

# Conflict Analysis

**Practical tool to analyse conflict in  
order to prioritise and strategise Conflict  
Transformation Programmes**





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## Acronyms and definitions

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>CM</b>   | Conflict Management                                   |
| <b>CR</b>   | Conflict Resolution                                   |
| <b>CT</b>   | Conflict Transformation                               |
| <b>DDR</b>  | Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration         |
| <b>GBV</b>  | Gender Based Violence                                 |
| <b>HR</b>   | Human rights  |
| <b>ICCO</b> | Inter-church organization for development cooperation |
| <b>ICG</b>  | International Crisis Group                            |
| <b>TOR</b>  | Terms of Reference                                    |
| <b>SALW</b> | Small Arms and Light Weapons                          |
| <b>FBO</b>  | Faith-based organisation                              |

### DEFINITIONS

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Conflict Transformation</b> | Conflict transformation aims at truly achieving positive peace. It not only aims to end violence and change negative relationships between the conflicting parties but also to change the political, social or economic structures that cause such negative relationships. Conflict transformation is aimed at empowering people to become involved in non-violent change processes themselves, to help build sustainable conditions for peace and justice. <sup>1</sup> |
| <b>Conflict Resolution</b>     | Conflict resolution work is aimed at developing and offering a range of alternative approaches for handling disputes non-violently and effectively. The methods might include customary or traditional methods, joint problem-solving, negotiation, mediation, arbitration. <sup>2</sup>   |
| <b>Conflict Management</b>     | Conflict management refers to the variety of ways by which people handle grievances - clashes of right and wrong. It includes such diverse phenomenon as gossip, ridicule, lynching, terrorism, warfare, feuding, genocide, law, mediation, and avoidance. Which of these diverse forms of conflict management will be used in any given case is predicted and explained by the social structure- or social geometry- of the case.                                       |

<sup>1</sup> Based upon definition of Lederach (2003), adapted by Wormgoor (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Wormgoor 2004, categorisation is based on work by Fitzduff (1993).



# 1 Introduction

The mission of ICCO & Kerk in Actie is to work towards a world where poverty and injustice are no longer present. The work of ICCO & Kerk in Actie consists of giving support to activities which stimulate and enable people, in their own way, to organize dignified housing and living conditions. ICCO adopted the rights-based approach as an overarching concept of its policy and formulated three main policy themes: Democratisation & Peace-building (D&P), Access to Basic Services (ABS) and Fair Economic Development (FED). In each country, ICCO & Kerk in Actie prioritized one policy theme, thus improving focus and coherence in the country programmes.

The policy on peace-building of ICCO & Kerk in Actie is focused on the concept of Conflict Transformation (CT). CT aims to transform negative destructive conflict into positive constructive relations and deals with behavioural and attitudinal aspects but also the structural dimensions of conflict. One of the prerequisites for an effective conflict transformation strategy is therefore a thorough conflict analysis on the basis of which relevant CT interventions can be developed and implemented.

In 2006, ICCO initiated a baseline study to provide a systematic and critical overview of its current efforts and results in the field of conflict transformation in Africa and the Middle East. Progress in the coming years will be measured against this baseline. The baseline highlighted the urgent need for strengthening the capacities of ICCO and its partners to undertake thorough conflict analysis that must form the basis of CT strategy development. Several partners of ICCO analysed the conflicts but, with a few exceptions, the analysis rather tends to focus on the direct causes than on the roots of the conflicts. ICCO & Kerk in Actie have to undertake a more thorough and deeper conflict analysis that can explain how these immediate causes relate to deeper structural causes. Additionally, the baseline pointed to problems in terms of: linking the analysis to setting priorities; strategy development based upon the analysis; and the complete lack of impact indicators.

In 2005, a manual for Conflict Analysis and Peace-building was developed for ICCO by Chris van de Borgh. While this manual presented the issues along with different theories very systematically, it became clear in the baseline study that the manual had not been thoroughly used. The baseline study recommended complementing the manual with a more user-friendly tool that can be used by both ICCO & Kerk in Actie and its partners.

