Promoting conflict sensitivity amongst donor agencies

Policy Brief

This paper lays out the case for a renewed focus on conflict sensitivity by donor agencies. It presents recommendations for how donors can integrate conflict sensitivity into their own systems and processes, as well as how they can promote conflict sensitivity in their implementing partners. The paper is intended to inform and influence policy makers and practitioners across a range of donor agencies. The recommendations have relevance across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities. It has been developed by the Department for International Development (DFID) funded Conflict Sensitivity Consortium (CSC), and draws upon experience and lessons learned during implementation of the Consortium project.[01]

Conflict Sensitivity Consortium

Part 01: Conflict sensitivity: a donor priority?

What is conflict sensitivity?

It is now widely recognised that aid and other development interventions can exacerbate conflict, but can also help build peace. Aid inevitably has an impact on the political economy of the recipient country, and thus on peace and conflict dynamics. The impact may be positive or negative, direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional. During the 1990s, those working in conflict-affected contexts developed tools and methodologies to help them understand and manage these impacts, including Do No Harm and Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment. Conflict sensitivity is an umbrella term that emerged in the early 2000s to encompass these approaches. [02]

A conflict sensitive approach involves gaining a sound understanding of the two-way interaction between activities and context, acting to minimize the negative and maximize the positive impacts of interventions on conflict, within an organisation's given priorities/ objectives (mandate). [03] This paper argues that donors should require that conflict sensitivity be understood and applied in a minimalist sense – as a means of factoring conflict awareness into programming and mitigating any harmful effects. Policies should not conflate conflict sensitivity with peacebuilding, nor require the pursuit of peacebuilding objectives by default. Indeed, introducing peacebuilding objectives would be inappropriate for humanitarian programmes in contexts in which neutrality and independence are essential for the safety and security of staff, projects and beneficiaries. In contrast, conflict sensitivity – in the sense of avoiding unintended negative consequences for conflict – should become an essential prerequisite for all programming.

Conflict sensitivity is relevant for the whole spectrum of development, humanitarian and peacebuilding organisations, and international donors have a particularly important role to play. Not only are they influential actors in themselves, but they also provide the majority of funding for national and international NGOs working on the ground. As such, donors have an opportunity, as well as a responsibility, to promote conflict sensitivity, both in their own strategies and in those of their implementing partners.

Conflict and development

The 2011 World Development Report (WDR) revealed that not one low-income conflict-affected state has yet achieved a single Millennium Development Goal. The WDR concludes that peace is not only important as an end in itself, but also as the pre-requisite for all other aspects of human development. In other words, preventing and reducing conflict leads to improved development outcomes. It is also recognised that conflict-affected and fragile states (CAFS) provide fertile ground for the growth of movements that threaten the national security of donor states. This explains the growing emphasis upon preventing conflict in the developing world, reflected for instance in the UK government's strategy for Building Stability Overseas (BSOS) and also in the increasing proportion of overseas aid allocated to CAFS.

The cost benefits of conflict sensitivity

Any development gains achieved by donor funded programmes can very easily be wiped away by an upsurge in violent conflict.

Whilst attempting to quantify the costs of conflict is an imperfect science, some studies give useful indications. UNDP calculates that post-election violence in Kenya cost the economy US$3.6 billion, while it has been estimated that an 'average' civil war costs a developing country the equivalent of 30 years of GDP growth. [04]

Adopting a conflict sensitive approach represents a low-cost way of mitigating the risk of violent conflict. While not cost-neutral, many of the steps outlined in this paper entail changes in working practices, rather than additional activities. The cost of these changes is far less than the ultimate costs of violent conflict, both in terms of human suffering and development progress.

