Conflict Sensitivity
Tools and Guidance

Stabilisation Unit
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> **What is conflict sensitivity?**
>
> Conflict sensitivity is acting with the understanding that *any initiative* conducted in a conflict-affected environment will *interact* with that conflict and that such interaction will have consequences that may have ***positive*** or ***negative effects***.
>
> It is a **deliberate and systematic approach** to ensuring we understand and minimise these negative effects (risks) and maximise positive effects of our actions (opportunities).
>
> To be conflict sensitive you need to:
>
> - Understand the **context**;
>
> - Understand the **interaction** between your engagement and the context;
>
> - **Act** upon this understanding in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts.

1.   The Basics

1.1   Why this guidance and who is it for?

Delivering HMG's National Security Objectives[1] effectively in fragile and conflict-affected states requires staff to recognise that *any* initiative conducted in such environments will interact with the conflict and that such interaction will have consequences that may have positive or negative effects.

This guide provides simple tools which can be used to identify these potential effects and to strengthen conflict sensitivity. It can be used alongside existing processes to inform the development of new portfolios, programmes, projects and activities across the range of HMG development, diplomacy, defence, and domestic security engagement and to review current activities for conflict sensitivity. It follows recommendations, contained within National Audit Office (NAO) and Independent Commission on Aid Impact (ICAI) reports, that HMG departments strengthen conflict sensitivity across their engagement in fragile and affected states (FCAS). It reflects internationally agreed norms encompassed in the OECD DAC Fragile States Principles (2007) and the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (2011).

1.2   What is conflict sensitivity and why is it important?

Conflict sensitivity means understanding the context in which you are operating, understanding the interaction between your engagement and the context, and taking action to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of HMG engagement on conflict and stability.

There are many documented examples of interventions which have inadvertently exacerbated conflict or undermined prospects for peace by, for example, deepening divisions between groups, entrenching war economies or by supporting elites with limited popular support (see Box 1). This tends to happen where there is a lack of in depth understanding of the context,

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[1] As laid out in the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review: A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom 2015

inability to adapt approaches to a rapidly changing situation or failure to identify and effectively manage the trade-offs between different objectives. In some stabilisation contexts we might even be conflict actors ourselves (e.g. through supporting military operations or through having overtly political positions) with actions which can, over the short term, be inherently destabilising as we seek to promote a new political order.

Box 1: Typical negative impacts

Targeting and distribution of support reinforces or creates grievances. Programmes where the distribution of assistance mirrors cleavages in a conflict (geographically, politically, and socially) can fuel grievances and deepen the conflict. Conflicts between communities may be fuelled over locations of projects and the hiring of labourers.

Elite capture, diversion of resources to particular groups. Where leaders directly benefit from assistance, taking credit for it, or seeking to control who benefits, inequalities and patronage can be reinforced and inclusivity undermined.

Reinforcing corruption, competition over aid resources, distorting the economy. Assistance can reinforce corruption through multiple layers of subcontracting, for example, or generate competition and conflict over aid resources, often along factional, tribal or ethnic lines. A quick increase in aid can generate an aid economy that distorts the local economy.

Supporting political settlements that are not inclusive. Striking a deal may be a priority in the short term, but the exclusion of key groups, such as parties to the conflict, women, youth may enhance grievance and lay the foundation for future conflict.

Working with or bi-passing the state. Working through a government or military that is (or is perceived to be) exclusionary, corrupt, or a party to the conflict can cause resentment and reinforce conflict actors. Not working through the state can in some contexts be equally harmful.

Conflict sensitivity does not however mean being risk averse. Instead, it entails adopting a deliberate and systematic approach to ensuring policy and programming decisions are made on the basis of a robust and credible analysis of the context. It involves adopting a critical lens, testing and challenging assumptions about how we contribute to stability, identifying key trade-offs and dilemmas inherent in our actions and seeking the right balance between different objectives and approaches, benefits and harms, and categories of risk.

Ultimately, being conflict sensitive leads to more effective decision making and programming, better risk management and value for money for the UK tax payer.

1.3   How and when do you apply conflict sensitivity?

Conflict sensitivity is relevant both where there is active violent conflict and in situations that are fragile but currently non-violent (latent conflict). It should inform the design of new activities, but can also be applied to existing commitments – these tools can be applied at any stage in the programme cycle. It involves four interlinked steps:

Step 1: Conflict analysis is a systematic and structured approach to identifying the factors driving conflict and violence, the actors involved and their interests, key trends and any entry

points or opportunities to build society's capacities for resolving differences or pursuing objectives without resort violence.
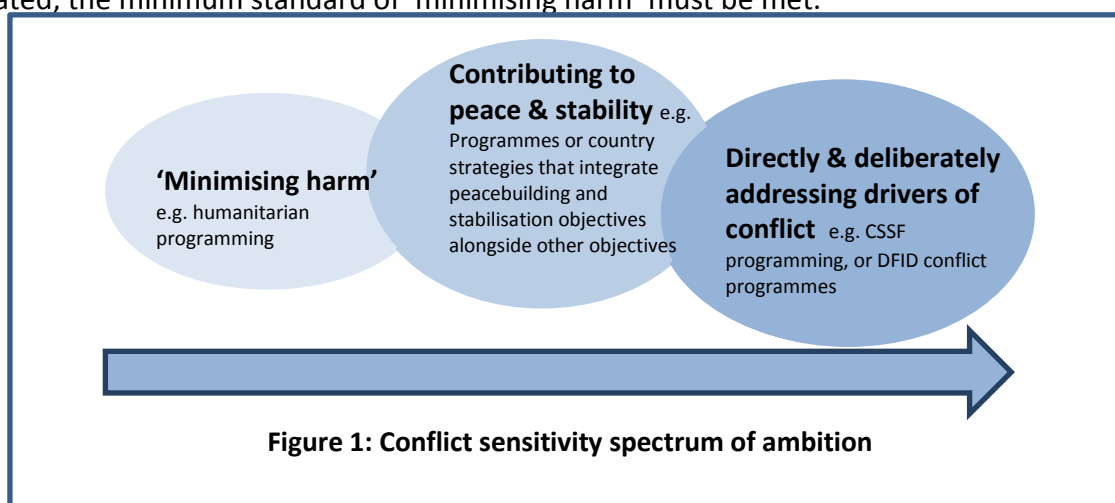
Step 2: Conflict sensitivity review uses the findings of the analysis to review and assess new or ongoing programmes and actions for interactions with the conflict context - in terms of risks of harm and opportunities. The programme design or action can then be adjusted to reduce risks of harmful impacts on the conflict and maximise opportunities to build peace.

Step 3: Conflict sensitive implementation involves ensuring implementing partners are able to operate in a conflict sensitive manner.

Step 4: Conflict sensitivity monitoring involves a regular refresh of the analysis, monitoring of key conflict sensitivity risks and ongoing adjustments to the intervention/ activities as necessary.

Conflict sensitivity is relevant at all levels of engagement therefore these steps should be applied to the country strategy and portfolio[2] as well as to individual programmes and projects. The steps can be streamlined within existing processes and discussions across the programming cycle and should not therefore be a significant additional burden (see Figure 2). Tools for doing this are presented in the following section.

The levels of ambition in applying conflict sensitivity will vary depending on the type of engagement as shown in Figure 1. However, whichever end of the spectrum the intervention is situated, the minimum standard of 'minimising harm' must be met.

'Minimising harm'
e.g. humanitarian programming

Contributing to peace & stability e.g. Programmes or country strategies that integrate peacebuilding and stabilisation objectives alongside other objectives

Directly & deliberately addressing drivers of conflict e.g. CSSF programming, or DFID conflict programmes