Therefore, it is the purpose of the present tool to fill the gap and help the staff of ICCO & Kerk in Actie, its partners and consultants to do in-depth conflict analyses. The result will be a detailed description of the attitudes, the behaviour, the perceptions, the context and the underlying structures of the conflicts. Answering and discussing all 13 questions of this manual will provide the basis for strategy development, guiding CT actions and priorities. It must be stressed that conflict analysis is important, but it is only the first step in developing an effective CT programme. It is not within the scope of this tool to provide detailed guidance on all steps, but Chapter 5 of this manual provides some indications on how to move from the analysis to developing a vision of the future, and a CT programme. Because this tool will be used around the world, in many different cultures, conflicts and different stages of conflict, no detailed guidance can be provided on the exact process of undertaking the analysis and developing a CT programme. It is, however, stressed that ICCO & Kerk in Actie and its partners should undertake the analysis in a consultative process, in order to have joint ownership and common understanding about the goals and social change desired as an alternative to violent conflict. The process of bringing partners together to compare notes on the causes of the conflict can be considered a CT activity in itself. It is clear that different views will be expressed by different partners and it is, therefore, extremely important to realise that all different views are all valid, and if put together, can actually provide a much better and full picture of the situation.

## 2 ICCO & Kerk in Actie and Conflict Transformation

*“Rather than seeing peace as a static end state, conflict transformation views peace as a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationships”.*

John Paul Lederach (The Little Book on Conflict Transformation, 2003).

Conflict transformation (CT) not only aims to end violence and change negative relationships between the conflicting parties, it also aims to change the political, social and/or economic structures that cause negative relationships. The lenses of CT therefore show the immediate situation and the underlying patterns.

The overall objective of Conflict Transformation for ICCO & Kerk in Actie is:

*To change negative relationships between the conflicting parties, and the political, social or economic structures that cause such relationships.*

The overarching impact indicator is that:

*Violent conflict is transformed into positive social change, where underlying structures of conflict are addressed, resulting in changes of attitudes, relationships and behavior, leading towards sustainable peace with respect for human rights.*

Conflict transformation therefore focuses on:

1. Addressing **underlying structures** and contexts of conflict. This implies that a solid conflict analysis should guide the CT interventions;
2. Understanding and changing **attitudes, behaviour of people and the context** of conflict;
3. Using **conflict as an opportunity** to initiate a process of social change. How do we end destruction and build a better society envisioning the present problems as opportunities for change.
4. Creating positive peace<sup>3</sup> as **middle to long term** commitment;
5. Establishing **vertical and horizontal linkages** between all levels of actors and stakeholders;
6. **Improving relationships** towards growing equality, justice, democratic decision making and respect for human rights;

For ICCO & Kerk in Actie it is additionally important to assess the role of **religion** as part of the underlying structures of specific conflicts. On this basis, a country-specific CT strategy, mobilizing religious capital with potential to contribute to positive social change, while reducing the negative potential of religious actors and beliefs that might spoil or hinder social change and peace, can be build.

Also, ICCO & Kerk in Actie wants to implement gender-sensitive CT programmes. This means that at all stages, from conflict analysis, to strategizing, programme development, implementation and evaluation, gender dimensions shall receive appropriate attention. Gender relations can be sources of conflict, but also entry points for peace and social change. It is important to analyze and address both women's and men's attitudes, their behaviour, and their contexts in this gender approach.

CT includes conflict resolution and conflict management but goes beyond these approaches. For example, while conflict resolution mainly focuses on changing attitudes and improving relationships between conflicting groups, conflict transformation also focuses on changing the context. Conflict management almost purely focuses on controlling and changing behaviour. Although activities on conflict resolution and conflict management are still valid under the new approach of CT, they need to be complemented with activities aimed at transforming the underlying structures of conflict, and ensure that more linkages are created with all groups of actors. An exclusive focus on behaviour quickly leads to conflict management approaches only. Focusing mainly on attitudes, leads to conflict resolution approaches. Whereas focusing mainly on structural causes of conflicts or the context of conflicts can be classified as general development projects. Yet, focusing on and combining all three angles of conflict can finally lead to **Conflict Transformation**, especially when it is recognized that the conflict opens the road to social change.

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<sup>3</sup> Conflict transformation aims at achieving truly positive peace, characterized not only by the absence of war, but also by minimum standards of well-being, justice, and freedom.