The risks of conflict insensitive approaches

The growing recognition that conflict undermines and retards development progress underlines the importance of conflict sensitivity. Conflict insensitive development can strengthen conflict drivers and increase the risk of violence breaking out. There are many documented examples of interventions which have made conflict worse due to a lack of understanding of the context, and/or an inability to adapt programming to take account of conflict issues. Poorly targeted aid can exacerbate divisions between conflicting groups (as in the Sierra Leone example below) or it can entrench war economies when aid is captured or manipulated by powerful groups, as was the case in the Rwandan refugee camps following the genocide. Indeed, 85 per cent of relief workers surveyed by the CSC reported that they had been involved in or witnessed emergency work that had become unwittingly implicated in existing conflicts or even caused conflict in some instances. [05] Aid is rarely the most important factor driving violence in conflict situations, but it can reinforce negative trends and dynamics, as illustrated by the examples below.

A conflict insensitive approach in Sierra Leone

The Consortium project revealed the case of an economic development project in Sierra Leone that was designed without being informed by a conflict analysis. During implementation, it was realised that the main target-group had a history of conflict with a neighbouring group, who were also meant to benefit. This led to resistance to project activities by the second group, who felt marginalized. Project staff did subsequently conduct a conflict analysis, which helped identify obstacles to implementation linked to conflict dynamics. They were able to adjust activities, e.g. by involving actors who had felt side-lined and by strengthening communication and feedback mechanisms with all groups. However, the lack of conflict sensitivity at the start of the project meant that implementation was delayed and the project continued to be viewed with some mistrust. This led to increased costs and decreased effectiveness of the project, as well as negatively affecting local community relations.

Nepal: Aid fuelling conflict

A review of the relationship between DFID's programmes and the conflict in Nepal in 2002 found that DFID's activities risked fuelling conflict in a number of ways. Aid focused on capacity-building and awareness-raising was found primarily to benefit elite groups and provided little benefit to the most excluded. Aid which demanded community contributions put an unfair burden on women and the poorest, and was resented by them. Aid was allocated to more accessible areas of Nepal, limiting benefits to the poorest and most conflict-affected regions of the mid- and far west. As a consequence, aid risked consolidating the very divisions – both vertical and horizontal – and patterns of exclusion that gave rise to Nepal's conflict in the first place. [06]

Conflict sensitivity is important at the project, programme and country level. It is also important at the global level. The very selection of which countries are prioritised for development support by donor governments sends a political message about the perceived significance of that country, which may have ramifications for regional conflict dynamics. Similarly, donor decisions to provide bilateral assistance to governments in conflict-affected countries – especially when such support is provided through direct budget support – send a message about the perceived legitimacy of that government. Such support can affect conflict dynamics if the government is, or has been, a party to a conflict. Indeed the fungibility of donor funding means that aid can either directly finance or indirectly subsidise the war-fighting strategies of parties to a conflict.

The benefits of conflict sensitive approaches

The CSC has catalogued a series of examples of NGO-implemented projects that have positively impacted on conflict dynamics. These examples demonstrate that a conflict sensitive approach can for example, help identify tensions between groups, and identify factors that can be used to help bring these groups together (see box below).

Conflict sensitive approaches in Kenya and Sri Lanka

A livelihood project in an area of Northern Kenya, where there are deep divisions between tribal groups (Pokot, Turkana and Samburu), planned to provide goats to community members, with the offspring dispersed to other families, thus multiplying the benefits. In view of an analysis of the local conflict context, this activity was adjusted so that the goats were allocated across community divides. Thus the project gave goats to five families in each community, who then passed on the offspring to people in the other tribal communities. This follows a traditional covenant: once I give you a goat, we are brothers. Solidarity was strengthened by the creation of a shared market that not only increased acceptance and participation in the project, but also brought communities closer together. Where previously there was no communication between the different groups, now they are interacting; buying and selling milk and meat through their shared market. Community cohesion has improved as a consequence.

In **Sri Lanka** one agency has sought to re-establish socio-economic relationships between communities in areas where ethno-political tensions have led to polarisation and division. Using these relationships as an entry point, communities are encouraged jointly to identify shared needs and concerns that they can work together to address – often related to the rehabilitation of community infrastructure (e.g. roads, irrigation channels or wells) or to lobbying service-providers to improve services. This interaction has helped re-establish communication channels resulting in greater mutual trust. Such strategies establish bonds between communities that can help them manage more contentious issues that may arise, for instance disputes over resource distribution. Moreover in volatile areas, the relationships established lead to communities notifying each other of security concerns or warning about impending attacks.

