This paper has been prepared by BCPR, UNDP.

Guidelines for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Prevention and Recovery Settings

Overview

This Compendium to UNDP’s planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) Handbook provides additional guidance and resources for practitioners operating in conflict prevention and recovery settings. Development work in settings marked by conflict is not “business as usual”. This means that the PME of development work in these settings requires awareness of, and attention to, factors relevant to programming in settings marked by violent conflict. This Compendium explains the rationale for and presents these key principles underpinning PME in conflict settings, points out practical implications for PME and offers a list of additional tools and resources.

Given the notable impact of CPR situations on gender relations and activities and UNDP’s corporate position on gender as a cross cutting issue; PME of gender in conflict prevention and recovery settings as a cross cutting is also briefly discussed.

The Compendium is a living document. It will be updated periodically as UNDP and other actors continue to build a body of specific knowledge and experience in this field.

Introduction

Conflict typically undermines development gains. At the same time, development has a role to “facilitate the creation of opportunities and the political, economic and social spaces within which indigenous actors can identify, develop and use the resources necessary to build a peaceful, equitable and just society”. Given that more than 40 countries have suffered violent conflicts since the turn of the century, the importance of conflict prevention and recovery for UNDP’s work supporting the achievement of the MDGs is clear.

The conflict prevention and recovery settings where UNDP and its partners operate include ongoing or potential armed conflict; post-conflict recovery settings; complex political transitions; and contexts marked by fragility, i.e. where state institutions may lack sufficient capacity to address economic inequalities and stagnation, to ensure the rule of law and to protect citizen from insecurity. In all of these settings, development actors need a good understanding of the context in which they are operating and of the potential results of the development intervention on the context.

Development needs to be conducted, based on this understanding, both to avoid negative impacts of the development interventions (doing harm) and to maximize the positive, peacebuilding impacts. In practice this means doing development in such a way to prevent conflict from escalating, or to recover sustainably from violent conflict. This has ramifications on all aspects of programming, including PME.

This compendium will not repeat the comprehensive descriptions of how to plan, monitor and evaluate in the main body of the Handbook, which provide the starting point for PME in conflict settings; rather four principles are discussed which should inform PME in conflict settings and resources indicated which consider the issues in more in-depth. These principles apply to all development interventions

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1 Secretary-General’s Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict (2001)
undertaken in conflict (or potential conflict) settings and also to interventions which are aimed specifically at conflict prevention and recovery:

☑ All programming needs to be sensitive to the inherent (or overt) tensions or to potential or actual conflicts, and be conducted in such a way to – at a minimum - not heighten tensions and – at best – reduce tensions

☑ Security of all involved (programme staff; beneficiaries; and evaluation staff) needs to be factored into all decisions

☑ Crisis settings are characteristically dynamic, and it is not unusual for changes in the setting to happen in short periods of time. Therefore, flexibility needs to be built in around the need to re-visit programming objectives to ensure they are still appropriate to the situation, as well as over the timing and appropriate methods of data collection according to what is feasible and can realistically be achieved

☑ All programming should maintain a ‘big picture’ perspective

Principles

Principle 1: Conflict-sensitive programming

In situations of actual or threatened conflict, (which can include post-disaster situations) all programme interventions (including PME) need to be conflict sensitive – ie conceived and implemented with the awareness that both the what (programme objectives) and the how of programme implementation has the potential to raise or lower tensions between different groups.

Conflict sensitivity therefore refers to the capacity of a development organization to:

(i) Understand the context in which it operates
(ii) Understand the interactions between the organization’s interventions and the context
(iii) Act upon this understanding to minimize harm and avoid negative impacts
(iv) Act to maximize the positive, peacebuilding impacts of development interventions.

(i) Understanding the context

Understanding the context means investing adequate time and resources is even more important for PME in conflict prevention and recovery settings than in non-conflict settings to ensure that the process of implementation as well as the programme/project objectives are conflict sensitive.

