



Peacebuilding Centre

... Promoting People, Peacebuilding & Transformation

EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE: *Diagnosing Root Causes of Conflict*

It is a sad fact that violent conflict affects many countries, and that there is an irrefutable link between conflict, peace and development. Countries affected by war suffer from greater poverty, malnutrition, and underdevelopment. It is broadly recognised that stability and peace are prerequisites for poverty alleviation and a successful development process - and that sustainable development, when successfully pursued, reinforces human security, stability, and peace.

Years of investment in development projects have been destroyed because of violent conflict, and decades of development gains can be wiped out by one civil war. Many developing countries are fragile though they may not be experiencing violent conflict, and the engagement of outside actors, even in seemingly-unrelated sectors, is likely to have a significant impact on the way that a country's political, social, and economic tensions evolve or are resolved.

The international community, civil society, international Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), and donors have been engaging in conflict, peace and development issues for many years. In addition, the private sector (SMEs and corporations) faces the challenges of running businesses in insecure environments.

Until recently, conflict and peace issues had been considered primarily the domain for political, diplomatic, or military actors. In 1997, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development (www.oecd.org/dac/conflict) issued Guidelines that clearly placed peacebuilding on the development agenda. These Guidelines were supplemented in 2001 and outlined the need to build more capacity

"upstream" in conflict prevention and conflict-sensitive development, and advocated greater mainstreaming of these capacities in the civilian sector including civil society and the private sector (business and corporations).

Subsequent deliberations of the Task Force have generated policies and guidelines (2005) in the security sector primarily around building civilian capacity to engage in security sector governance, small arms reduction, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants, etc.

The principal message emerging from this new international consensus is that without peace there can be no-sustainable development, and without sustainable socio-economic development, there can be no sustainable peace. This cannot be achieved without being sensitive to the tensions that divide communities.

The result is that considerable efforts have been made to document lessons learned and good practice in engaging with fragile states, particularly in activities that had previously not been handled by the civilian sector. It is relatively straightforward to assemble good practice and "learn" how to act in a conflict-sensitive way, but it takes professional facilitators with directly relevant field and operational experience to assist in building this capacity in institutions.

IN, ON OR AROUND CONFLICT

Peacebuilding refers to all activities, whether before, during or after conflict, that deal directly with conflict and peace issues. While peacebuilding may be initiated at any point during a conflict cycle, it is much less costly in both human and financial terms if it is done early.

An institution needs to decide whether to improve its skills in working IN or ON conflict as opposed to AROUND it. There are many models and tools available to identify countries "at risk" of failure that can assist in determining whether special care needs to be taken for engagement in these communities.

Early Warning-Early Response

For those who wish to work **ON** conflict and directly address the root causes of community tensions, there are methodologies to guide participants through an assessment of early warning indicators leading to a consideration of options for action, and strategic decision-making.

The Early Warning-Early Response Framework provides a conflict diagnostic methodology that has been developed in concert with NGOs, donors, and multilateral agencies of the Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction (CPR) Network of peacebuilding donors. **The Early Warning Workshop** is a specialized course aimed at preparing participants to do Early Warning - Early Response analysis and design. It is designed for individuals who want to work **ON** fragile states as opposed to **AROUND** them.

Objectives - The workshop focuses on developing core competencies necessary to be an effective conflict/peace analyst. It provides participants with a comprehensive understanding of Early Warning-Early Response conflict diagnostic approaches. Participants will broaden their understanding of conflict and peace dynamics, and the linkages between conflict analysis, early warning, and strategic responses. They will be able to assess the root causes of conflict, and make strategic choices for programming.

Participants - Participants will usually be senior level managers, or project planners from government, civil society, and multilateral agencies dealing with peacebuilding and conflict management - whether in headquarters or in the field. The workshop may also be used as a consensus-building process with local partners in the field.

Methodology - **The Early Warning Workshop** takes a dynamic, participatory approach. It makes extensive use of good practice and lessons learned from the field. The focus of the workshop is on developing practical skills for conducting conflict-peace diagnostics and early warning analysis. Presentations, case studies, group work, and exercises are used to give participants the opportunity for an in-depth review of the subject matter. The multidisciplinary composition of the groups encourages a wide range of viewpoints and experiences relating to the topic.

Elements/Concepts

- Causes of Conflict Theories
- Peacebuilding: Policy and Practice
- Comparative Approaches to Conflict Analysis
- Characteristics of Fragile States
- Conflict Analysis and Strategic Planning Frameworks
- Conflict, Peace and Stakeholder Analysis
- Scenario-Building and Objective-Setting
- Conflict Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation
- Response Design and Mobilisation
- Sector specific topics on governance and rule of law, security sector governance, gender, business and peacebuilding, media, war affected children

Facilitators - The workshop facilitators are international subject-matter experts who are recognized in their fields. The President of the Peacebuilding Centre, Susan Brown, currently delivers workshops for the EU REACT (Rapid Expert Assistance and Cooperation Teams) program which prepares civilians for deployment to UN operations, works in Africa on conflict-sensitive business practice, teaches at Royal Roads University (Canada) Masters Program in Human Security and Peacebuilding, and Wilfrid Laurier University (Canada), in the Political Science Department. She is formerly the:

- Director, Peacebuilding Programs, Pearson Peacekeeping Centre
- Chief of the Peacebuilding Unit, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- Canadian Representative to the OECD/DAC Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development
- Member of the Advisory Council, Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), Stockholm, Sweden
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