



Helpdesk Research Report

Conflict sensitivity in education, the private sector and infrastructure development

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Question

What are examples of conflict sensitive approaches and practice in relation to (i.) education, (ii) the private sector, and (iii.) infrastructure development, identifying good practice where available? What are challenges to applying such approaches and practice?

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1. Overview

Since the 1990s, aid actors have increasingly recognised that aid interventions are not neutral but become a part of the context. As such, donors need to be accountable for the inadvertent side effects of programming on conflict and fragility. Conflict sensitivity is an important concept and tool to help aid actors to understand these implications and to minimise harm and achieve positive outcomes.

Conflict sensitivity in education

There has been increasing awareness that education systems are not neutral. **Education can exacerbate conflict** if it increases social tensions or divisions between groups. This may be the case if:

- Education policies and practice are inequitable
- Education systems reinforce identity grievances
- Educational curricula promote militarism

It is essential to ensure that education interventions themselves do not represent a threat to peace. **Conflict sensitivity in education** is the process of understanding the context; analysing the two-way interaction between the context and education programmes; and acting to minimise adverse impacts and maximise positive impacts of education interventions on conflict.

There has been a growing shift by those working in the education field from a focus on avoiding negative effects of education interventions (a more narrow view of conflict sensitivity) toward more attention to how education can also address drivers of conflict and make a positive contribution to peacebuilding (a broader view of conflict sensitivity). There are various ways in which **education can contribute to peacebuilding**:

- An inclusive education system can help to eradicate perceptions of inequality and exclusion
- Education can contribute to social cohesion
- Educational investments can increase government legitimacy
- Participation of stakeholders in educational systems can rectify grievances over lack of participation and build cooperative relationships

There are various **factors that must be taken into account when designing, planning and implementing conflict sensitive educational policies, programmes, activities and approaches**. Key issues include:

Governance: good governance of education systems can be essential to achieving equity, inclusion and social cohesion, and protecting against grievances about access and quality of education as sources of conflict. Careful judgement is required about the balance between central control and devolution of authority.

Language of instruction: language policies have been used in ways that render access to education inequitable and exacerbate conflict. It can be challenging to develop conflict sensitive language policies. In some contexts, the use of a single national language in school instruction has helped to foster a sense of shared identity, whereas elsewhere it has led to a sense of exclusion.

Curricula, history and methods of teaching: it is important to develop a curriculum that is not biased toward any one group and educational materials that have civic and social and economic relevance to

students. A focus on national identity can promote cohesion, but risks imposing the culture of dominant groups. Teaching of history is particularly controversial. Much of the emphasis is on providing multiple points of view. These issues are closely tied with methods of teaching and whether a conflict sensitive approach to education requires a shift from transmission of knowledge, which could be used as a tool to promote particular ideologies, to learning outcomes and skills development.

Teachers and teacher education: recruitment of teachers should reflect diversity. Teachers may also require additional training to address students about recent conflicts and to foster an open environment to explore historical events.

There are **various approaches and toolkits to guide thinking on conflict sensitivity and its operationalisation**. Guidance and tools have also been designed specifically for the education sector. At this stage, there are no evaluations or much discussion in the literature of their advantages or disadvantages. As such, the profile of these approaches and tools in this report is purely descriptive. The report covers: the **INEE conflict sensitive education pack** and other guidance from international organisations; CIDA and USAID's **diagnostic and assessment tools**; and Save the Children's **education and fragility barometer**.

Conflict sensitivity in the private sector and infrastructure development

Similar to aid agencies, companies are not expected to be neutral. **Businesses can exacerbate tensions and conflict** through:

- Displacement of communities
- Unequal distribution of benefits and disadvantages, such as job opportunities, resources, compensation, and environmental impacts
- Weakening government legitimacy, should they provide a greater degree of public goods and services and/or bypass government procurement processes
- Insufficient attention to the entire user chain, including ensuring that company-generated revenues, company products, company assets and infrastructure all do not support conflict

Infrastructure development, which can be a key activity of the private sector, **can exacerbate tensions and conflict** if:

- Infrastructure development produces unmet expectations
- Infrastructure projects involve competitive contracting processes
- The process creates beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries –benefiting particular groups over others
- The process bypasses local systems and local participation

Incorporating conflict sensitivity into the private sector entails engaging in business in a way that prevents foreign investors and domestic businesses from causing harm and instead strengthens their ability to contribute to peacebuilding. There are various other ways in which **businesses can contribute to peacebuilding**. These include:

- Conflict mediation, for example, acting as facilitators between conflict parties
- Ensuring local benefits through local content policies, micro-credit and skills training

- Workshops and training on peaceful coexistence, community cohesion and good governance

Infrastructure development can further contribute to peacebuilding through:

- Collaboration over infrastructure planning and implementation, with the view that all may benefit from such projects
- Employment generation
- Internal connectivity and nation-building, facilitated by transport and communications infrastructure
- Improvements in security and justice, with infrastructure investment geared specifically toward these sectors
- Gender rights, with improved access to water freeing up time for women to engage in educational and income opportunities

Benefits to the private sector of adopting a conflict sensitive approach include:

- Better risk management
- Lower operational costs
- Enhanced reputation, credibility and social good will
- Positive and constructive stakeholder engagement

There are various **factors that must be taken into account when designing, planning and implementing conflict sensitive private sector policies, programmes, activities and approaches**, including those concerning infrastructure development. Key issues include:

Inclusiveness: a conflict sensitive approach to business practice and infrastructure development must also consider non-beneficiaries, particularly when a project is specifically designed to improve a certain area or creates particular opportunities, such as employment. A project that creates haves and have-nots can result in tensions and violence between the different communities and between the company and groups that do not benefit.

Community-company consultations: such consultations allow for companies to be aware of and understand – and to be able to address – community needs, fears and expectations, and possible flashpoints that could result in violence. Consultations should also promote transparency and accountability, equitable interventions, and effective management of expectations.

Addressing the needs of the socially excluded and vulnerable groups: a key consideration is ensuring access to employment opportunities to members of such groups, such as women, youth and ethnic minorities.

Private sector partnerships: companies alone cannot avoid harm, reduce or prevent violence, and build peace. Tripartite partnerships involve the company, government and civil society/communities. This approach helps to reduce local dependency on companies and may improve government legitimacy. A key political challenge, however, is clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of public and private actors in areas of conflict – and dealing with situations where governments are unwilling or unable to provide an enabling environment for companies to operate responsibly and successfully. Another form of

private sector partnership is between business and the international development and peace community. The international development community and policy makers need to systematically engage with the private sector to develop guidelines and international standards and to create tangible opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.

Sustainability: conflict sensitive approaches to infrastructure development must take into consideration the maintenance and sustainability of the systems and structures that are created (such as road systems and water infrastructure). In addition, the impact of the construction of social infrastructure (schools and health facilities), for example, is highly dependent on adequate services provided in the new facility. This requires institutional strengthening and training of local staff to provide the services.

Guidance and tools have also been designed specifically for the private sector. As discussed, there are no evaluations or discussion of their advantages or disadvantages. As such, the profile of these approaches and tools in this report is purely descriptive. The report covers: **International Alert's conflict sensitive business practice approach** and other guidance from the NGO sector, including **USIPs' conflict sensitive approach to infrastructure development**. It also looks at **USAID's value chain approach** and includes a brief discussion on **public policy-private sector approaches and tools**.

Challenges to achieving conflict sensitivity

Despite widespread agreement among aid actors about the importance of conflict sensitivity, there are still various **factors that have undermined the successful operationalisation of conflict sensitivity**, including in education, the private sector and infrastructure development. These include:

- **Incentives/disincentives:** pressures faced by implementing organisations to spend large amounts of donor money quickly can result in failure to adopt time-consuming conflict sensitivity approaches. Companies may be concerned that the costs of conducting conflict analysis and engaging in community consultations, important aspects of conflict sensitivity, could undermine their competitiveness. In addition, organisations are rarely held to account for failure to incorporate conflict sensitivity approaches or for the negative impacts that their programming may have.
- **Analytical issues and integrating findings into programming:** difficulties in gathering information, such as educational data, can undermine the ability to conduct effective conflict analysis and assessments.
- **Inconsistent application of conflict sensitivity** at the policy and organisational level, throughout the project life cycle, and at the inter-agency and inter-sectoral level. Lack of coordination among actors operating in the same space, for example, can result in unintentionally undermining the work of others. There needs to be greater collaboration between those working in the social services sectors, such as education, and those in the peacebuilding community; as well as between those working in conflict transformation and in the private sector.
- **Political dimensions:** conflict analyses are political exercises. Assessments of the education sector in relation to conflict and fragility can be controversial as they often include a critical analysis of the political ideology driving the educational system. It is important to find ways in which to engage government officials that meet their sensitivities.

2. What is conflict sensitivity?

The first principle for aid policymakers, identified in the OECD-DAC Guidelines on 'Helping Prevent Violent Conflict' (2001: 23), is 'to do no harm and to guard against unwittingly aggravating existing or potential conflicts', in addition to 'maximising good' and strengthening incentives for peace. Now well accepted in the development community, this principle rose to prominence after the devastating genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Genocidaires used humanitarian relief to refugee camps to consolidate their own power and to launch attacks within the camps and against Rwanda (Brown et al. 2009). Uvin (1998) argues that development agencies were also responsible for exacerbating structural violence in the lead up to the genocide through various actions. This included recruiting predominantly Tutsi local staff, heightening tensions between Tutsi and Hutu groups.

Aid interventions have since been understood to become a part of the context - and in conflict settings, to become a part of the conflict. This acknowledgement that aid is not neutral also led to the recognition that donors need to be accountable for the inadvertent side effects of programming on conflict. Conflict sensitivity emerged as an important concept and tool to help aid actors to understand these implications and to minimise harm and achieve positive outcomes. The **Do No Harm (DNH)** project was launched in late 1994 to answer the question: How may assistance be provided in conflict settings in ways that, rather than feeding into and exacerbating the conflict, help local people disengage from the violence that surrounds them and begin to develop alternative systems for addressing the problems that underlie the conflict?¹ At the core of do no harm is analysis of dividing and connecting issues and actors, which should be done with local partners and regularly updated during project implementation. Primarily seen as a project level tool, the DNH framework has seven steps (see CDA 2004):

1. **Identify which conflicts** are dangerous in terms of their destructiveness, and which therefore require DNH.
2. **Analyse 'dividers'** – identify what divides groups and sources of tension.
3. **Analyse 'connectors'** – understand how people remain connected across sub-group lines despite divisions created through the conflict, and local capacities for peace (LCPs).
4. Conduct a thorough review of all aspects of the assistance programme.
5. Analyse the **interactions of each aspect of the assistance programme with the existing dividers/tensions and connectors/LCPs**. For example, who gains and who loses from assistance?
6. Examine steps one to four: if assistance exacerbates inter-group dividers, rethink how to provide the programme in a way that eliminates its negative, conflict-worsening aspects.
7. Once a better programming option has been selected, re-evaluate the impacts of the new approach on the dividers and connectors.

In 1998, Kenneth Bush developed the **Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)** methodology, comparable to environmental or gender impact assessment. While similar to DNH in its focus of how aid impacts conflict, PCIA adds an additional layer of assessment – looking also at how the context can affect aid interventions. There are three key steps to conducting PCIA (see Bush 2009):

1. **Mapping exercise:** to better understand the complexity and dynamics of peace and conflict environments and the interests, objectives and actions of stakeholders.

¹ See Do No Harm Project: Trainer's Manual – Background and History of the DNH Project, updated 2004:

<http://www.cdacollaborative.org/media/52479/DNH-Training-Manual-History-of-the-DNH-Project.pdf>

2. **Risk and opportunity assessment:** to identify the negative and positive ways in which the peace and conflict environment could impact on the initiative.
3. **Peace and conflict impact assessment:** to identify the ways in which the initiative could create or worsen conflicts or contribute to peacebuilding. This assessment should be engaged in pre-initiative, during the initiative, and post-initiative - contributing to planning, monitoring and evaluation.

In order for conflict sensitivity to be effective and maximise impact, it should be mainstreamed within an organisation, rather than treated as a separate project component. It should be applied consistently at the different levels of intervention (project, programme, sector, policy and inter-agency). Conflict sensitivity also needs to be applied holistically throughout the programme cycle (design and planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation). Programmes need to be adaptable based on changing situations and M&E findings. In addition, conflict sensitivity needs to be conducted by different actors, ranging from donors to non-governmental actors to private sector actors – all of whom have the potential to produce inadvertent affects in the environments in which they operate.

3. What is conflict sensitive education?

Just as aid interventions are no longer viewed as neutral, there is increasing awareness that education systems are not neutral, and are frequently designed by elite groups in society (UNICEF 2013). **Education can exacerbate conflict** if it increases social tensions or divisions between groups. This may be the case if:

- **Education policies and practice are inequitable:** children or youth from one group may have less access to education opportunities (and associated employment opportunities) than other groups. This can create grievances that act as a motivation to engage in conflict. Such exclusion may reflect broader patterns of inequalities in society, such as gender and/or ethnic inequalities (Sigsgaard 2012; INEE 2010; Dupuy 2008; Save the Children 2008).
- **Education systems reinforce identity grievances:** identity issues can play out through particular language of instruction, curricula that favours a dominant culture, one-sided teaching of history and portrayal of negative stereotyping of groups in textbooks, among other areas (Sigsgaard 2012; INEE 2010; Bush and Satarelli 2000). Identity is often closely tied with dynamics of equity and exclusion (INEE 2010).
- **Educational curricula promote militarism:** the militarisation of textbooks and classroom teachings can produce military mindsets among children and youth and the belief that solutions to problems are achieved through force (Sigsgaard 2012; Davies 2011).

Educational interventions (policy decisions, programmes, projects etc.) can inadvertently contribute to conflict through counter-productive development, planning and delivery, ranging from educational structures established through peace agreements that further entrench social divisions, to programmes that fail to link educational opportunities to employment. They can also contribute to conflict by reflecting the status quo, e.g. by reproducing existing patterns of inequality and biased teachings (Davies 2011).

Conflict sensitivity requires recognising that interventions are not neutral, diagnosing potential problems, and acting to remedy them (Sigsgaard 2012). It is essential to ensure that interventions themselves do not represent a threat to peace. **Conflict sensitivity in education** is the process of (IIEP-UNESCO 2013, adapted from Resource pack):

- Understanding the context in which education takes place;
- Analysing the two-way interaction between the context and education programmes and policies (how the context affects the intervention and how the intervention affects the context); and
- Acting to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of education policies and programming on conflict.

Conflict sensitive education encompasses ‘policies, activities, and approaches that promote equitable access to educational opportunity and curricula based on skills and values that support peace and social cohesion’ (USAID 2013: 2). Sigsgaard (2012) emphasises that **conflict sensitivity is a cross-cutting issue**: all education policies and programmes should be designed to minimise tensions that may lead to conflict; and special initiatives should be undertaken for education to contribute to peace. There is a **spectrum of ambition that applies to conflict sensitivity**. A minimalist position involves being cognisant that all decisions can affect social tensions and inter-group relations and that interventions must avoid causing harm. For example, programmes must not favour one side of the conflict through language of instruction, teacher recruitment or location of schools. A maximalist position also entails the active promotion of peace, for example developing and implementing programmes where education aims to transform social tensions by challenging perceptions of the ‘other’, and teaching respect for diversity and local, national and global citizenship (USAID 2013; Sigsgaard 2012).

Smith (2010) finds a growing shift in the past decade by those working in the education field from a focus on avoiding negative effects of educational interventions toward more attention to how education can also address drivers of conflict and make a positive contribution to peacebuilding. There are **various ways in which education can contribute to peacebuilding**:

- An **inclusive education system can help to eradicate perceptions of social inequality and exclusion**, which may have been a driver of conflict (Dupuy 2008; Save the Children 2008).
- **Education can contribute to social cohesion** by teaching principles of unity, good citizenship and social justice, establishing inclusive curricula and textbooks, disarming history, and bringing different groups together and teaching them to work together peacefully (Sigsgaard 2012; Davies 2011; Barakat et al. 2008; Dupuy 2008; Bush and Santarelli 2000).
- **Educational investments can increase government legitimacy** (Sigsgaard 2012; Davies 2011).
- **Participation of stakeholders** in school management processes and educational systems can rectify grievances over lack of participation, provide a medium to **build relationships** outside of the school built on trust and cooperation, and promote civic action (INEE 2010; Dupuy 2008).

Despite the importance of conflict sensitivity in education, Bird (2011) states that **conflict-assessment approaches and tools used by donors, agencies or country governments rarely consider the relationship of education to conflict or include education indicators**. In order to understand the multiple influences of education on context, it is essential to engage in qualitative and quantitative analysis. Such analysis should incorporate examination of the drivers and dynamics of conflict and analysis of education’s interactions with these drivers and dynamics. Similarly, conflict analysis should be included in educational planning and sector review processes (Davies 2011; INEE 2011). Collecting and analysing data can help to determine, for example, who does and does not have access to education and why. Once this is determined, efforts should be made to design and monitor programmes that make education more inclusive and equitable (USAID 2013).

Analysing education from a conflict perspective is relevant to all phases of a conflict – before, during and after conflicts. Within relatively peaceful contexts, for example, an analysis of the education system may reveal factors that could become sources of grievance between groups and provide opportunities to adapt policies and programmes in a ‘preventative’ way. Where violence is underway, education could serve a ‘protective’ role, providing a safe space and stable environment for children, and if possible, imparting messages of non-violent methods of conflict resolution. Where peace processes are underway, education can contribute to ‘social transformation’, for example through educating people about institutional change and the development of new societal structures (Smith 2011; Dupuy 2008). Dupuy (2008) emphasises, however, that while education can play an important role in various aspects of peacebuilding, education alone cannot build the conditions for peace. It must be combined with other peacebuilding interventions.

4. Key issues in conflict sensitive education

There are various factors that must be taken into account when designing, planning and implementing conflict sensitive educational policies, programmes, activities and approaches. Key issues include:

Governance

Smith (2011) considers **good governance key to a conflict sensitive approach to education**. Good governance of education systems can be essential to achieving equity, inclusion and social cohesion, and protecting against grievances about access and quality of education as sources of conflict. Conflict sensitive governance of education systems, however, requires **careful judgement about the balance between central control and devolution of authority**. Central control can play an important role in providing cohesive direction and regulation, but may result in problematic concentration of power.

Decentralisation and devolution are often seen as a way to mitigate against politicisation at the central level, and to promote greater accountability and participation. While this may be the case in some instances, decentralisation and devolution could also leave education open to manipulation as part of local politics and could result in ethnic or religious fragmentation (Davies 2011; UNICEF 2011a). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, a minimal federal state presence has resulted in three separate curricula for the three ethnic groups that differ for subjects such as history, culture and language, sometimes in ways that reinforce prejudice (UNICEF 2011a). It is thus essential to engage in analysis to identify the political and economic influences operating on and within the education system in particular contexts (UNICEF 2011a). In order to promote conflict sensitive education, the aim could be to maintain some form of central regulation alongside adequate degrees of decentralisation (in areas of planning, teacher education, examinations etc.), while strengthening capacity and monitoring efficiency at all levels (Davies 2011; Smith 2011).

Accountability and participation could be further promoted through the **involvement of local communities in planning curricula and other forms of decision-making** (Dupuy 2008). In addition, parents and children could be incorporated into governance structures, such as school management councils and parent-teacher associations. This may also have the effect of building relationships and strengthening social cohesion (Save the Children 2008). In Somalia, conflict sensitive education planning involved discussion and awareness raising with hundreds of community education committees. These consultations resulted in community buy-in, trust and support and provided concrete opportunities for dialogue and collaboration. This was instrumental in encouraging parents to send their children, especially girls, to school (UNICEF 2013).

Language of instruction

The choice of language in educational systems confers a power and prestige through its use in formal instruction (UNICEF 2003, cited in UNICEF 2011a). **Language policies have been used in ways that exacerbate conflict.** In India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, for example, they have been used as a way to dominate access to education by particular groups (Smith 2011). It can be challenging to develop language policies that contribute to peace rather than conflict. In some contexts, such as in Tanzania, the **use of a single national language in school instruction has helped to foster a sense of shared identity, whereas elsewhere it has led to a sense of exclusion** and fuelled violence. In the latter, multilingual policies may provide protection against conflict. In Guatemala, for example, the use of Spanish as the primary medium of instruction, alongside a monocultural school curriculum, was a long-standing grievance of indigenous people. Under the 1996 peace accords, goals for education reform included the strengthening of intercultural and bilingual education. This led to the promotion of the use of indigenous languages in school (UNESCO 2011). In Uganda, the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2004-2015) has attempted to address the conflict in the north of the country by supporting national integration. It aims to achieve this in part through fee-free primary education and the provision of reading materials in local materials, to address political problems surrounding languages of instruction (Bird 2011).

Curricula, history and methods of teaching

Schools should adopt a **curriculum that is not biased toward any one group** and educational materials that have civic and social and economic relevance to children in their particular contexts. It is essential that curricula do not reproduce contents that have contributed to conflict or that have failed to prevent it. Educational reforms in Afghanistan, for example, have been critiqued for focusing on rebuilding schools but failing to address attitudes of intolerance and militarism in school textbooks and instead reprinting them using international development assistance (Smith 2011). There is a risk that socialisation towards intolerance and violent solutions will exacerbate tensions. Removal of hate messages from textbooks can still have a negative effect, however. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international community's focus on removing divisive messages about the war from textbooks had the inadvertent effect of politicising education and exacerbating political and identity divisions (INEE 2010).

Curricula and textbooks that **focus on national identity can promote cohesion** and serve as an effective counter to divisive manipulation of parochial identities, but **risk imposing the culture and values of dominant groups** and intolerance of diversity (Davies 2011). Davies (2011) asserts that the goal should generally be to promote national unity while acknowledging and respecting differences and diversity. Civic or citizenship education can be an important part of the school curriculum in conflict-affected societies. In some cases, a focus on what unites students rather than what divides them can help to erode entrenched divisions). Such programmes can also impart important messages about the rights of citizens and their relationship to the state (Smith 2010). The adoption of one textbook can serve as a minimum entitlement for students, demonstrating equal access. This may, however, raise concerns over who controls or benefits from the production of textbooks and about their content (UNICEF 2011a).

The **teaching of history is particularly controversial** in conflict-affected contexts. In Cambodia, the education system has recently begun addressing the history of genocide, whereas in Rwanda, the government maintains a moratorium on history education (UNESCO 2011). There are debates about whether a single narrative of history or the provision of multiple perspectives is the better approach. Much literature on reforming education systems emphasises that teachers should foster an environment in which historical events can be explored and questioned from **multiple points of view**. The aim is to help students

see events through their enemies' eyes and to facilitate empathy; as well as to teach how narratives can be used to promote fear, mistrust and hate.

These issues are **closely tied with methods of teaching**. A conflict sensitive approach to education may entail a **move away from transmission of knowledge** and rote memorisation, which in some instances could be used as a tool to promote particular ideologies, to an **emphasis on learning outcomes**. This involves skills, attitudes and values along with factual knowledge, including development of 'life skills'. Life skills could incorporate critical thinking, communication skills, conflict resolution skills and psycho-social support (UNICEF 2011a; Save the Children 2008). In addition, inter-sectoral planning and coordination is needed to **better connect skills and knowledge taught in the formal education system with the labour market**, in order to prevent grievances from lack of appropriate employment opportunities (Davies 2011; Dupuy 2008).

Teachers and teacher education

Teachers are critical to determining the quality of learning and in socialisation of students (Davies 2011; Smith 2010). It is thus essential that teacher recruitment and training is conflict sensitive. **Recruitment of teachers should reflect diversity**, with a good balance of male and female teachers from different ethnic groups and with different language skills (Smith 2010). Teachers may also require **additional training to address students about recent conflicts** and to foster an open environment in which to explore historical events from multiple points of view (Save the Children 2008). A more general shift in teaching methods from rote learning to learning outcomes would also require retraining. In order for teachers to be a positive force in conflict-affected contexts, it is also important to address the morale and motivation of teachers in terms of status in society, rates of pay, and terms and conditions of employment (Smith 2010).

5. Approaches and tools: how to incorporate conflict sensitivity in education

There are various approaches and toolkits to guide thinking on conflict sensitivity and its operationalisation. Guidance and tools have also been designed specifically for the education sector. These are profiled below. A common central component of conflict sensitivity approaches and tools is conflict or political economy, which provides an understanding of the interaction between the intervention and the context and informs conflict sensitive programming.

INEE/IIEP/EAA guidance and tools

The INEE (international network for education in emergencies) has developed various tools to integrate conflict sensitivity into education policy, including a **conflict sensitive education pack** – comprised of three key components: Guiding principles, a reflection tool, and guidance note

INEE Guiding Principles on Integrating Conflict Sensitivity in Education Policy and Programming in Conflict-Affected and Fragile Contexts

http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1150/INEE_Guiding_principles_A3_English%5B1%5D.pdf

The Guiding Principles are designed to help stakeholders ensure that conflict sensitivity is incorporated into **education proposals, policies, investments and programmes** in conflict-affected and fragile contexts. The six principles are:

1. Assess
2. Do no harm
3. Prioritise prevention
4. Promote equity and the holistic development of the child as a citizen
5. Stabilise, rebuild or build the education system
6. Development partners should act fast, respond to change, and stay engaged beyond short-term support

INEE Reflection Tool for Designing and Implementing Conflict Sensitive Education Programmes in Conflict-Affected and Fragile Contexts

http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1150/INEE_Reflection_Tool_English_interactive%5B1%5D.pdf

The Reflection Tool is designed for education programme staff and other stakeholders to ensure that conflict sensitivity is integrated in education at **all stages of the programme cycle: assessment, design, implementation/management, monitoring and evaluation**. It is a 'checklist' with a series of questions based on each principle, which allows stakeholders to design or 'check' the conflict sensitivity of a programme. Principles of community participation, equity, access, quality, relevance and protection are included across the checklist.

INEE Guidance Note on Conflict Sensitive Education (2013)

http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1150/INEE_GN_on_Conflict_Sensitive_Education%5B1%5D.pdf

The Guidance Note offers strategies to practitioners, policy makers and researchers for developing and implementing conflict sensitive education programmes and policies in conflict-affected and fragile contexts.