In practice, this means that the situational analysis which informs planning processes should include a discussion of actual and potential tensions in conflict situations, and how these could have an impact on, and need to be addressed by, development programming. UNDP offers a framework for analysis, the Conflict-related Development Analysis (CDA), which can be downloaded from UNDP’s website

2 “Doing harm in a conflict situation means having impacts (intended or not, direct or indirect) that aggravate grievances, increase tension or vulnerabilities, or perpetuate conflict in some way. The notion of conflict sensitivity is intended to mitigate such harm by encouraging systematically taking into account both the positive and negative impact of interventions on the contexts in which they are undertaken, and vice versa. This issue first emerged and entered policy discussions in the context of humanitarian interventions, and soon spread throughout the development field. Conflict sensitivity is now a key pillar of development policy and intervention strategies. This is relevant to programming whether it is directly aimed at contributing to peacebuilding or not.” (Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities – ©OECD 2008, p20)
This paper has been prepared by BCPR, UNDP.

(www.undp.org/bcpr/documents/prevention/integrate/CDA_complete.pdf). Given how different conflict prevention and recovery settings can be, there is not one way to conduct conflict analysis. The scope and stakeholders involved in such a process need to be adapted to the specifics of the situation.

It is not mandatory to use the UNDP CDA framework if another one suits a given situation better, but most frameworks for conflict analysis cover very similar elements. Importantly, the CDA is not a framework that needs to be followed from A to Z. It can be adapted to a variety of different processes.

Understanding and designing a CDA-type exercise as a process is crucial for it to be successful, especially in terms of providing a structure through which different stakeholders (government, multilaterals and international players, local stakeholders) can develop a shared understanding of the nature of the challenges and agree on how to address them. In this way, a CDA can provide a framework for conflict-sensitive, integrated planning and programming. (See explanation of how to conduct a CDA in Annex 1).

Whichever framework or approach is used, it is important to understand conflict analysis not as a one-off exercise, but something which needs to be regularly updated.

Examples of different applications are:

✓ Participatory conflict analysis exercises at the national level involving all key stakeholder groups to be involved in, or affected by, the planned development initiative. This can help develop a joint understanding of root causes and conflict dynamics and to find joint solutions to be supported by development programmes.

✓ In some contexts, time constraints and other factors may not allow for a more time-consuming participatory conflict analysis process. Until this is possible a quick conflict analysis can be conducted, concentrating on specific areas at the sub-national, community level. This can still be participatory but would involve a more narrowly defined group of local stakeholders.

✓ At times, UNDP or a partner organization may benefit from an internal exercise to help structure analysis and to reach a common understanding among staff members involved in programme planning and implementation. If required, these exercises can make use of facilitators experienced in conflict analysis, eg from UNDP HQ or a RSC, or a consultant.

✓ Qualitative and quantitative research can be commissioned to develop a broader and deeper baseline for understanding the conflict context. This research can provide a critical evidence to inform programme planning, and help deliver the baseline against which to monitor the programmes’ results and impact. It can focus, for example, on a particular (sub-)region or on a particular thematic issue.

Examples of how UNDP has supported and employed these different applications of conflict analysis for planning and programming have been documented as case studies or lessons learned on UNDP’s public website in the section on “Integrating Conflict Prevention into Development Programming” or the CPR practice pages (http://www.undp.org/cpr/we_do/integrating_conflict.shtml). See also the “Inventory of UNDP Country Experiences with Conflict-Sensitive Development” in UNDP’s CPR Workspace: http://intra.undp.org/bcpr/cp_learn/files/3/3_2.html

3 An inventory of conflict analysis tools developed by a range of development organizations can be found on UNDP’s CPR Workspace: http://intra.undp.org/bcpr/cp_learn/files/3/3_1.html. It has been compiled specifically to allow practitioners to draw on complementary resources as they are tailoring a conflict analysis process to the specific needs of the situation.
The results of the conflict analysis should inform all aspects of programming including PME. Establishing a baseline which serves as an evidence base to inform planning processes and help develop indicators for monitoring and evaluation will require a thorough analysis at a critical moment in time. It will also inform what sort of monitoring data should be collected to monitor the conflict including how monitoring and evaluation data can be collected and how evaluation questions can be framed so as not to heighten tensions. In developing the results matrix and identifying key indicators it is important to include indicators of the project implementation process as well as of the desired results to ensure that programme implementation remains conflict sensitive.

