention and the context.
- ▶ it is a central component of conflict transformation because it forms the basis on which strategies can be developed and actions planned.

Speaker's note:

Explain the link between conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity.

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

Herbert, S. (2017). *Conflict analysis: Topic guide*. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. <https://gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ConflictAnalysis.pdf>

Conflict analysis is a structured process of analysis to understand conflict, focusing on the conflict profile (history of conflict), the actors involved and their perspectives, the structural and proximate causes and the dynamics of how these elements interact (Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 2012). A conflict analysis examines open conflict (conflict that is very visible and deep-rooted), surface conflict (visible but shallow or with no roots), and also latent conflict (below the surface with potential to emerge) (Fisher et al., 2000). The important distinction between a conflict analysis and a context analysis is that conflict analysis always addresses the relationship of the issue with conflict, instability and peace.

The literature widely states that systematic conflict analyses are an important element underpinning policy and practice in conflict-affected countries. Conflict analysis aims to provide a comprehensive and easily accessible assessment of the issues and documentation for policymakers/practitioners who are newly working on a country/issue. For policymakers/practitioners who already have knowledge/experience of the context, it can offer an overarching/shared understanding and narrative on the situation. It also presents a model and process to facilitate more frequent and updated conflict analysis. When used in combination with programming decisions and a conflict-sensitive approach, it aims to improve the positive impacts and minimise the negative impacts of working in conflict-affected countries by ensuring practices are conflict sensitive, and it can provide a baseline analysis to evaluate the impact interventions have had on the relevant aspects of the conflict (OECD, 2008; Sandole et al., 2008; CDA Collaborative, 2013).

Conflict analysis

- ▶ **Conflict analysis is not an end in itself!**
- ▶ **It is only worth the time and effort if it is used:**
 - ▶ In making choices about what to do, where, with whom and why
 - ▶ In designing programmes or projects
 - ▶ In determining whether and how to work with the various parties to a conflict

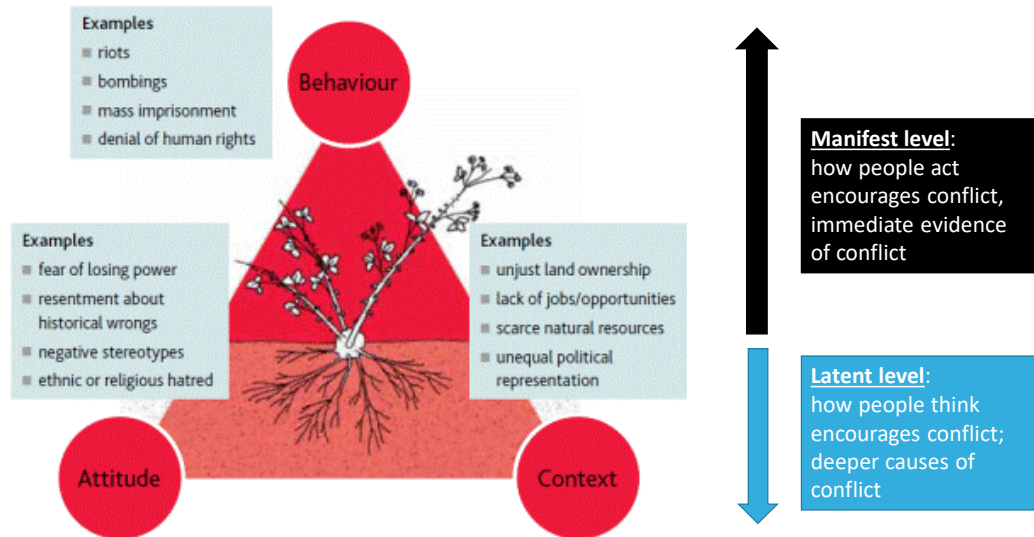
Speaker's note:

Explain what a conflict analysis can be used for.

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

Conflict triangle (ABC): exploring the impact and causes of conflict



Speaker's note:

Mention that there are many different methods to analyse conflict. In this workshop we will use the conflict triangle as an example.

Time: 10 minutes

Background information:

ABC triangle

In a conflict, the violent **behaviour** we see has its roots in people's **attitudes** and the political-economic **context**.

The ABC triangle is a simple framework for exploring the impact and causes of conflict. You should complete one triangle for each of the major groups involved in the conflict.

If you are working in conflict, you can use the triangle to answer questions like:

- How will our work be affected by the behaviours we have identified? Will it affect any of the contextual factors that drive the conflict?
- How will our staff and our work be perceived by each group, given the attitudes we have identified?

If you are working on conflict, you can also use the triangle to answer:

- How can our work restore relationships by addressing negative attitudes?
- How can our work improve the contextual factors that are driving the conflict?

Root and branch

Sometimes violent conflict is shallow or **apparent** – the roots of the violence are not deep, perhaps based in a misunderstanding.

In other contexts, there may be little violent behaviour, but there are deep-rooted problems in people's attitudes and the context. This is a **latent** conflict, where it is essential to address the roots of conflict before they lead to actual violence.

The most difficult kind of conflict is **persistent** conflict, in which violence is both visible and deep-rooted

Why introduce gender in conflict analysis?



Speaker's note:

- Ask participants why we plan to introduce the concept of gender when the topic of the session is the analysis of (conflict-) context.

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

Gender & conflict analysis



- ▶ **Men and women can play different roles in (conflict) contexts and may be affected differently by a conflict.**
- ▶ **Often (conflict) context analyses neglect the analysis of roles and perspectives, women and men.**
 - ▶ Conflict analysis, factors, actors, dividers / connectors etc. should take into account the gender perspective.

Speaker's note:

- Explain why gender is introduced in conflict analysis
- Link the reasons to the responses you got from the participants to the previous slide

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

Men and women

- can play different roles in (conflict-) contexts
- may be affected differently by a conflict

Often (conflict-) context analyses neglect the analysis of roles and perspectives ,. women and men

Gender-disaggregated analysis, avoids a false or biased understanding of the (conflict-) context, without it we risk ignoring factors or critical elements of the conflict

Later biased analysis can lead to biased or unbalanced programmatic approaches

Conflict analysis - factors, actors, dividers / connectors etc. - should take into account the gender perspective

In the methodological analysis the different layers of a society - including women

Group exercise

Make an analysis of a major conflict within your region on the basis of the ABC triangle.

- ▶ *30 minutes in groups*
- ▶ *Presentation in plenary, feedback and discussion*



Speaker's note:

- Ask participants in groups (4-6 participants) to make an analysis of a local conflict according to the ABC triangle (30 minutes)
- Ask one representative of each group to present their analysis (15 minutes)

Time: 45 minutes

Background information:

Questions/reflections?



Speaker's note:

- Summarise the content of the session
- Ask if there are any outstanding questions

Time: 5 minutes

Background information: