



Peacebuilding Centre

... Promoting People, Peacebuilding & Transformation

PEACE AND CONFLICT IMPACT ASSESSMENT (PCIA): *Conflict Sensitive Programming in Fragile States*

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. The 1990s saw a rise in protracted intrastate conflicts, or civil wars fuelled by ethnic tensions, religious rivalries, and socio-economic deprivation.

These conflicts cause enormous human hardship as well as social, economic, and political disruptions. 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 OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) has identified an irrefutable link between conflict and underdevelopment, and their *Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development*, (May 1997), clearly demonstrate that sustainable development cannot be achieved without being sensitive to the tensions that divide communities. The DAC *Guidelines* (www.oecd.org/dac/conflict) also advocate that efforts should be made to 'mainstream' conflict-sensitive skills throughout development programs and other institutions, particularly in fragile states, and this course is a response to that recommendation.

Development programs traditionally focus on sectors like agriculture, education, energy, governance, health, transportation, etc. It is important, however, to ensure that engagement of outside actors is conflict-sensitive so that programs are consciously designed to work **IN** conflict and not **AROUND** it. The influence of aid in fragile states can be significant - it can exacerbate community tensions and do harm if special care is not taken. In this sense, 'Peace and Conflict Impact Assessments' (PCIA) are similar to environmental and gender impact assessments.

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

Objectives - CONFLICT-SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING is a specialized course aimed at improving the understanding and skills for engaging in fragile communities. It will assist in preparing participants to conduct Peace and Conflict Impact Assessments, as well as to identify and design conflict-sensitive programs.

It will provide an understanding of the context of fragile states; the interaction between new interventions and the context; provide tools to assess the impact of proposed external interventions on existing community tensions; and the impact the tensions may have on the project. Conflict-sensitive programming will increase the effectiveness of an organisation's programs by minimising the risks and mitigating the occurrence or escalation of violent conflict.

Participants - This course is intended for those who program in fragile states, and who wish to ensure that the impact of their engagement will, as a minimum 'do no harm', and as an optimum, have a positive effect on the conflict dynamics of the community in which the project is taking place, even though the project itself is not directed at dealing with the root causes of conflict.

Methodology - CONFLICT-SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING takes a dynamic, participatory approach. The course makes extensive use of good practice and lessons learned from the field. The focus is on understanding essential concepts and developing practical skills needed for conducting peace and conflict impact assessment and designing conflict-sensitive approaches to fragile states. Presentations, case studies, group work, and exercises are used to give participants the opportunity for an in-depth review of the subject matter. At the end of the workshop, participants will have a PCIA toolkit and relevant resource materials needed for conflict-sensitive programming.

Workshop Elements/Concepts

The course covers an overview of concepts, terminology, methodologies and applications as practised by various donors, institutions, and respected peacebuilding practitioners, and brings together key

resources and operational frameworks, which assemble good practice from many sources.

- Peacebuilding: Policy and Practice
- Theories of Peace and Causes of Conflict
- Characteristics of Fragile States
- Understanding Conflict Sensitive Development
- Democracy Assessment, Governance, and Rule of Law
- Profile Tools (Political, Economic, Social, Security)
- Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment Tools
- Case Study and Exercises on Applications
- Measuring Results for Conflict-Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation
- Response Design and Mobilisation
- Sector specific topics on 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 runs workshops for the EU REACT (Rapid Expert Assistance Cooperation Teams) program, teaches at Royal Roads University (Canada) Masters Program in Human Security and Peacebuilding, and Wilfrid Laurier University (Canada) in the Political Science Department, and has worked in Africa on conflict-sensitive business practice. 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
- Chair of the Advisory Council, War Torn Societies Project (now Interpeace), Geneva, Switzerland

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