(ii) Understanding the interaction between the development organization and the context

Essentially, this element of conflict sensitivity is about how to link the results of conflict analysis with programming decisions. Any intervention in a tense situation has the potential to raise or lower tensions depending on perceived benefits for one group over another. This need for perceived neutrality relates to both project objectives and the processes by which it is implemented and is relevant whether the project is directly addressed to reducing tensions or whether it is a more ‘traditional’ development project which is being implemented in a setting of raised tension. Planners and decision-makers therefore have to be aware whether the intended programme or project means working in, around or directly on conflict.

Table 1 characterizes what working in, around or on conflict means respectively for the interaction between development programmes and conflict and provides general pointers for the type of programmatic options or choices planners and decision-makers need to consider.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding of the interaction between conflict and development</th>
<th>Working around conflict</th>
<th>Working in conflict</th>
<th>Working on conflict</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict is a disruptive factor, over which little influence can be exercised.</td>
<td>Development programmes can be negatively affected by, or have a negative impact on conflict dynamics.</td>
<td>Development programmes can maximise opportunities to positively affect conflict dynamics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic options</td>
<td>✓ Withdrawing from or keeping out of conflict affected areas</td>
<td>✓ Reactive programme adjustments in medium and high risk areas</td>
<td>✓ Refocusing programmes onto the structural causes of violent conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Continued work in low risk areas and/or traditional development activities</td>
<td>✓ Minimising the potential for programmes to do harm.</td>
<td>✓ Designing new programmes that focus on addressing structural causes</td>
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</table>
(iii) Minimize harm

To counter any perception of bias or un-neutrality, planning processes should ensure that as far as possible a balance is maintained in which all key stakeholder views are represented at all stages of planning, and throughout programme/project implementation. This means that PME should be, as far as possible, participatory, with all parties to the conflict represented as appropriate.

Participation in PME underpins UNDP’s commitment to strengthen capacity (which should be part of all UNDP’s interventions) and support national ownership. In conflict settings it may be more difficult than normal to maintain this approach because of typically high staff turnover and mobility and the need for demonstrate fast results (as a peace dividend) which may make it easier just to get on and do the job rather than taking time to involve and capacitate national partners. However, despite the challenges, capacity strengthening and national ownership post-crises are important to the recovery process.

In practice this means:
✓ Recruiting representatives of different groups (ethnic, gender, parties of any tension) among project staff, project monitors and beneficiaries as well as throughout planning processes.
✓ Conducting participatory planning, always best practice (Chapter 2, Section 3). This can be an effective peacebuilding mechanism by bringing different factions together to hear each other’s viewpoints. The importance of including all stakeholder groups and ensuring that a balance of views is represented between the different groups is critical to remaining transparent and to ensuring that one group does not feel (rightly or mistakenly) excluded or discriminated against, which may heighten tensions/vulnerabilities.
✓ For any evaluation conducted, balance between different groups (informed by the results of the situation and/or conflict analysis) and participation should be reflected in the selection of evaluation staff, interviewees, field visits, documents consulted, and all information gathered should be triangulated as far as possible to prevent bias and reflection of one or only some of the different factions.

(iv) Maximize peacebuilding impact

Informed by the results of the situation/conflict analysis, and whether programmes/projects are directly focused on contributing to peacebuilding or not, they should be conceived and conducted in such a way as to maximize peacebuilding impact. As with all programming in crisis/conflict settings, ongoing results of monitoring should be viewed against the ongoing results of the updated analysis throughout the duration of the intervention.

Each of these elements of conflict sensitivity should be adhered to through the PME process, meaning:
✓ the ongoing situation/conflict analysis is regularly monitored and updated;
✓ the results matrix contains indicators of process as well as desired results; and
✓ that any evaluation specifically considers the conflict sensitivity of the interventions in addition to evaluating them against other, agreed criteria

Principle 2: Security

The security of, and potential risks to, both staff and stakeholders needs to be constantly factored into PME decisions including those relating to protection and ethics issues. Security will influence the methods chosen for monitoring (choice of indicators, data collection, selection of monitors) and
evaluation, (team members, interviewees, choice of field studies, the kinds of information sought and how questions are framed). Due consideration of how to minimize lasting danger to stakeholders and interpreters, including after monitoring or evaluation has been conducted and project staff (especially internationals) have left, should also be factored into plans.