Other INEE/IIEP materials:

Situational analysis of education and fragility – Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and Liberia (IIEP, 2011)

http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Info_Services_Publications/pdf/2011/INEE_Synthesis.pdf

This paper stresses the importance of **mapping the connections between education and fragility** as part of education policy and programming. Such analysis should serve as a basis for determining needs and risks, setting targets and evaluating progress. The following three questions are central to the analysis:

- Can this policy/project/intervention have a negative impact on conditions of fragility?
- What evidence exists that it will have a positive impact on fragility?
- What factors and dynamics might influence the course and impacts of the intervention?

Answering the last question requires a political economy analysis and assessment of the politico-cultural aspects surrounding the workings of organisations.

The paper identifies the following four areas as particularly important for the purposes of **mitigating the fragility of the education system** and strengthening its functionality:

- National planning, including joint planning across sectors and across donors and government
- Legal and regulatory frameworks, including codes of conduct
- Community involvement and local ownership, including in decision-making and implementation
- Teacher capacity development

If conflict sensitivity is interpreted as also **addressing the drivers and dynamics of fragility and contributing to peacebuilding and statebuilding**, the paper suggests that attention be paid to promoting:

- Equal, generalized, and safe access to education: this can help to challenge exclusion; and to build or restore legitimacy and public trust in the state
- Programmes that contribute to citizenship and nation-building, focusing on human rights, shared national identity and commonalities, while being respectful of differences
- Effective preparation for livelihoods and entrepreneurship, matching skills and knowledge to the labour market
- Gender-sensitivity, including programmes that target gender equity and gender relations
- Environmental education
- Child-friendly schools and informal education initiatives, such as forums for youth voices

Integrating conflict and disaster risk reduction into education sector planning (UNESCO IIEP, 2011)

http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1150/IIEP_Guidancesnotes_EiE_en.pdf#page=1

These IIEP Guidance Notes provide strategies to educational planners on how to mainstream conflict and disaster risk reduction measures in the education sector planning process. The tool has already been used in Burkina Faso and Chad to integrate disaster preparation and prevention strategies into their education sector planning processes. It identifies ways in which each of the steps of the planning cycle can contribute to reducing the risk of predictable, recurrent emergencies, and also better respond to the sudden onset of disaster and conflict. Specifically, the tool provides guidance on the following aspects of the **planning process**:

- **Risk analysis** for the education sector, including analysing the impact of conflict and natural disasters
- **Design of policies and programmes** that will reduce the specific conflict and disaster risk identified in the diagnosis process, including developing capacity for reducing risks
- **Monitoring and evaluating** conflict and disaster risk reduction measures
- **Costing all initiatives** related to conflict and disaster risk reduction and integrating conflict and disaster risk reduction into education sector budgets

Conflict-sensitive educational planning for peacebuilding (Education Above All, 2013)

http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/files/resources/EAA_Education_for_Global_Citizenship.pdf

This paper reviews ways of including conflict-sensitivity in education sector diagnosis, plan development, monitoring and evaluation, and costing and financing. Figure 1 and Annex 1 (p. 269, p. 275) identifies the steps from analysis to monitoring and evaluating programmes that could provide a framework for educational planning in conflict-prone situations.

An **education sector diagnosis** for conflict mitigation must look at the risk factors to the system, including possibly an analysis of equitable resource distribution; the level of integration or segregation within the education system; and bias in curricula and textbooks. The diagnosis process also involves identifying tension points within the political system and within the education system specifically, looking also at root causes of tension at a broader scale. Once these are identified, it is necessary to assess the role that education has played, for example a disproportionate percentage of education personnel favouring a particular ethnic group.

An **education sector plan formulation** should address what needs to change to help prevent further violence and consider how education can play a role in reducing risks and tensions. Specific programmes for conflict mitigation may fall under priority programme areas such as access, quality and relevance, equity and management of education. Specific initiatives could include ensuring equitable access in conflict-affected areas through activities such as removing bias from curriculum and textbook. These activities should be **costed and budgeted** for and ultimately integrated into national education sector plans, where possible. **Monitoring and evaluation** mechanisms should contain indicators related to preparedness, such as the number of schools that have developed contingency plans, or the number of districts that have conducted a vulnerability mapping.

Donor approaches and tools

Despite the role that education can play in fuelling conflict or in preventing and recovering from it, it rarely features in conflict analyses and assessment tools (UNICEF 2012; Bird 2011). USAID and CIDA are unique in their specific targeting of education in their conflict assessment tools (Save the Children 2007). Both the USAID and CIDA tools draw on Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) methods, looking at both the impact of conflict and fragility on education; and of education on conflict and fragility (UNICEF 2011a).

Education, Conflict and Peacebuilding: A diagnostic tool (CIDA, nd)

<http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/e11.pdf>

This tool is based on the **PCIA approach**. It outlines a number of **conflict indicators, risks and monitoring measures for the political, economic, social/cultural, and institutional aspects of education** and the impact of these on conflict. The type of analysis suggested in the tool is considered more useful for early warning stages and in the aftermath of war – with the ultimate aim that the results of the analysis can be used to predict and contribute to mechanisms for peacebuilding.

Education and Fragility: an Assessment Tool (USAID, 2006)

http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADH913.pdf

This tool is based on the **PCIA approach** to conflict sensitivity and helps to answer the following three questions:

1. How does fragility affect education?
2. How does education contribute to fragility?
3. How can education mitigate the sources of fragility and support resiliency?

Each question is posed in relation to a general or specific theme/**root cause of fragility** (governance, security, social domain, public disengagement, corruption, lack of capacity, organised violence, transitional dynamics, and exclusion, elitism and factionalism). Each thematic table looks at the links between **patterns of fragility and access, quality, relevance, equity and management**.

See also:

Miller-Grandvaux, Y. (2009). Global Trends for Education to Support Stability and Resilience: Research, Programming and Finance

<http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1150/EducationFragilityANewFramework.pdf#page=>

Checklist for Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs (USAID, 2013)

http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USAID_Checklist_Conflict_Sensitivity_14FEB27_cm.pdf

The Checklist offers a practical framework for analysing the operational and technical aspects of education programmes during all stages: **planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation**. It serves as a guiding framework, providing key steps to avoid harmful actions and to promote inclusion and equitable access to education in conflict and crisis environments. The checklist is divided into the following seven categories with corresponding questions and measures to address to ensure that conflict sensitivity is incorporated in each category:

1. Commitment and accountability (e.g. whether the organisation has up-to date knowledge about conflict dynamics)
2. Strategy (e.g. whether the education strategy demonstrates understanding of the conflict context and its interaction with education)
3. Equitable access (e.g. whether and how the education programme is designed and carried out based on equity and inclusion)
4. Curricula, teaching and learning (e.g. whether learning materials are unifying rather than divisive)
5. Capacity building (e.g. whether management decisions about education personnel include conflict sensitive recruitment policies)
6. Community engagement (e.g. whether the approach to community engagement aims to promote social cohesion)
7. Monitoring and evaluation (e.g. whether data is collected that measure who is and who is not accessing education and decisions made to address inequalities and exclusion)

NGO approaches and tools

Education and Fragility Barometer (Save the Children, 2007)

http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1150/The_fragility_barometer.pdf#page=1

This early warning tool is designed to aid conflict prevention. It builds on and seeks to complement the CIDA and USAID assessment tools with the aim of providing a set of more operational indicators for analysing the role of education in relation to conflict and fragility. How an education system is functioning can provide indicators on how a country is performing in terms of fragility and/or conflict. The 'education and fragility barometer' allows fragility comparisons to be made in schools and in countries, at local, national, regional and even global levels. The indicators focus on the education system at two levels: School and National, and across three domains: Culture, Policy and Practice. It is preferable to involve children and communities as well as national authorities in the assessment. The indicators provided are generic, and need to be adapted according to context. The use of the indicators and subsequent development of the 'barometer' gives authorities an opportunity to:

1. Undertake a dialogue at different levels and with various stakeholders on the factors that promote/mitigate conflict in their community/country and the role education plays

2. Adapt the indicators in the barometer template to ensure they are context specific
3. Determine whether they are in the 'danger zone' and need to take steps to mitigate the potential for conflict
4. To assess where the critical issues are within the education system and identify appropriate mitigation strategies

6. What are conflict sensitive private sector interventions and infrastructure development?

Although originally developed for the aid sector, the 'Do No Harm' framework has been adapted by Mary B. Anderson and her colleagues to the private sector. Similar to aid agencies, companies are not expected to be neutral. While private sector activities are inevitably affected by local context, company actions will also have an impact on the underlying conflict in a negative or positive way. An analysis of companies, primarily working in the extractive industries, demonstrates that the majority of conflict dynamics that companies experience at the local level are directly related to the ways in which the implementation of their policies interact with the conflict context (Zandvliet 2011). This is in contrast to the assumption by most companies that the outcomes of their venture are attributable solely to external factors such as a weak host government (Zandvliet 2011). Businesses can exacerbate tensions and conflict through:

- **Displacement:** corporate activities may force communities to resettle to new locations that may not have sufficient access to basic resources. There could also be tensions between migrant populations and the communities into which they are settling (Forrer et al. 2012).
- **Unequal distribution of benefits and disadvantages:** real or perceived unequal distribution of job opportunities, compensation and resources can be particularly sensitive (Forrer et al. 2012; Bray 2009). Reliance on an expatriate staff by multinational corporations, for example, could create tensions with the lack of benefits to local employment (Forrer et al. 2012). The main beneficiaries of corporate activities, in particular those of extractive industry companies, may be national governments and companies rather than the local communities that suffer most from environmental impacts (Bray 2009). Poorer communities, which often already have poor air quality or minimal access to potable water, tend to suffer most from the release of toxins or pollution (Forrer et al. 2012).
- **Weakening government legitimacy:** firms that invest excessively in public goods and services could reinforce existing dissatisfaction with the government's capacity to provide for local communities (Forrer et al. 2012). Bypassing government systems and procurement processes could also undermine a sense of local ownership and the sustainability and maintenance of company outputs (Jones and Howarth 2012).
- **Insufficient attention to the entire user chain:** companies need to take responsibility for all stages of the user chain, including ensuring that company-generated revenues do not fuel or finance conflict; company products (e.g. computers, telephones, aeroplane fuel) are not used to wage war in ways that violate international law; company assets (e.g. vehicles, helicopters) or infrastructure (e.g. buildings, airstrips) are not used by conflict actors; and corporate presence does not serve to legitimise conflict actors or governments accused of violations of international law (Zandvliet 2011).

Infrastructure development

Private investment in infrastructure in conflict and fragile contexts is often closely linked to investment in extractive industries, particularly investment in transport (road, rail, pipelines) and power supply to enable the exploitation of resources. Jones and Howarth (2012) find that although there is little evidence on the specific role of infrastructure development in extractive industries contributing to conflict and fragility, there are incidences that demonstrate such a link. Infrastructure projects, such as major roads, bridges, dams and other energy generating projects, water and sanitation projects – whether connected to extractive industries or not - can inadvertently cause conflict and/or exacerbate pre-existing divisions and tensions among competing groups (Mitra et al. 2014; Ballentine and Haufler 2009; International Alert 2006). This may be the case if:

- **Infrastructure development produces unmet expectations:** poorly designed or implemented programmes may raise expectations that are subsequently disappointed (Mitra et al. 2014; Jones and Howarth 2012). In Afghanistan, for example, farmers had unrealistic expectations that infrastructure projects would improve water supply in the short term, rather than being limited to protection (Jones and Howarth 2012). Expectations need to be managed well and should be adjusted to reflect the reality on the ground (USIP 2008).
- **Infrastructure projects involve competitive contracting processes:** competition over contracts and new resources for reconstruction can become intense and violent (Jones and Howarth 2012). In Nepal, for example, local government tendering processes resulted in violence between opposing groups, with some groups colluding to prevent competitors from submitting bidding documents.
- **The process creates beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries:** there is a risk of elite capture of infrastructure projects that results, for example, in the selection of road alignments or water supply points that benefit certain groups (Jones and Howarth 2012). Major infrastructure projects can reinforce an inequitable allocation of resources, such as granting vital road access to markets to the dominant community. The contracting process itself is often mismanaged in ways that benefit the few at the expense of the many (Ballentine and Haufler 2009).
- **The process bypasses local systems and local participation:** in conflict-affected and fragile environments, it is often tempting to opt for more rapid progress by focusing on external input and bypassing local participation to avoid local controversy; or relying on financial management by external partners and bypassing local systems to reduce corruption. Such short-term solutions can undermine broader statebuilding and peacebuilding processes, in addition to weakening local ownership and sustainability of infrastructure (Jones and Howarth 2012).

Incorporating conflict sensitivity into the private sector entails: ‘a way of doing business that will prevent foreign investors and domestic businesses alike from causing harm and will instead strengthen their ability to build and consolidate peace’ (Hoffman 2014). Understanding the tensions that existed prior to the arrival of the company at local and national levels, and anticipating how the project might impact on them is fundamental to conflict sensitive business practice (International Alert and Engineers Against Poverty 2006). Conflict sensitive business practice can also refer to positive efforts to contribute actively to peacebuilding and sustainable development.

Many peacebuilding and development actors view the private sector as a positive force in conflict-affected and fragile contexts. Private sector investments can facilitate employment growth, skills development, and a more inclusive economy, all of which have the potential to reduce socio-political tensions and contribute

to stability and peace. The New Deal identifies the generation of employment and the improvement of livelihoods as one of five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals, which underscores the important role of private sector actors in a formal peacebuilding and development framework (Wennmann 2012). There are various other **ways in which businesses can contribute to peacebuilding**. These include:

- **Conflict mediation:** businesses could act as facilitators between conflict parties if they are perceived to be neutral, provide good offices and information, and act as a pro-peace constituency (Wennmann 2012).
- **Ensuring local benefits:** companies can aim to ensure that they benefit the local economy and local actors. For example, they could develop local content policies that specify which types of contracts and jobs could be awarded to local people, finance micro-credit programmes that support economic diversification activities, or contribute to training communities in basic business development skills (Zandvliet 2011).
- **Workshops and training on peaceful coexistence, community cohesion and good governance:** in order to counteract the potential for corporate activities and new revenues to exacerbate divisions, companies have provided leadership training and conflict transformation workshops (Zandvliet 2011). Companies in Kenya conducted employee seminars in order to foster harmony among employees, amidst fears that there could be tensions among their ethnically diverse staff (Ouwor and Wiser 2014).

Infrastructure development

Economic and social infrastructure is integral to inclusive growth, employment and access to services. It can play a direct role in addressing the drivers of conflict and fragility. In particular, **infrastructure development can contribute to peacebuilding** through (see Jones and Howarth 2012):

- **Collaboration and collective action:** collaboration over infrastructure planning and implementation, with the view that all may benefit from such projects, can help to restore confidence in collective action, cooperation and non-violent means of conflict resolution. Jones and Howarth (2012) advocate for community-based models for local infrastructure development that build on local traditions for collective decision making.
- **Employment generation:** employment can be created through the construction of infrastructure assets, their maintenance, and from the improved environment for economic activity that such infrastructure creates.
- **Internal connectivity and nation-building:** transport and communications infrastructure that improves internal connectivity can integrate marginalised regions into broader social and economic frameworks and improve perceptions of the nation.
- **Improvements in security and justice:** infrastructure investment geared specifically toward certain sectors such as security and justice (e.g. courts, police stations) may be part of a broader peacebuilding strategy.
- **Gender rights:** improved access to water can result in significant time savings for women and children, freeing up time for educational and income opportunities.

USIP (2008) emphasises, however, that **infrastructure alone cannot bring about stability**. It is essential that actors involved in infrastructure development planning processes view infrastructure as solely a

means of achieving larger goals, such as rule of law, security, sustainable economy and governance – all of which require much more comprehensive policies, strategies and programming. More generally, Hoffmann (2014) cautions that enthusiasm over the potential of the private sector to contribute to peacebuilding is not based on a strong evidence base. Governments must continue to have primary responsibility for peace.

What's in it for businesses?

Violent conflict can impose a wide range of costs on businesses. These could include security costs (payments to private security firms), material costs (destruction of property and infrastructure) and opportunity costs (disruption of production). A conflict sensitive approach to business, according to International Alert (2007) is thus a strategic choice for company managers as it helps to avoid such costs by developing informed conflict-management strategies. More specifically, the **benefits to the private sector** of adopting a conflict sensitive approach include (see Mitra et al. 2014):

- **Better risk management:** conflict sensitivity enables companies to anticipate threats and identify strategies for avoiding or addressing them. By understanding the full range of project risks and impacts, companies are better equipped to mitigate risks arising from local grievances.
- **Lower operational costs:** conflict sensitivity helps companies to avoid operational costs arising from delays and disruptions from protests, and minimize staff time required to address local conflicts.
- **Reputation, credibility and social good will:** conflict sensitivity enhances company reputation through the provision of social and environment benefits in addition to economic benefits. It also prevents poor public relations events or situations.
- **Positive and constructive stakeholder engagement:** conflict sensitivity can help better manage company relationships with local communities. Consistent, meaningful stakeholder engagement helps to identify real and perceived community concerns and resolve disputes before they escalate.