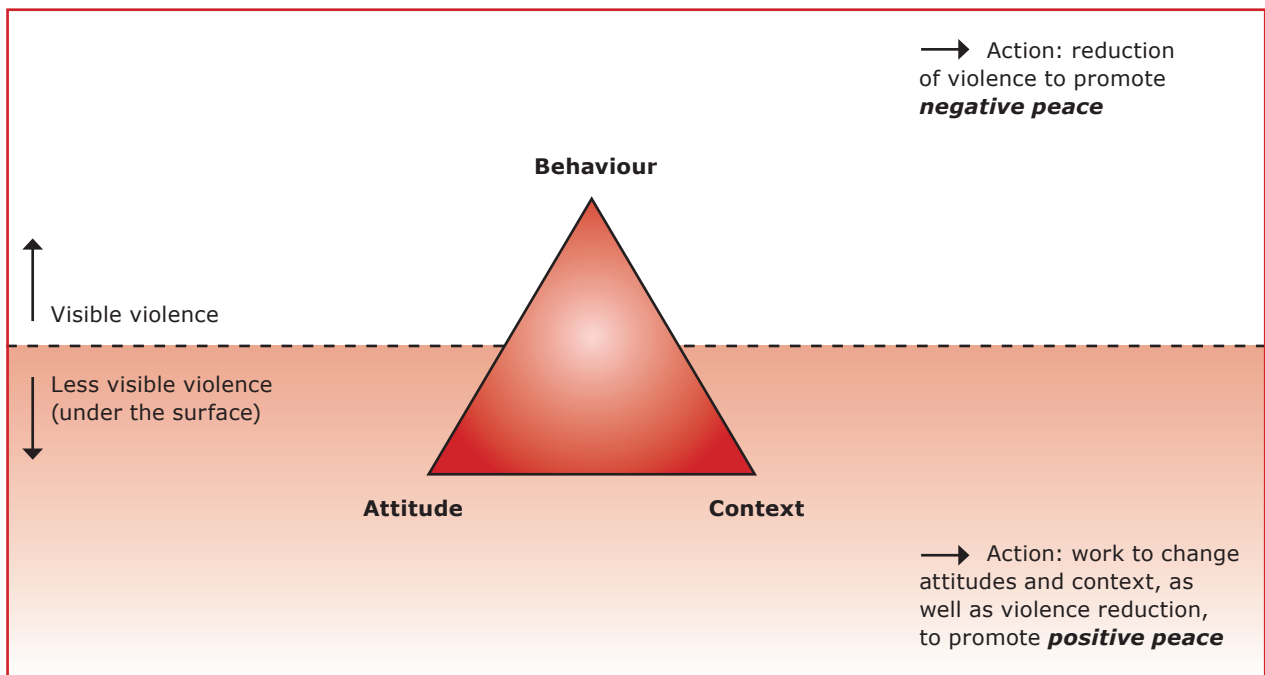


Figure 2.1: Adaptation of Galtung's triangle (Fisher et al., 2000: 10)

CT seeks to remove the asymmetries between conflicting parties and tries to influence the structures that foster these asymmetries. In addition, CT focuses on transforming violent conflict into constructive conflict, and can therefore indeed be regarded as a (violent) conflict prevention measure. Much emphasis is put on creating lasting and positive peace. However, conflict might remain necessary to create social change and real positive peace. Therefore, CT is applicable in all stages of conflict, also in the so called "post conflict" contexts, where many conflicts remain unresolved with the potential for re-escalation.

In order to learn more about the theory and principles of CT, please see the bibliography for additional readings.

In 2006, ICCO established a baseline in which the following weaknesses were highlighted. Therefore, they now deserve special attention:

- CT analyses are too weak on root-causes and underlying structures of conflict. This is automatically reflected in the policies deriving from the analyses.
- "Too quickly, people jump from a brief analysis or context description to the identification of potential transformers";
- ICCO's work on peace-building clearly comes from a conflict resolution perspective. Although many partners go beyond this, in order to become a real effective actor in CT ICCO & Kerk in Actie need to do more work on addressing the underlying structures of conflict;
- It has proven difficult to find the relationship between the local conflicts, on which some partners focus, and the bigger national or regional conflicts;
- There are no explicit explanations made regarding how the projects use the ongoing conflict to create a better society;
- Outcomes and impacts are not measured systematically. All partners lack proper impact indicators. Social change can therefore not be assessed properly. In addition, unforeseen negative impact is never reported, due to the fact that impact is not monitored regularly.