Contextualising Conflict Sensitivity

The CSC project has found that for the principle of conflict sensitivity to be understood and acted upon, it must be presented in a way that is accessible and appropriate to the context; in some cases it may be best to avoid the term 'conflict-sensitivity' altogether. In Sri Lanka for instance, the project encountered resistance because there the concept of conflict-sensitivity is contested. The dominant discourse,

shaped by the government, is that there is no 'conflict' in Sri Lanka. In such a context, overt reference to conflict sensitivity is problematic, and may expose those promoting it to danger. In Kenya, on the other hand, there was general acceptance and appreciation of the concept of conflict sensitivity. Thus creative and flexible approaches to the messaging of conflict-sensitivity may need to be adopted in different contexts, without compromising on the core principle.

The current state of play

Over the past ten years, many donors have recognised both the risks and opportunities of conflict sensitivity and have adopted more conflict sensitive policies as a consequence. However, there is evidence to suggest that these policy changes have not yet translated into changes in practice on the ground. The Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (FSPs), endorsed by the OECD in 2007, include 'Do No Harm' as a core principle. However, according to a 2011 survey of FSP implementation, "development partners do not systematically ensure that their interventions are context- and conflict-sensitive, nor do they monitor the unintended consequences of their support." [07] The survey recommends that: "development partners need to make a more focused effort to "walk the talk", ensuring that the adoption of policies at headquarters translates into behavioural change on the ground. This requires greater political efforts to adapt and reform their field policies and practices, reinforced with incentives for change, to ensure they can respond faster and with greater flexibility."

Some donors, like NGOs, have piloted different approaches and tools for translating conflict sensitive policies into practice. For example, DFID has initiated 'Conflict Audits', which have helped country offices in Nigeria and Sierra Leone assess the level of conflict sensitivity of their current portfolio and identify ways of strengthening it in the future. [08] Section 2 of this paper goes into detail on how donors can institutionalise and operationalize conflict sensitivity in their work and that of their implementing partners.

Conclusion

Violent conflict can very quickly reverse hard won developmental gains, and its impacts can take many years to recover from. The evidence presented in this paper shows that conflict sensitivity can contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of donor interventions by helping to mitigate the potential risks of violent conflict. Equally, well designed interventions can contribute to building the sustainable peace necessary for promoting long term development. Experience has shown that putting conflict sensitivity into practice is easier said than done. In the next section of this paper, we suggest some practical steps that donors can take to become more conflict sensitive.

Part 02:
Promoting conflict sensitivity by donors

Part 2 of this paper identifies a range of practical steps that donors can take to ensure that conflict sensitivity is not only mainstreamed across their own programmes, but also by their implementing partners, including non-governmental organisations, multilateral organisations and private contractors. [09]

It recognises that all donors have different systems and structures, as well as differing levels of conflict sensitivity experience. Therefore the following recommendations should be adapted and selected to fit the needs of the particular donor. Furthermore, the terms used to describe organisational functions and processes are not rigid, and organisations should adjust these to match their own systems and institutional terminology.

2.1 Promoting conflict sensitivity in donor funded projects

The CSC identified a number of lessons to strengthen the conflict sensitivity of NGOs implementing projects. [10] Responsibility for making the necessary changes lies primarily with those agencies. However donors also have a responsibility to ensure the projects they fund do not aggravate conflict, and there are particular actions they can take to support this. Furthermore, donor policies and practices can enable or constrain the conflict sensitive efforts of their implementing partners.

Recommendations to strengthen conflict sensitivity of implementing partners, and the corresponding implications for donors are as follows:

Conflict sensitivity should be incorporated in funding instruments and mechanisms

Where resources are scarce, the injection of donor funds has huge impact. This can be negative as well as positive. Donors need to be conflict sensitive when designing and managing funding instruments. Questions of who is funded (state or non-state actors, private contractors or NGOs) and how much funding is allocated (does the country have the capacity to absorb it; will it distort the local economy) can have a significant bearing on conflict dynamics. In particular, the issue of providing funds directly to governments in CAFS, for instance through budget support, risks entrenching conflict drivers and governance problems, such as corruption.

Conflict sensitivity must be applied at each stage of the project cycle

Conflict insensitivity can lead to negative impacts at any stage in the project cycle. Donors should support conflict sensitivity in the projects they fund throughout the project cycle, from conception through implementation to evaluation and exit.

The recommendations outlined in this section are of relevance to donor funded development and peacebuilding programmes. Whilst humanitarian projects should strive to achieve these same standards, this may not always be possible often due to very short time periods between proposal development and implementation.

a) Assessment stage: Implementing agencies should be able to demonstrate that project proposals are informed by an understanding of key conflict issues in the operating context, as well as how local conflict issues relate to national (or international) drivers of conflict. Where up-to-date and robust conflict analysis already exists, agencies should draw upon this, while ensuring its relevance to their intervention. If not available, they should undertake their own systematic analysis to inform project design. If this is not feasible prior to project design and funding application, proposals should include a commitment to undertake conflict analysis before project implementation begins.

Donors should:
- Include a reference to conflict sensitivity as a key principle in calls for proposals and tenders, and again in project proposal and funding application guidelines.

- Include conflict sensitivity as a criteria for assessment in evaluating project proposals.

- Allow for, and encourage, implementing agencies to include provision for conflict analysis and conflict sensitive programming in budgets.

b) Planning and implementation: Implementing agencies should undertake a systematic conflict analysis if they have not already done so and if no such analysis already exists. This will require project staff to have the requisite level of knowledge and skills to undertake a conflict analysis and ensure that implementation is conflict sensitive.

Donors should:
- Make resources available to enable conflict analysis where necessary as part of the project start-up phase; as well as resources for reviewing and updating the conflict analysis during the life of the project.

- Ensure that conflict analysis is actually used to inform project design (rather than just sitting on the shelf). When reviewing project design documents, donors should ask the following questions:

  - How do the key parameters of the project design (what will the project do, who will it target, where, when, etc.) link to the conflict analysis?
  - How might project implementation impact on the conflict risks be identified?
  - Have there been any changes to the original project design, based on the findings of the conflict analysis?

- Check for indications that conflict sensitivity has been incorporated into the logframe. This might include an explicit recognition that a project can risk exacerbating conflict.

- Approaches to monitor the impact of the project on local conflict dynamics could also be identified. For example, these might include identifying indicators such as monitoring the proportion of people in communities who perceive the project as benefitting all groups equally (see M&E section below).

- Allow for, and encourage, implementing agencies to include provision for strengthening capacities of staff and partners in conflict sensitivity.

- Review project implementation and adjust if there are activities that risk the escalation of conflict.

- Encourage implementing partners to work closely together where possible, e.g. by sharing or undertaking joint conflict analysis.

c) Monitoring and Evaluation: Monitoring and evaluation should review not just direct project outputs and outcomes, but also the

relationship between the project and the conflict context. Implementing partners should regularly update their conflict analysis, and ensure that programming is adjusted accordingly. Donors should encourage and support partners to respond flexibly to changing contexts.

Donors should:
- Include a section on "Operating Context and Conflict Sensitivity Monitoring" in project reporting formats. Specific indicators could be included for monitoring;
  - the conflict context: e.g. frequency of violent incidents between communities A and B in a designated area, over a three month period.
  - the interaction between the project and conflict context: e.g. proportion of people in communities A and B who perceive the project as benefiting: both communities/ one community over the other (rarely/often/always).
  - *It is important to note that gathering this data can be very sensitive. Donors and implementing partners may need to agree to share this information on a confidential basis only.*

- Agree stages in the project cycle (e.g. annually or mid-term) when the operating context can be reviewed with the implementing agency, and potential changes in project design can be discussed. Changes to the project based on monitoring of the context should be viewed as a strength rather than a weakness; they indicate an awareness of changing conflict dynamics, and willingness to adapt.