Figure 1: Conflict sensitivity spectrum of ambition

Different programmes and countries will carry different levels of conflict sensitivity risk and opportunity. Therefore the degree of attention to applying these tools should be adjusted accordingly. Large programmes should receive more attention as should those that are focused on drivers of conflict. Some smaller activities may also need significant focus if they are particularly high risk. High risk programmes include those that involve engagement with key conflict actors (e.g. military, armed groups, or powerful elites) or are implemented in a context of open violence.
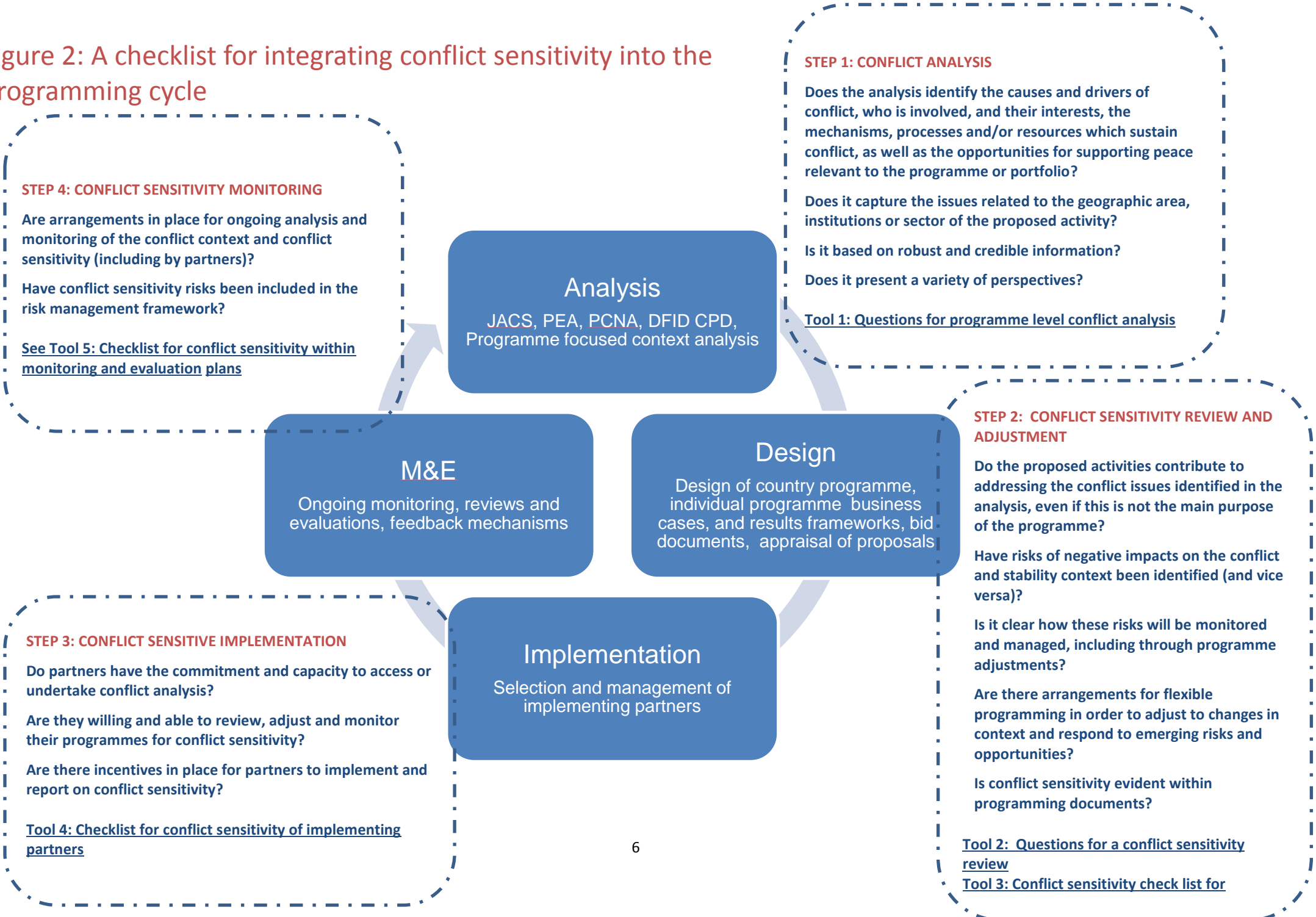
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[2] For DFID, this would be the Country Operational Plan. In the case of the CSSF, the country or regional portfolio/ bid. In some countries it may be an HMG integrated plan.

1.4 Conflict sensitivity and gender sensitivity

As part of its global Women Peace and Security commitments, the UK has committed to making its programming in conflict affected contexts gender sensitive. Integrating conflict sensitivity within programming can be undertaken in tandem with integrating gender sensitivity. The tools and process within this guidance have been designed to map on to similar tools and processes contained within the *CSSF Guidance Note: Integrating Gender Issues into Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Programming*. The two sets of guidance can be applied simultaneously.

Figure 2: A checklist for integrating conflict sensitivity into the programming cycle

Does the analysis identify the causes and drivers of conflict, who is involved, and their interests, the mechanisms, processes and/or resources which sustain conflict, as well as the opportunities for supporting peace relevant to the programme or portfolio?

Does it capture the issues related to the geographic area, institutions or sector of the proposed activity?

Is it based on robust and credible information?

Does it present a variety of perspectives?

Tool 1: Questions for programme level conflict analysis

STEP 4: CONFLICT SENSITIVITY MONITORING

Are arrangements in place for ongoing analysis and monitoring of the conflict context and conflict sensitivity (including by partners)?

Have conflict sensitivity risks been included in the risk management framework?

See Tool 5: Checklist for conflict sensitivity within monitoring and evaluation plans

Analysis
JACS, PEA, PCNA, DFID CPD, Programme focused context analysis

M&E
Ongoing monitoring, reviews and evaluations, feedback mechanisms

Design
Design of country programme, individual programme business cases, and results frameworks, bid documents, appraisal of proposals

STEP 2: CONFLICT SENSITIVITY REVIEW AND ADJUSTMENT

Do the proposed activities contribute to addressing the conflict issues identified in the analysis, even if this is not the main purpose of the programme?

Have risks of negative impacts on the conflict and stability context been identified (and vice versa)?

Is it clear how these risks will be monitored and managed, including through programme adjustments?

Are there arrangements for flexible programming in order to adjust to changes in context and respond to emerging risks and opportunities?

Is conflict sensitivity evident within programming documents?

Tool 2: Questions for a conflict sensitivity review
Tool 3: Conflict sensitivity check list for

Implementation
Selection and management of implementing partners

STEP 3: CONFLICT SENSITIVE IMPLEMENTATION

Do partners have the commitment and capacity to access or undertake conflict analysis?

Are they willing and able to review, adjust and monitor their programmes for conflict sensitivity?

Are there incentives in place for partners to implement and report on conflict sensitivity?

Tool 4: Checklist for conflict sensitivity of implementing partners

2.   Integrating Conflict Sensitivity with the Programming Cycle

2.1   Analysis

Conflict analysis is the first step in applying conflict sensitivity. It identifies the main drivers of the conflict and should recognise the UK as an actor within the conflict context. It should be as robust and credible as possible.

Analysis to inform strategic policy choices and country portfolios can take the form of a Joint Analysis of Conflict and Security (JACS) which is an integrated cross-HMG approach to understanding conflict and stability in fragile countries and provides a framework for a strategic level analysis.

However, a JACS may not have been undertaken in every context. In these situations the JACS analytical framework can be used to undertake a 'light touch' analysis, drawing on existing knowledge and materials. A cross-government analysis workshop is a useful means to generate a shared understanding of the issues and bring in different perspectives and insights. Conflict analysis can also be generated through integrating relevant questions into existing analytical processes such as the DFID Country Poverty Diagnostic, rather than being undertaken as a separate exercise.

At the level of programmes a more granular conflict analysis is required, focused on the particular geographic area and/ or sectoral focus of the intervention. Partners may (and should) undertake programme level analysis and HMG should draw on this. However, it is important that HMG generates its own shared understanding of key conflict issues relating to areas of support and considers how these relate to their strategic level Conflict Analysis.

The following box contains tips on generating a robust and proportionate programme level conflict analysis. **Tool 1 provides typical questions that can guide a programme level conflict analysis**. There are however many different tools and analytical approaches available. Some of these, including the JACS Guidance Note are listed at Annex 1. Stabilisation Unit, Regional Conflict Advisers and DFID Conflict Advisers can provide advice on adapting tools for specific requirements.

Tips for generating robust programme level conflict analysis

✓ Undertake a desk review of existing analysis and/ or a short analysis workshop as well as some consultation with external stakeholders, including partners. (Annex 1 provides a list of potential existing sources of analysis).

✓ Seek support from conflict experts within HMG for further advice on methodology and facilitation of analysis workshops. Annex 1 provides a list of sources of conflict advice.

✓ Involve external expertise and grass roots perspectives in the analysis process to provide a challenge function and prevent inherent biases.

✓ Use the process to generate a shared understanding of the context across different HMG and programme stakeholders.

✓ Ensure the time and effort expended on analysis is proportionate to the size and risk level of

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the programme (larger and/or more risky programmes require more time and effort).

✓ Integrate conflict analysis into needs assessments or other planning processes where they exist.

✓ If analysis needs to be generated quickly in response to an evolving situation, it can take the form of an initial discussion and then be deepened at a later stage.

Tool 1: Questions to guide Programme level conflict analysis

Understanding causes/ drivers of conflict and peace

- What are the characteristics of conflict and violence in the area where the programme will be implemented? (e.g. localised, national level, criminal, armed, non-armed, linked to extremism etc.)
- What are the key long-term factors that are driving conflict and violence in the area? (e.g. social, economic, political and security).
- What is supporting stability or prospects for peace?
- Are there factors driving conflict or supporting stability that relate directly to the sector or focus of the intervention? (e.g. security sector, education etc.)
- Are there linkages between national/regional level conflict drivers and local level conflict/ tensions in the area of intervention?
- Which combination of factors are the most significant in terms of driving conflict or increasing the risk of conflict? Or alternatively in promoting stability or prospects for peace?
- How does the conflict affect (or is influenced by) women/ girls differently to men/ boys?

Understanding the key actors

- Who are the actors (and institutions) who influence conflict and violence or prospects for peace in the area or sector of the intervention?
- What are their interests and incentives towards violence and/ or peace?
- What power do they hold and what is their impact?
- How do actors in the area of intervention relate to other local, national, regional, or international level actors that influence conflict?
- What role to women/ girls play as opposed to men/ boys?

Understanding the dynamics and trends of conflict and peace

- What are the current trends in conflict? Is it intensifying, decreasing or a stalemate?
- What are the likely triggers, or combination of factors and actors that might lead to an increase in conflict or violence?
- How do they relate to the sector or geographic area of intervention?
- Are there any windows of opportunity for peacebuilding that relate to the sector or area of intervention?
- What are the likely future scenarios in the conflict context?

2.2 *Design and appraisal of portfolios, programmes, and projects*

<u>Undertake a conflict sensitivity review of planned or ongoing activities</u>

Once the analysis has been generated it can be used to inform a conflict sensitivity review/assessment of *planned or ongoing* activities to identify any risks of (or actual) harm, opportunities to contribute to peace and stability and dilemmas that may need to be discussed and navigated. This should happen in relation to the country portfolio or integrated plan, and in the design and appraisal of individual programmes. Staff should also seek evidence that partners have addressed these considerations within their own design process.