Direct monitoring of projects in areas of open conflict may be difficult or impossible, and in such cases, capacity building of implementing partners in the initial stages of the project so that they understand what and how to monitor and have all the necessary tools to help them, is important. Alternatively, secondary information through interviews with NGO staff rather than directly with clients may need to inform monitoring where project staff cannot travel to the project areas.

Issues of transparency, which are important for the credibility and standards of all monitoring and particularly for evaluation, may be even more important in conflict settings. As with other interventions, the processes by which they are planned and implemented can help reduce suspicion and tension between different parties. At the same time, the degree of openness of interviewees may be affected by security concerns and this should be factored into analysis of data, with triangulation built in to try and minimize bias.

There may be cases where evaluations conducted cannot assess all elements which they would wish to because of security issues. In this case, the evaluation report should identify these challenges and provide reasons for the decisions made.

All UNDP staff members and consultants working in conflict sensitive programming should have completed both the Basic and Advanced Security in the Field programmes.

**Principle 3: Maintaining Flexibility**

Typically CPR settings are fluid and situations can change rapidly. Planning, monitoring and evaluation processes need to have this element factored in and respond to information from constantly updated assessments of the situation. In practice this means remaining flexible on scheduling monitoring or evaluation field visits (which may need to be re-scheduled at short notice or be conducted in different areas) and being prepared to alter data gathering mechanisms at the last minute if security concerns or relationships between different groups change or deteriorate suddenly.

Flexibility also means that projected results may also alter radically through the course of the project/programme as needs and circumstances of target beneficiaries’ change. Ongoing monitoring (of both the conflict analysis and the project implementation) is critical to provide up to date information on which decisions can be made on whether/how project objectives should change. Any changes in objectives should be recorded so that any evaluation can see not only what changed, but the reasons for the changes.

**Principle 4: Maintain a ‘big-picture’ perspective**

Particularly for conflict prevention and peacebuilding programming, but wherever there is actual or potential conflict, bearing in mind the *contribution (or not) of projects and programmes to the wider peace process is critical*. Where a joint conflict analysis has been conducted so that all key stakeholders agree on the analysis of root causes of the conflict and how to address them, this element may be already incorporated into programming. However, if this is not the case, all actors need to have an idea
of where ‘their’ intervention(s) fit into, and how they contribute to, the larger efforts to build sustainable peace. This ‘big picture’ perspective needs to be brought, explicitly, into planning, monitoring (with indicators to track the contribution of the intervention to the wider peace process) and evaluations, to consider explicitly the connectedness of interventions to the wider peace process. This should lessen the likelihood of situations in which projects are considered ‘successful’ in terms of meeting the desired results but either do not impact on the wider peace positively, or – worse – impact negatively upon it.

As conflict is often related to supra-national events, a regional perspective should be considered as part of the planning process, and if relevant, integrated into monitoring and evaluations.

Gender

Women and men experience, engage in and are affected by conflict differently. Patterns of vulnerability and mortality typically vary by age and sex in different kinds of conflict, (more women typically are displaced in conflicts while mortality of men is often higher, as young men are more at risk of being abducted as soldiers). The conflict may result in marked demographical changes as compared with pre-conflict society, as well as a-typical vulnerabilities and changed roles (both by sex and by age). For example, (i) in IDP situations when traditional economic opportunities are not available for men, women often becoming the main family earners and men may feel disempowered while unable to support their families; and (ii) post-conflict displacement characteristically results in a high proportion of female, elderly and child-headed households. For programming to remain relevant and target those most in need, accurate information reflecting these changes and the varying needs and opportunities of different groups of beneficiaries collected through ongoing monitoring and good evaluation is critical.