- Promote inclusion of communities in monitoring and evaluation processes, and include feedback and accountability mechanisms into project design and implementation.

- Include questions about the interaction between the project and the broader context as part of the final evaluation.

- Identify learning on conflict sensitivity that can be extrapolated from project evaluations to share with other projects and inform future programming.

Conflict sensitivity needs to be institutionalised in implementing partners

The CSC project demonstrated that if conflict sensitivity is to be sustained, the approach needs to be integrated into the systems and structures of implementing organisations, as well as strengthening capacities.

Donors should:
- Encourage and support potential partner agencies (including NGOs based in their countries, or local NGOs in countries of operation) to develop skills and capacity in conflict sensitivity, by:
  - Providing institutional funding or support for capacity building in conflict sensitivity. This could be used to ensure that conflict analysis is undertaken at an earlier stage in the project cycle, as well as to ensure that it is systematically updated throughout the life of a project;
  - Promote conflict sensitive self-assessments and capacity-building strategies within implementing agencies.

2.2 Integrating conflict sensitivity into donor programmes, policies and systems

Donors have the potential to influence conflict dynamics, either negatively or positively, in a number of ways, not just through the projects they fund. This is increasingly recognised and accepted by some donors who have developed their own methodologies to address this, for instance DFID's conflict audit methodology. Some additional lessons relevant to donors, as identified by the CSC, are outlined below.

National Programming

The recommendations in section 2.1 are also relevant to donor national programmes. In addition to these points, there are a number of subsequent actions donors can also take to promote conflict sensitivity across their national programmes.

Donors should:
- Conduct macro-level conflict analysis as a key part of the development of Country Strategies. A number of methodologies are available to donors (see box). This analysis can be complemented with participatory conflict analysis methodologies at the national level. [11]

- Review procurement and recruitment procedures from a conflict sensitivity perspective: the choice of suppliers when procuring goods has implications for conflict sensitivity, e.g. if the supplier is associated with a party to the conflict, or if procuring from outside the project location is perceived as undermining the local economy. Who the staff are and how they are recruited is also important in conflict-affected situations. In divided contexts perceptions of bias, lack of impartiality and association with particular groups or parties to a conflict can easily arise from the way an organisation recruits its staff.

- Integrate conflict sensitive approaches across programme cycles; just as conflict sensitivity should inform all stages of the project cycle, it should also be applied across all stages of national level, or sector specific programmes, e.g. conflict analysis should inform donor choices about geographic and sectoral priorities.

Donor conflict analysis methodologies

Many donors have developed conflict analysis tools, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. Both their process and content have implications for how holistic the analysis is, how it translates into changes in practice and how progress is monitored.

DFID's Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) tool is regarded as a leading example in the field. SCAs are expert-led processes, which involve deep analysis of a range of topics, such as structures, institutions, actors, security, politics, economics, social structure and culture. SCAs tend to be used at the macro level, for the development of national or regional level strategy.

The UK Government is also developing a new cross-government approach, the Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability (JACS). It aims to ensure that UK Government conflict analysis is jointly designed, conducted and owned by all relevant departments, thereby contributing to improved conflict sensitivity. Whilst coordination and coherence across government departments often proves challenging in long-term situations of chronic conflict, this is likely to be all the more challenging in rapid on-set conflict situations.

The World Bank conflict analysis framework focuses on socio-economic causes and identifying indicators. It uses generic qualitative and quantitative indicators at the macro (national/regional) level and can be applied to any conflict. The indicators are useful for identifying trends and for early warning, but less so in identifying strategies for engagement. They are limited by not capturing information concerning the interests of or relationships between actors in the conflict.

Institutional level

Building institutional capacity is crucial for sustainability and effectively improving conflict sensitivity. This is relevant for any organisation involved in development, peacebuilding or humanitarian work, whatever its size, set-up or scope of action. Without taking an institutional approach, knowledge and skills in conflict sensitivity may be confined to a small group of experts, risking loss of capacity when those individuals leave. Even with skilled individuals, conflict sensitivity will not be effective unless wider structures, policies and processes support and encourage conflict sensitivity.