A conflict sensitivity review/ assessment involves applying a checklist of questions relating to:

- **What** HMG does (e.g. in terms of strategic choices and theory of change, choice of focal intervention areas, identification of comparative advantage, strategic alliances and the content of political dialogue);
- **Who** HMG engages with and targets for support locally, nationally and internationally;
- **Where** HMG efforts are focused geographically and institutionally;
- **How** HMG engages in terms of delivery mechanisms; and
- **When** HMG engages.

Tool 2 provides questions that can be asked at the strategic, portfolio, programme or project level. These are examples. Additional or alternative locally adapted questions may need to be developed depending on the key issues emerging from the analysis and the sector of intervention. For example, if a key driver of conflict and insecurity is perceived (or actual) inequality between groups, the questions should examine how the interventions influence inequality (positively or negatively). Similarly, if grievances relate to the behaviour of the military, the assessment would seek to assess to what extent external support addresses those behaviours or, conversely, might be perceived to be reinforcing them.

Applying tool 2 could take the form of a facilitated workshop, a discussion or short study. It can also be integrated into risk assessments.

Tool 2: Example questions for a conflict sensitivity review

What is HMG doing?

- If the intervention is supporting peace and stability as a main objective, is the theory of change supported by the conflict analysis – are the outputs and objectives realistic given the conflict context?
- If the intervention is not working directly 'on' conflict issues, what could be done within the objectives of the programme to address key conflict issues identified in the analysis or to strengthen the factors and actors supporting peace and stability?
- Are there any key assumptions underpinning the intervention's theory of change which, if they are not realised, may lead to the programme exacerbating the situation (e.g. relating to the behaviour of the military, position and behaviour of key actors). i.e. are there any activities that might, in certain circumstances, increase hostilities or tensions and lead to

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the intervention reinforcing tensions and conflict?

- Are there any trade-offs between different objectives? (e.g. between short term interventions to support security – including UK security – vs longer term peacebuilding and stabilisation objectives). Are they understood, managed and communicated?
- Are there exit strategies for the programme, or plans on how programming will be adapted if the situation changes? How would stopping impact on stability?

Who is HMG engaging with?

- What is the likely impact (positive or negative) of the policy, portfolio or programme on the interests and capacities of key conflict and peace actors - including state and non-state actors and institutions? How might that impact on the conflict?
- What are the interests or incentives of key stakeholders in engaging with HMG or the programme? (e.g. to bolster their position? Or to weaken that of others?)
- How are the actions of HMG likely to be perceived? How might that affect impact?
- How do partners relate to the conflict situation? (e.g. do they have links to elites, only represent one group in the conflict)
- Could the intervention and association with HMG make certain actors targets for aggression?
- Do the targeting criteria coincide with key divisions in the conflict, e.g. along religious, ethnic, political or economic grounds. How might support focused on certain groups impact on tensions or risks of conflict?

Where is HMG engaging?

- What is the likely impact of the geographical or institutional focus of HMG assistance on the conflict drivers? Is it concentrated in certain geographic areas (urban vs rural, different regions, centre vs. periphery) or on particular institutions? Could that reinforce grievances around issues such as marginalisation?

How is HMG engaging?

- What is the likely impact of the choice of instrument on the conflict and stabilisation context? (e.g. decisions to provide support inside or outside of government systems, budget support)?
- Is there a risk of diversion of resources to pursue conflict related aims or of reinforcing corruption and patronage?
- How might the proposed recruitment, procurement or beneficiary selection process impact on the conflict? (e.g. by providing opportunities for corruption, capture of resources by elites to promote patronage networks, increasing competition between groups in conflict)
- How might the behaviour of HMG staff or partners reinforce grievances or make them a target for conflict? (e.g. where there is a failure to respect cultural norms etc.)

When is HMG engaging?

- What is the likely consequence of the timing of programme activities, e.g. consultations or

> training etc. Do they coincide with periods of heightened tensions or events, or could compressed timeframes reduce opportunities for inclusivity within processes?

Adjust programmes

Once the conflict sensitivity risks and opportunities have been ascertained **through application of tool 2, the aspects of the portfolio, programme or approach that may need to change and adjustments can then be identified** to increase conflict sensitivity. These can be documented in a conflict sensitivity plan of action.

Identifying necessary adjustments can be achieved through a facilitated discussion across different HMG stakeholders since it often requires making judgements in relation to trade-offs between benefits and harms, identifying and navigating key dilemmas, different objectives and categories of risk. At times, important decisions may need to be made or communicated to seniors, such as stopping a programme or a project, or taking a course of action that is known to be high risk. Stopping programmes may be necessary when, even with adjustments and on-going monitoring, the risks of harm associated with a particular intervention or approach remain considerable. The decision to continue with the proposed course of action needs to be made on the basis of an assessment of the certainty of expected benefits (and risks of doing nothing) vs. likelihood of harms.