7. Key issues in conflict sensitive private sector interventions and infrastructure development

There are various factors that must be taken into account when designing, planning and implementing conflict sensitive private sector policies, programmes, activities and approaches, including those concerning infrastructure development. Key issues include:

Inclusiveness: beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries

A conflict sensitive approach to business practice and infrastructure development must also consider non-beneficiaries (e.g. those who do not benefit directly from a particular new water system; or do not get compensation for the inconvenience of a business activity), particularly when a project is specifically designed to improve a certain area or creates particular opportunities, such as employment. Businesses need to ensure that there is a shared interest and common agenda between communities. In many cases, companies implement policies and practices that favour host or neighbouring communities over groups that live further away from corporate plants and offices. Such an approach can inadvertently create haves

and have-nots, which can result in tensions and violence between the different communities and between the company and groups that do not benefit.

In Nepal, a water and sanitation project aimed to improve water provision in twenty small towns initially consulted only town-based beneficiaries and not rural communities, from where water was to be diverted for the project. This resulted in grievances among the rural communities and protests that delayed the project (Mitra et al. 2014). In the case of one of Shell Nigeria's pipeline projects, an agreement was negotiated that benefited not only the most apparent and nearby communities that would be affected but communities situated geographically further. The communities that would have received the majority of the compensation acknowledged the risk of conflict if other communities were left out (Zandvliet 2011).

Community-company consultations

Consultation between companies and local communities is considered integral to a conflict sensitive approach to business practice. In the absence of consultations between companies and local communities, it is difficult for companies to be aware of and understand – and to be able to address – community needs, fears and expectations, and possible flashpoints that could result in violence. The creation of safe spaces for dialogue and dispute resolution is important to both companies and communities (Mitra et al. 2014; Wennmann 2012). Jones and Howarth (2012) stress that community engagement is of central importance for successful infrastructure programmes, and should comprise an important part of programme design and implementation.

Conflict-sensitive initiatives should draw on such consultations and stakeholder engagement to build relationships, identify community perceptions and local concerns, and find way to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable (Jones and Howarth 2012; International Alert 2006). Key aspects of such consultations would also be to ensure appropriate levels of transparency and accountability, clear communication and effective management of expectations (Mitra et al. 2014). CDA (2011) reinforce the importance of transparency and accountability. In their guidance on facilitating **conflict sensitive local community partnerships with the private sector**, they highlight the following as four key principles for corporate engagement:

- **Accountability** beyond legal and contractual obligations: for local communities, accountability goes beyond companies bearing responsibility for offsetting the negative outcomes of their presence and activities to ensuring that the community is 'better off'. This could be through employment opportunities and training programmes that provide economic benefits to the community.
- **Respect** for local communities: this involves engaging communities in genuine, open and ongoing dialogue and as decision-makers in the process of designing and planning projects to meet local needs and perspectives. In Indonesia, for example, a bridge that was built by an extractives company without community input was disliked and seen as the 'company's bridge', rather than a community bridge.
- **Fairness**, based on local definitions: companies should ensure that local views on equitable distribution of economic benefits from company activities are adopted. For example, hiring based on merit may not be perceived as equitable if this has historically favoured a particular group.
- **Transparency**: communicating full information about plans for and impacts of private sector activities allows for communities to make informed choices. In addition, it prevents suspicions of corruption and unfairness.

Addressing the needs of the socially excluded and vulnerable groups

Jones and Howarth (2012) find little evidence of whether the needs of women and other vulnerable groups have been effectively considered and met in infrastructure programmes. The key consideration here is employment opportunities. The Rural Access Programme in Nepal, which aims to provide road access to unserved areas in parts of Nepal, was redesigned to place greater emphasis on the participation of the poor and socially excluded, particularly through access to employment opportunities. An assessment from 2012 found that the engagement of community youth in the programme discouraged the normally unemployed youth from joining rebel groups. In addition, the provision of equal pay to women for equal work improved their economic and social position (Jones and Howarth 2012).

Private sector partnerships

Literature on promising private sector practices and anecdotal evidence suggests that companies alone cannot avoid harm, reduce or prevent violence, and build peace in conflict-affected and fragile contexts (Hoffman 2014; Wennmann 2012). Rather **tripartite partnerships are required with government and civil society/communities**. Some companies may use their leverage to encourage governments to take part in such partnerships. The aim is to use government revenues for social services or infrastructure projects that otherwise could be used to fuel conflict. Each party contributes to the partnership in order to implement a programme. To build a road, for example, communities could provide labour, the government could provide materials and the company could provide equipment. This approach helps to reduce local dependency on companies and may improve government legitimacy in the eyes of local communities, which could have been a factor in the conflict (Zandvliet 2011).

Ballentine & Haufler (2009) find that a key political challenge is clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of public and private actors in areas of conflict. There is currently little guidance that provides a clear demarcation of responsibility. Bray & Crockett (2012) assert that governments are responsible for providing an enabling environment for companies to operate responsibly and successfully. In some cases, however, governments may lack the necessary resources or skills or be unwilling to take on such responsibility. In the absence of stable governance, it can be challenging for businesses to adopt conflict sensitive practices. Further, it cannot be left to businesses to tackle challenging issues such as corruption or non-transparency in government practices.

The international public sector has an important role to play in this regard, establishing international norms against corruption, international guidelines for conflict sensitivity in the private sector, and global standards for business operations. They also play an important role in providing assistance to governments that lack capacity to govern effectively (Ballentine & Haufler 2009). Hoffman (2014) points out, however, that it has been difficult getting governments from conflict-affected and fragile states involved in the process of setting up such guidelines and standards and their participation remains limited. On the other hand, the involvement of companies in these processes has increased. This comprises **another form of private sector partnerships – between business and the international development and peace community**. The international development community and policy makers need to systematically engage with the private sector in order to jointly build a sound business case for conflict sensitivity, to gather data and engage in assessments, and to supplement existing guidelines with practical support and tangible opportunities for cross-sector collaboration (Hoffmann 2014; Wennmann 2012).

Two important factors to public-private partnerships are:

- **Transparency:** public-private partnerships must be organised in a transparent and accountable manner to ensure that they do not risk undermining the legitimacy of government or the programmes developed through the partnership. Programmes must also be designed in a way that clearly acknowledges the different goals, roles and responsibilities of public and private actors (Ballentine & Haufler 2009).
- **Inclusiveness:** in order to effectively achieve conflict sensitivity in the private sector, all relevant actors need to be involved. Bray (2009) notes that small and medium sized enterprises are often under-represented in political dialogues on governance and economic reforms. This may be due to their limited political clout and poor organisation of associations that represent them.

Sustainability

Conflict-sensitive approaches to infrastructure development must take into consideration the maintenance and sustainability of the systems and structures that are created. While road and other transport infrastructure construction and maintenance can generate short-term employment and economic opportunities, sustainability requires institutional strengthening and effective community engagement. This is also true for water infrastructure for agricultural development (Jones and Howarth 2012). In addition, the impact of the construction of social infrastructure (schools and health facilities) and security-sector infrastructure, for example, is highly dependent on adequate services provided in the new facility. This also requires institutional strengthening and training of local staff to provide the services. It can take several decades to develop the institutional capacity required to ensure appropriate operations and maintenance and to ensure an equitable distribution of services (USIP 2008).

USIP (2008) emphasises the importance of conducting assessments that take into consideration existing local systems that were put in place to provide essential services that the national government was either unable or unwilling to provide. In some cases, it may be beneficial to rehabilitate and strengthen the pre-existing system rather than building new infrastructure from scratch. In Iraq, for example, there was a network of community and neighbourhood electricity generators that could have been rehabilitated rather than rebuilding the electrical grid (USIP 2008). Planners need to consider carefully the various options available and to be careful not to create future dependencies that could make conflict-affected and fragile states vulnerable, such as high energy prices (Jones and Howarth 2012).

8. Approaches and tools: how to incorporate conflict sensitivity in the private sector and infrastructure development

In conflict-affected and fragile countries, it is not sufficient for companies to engage in standard impact assessments (political risk, environmental and social impact assessments). Such standard assessments fail to identify the many and complex ways in which a project can impact on the local context and vice versa (Mitra et al. 2014). Companies must also conduct conflict analysis and implement conflict sensitivity approaches and tools.

As noted, the Do No Harm framework has been applied beyond the aid sector to the private sector. PCIA would also be a relevant framework. Other guidance and tools have been designed specifically for the private sector. These are profiled below.