Donors should:
- Undertake a conflict sensitivity self-assessment. This will allow the organisation to identify its own particular strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and blockages. The information thus gathered will provide a sound basis upon which the organisation can define priority areas of action and agree on specific change objectives. The comprehensive approach to conflict sensitivity self-assessment undertaken by the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium is summarised in the 'How To Guide To Conflict Sensitivity '. [12] This guide also contains suggestions on how to develop an organisational change strategy on the basis of the assessment, as well as on promoting senior management buy-in. While detailed guidance is contained in that guide, key elements include a focus on:
  - Institutional commitment
  - Policies and strategies
  - Human resources – staff competencies, skills and understanding
  - Learning and knowledge management
  - Integration into the programme cycle
  - External relations

Some donors, such as DFID with its conflict audit methodology, have experimented with similar assessments. Lessons learned from such exercises could be shared through multi-stakeholder aid effectiveness processes and institutions, such as the OECD Development Assistance Committee's International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), or the implementation of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States agreed at Busan.

- Ensure that conflict sensitive thinking is incorporated across all departments within the organisation, and not just those responsible for direct project implementation. More specifically, ensuring procurement, human resources and security policies and processes all employ a conflict sensitive approach.

- Invest in staff performance management, capacity-building, development and learning: capacity-building plans are crucial to ensure that all staff develop or reinforce their conflict sensitivity competencies. Trainings are necessary but not sufficient to ensure conflict sensitive practice. Training needs to be reinforced by institutionalised learning processes that facilitate and encourage reflection on practice. Donors could develop internal or interagency toolkits and helpdesks to support capacity development. [13] Performance management is also key to ensuring that conflict sensitivity is integrated into how individuals and country offices are assessed and progress is monitored.

See Annex 1 for a more detailed checklist of how conflict sensitivity can be incorporated into donor policies and processes.

Cross-Government level: Conflict sensitivity is relevant not only for international development departments, but for any government ministry with an interest and involvement in developing countries. Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Defence, Finance, Business and Trade should all be aware of the basic principles of conflict sensitivity and should consider how to integrate this approach into their policy and practice as it relates to developing countries. Key examples include:
- Ministry of Trade, Finance and Business policies relating to trade, investment and private sector involvement in conflict-affected or prone countries should:
  - Take measures to ensure a conflict sensitive approach to stabilisation, recovery and development activities implemented directly by private sector actors, both international and national, which can fall outside of the regulatory frameworks applying to NGOs, multilateral organisations and other traditional aid actors.

- Ministry of Defence and Interior policies relating to military operations in third countries, defence diplomacy, security sector reform and stabilisation and reconstruction efforts should:
  - Ensure that conflict sensitivity principles are translated into policy and operational guidance on how the military and other security actors engage with civilian actors, such as local government institutions
  - Pay particular attention to the potential impact of projects aimed at intelligence-gathering, force protection or stabilisation on underlying conflict dynamics within a community.

- Donor development agencies can play a role in raising awareness of conflict sensitivity in other Ministries and support them to incorporate this approach:
  - Increase awareness and understanding of other Departments/ Ministries (including but not limited to Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministries) of the relevance, need and value of conflict sensitivity for their engagement in developing countries.
  - Seek opportunities to provide conflict sensitivity training to staff in non-donor government departments.
  - Integrate conflict sensitivity into cross-departmental funding systems.