Adjustments will depend on the issues that emerge from the conflict sensitivity review. Examples include:

- enhancing communications and stakeholder dialogue in relation to HMG activities and intent (or conversely reducing HMG profile in relation to activities);
- encouraging partners to integrate activities to support community cohesion;
- adjusting the balance of support between state and non-state, civilian and military actors;
- accompanying programmes with policy dialogue in relation to key issues;
- adjusting the geographic location of projects;
- undertaking further assessment of partners' capacities, interests and ability to integrate conflict sensitivity;
- commissioning further analysis (e.g. via partners) to inform individual interventions;
- introducing a code of conduct to guide partners' behaviour.

Any remaining key conflict sensitivity risks that need to be carefully managed and monitored can be included in risk matrices, monitoring plans and results frameworks (more information on monitoring is provided below).

A key requirement for conflict sensitivity is having more flexible and adaptive programming that can respond to changes in the context and emerging risks. This should be integrated into programme design (e.g. through scenario based programming).

Reflect the findings of the conflict sensitivity review and adjustment process within programme documentation, such as business cases.

Conflict sensitivity should be evident within programme and project documents, including partners' proposals. **Tool 3 provides a conflict sensitivity checklist for programme documents**. It can also be used to screen partners' proposals for conflict sensitivity or to inform the conflict sensitivity requirements to be included within a partner terms of reference, Invitation to Tender or a call for proposal.

Tool 3: Conflict sensitivity checklist for programme documents and partner proposals

Strategic case and theory of change

- Is there an analysis of the drivers of conflict and instability? (Tool 1)
- Is the programme/ portfolio addressing conflict and supporting peace or stabilisation as a main objective? If so, is there a clear and well evidenced theory of change/ explanation of how the proposed activities will contribute to addressing the issues identified in the analysis? And in the case of portfolios, to a cumulative impact on peace and stability?
- If supporting peace and stabilisation is not a main objective, is it nonetheless clear how the programme will capitalise on opportunities to contribute to peace and stability?

Appraisal case

- Have risks of negative impacts of the programme on the conflict and stability context been articulated (and vice versa). Is it clear how these will be monitored and managed? (Tool 2)
- Is it clear how the intervention will enhance positive impacts on the conflict and stability context? And reduce negative impacts?

Commercial case

- Has partner capacity to integrate conflict sensitivity considerations been articulated? (Tool 4)
- Have any conflict sensitivity risks or opportunities associated with the choice of partner or delivery mechanism been explained? It is clear how these risks will risks be managed?

Financial case

- Is it clear how risks of diversion of resources will be managed?
- Is it clear how conflict sensitivity related activities will be resourced?

Management case

- Is it clear how conflict sensitivity risks and opportunities will be addressed within programme governance and oversight arrangements?
- Are the arrangements and incentives for ongoing analysis and monitoring of the conflict context and conflict sensitivity explained? Including within risk management frameworks? (see Tool 5)
- Are there arrangements for adaptive and flexible programming?

Case study: Conflict sensitivity in action in Pakistan

Conflict sensitivity is high on HMG agenda in Pakistan and central to the design and implementation of CSSF programmes. The starting point was a JACS (September 2014), which identified key conflict drivers, actors, and dynamics. The findings were used as the basis to determine priorities for HMG and to inform the CSSF portfolio. Refreshed a year later, the JACS provided further direction and opportunities to adjust on-going programmes and inform the design of new ones. The four CSSF programmes aim to address the causes and consequences of national and regional conflict and instability, and to proactively contribute to building peace and stability. The CSSF team engaged in a process to reflect on the conflict sensitivity risks and opportunities of the identified interventions, to inform how conflict sensitivity is integrated in the new CSSF programmes and related programme documents and to step up the screening of implementing partners for conflict sensitivity. Proposed concrete measures include: the adjustment of the overall CSSF programme risk management framework and of individual programme to clearly identify and be able to monitor and address conflict sensitivity risks, and; stepping up incentives to ensure capacities and accountability for conflict sensitivity of implementing partners; and integration of discussions on conflict sensitivity risks within CSSF management structures.

2.3   Implementation

The way programme and projects - even those that were designed with conflict sensitivity in mind - are implemented and by whom is critical to ensure that interventions do no harm and contribute to peace and stability. Conflict sensitivity requires having partners (including government partners) who can design and implement programmes and projects in a conflict sensitive manner. They need to have a solid understanding of the local context, be able to adapt programmes to changes in that context, and identify and monitor conflict sensitivity risks and opportunities on an ongoing basis. They also need to be incentivised to integrate conflict sensitivity in an explicit and systematic way.