Conflict sensitive business practice (CSBP) – International Alert

International Alert has been a pioneer in developing conflict sensitivity guidance specifically tailored to the private sector. **Conflict sensitive business practice** enables companies to anticipate, monitor and assess the interaction of business operations with local tensions and drivers of conflict; and to carry out their business activities in a way that does not exacerbate conflict and promotes peace (International Alert 2005). It **extends beyond compliance** with host country laws and regulation to proactive and responsive efforts to ensure that company investments and operations do not contribute to violence, corruption, criminality or human rights violations. A conflict-sensitive approach should be an extension of a company's existing risk analysis processes, rather than an additional process. The key elements of such an approach can be summarized as follows (see Mitra et al. 2014 and International Alert and Engineers Against Poverty 2006):

- **Compliance:** projects should at a minimum comply with national and international laws and regulations. Not complying with applicable laws and regulations can not only undermine stability in a country, but also lead to immediate legal risk for companies. Compliance programmes, risk management and training of employees involve proactive risk identification and can help reduce compliance violation and legal costs.
- **Do No Harm:** even with full compliance, business practices can unintentionally do harm. Awareness and assessment of risks and impacts of business operations on local communities, through conflict risk and impact assessment tools, can help ensure activities do not fuel tensions or violence.
- **Peacebuilding:** companies can also proactively contribute towards ensuring a more stable operating environment by improving service delivery and promoting equity, community voice and stakeholder participation in decisions that will affect them. A peacebuilding approach is guided by the following key principles:
 - Communication: open channels of communication to help tackle contentious issues constructively
 - Local relationships: beneficiaries of infrastructure projects have a legitimate interest in investments
 - Cost and benefit sharing for sustainability: contractors and beneficiaries have a stake in the process and outcome of the project

Conflict-sensitive business practice: guidance for extractive industries (International Alert 2005)

<http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/publications/conflict-sensitive-business-practice-guidance-extractive-industries>

Conflict sensitive business practice (CSBP) enables companies to anticipate, monitor and assess the interaction of business operations with local tensions and drivers of conflict; and to carry out their business activities in a way that does not exacerbate conflict and promotes peace. CSBP is designed to accompany the entire life-cycle of a project. Companies should adopt a conflict-sensitive approach from the pre-investment phase, allowing for early analysis of conflict risk factors. It is also possible to adopt a 'catch-up' approach for projects that are already underway. CSBP should be constantly updated to reflect changes in the context and in local dynamics as the project develops. New contractors should immediately be brought

in existing CSBP-related processes. Meaningful and transparent stakeholder engagement is at the core of CSBP.

Although International Alert initially established their guidance for extractive industries, it is developed as a generic set of guidance that companies can adapt to fit their specific context. The guidance comprises of:

- **Operational Guidance Charts:** provide a brief overview of possible company/conflict issues that can arise at the different stages of oil, gas and mining projects at both macro and project levels.
- **Screening Tool:** allows for rapid assessment to identify key conflict issues early in the pre-investment phase. It provides an initial analysis of the country and its conflict dynamics, flags key issues of concern and identifies the level of risk, as well as potential 'showstoppers' (difficulties of operating within business principles on human rights, corruption and environment issues, or within international law). If a high conflict risk is identified, the tool helps to determine if there is a way in which to operate that is unlikely to exacerbate conflict.
- **Macro-level Conflict Risk and Impact Assessment tool (M-CRIA):** involves an expert-led national and regional level context analysis. This provides a deeper understanding of conflict risk issues. It further explores issues of concern raised in the screening and identifies potential interactions of the project with these issues. M-CRIA involves engaging with key stakeholders at the national level to deepen understanding, start building relationships and identify potential partners for future conflict risk mitigation initiatives.
- **Project-level Conflict Risk and Impact Assessment tool (P-CRIA):** analysis of the potential interactions between the project and its context to a deeper level. This tool helps companies to build trusting relationships and design shared actions that prevent conflict and build peace through processes for participatory analysis and decision-making with stakeholders.

Other NGO approaches and tools

Preventing conflict in exploration: a toolkit for explorers and developers (Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, World Vision Canada, & CDA)

<http://www.pdac.ca/docs/default-source/e3-plus---common/2012-news-toolkit-english.pdf?sfvrsn=6>

This tool consists of five steps, each with a set of interrelated guidance questions:

- Step 1 – Analyse and understand the operating context: this involves mapping key stakeholders in the context and understanding causes and drivers of conflict. Information should be gained through analysis and dialogue.
- Step 2 – Understand aspects of the exploration project that effect local communities: this involves defining company objectives, resources, and exploration project time frame and phase; and identifying key activities that impact the community both positively and negatively.
- Step 3 – Understand how the interaction between the context and company activities creates sources of risk and opportunity.
- Step 4 – Assess and prioritise risk and opportunities for company operations and the local community.

- Step 5 – Develop options and approaches for mitigating risks and optimising constructive stakeholder engagement opportunities. This includes engaging company staff and key local stakeholders to jointly track effectiveness of risk mitigation strategies.

Analysis should be conducted on a regular basis, starting early in exploration and frequently as the relationships between exploration companies and communities are dynamic. Once a company changes its practices, it changes the context itself – requiring additional context analysis.

The tool outlines the following principles as key to successful stakeholder engagement:

- Respect
- Honesty
- Inclusion
- Transparency
- Communication

It also emphasises that communities are diverse and change with time. Consultation should be with a broad range of national, regional and local actors, using a wide range of venues.

Do No Harm: Designing and implementing conflict sensitive land programmes (CDA Collaborative learning projects 2013)

<http://www.cdacollaborative.org/media/92483/dnh-in-land-tenure-and-property-rights-final.pdf>

This tool outlines the process for a DNH analysis as it relates to interventions in the land sector in order to help actors understand the impacts of their programmes and adjust them to suit the context. It can help NGOs, agencies, governments and land tenure and property rights professionals assess the unique and changing legal, economic, cultural and political conditions in a region and country – and to design appropriate interventions based on the assessment.

Infrastructure development

Infrastructure projects are generally approached from an engineering perspective. While engineering concerns such as efficiency are important, they should be secondary considerations in a conflict sensitive approach (USIP 2008).

Conflict-sensitive approach to infrastructure development (U.S. Institute of Peace 2008)

<http://www.usip.org/publications/conflict-sensitive-approachinfrastructure-development>

A conflict-sensitive approach to infrastructure development begins with viewing the five key phases of program development through the lens of conflict analysis. This allows for infrastructure programmes to be designed to reduce drivers of conflict and support the peace process. The model is based on the five life-cycle phases of an infrastructure project:

1. **Assessment:** Analysis should address key issues such as identification of who controls infrastructure and what motivates these stakeholders. Assessments need to be ongoing through the life of the project and address the following issues in the host nation:
 - The role infrastructure plays in perpetuating or mitigating host nation conflict
 - Cultural traditions and practices that might impact infrastructure design and use

- Identification of who controls infrastructure and what motivates these stakeholders
 - Identification of possible incentives for powerful stakeholders, such as cooperation, co-optation, or confrontation
 - Illicit power structures and their impact on infrastructure
 - Capacity of the host nation to sustain infrastructure
 - Host-nation-appropriate technology and local systems
 - Regional infrastructure arrangements with neighbouring countries
2. **Strategy, planning, and coordination:** this phase requires identifying the agencies, private companies and organisations that have the capacity to engage in specific tasks relevant to reconstruction needs. Bringing everyone together in planning allows for effective joint efforts.
 3. **Building host nation legitimacy:** this requires a fully integrated and resourced capacity development plan within the host nation at the following levels - policy, laws and regulations, inter-organizational, host nation government, and infrastructure. It is important to recognize that building legitimacy is a long-term endeavour requiring capacity development at all levels of the host nation government.
 4. **Project execution:** simplified contracting and small, community-driven infrastructure projects implemented by local firms are considered preferable to large-scale projects. It is also important to link short-term initiatives to long-term development strategy.
 5. **Transition of completed projects to host nation control:** transitioning an infrastructure program from one lead donor agency to another or to the host nation is a challenging process. The security environment, progress on indigenous institutional capacity, and the public's perception of essential services all impact the transition process. It is important to develop processes to deal with 'spoilers' and an effective communications strategy to manage public's expectations.

Donor approaches and tools

Conflict sensitive approaches to value chain development (USAID 2008)

[http://www.international-](http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/C_s_approaches_to_value_chain_devel.pdf)

[alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/C_s_approaches_to_value_chain_devel.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/C_s_approaches_to_value_chain_devel.pdf)

This paper uses a value chain framework as a starting point and explores how a conflict sensitive approach can be applied to the analysis both of different levels and the various components of the chain. It covers three aspects of conflict sensitivity as they relate to value chain analysis:

- Conflict analysis
- Identifying value chain/conflict interactions
- Options for project design and implementation based on the analysis above

For each value chain component (e.g. local end markets, business enabling environments), the study outlines questions to help practitioners analyse the links between conflict dynamics and a given value chain to ensure that interventions minimize negative impacts and maximize those that are positive.

Public policy-private sector approaches and tools

Codes of conduct have become a common feature of the corporate social responsibility agenda, incorporating aspects such as positive community relations and environmental protection. While many of these codes remain mostly aspirational benchmarks, some companies have committed resources and personnel to match them with meaningful implementation (IISD 2006). Other forms of voluntary company self-regulation are multi-stakeholder initiatives, which require active public policy engagement. Such initiatives include: the *Kimberley Process for International Trade in Rough Diamonds*, the *Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights*, the *UN Global Compact's Dialogue on Private Sector Actors in Conflict Zones*, and the *Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative*. The UN's Global Compact initiative, for example, has played an important role in providing guidance on the principles of conflict risk assessment and in promoting public-private policy engagement on how to promote responsible business in conflict-affected areas (Bray 2009). These initiatives have sensitised companies to the need to engage in conflict and political economy analyses and the awareness that their activities can influence conflict dynamics (Ballentine & Haufler 2009).