Monitoring and evaluation is therefore one important mechanism through which gender equality and mainstreaming can be operationalized in concrete ways in CPR programming, as well as an important source of current information on gender relationships and differential results of CPR programming. By including gender/age specific baselines, targets, indicators and gender relevant methods of collecting data (ie single sex focus groups, training beneficiaries representing different demographics to monitor projects in their communities) evidence is gathered on which relevant, appropriate programming can be based and which will inform project management as well as reporting. All UNDP (and national) monitoring data should be disaggregated by age, sex, location (as appropriate).

Tools and Resources

The list below highlights a few tools and resources, and is not exhaustive. There two UNDP web-based spaces where relevant material can be found that is regularly updated and added to. These are:

1. UNDP’s CPR Practice web-pages on UNDP’s public website: www.undp.org/cpr
   Here in particular the pages on “Integrating Conflict Prevention into Development Programmes”: http://www.undp.org/cpr/we_do/integrating_conflict.shtml

2. UNDP’s CPR Practice Workspace for UN(DP) practitioners: practices.undp.org/cpr

Tools and Approaches for Conflict Analysis and Conflict-sensitive Programming and PME
This paper has been prepared by BCPR, UNDP.

UNDP Conflict-related Development Analysis (CDA) (available in English, French and Spanish):

Interagency Framework for Conflict Analysis in Transition Situations, UNDG/ECHA, 2004 (word doc)


A comprehensive resource pack on “Conflict sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peace building” with specific chapter on conflict-sensitive planning and conflict-sensitive M&E can be found here: http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/resource_pack.html

See also the inventory table of conflict analysis tools developed by other organizations available in UNDP’s CPR workspace, compiled to allow practitioners to draw on complementary resources and tailor a conflict analysis process to the specific needs of the situation: http://intra.undp.org/bcpr/cp_learn/files/3/3_1.html

The Do No Harm concept was originally developed for humanitarian settings by Mary Anderson (http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project_profile.php?pid=DNH&pname=Do%20No%20Harm) but has been expanded through the work of the CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and is now used within both disaster and conflict settings.

The OECD has produced a draft guidance note for evaluating conflict prevention and peace building which has some useful discussions on these issues. https://www.oecd.org/secure/pdfDocument/0,2834,en_21571361_30097720_39774574_1_1_1_1,00.pdf (login: dacevaluation, password: evaluation)

**Indicators for M&E**

BCPR has developed sets of generic CPR indicators (including a specific set for gender) which have been designed to be customized to the specifics of different situations. These can be found on the UNDP CPR Workspace for UNDP (See link above)
ANNEX 1

Overview of basic steps and elements of a Conflict-related Development Analysis (CDA)

The columns below summarize the basic steps and elements of a CDA. It is important to note that CDA involves analyzing both the context and the ongoing (development and other) responses. This is crucial for planning purposes to identify synergies or gaps and counteract overlaps or contradictory initiatives that may collide and create negative effects, for example through the competition for scarce resources in a given area of intervention. ((See point (ii) for further discussion).

The basic sequence is:
1. Analyze causes of conflict, actors’ positions/interests/needs, and existing capacities for peace
2. Develop scenarios to assess and anticipate trends
3. Analyze ongoing responses to conflict or in conflict contexts
4. Make strategic choices by identifying objectives and defining and planning responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of Conflict</th>
<th>Analysis of Ongoing Responses</th>
<th>Identification of Ways Forward</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Survey of Causes</td>
<td>✓ Mapping of current responses</td>
<td>✓ Strategic conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Actor Analysis</td>
<td>✓ Development and conflict: working in/on/around conflict</td>
<td>✓ Implications for policy, programming, and advocacy strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Capacities for Peace Analysis</td>
<td>✓ Development and formal peace processes</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Dynamics/Scenarios</td>
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</table>

To ensure that the programme/project manager and board’s understanding remains current, the situation/conflict analysis should be regularly monitored and updated throughout programme implementation together with results monitoring of programme objectives. It should also inform any evaluation which is undertaken. This can be done in various ways, for example by building it into a participatory learning process with the main counterparts of the programme or project, or by conducting a peace and conflict impact assessment for the ongoing programme. Changes in programme objectives responding to changes in the wider setting should be documented, so that any evaluations of the appropriateness of programming can reflect the rationale for these changes in the light of ongoing monitoring of the situation/conflict analysis.