Tips on incentivising partners on conflict sensitivity

✓ Include conflict analysis and demonstration of conflict sensitivity as a key requirement within calls for proposals and include an assessment of conflict sensitivity as a criterion within the proposal evaluation / scoring framework (e.g. existence of analysis, adaptive programming etc.).

✓ Include conflict sensitivity within the ToR for implementing partners.

✓ Encourage partners to have a budget line for conflict analysis and monitoring and to include this in the work plan.

✓ Require partners to have appropriate mechanisms for conflict sensitivity monitoring.

✓ Include conflict sensitivity as a requirement within contracts. Link milestone payments to key conflict sensitivity related processes (e.g. completion of analysis).

✓ Encourage partners to report conflict sensitivity risks as part of risk reporting.

✓ Include a section conflict context and conflict sensitivity monitoring within reporting formats.

✓ Include conflict sensitivity as a key line of enquiry within reviews and evaluations of partner

projects.
- ✓ Support partner capacity building in relation to conflict sensitivity.
- ✓ Consult National Crime Agency for any relevant background checks on partners.

Tool 4 is a checklist of questions to help determine whether implementing partners have the capacity to address conflict sensitivity within their projects and to identify where more support may be needed. It can be used to inform the selection of partners, the requirements in a ToR or call for proposal or a contractual agreement.

Tool 4: Checklist for conflict sensitivity of implementing partners

- Does the partner have access to reliable and credible understanding of the conflict context that reflects the views of a range of stakeholders?
- Does the partner have internal conflict sensitivity expertise?
- Has the partner demonstrated ability to integrate conflict sensitivity within past activities? (e.g. through stakeholder engagement, conflict sensitivity review etc.)
- Does the organisation have procedures, guidelines, or a systematic approach to increasing the conflict sensitivity of programmes? E.g. through integrating within risk management, monitoring frameworks etc.
- Do staff implementing the programme have a strong understanding of the local context and ability to identify, manage and monitor conflict sensitivity risks and opportunities?
- Are there any factors that might compromise partner's ability to be conflict sensitive? e.g. language, affiliations, location, behaviour, interests?

2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Risk Management

Monitoring, evaluation and risk management are typically challenging in conflict affected areas where access may be limited and restrictions are in place. Monitoring for risks of harm and unintended impacts as well as opportunities to support peace and stability is however particularly important in these contexts and an underlined_essential element of conflict sensitivity. It can inform where further adjustments to the programme or portfolio are needed and involves:

Regularly updating the analysis. There are various light touch ways of keeping the analysis live, for example through short (half day or less) facilitated workshops on a periodic basis to assess what has changed. It may be helpful to do this before key events such as elections which may act as a trigger for violence. The Annual Review process also provides an opportunity to update the analysis and this can be included in the ToR for review teams. Partners can be requested to provide updates through reporting.

Risk management frameworks. Key conflict sensitivity risks and related adjustments (mitigation) should be included in risk management frameworks and registers. These can provide an entry point for regular discussions within programme teams on the status of current risks.

Results frameworks. Indicators can be useful to track changes in the conflict and possible interactions between the programme and the conflict (see Tips on indicators). Since they are identified up front indicators are good for capturing outcomes or harms that have been identified as a possibility on the basis of analysis and conflict sensitivity review.

Beneficiary feedback mechanisms. Where feedback mechanisms are integrated within partners' programmes these can be used provide information on unanticipated negative or positive impacts of an intervention and how it is perceived. It is important to remember that how a programme is perceived is often as important as how it is intended and actually working. Even well designed programmes can be perceived in ways we don't expect. Further guidance on how to fold conflict sensitivity within beneficiary feedback mechanisms can be found at Annex 1.

Annual reviews. A 'light touch' conflict sensitivity review can be included as a line of enquiry within annual reviews.

Tips on using indicators to monitor for conflict sensitivity

✓ Develop conflict indicators from the key issues emerging in the conflict analysis that are particularly relevant to the programme.

✓ Develop indicators to track key risks of harm identified in the conflict sensitivity review (conflict interaction indicator). For example, if capture of programme benefits by a particular ethnicity or group is identified as a risk, a conflict interaction indicator might simply be the numbers of beneficiaries disaggregated by ethnicity (where possible). If there are risks relating to human rights abuses by military receiving UK support, an interaction indicator may be number of human rights violations reported (where data exists).

✓ Use both qualitative indicators (measures the quality or perceptions) and not just quantitative indicators (measures amount or quantity).

✓ Take into account the availability of data and the costs involved in collecting that data.

Tool 5 provides a checklist for conflict sensitive monitoring and evaluation, e.g. to help determine whether conflict sensitivity is part of a monitoring and evaluation plan and/or to help integrate it.