Voluntary initiatives suffer from various weaknesses, however. These include: their partial, self-selective nature; lack of uniformity in terms of company codes; and lack of transparent reporting or monitoring mechanisms. All of this undermines the widespread adoption of conflict sensitive approaches and practices and the ability of such initiatives to have a cumulative and sustainable impact (Ballentine & Haufler 2009; IISD 2006). Ballentine & Haufler (2009) advocate for more concerted public policy and regulatory support, including public incentives for the adoption of conflict sensitive business practices and common international standards. The IISD (2006) also recommends the use of other tools, particularly mandatory regulation (involving common authoritative and legally enforceable rules, with rigorous sanctions for failure to comply) and market inducement (rewarding good business practice with economic benefits).

See Table 2 and the Appendix in Ballentine & Haufler (2009) for an overview of relevant voluntary initiatives and regulatory instruments.

9. Challenges to achieving conflict sensitivity

There is widespread agreement among aid actors about the importance of conflict sensitivity. However, there are still various factors that have undermined the successful operationalisation of conflict sensitivity, including conflict sensitive education. These include:

Incentives/disincentives

Funding and timing: pressures faced by implementing organisations to spend large amounts of donor money quickly can result in failure to adopt time-consuming conflict sensitivity approaches (CDA 2009). In his research on PCIA in Pakistan, Ahmed (2011) finds that in most cases, agencies opted for a hurried approach (based on decisions at headquarters). Development projects were implemented without a prior conflict analysis and the PCIA exercise was then partially performed after the fact to determine the projects' impacts on local peace and conflict dynamics. He argues, however, that once a project is implemented without a conflict analysis, the benefits of the PCIA approach are significantly undermined.

There are many competing priorities when working in the education sector in conflict-affected and fragile contexts and many countries find it difficult to prioritise peacebuilding among competing demands (UNICEF 2013). Often civic education and life skills programmes, for example, are considered to be of lower status

than other curriculum areas. Even where there is consensus to address the drivers of conflict, it is challenging to decide which issues to priorities e.g. addressing geographical educational inequalities or youth unemployment and skills (UNICEF 2011b).

Conflict sensitivity processes impose additional costs on companies in the short run and can be seen as a luxury add-on to a project that reduces the competitiveness of a bid or the initial profitability of a venture. A conflict sensitive approach can, however, reduce costs in the mid- to long-term related for example to project delays, security costs and compensation to communities (Mitra et al. 2014). It may be beneficial for the public sector to provide incentives for more widespread adoption of conflict sensitive practices by companies and adherence to international standards and frameworks. Incentives could help to counter the problem of economic competition that undermines the willingness to adopt conflict sensitive approaches (Ballentine & Haufler 2009).

Lack of accountability: if organisations are not held to account for failure to incorporate conflict sensitivity approaches or for the negative impacts their programming may have, they may have little or no motivation to engage in conflict sensitivity. CDA (2009) finds that donors rarely monitor for the use of 'do no harm' by implementing agencies beyond the funding phase and thus have little knowledge of whether it is actually adopted. Further, donor policies rarely provide any consequences for failing to engage in conflict sensitive programming or penalize activities that actually caused harm (Woodrow and Chigas 2009). At the community level, there are also no mechanisms for recipients of international assistance to hold organisations accountable for the negative impacts of projects on local people (CDA 2009).

Analytical issues and integrating findings into programming

Difficulties in gathering information, due to complex conflict environments and intensive demands on time and resources, can undermine the ability to conduct effective conflict analysis and assessments (Bornstein 2010). In the education sector, the practical feasibility of gathering the necessary educational data is an important consideration. A complete overhaul of national data collection processes and of the education management and information system can be a very costly and slow process (Sigsgaard 2012).

Further, a key challenge for agencies, generally and in relation to conflict sensitivity, is how to ensure that all information gathered and analyses conducted are made useable, presented in a 'user-friendly' way, and disseminated rapidly to those who can act on it to inform, design and monitor programming. Lange (2006) recommends experimenting more with web-based information management systems. Progress in integrating findings into programme design, implementation and monitoring also depends on commitment from decision-makers and formal mechanisms that link analysis and assessments to an overarching planning cycle (Bush 2009).

Inconsistent application of conflict sensitivity...

...at the policy and organisational level

The majority of learning about conflict sensitive practice has been at the programme level, with little attention given to the policy level (Woodrow and Chigas 2009). In order for conflict sensitivity to be applied consistently, it should be embedded in an agency's policies and operational agenda.

In companies, a key challenge is ensuring that conflict sensitivity is understood and fully applied by operations managers and not just by corporate social responsibility specialists. It is also important that conflict sensitivity is applied not only by larger Western companies but also by small and medium sized

companies from all parts of the world and by local entrepreneurs (Bray 2009). It also needs to be applied to all firms along the value chain, extending to suppliers (Forrer et al. 2012).

...throughout the project life cycle

Conflict sensitive approaches are most effective when applied consistently and holistically throughout the project life cycle – from analysis and design to evaluation. The widespread focus on developing conflict analysis frameworks has resulted in a relative neglect of practical guidance on how to operationalise the findings (Woodrow and Chigas 2009). The 'do no harm' project finds that where agencies conduct analysis, this is often relied on solely for initial programme design, with no monitoring of impacts and unintended consequences of the programme once implemented and follow-on programme adjustments (Woodrow and Chigas 2009). New education curriculums may be designed to be conflict sensitive. However, such interventions will not be conflict sensitive in implementation if teachers continue to use outdated conflict insensitive curriculum and resist changing their traditional teaching methods (UNICEF 2013; IIEP-UNESCO 2013). In terms of companies, Zandvliet (2011) finds that most companies focus on opportunities to transform conflict only at one phase rather than throughout the project cycle. Outside groups could assist companies in becoming more strategic and implementing conflict sensitivity throughout the whole cycle.

...at the inter-agency and inter-sectoral level

Even if organisations adopt conflict sensitivity in their internal processes, policies, funds and structures, the lack of an enabling external environment can adversely affect its operationalisation (Lange 2006). Lack of coordination among actors operating in the same space, including national governments, donors, local partners and NGOs, can result in unintentionally undermining the work of others. UNICEF (2013) emphasises that in order for education services to be conflict sensitive, there needs to be sustained commitment on behalf of country-level governments, donor partners and civil society. There also needs to be collaboration between those working in the social services sectors, such as education, and those in the peacebuilding community. However, the peacebuilding community is not always open to inputs from the services sectors and education practitioners may not be prepared to consider the possibilities that come with viewing education as an enable of peace. There needs to be multiple interactions over time to build an understanding and commitment to linking education and peace and developing sustainable approaches and interventions (UNICEF 2013).

Much literature on business and conflict emphasises insufficient communication, coordination and cooperation among key actors. Zandvliet (2011) states that at best, stakeholders work in isolation; and at worst, they create conflict among themselves. Companies that fail to adopt conflict sensitivity undermine the work of those that do. In addition, host governments that are unconcerned or unable to address issues of corruption, criminality and conflict fail to create an enabling environment for conflict-sensitive business practices (Ballentine & Haufler 2009). Similar to the lack of collaboration between the education and peacebuilding communities, there needs to be greater efforts to develop mutual interests among those working in conflict transformation and those in the business community (Zandvliet 2011).

Political dimensions

Conflict analyses are political exercises that reflect often contentious determinations of the causes of conflict and interpretation of history (Izzi and Kurz 2009). Ongoing assessments and evaluation in conflict sensitivity processes are also political exercises. There may be pressure to minimise or exclude controversial issues in order to make findings acceptable to a larger set of actors and thus useable. Izzi and Kurz (2009) argue that if the quality of analysis is compromised to a large extent, it may not be better than

no analyses at all. Assessments of the education sector in relation to conflict and fragility can be controversial as they often include a critical analysis of the political ideology driving the educational system and other sensitivities. Analyses can be critical of government and other key stakeholders and there is in some countries a reported hesitancy among government officials to talk about conflict sensitive issues. This can delay efforts to promote conflict sensitive education, for example, in Ethiopia where such hesitancy delayed the government's decision to join UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy programme. It is important to find ways in which to engage governments that meet their sensitivities, for example, using alternative language to conflict and peacebuilding such as an emphasis on resilience (UNICEF 2013; UNICEF 2011a). Citizenship education can also seem threatening when it is aimed at dealing with ethnic or religious tensions. Strategies and programmes are more likely to be sustainable if they are based on broad dialogue and buy-in from diverse groups in society (Sigsgaard 2012).

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