Annex 1: Application of conflict sensitivity to donor policies and processes

Policy Area	Conflict Sensitivity Linkage
Audit	Risks assessed as part of an audit can be expanded to include conflict sensitivity considerations, such as risks linked to changes in the context or to conflict-insensitive practices.
External Policies (partnerships, communication, advocacy)	The way an organisation relates to its partners and constituencies is critical to its ability to be conflict sensitive, or to influence other actors' policies and practices.
Procurement	Procuring goods and transporting goods into an environment that may have scarce resources carries particular risks and can exacerbate tensions. Many organisations have procedures that are designed to deal with cost-effectiveness and the prevention of corruption. These also need to be reviewed from a conflict sensitive perspective. Where, from whom and when you procure goods can all have an impact on conflict dynamics and on the organisation's perceived impartiality. An explicit review of the procurement policy in view of a conflict analysis will help identify risks and mitigation strategies in each particular context.
Programming Framework	Programming standards and guidelines can enable or hinder the ability of project staff to integrate conflict sensitivity into particular projects. Integrating conflict sensitivity into an organisation's programming framework will help ensure a more systematic application of conflict sensitivity across the organisation. It may involve different components, such as: proposals including costs for a conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity trainings; internal programme reporting formats incorporating reporting on conflict sensitive practice; evaluation terms of reference including questions on the conflict context and interaction with the project.
Sectoral Policies (gender, disability, HIV/Aids, Child Protection...)	Where an organisation has prioritised particular sectoral approaches or cross-cutting issues, such as gender, child protection, disability or HIV/Aids, the importance of conflict-sensitive principles can be highlighted in relation to these existing policies. A common thread across such issues is the question of power and lines of exclusion and division within a given society and across different social groups. Encourage reflections across teams. Recognise the overlaps and identify points of synergy or connection between different sectors. This may help develop integrated approaches to analysis and programming (e.g. common assessment tools).
Security	Often, risk mitigation strategies imply "outsourcing" risks. Security policies should consider not only risks to staff but also to partners and communities. Consider the implications of security measures in terms of local perceptions and possible longer-term risks: arriving in a community with obvious security measures (e.g. armoured car) will send a particular message about the organisation and its assessment of the context, which may be at odds with the organisation's actual situation assessment or the image it wants to project.
Travel	Visiting staff need to receive an adequate briefing on the local context and conflict issues. When foreign staff or partners are visiting communities, this may raise local expectations and lead to tensions when those are not met. Staff needs to be aware of this risk and be briefed on how to communicate. Who visiting staff meet, and how they are introduced to them, can have an effect on local perceptions towards the organisation and notably on its impartiality or link to parties in a conflict. In particularly divided contexts, the information shared by visiting staff may lead to risks for the safety or liberty to operate for the organisation and staff in-country. The level of transparency or confidentiality that needs to be applied has to be clearly communicated to visitors.

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[01] The Conflict Sensitivity Consortium is made up of 35 agencies in 4 countries working together to improve conflict sensitivity in development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding programming. Members of the consortium include: ActionAid UK, CAFOD, CARE International UK, ENCISS, International Alert, Peace and Community Action (PCA), Plan International, Responding to Conflict, Saferworld, Save the Children UK, Sierra Leone Red Cross Society, Skillshare International, SLANGO, Diocese of Maralal, Future in our Hands and World Vision. While this publication is based on field research and consultations amongst consortium members, its contents should not be taken as the formal position of individual agencies.

[02] See Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding Resource Pack (2004) – available at www.conflictsensitivity.org

[03] Definition of CS developed by the conflict sensitivity consortium.

[04] DFID 2010.

[05] CSC, Applying Conflict Sensitivity in Emergency Response, 2011.

[06] Adapted from DFID 2010

[07] p17, OECD (2011), International Engagement in Fragile States: Can't we do better? OECD Publishing. Available at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/14/14/48697077.pdf

[08] DFID 2011

[09] 'Implementing partners' refers to any actor contracted to implement an intervention on behalf of a donor. In most cases, these will be NGOs (local or international) or private sector contractors.

[10] CSC also developed guidance to support improved CS amongst NGO members. See 'How To Guide to Conflict Sensitivity' available at www.conflictsensitivity.org

[11] For example using World Vision's Making Sense of Turbulent Context (MSTC) methodology

[12] Available at www.conflictsensitivity.org

[13] Such efforts could draw upon the CSC How To Guide to Conflict Sensitivity

Conflict Sensitivity Consortium