Tool 5: Checklist for conflict sensitivity within monitoring and evaluation plans

- Are there plans to regularly refresh the conflict analysis, including in relation to key events, and use this information to inform any adjustments needed to the programme?
- Is conflict sensitivity included as a line of enquiry within Annual Reviews and evaluations?
- Is there a section within partner reporting templates for reporting on conflict sensitivity concerns?
- Do beneficiary feedback mechanisms exist and do they track conflict sensitivity concerns?
- Does the results framework include indicators that can track key conflict trends relevant to the programme?
- Does the results framework include conflict interaction indicators which track key risks of harm that might be attributable to the programme?

- Is there a mix of qualitative indicators (measures amount or quantity) and quantitative indicators (measures the quality or perceptions)?
- Is data disaggregated? E.g. by ethnic group, sex, religious grounds. So that differential impacts on different groups can be measured.
- Have conflict sensitivity related risks been included in the risk matrix? Are there plans to regularly review these?

3. Beyond guidance and training: building capacity for conflict sensitivity

On their own, guidance and training are insufficient to build capacity for conflict sensitivity within HMG. Ongoing accompaniment and support for staff is required, accompanied by high level support HMG and integration within decision making processes and structures.

Tips on building capacity for conflict sensitivity

✓ Allocate resources for conflict sensitivity e.g. via CSSF funds for ongoing analysis and accompaniment support.

✓ Integrate a review of key conflict sensitivity risks within programme and portfolio related decision making processes (e.g. CSSF boards and working groups).

✓ Build flexibility into the portfolio using scenario based and flexible and adaptive programming models e.g. Syria is experimenting with active programme management.

✓ Allocate a conflict sensitivity lead within programme teams.

✓ Seek ongoing accompaniment support for integrating conflict sensitivity from within HMG e.g. from the Stabilisation Unit, DFID Advisors and RCAs.

✓ Build conflict sensitivity expertise into partner programmes, that HMG can also draw on for support (e.g. DFID Nigeria is receiving conflict sensitivity support via the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme).

✓ Draw on external sources of advice and analysis e.g. from NGOs and partners.

Annex 1: Sources of advice, analysis and guidance

HMG sources to inform conflict analysis

- Countries at Risk of Instability (Cabinet Office)
- Country Governance Analysis (DFID)
- Country Poverty Reduction Diagnostic (DFID)
- Diptels (FCO)
- Gender Inequality and Social Exclusion Analysis (DFID)
- Human Rights Assessments and OSJA (All)
- Inclusive Growth Diagnostic (DFID)
- Intelligence Products (MoD)
- JIC Papers (MoD)
- Political Economy Analysis (DFID)
- Reporting from Post (All)
- Research Analyst Papers (FCO)

Non-HMG sources to inform conflict analysis

- International Crisis Group
- United States Institute for Peace
- Chatham House
- International Alert
- Saferworld
- Conciliation Resources

Where to go to for support – HMG sources

- Stabilisation Unit
- DFID Conflict Advisors and Regional Conflict Advisors
- FCO Research Analysts
- MOD Intelligence Analysts

Where to go to for support – Non-HMG sources

- GSDRC – provide applied knowledge services related to issues of governance, social development, humanitarian and conflict issues and can respond to Help Desk enquires, including for conflict analysis.
- The following NGOs have specialist expertise in conflict sensitivity
    - Collaborative for Development Action
    - International Alert
    - Saferworld

<u>Relevant HMG guidance</u>

- Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability – Guidance Note (Available through the SU)
- CSSF Guidance Note: Integrating Gender Issues into Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Programming. (DFID)
- Stabilisation Unit: Analysis for Conflict and Stabilisation Interventions, What Works Series
- A Toolkit for Conflict Sensitivity Review: This toolkit is aimed primarily at assessing the conflict sensitivity of strategies and country programmes, and strengthening their alignment with building peace and stability in a country context. (Available through DFID CHASE).

<u>Non-HMG guidance</u>

- How To Guide to Conflict Sensitivity (2012); developed by the DFID funded Conflict Sensitivity Consortium. This provides practical, user-friendly information on applying conflict sensitivity throughout the programme cycle, from assessment to design to implementation to monitoring and evaluation, and references various other useful resources. It includes a variety of conflict analysis tools.The slightly older 'Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: Resource Pack' also continues to provide useful resources.

- Do No Harm: The 'Do No Harm Framework' provides a simple and widely-used tool for determining the positive and negative impacts of a programme in relation to conflict. This is done by considering the stakeholders and activities of the programme as either 'Dividers' (likely to contribute to conflict) or 'Connectors' (likely to contribute to peace), and asking how the project/programme outcomes affect each of these groups.

- Conflict Sensitivity Topic Guide: Available through the DFID funded and publicly accessible Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC), the 'Conflict Sensitivity Topic Guide' provides a comprehensive overview of the concept of conflict sensitivity, a review of available tools and approaches, an examination of how to apply it to sectors, and key challenges.