### 3 Conflict Analysis

In CT, all interventions need to be linked to deeper structures of injustice and inequality, so that even the smallest intervention contributes to social change and, ultimately, can lead to sustainable peace. This is one of the main shifts from conflict management and conflict resolution, purely focusing on resolving immediate causes. In CT, conflict is seen as an opportunity for changing long-lasting problems that are deeply rooted in societies. This change cannot be achieved without a thorough understanding of the origins of the conflicts, which are made explicit and shared among partners.

Theories explaining violent conflict, their main causes, and the driving forces behind conflict sometimes distinguish between underlying social structures in society (e.g. unequal access to basic services and economic opportunities, land and wealth), and the agendas as well as the motivations of actors involved (agency). In fact, for the explanation of violent conflict, the analysis of structures and agency has to be combined. As the main objective of CT is to transform underlying structures of conflict, it is therefore absolutely necessary that the conflict analysis goes deep into describing and analyzing these dimensions (structures and agency). Analyzing causes of conflict

also implies analyzing the actors in the conflict and their linkages. The categories of actors used in CT are Track, 1, 2 and 3 actors, as explained in the drawing below:

The other dimension of CT is that of improving relationships through transformed perceptions/ attitudes, behaviours and context. In order to work on this, a thorough understanding of the actors, their objectives and agendas is required. Also, CT aims to use the conflict as an opportunity to create social change. For this element, a thorough understanding of the overall situation, the cultural, religious and social capital of people, potential and historical tensions, attitudes and perceptions all need to be part of the analysis.

In CT, the conflict analysis should form the basis of setting the CT agenda and choosing its partners. Therefore, ICCO & Kerk in Actie must invest seriously in this element of programming. Additionally, conflicts evolve and consequently attitudes, behaviours, and contexts might change rapidly. Regular updates (such as yearly) are required as conflicts and transformation processes are highly dynamic and approaches need to be flexible, able to adapt to new challenges constantly.

Ideally, the country and regional analysis should take place through a consultative process with all partners, potential partners and other stakeholders. Partners should first be encouraged to do their own analysis using this manual. The partners' analysis should then be compared and discussed with those of other partners and ultimately feed into the broader ICCO & Kerk in Actie analysis and vice-versa. Other complementary sources should be consulted (such as analyses of the International Crisis Group, United Nations and World Bank reports, publications from national universities) and differences should be discussed with the partners. The full picture should then determine the CT strategy and the priorities in the specific country or region. Different partners might analyse a specific and very local conflict. It is, however, important to link these local conflicts to bigger country-wide or regional conflicts. The ICCO & Kerk in Actie umbrella analysis will need to show this. This way ICCO & Kerk in Actie and its partners

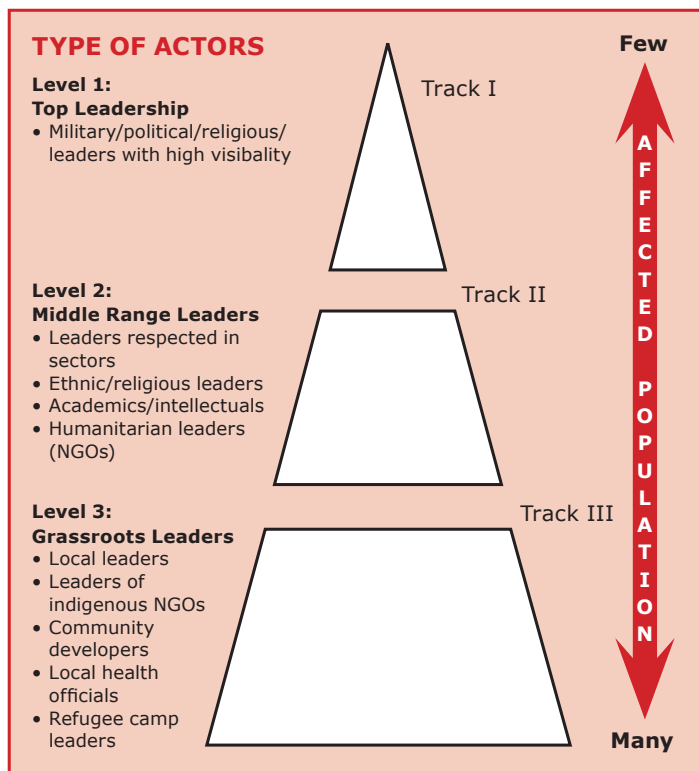
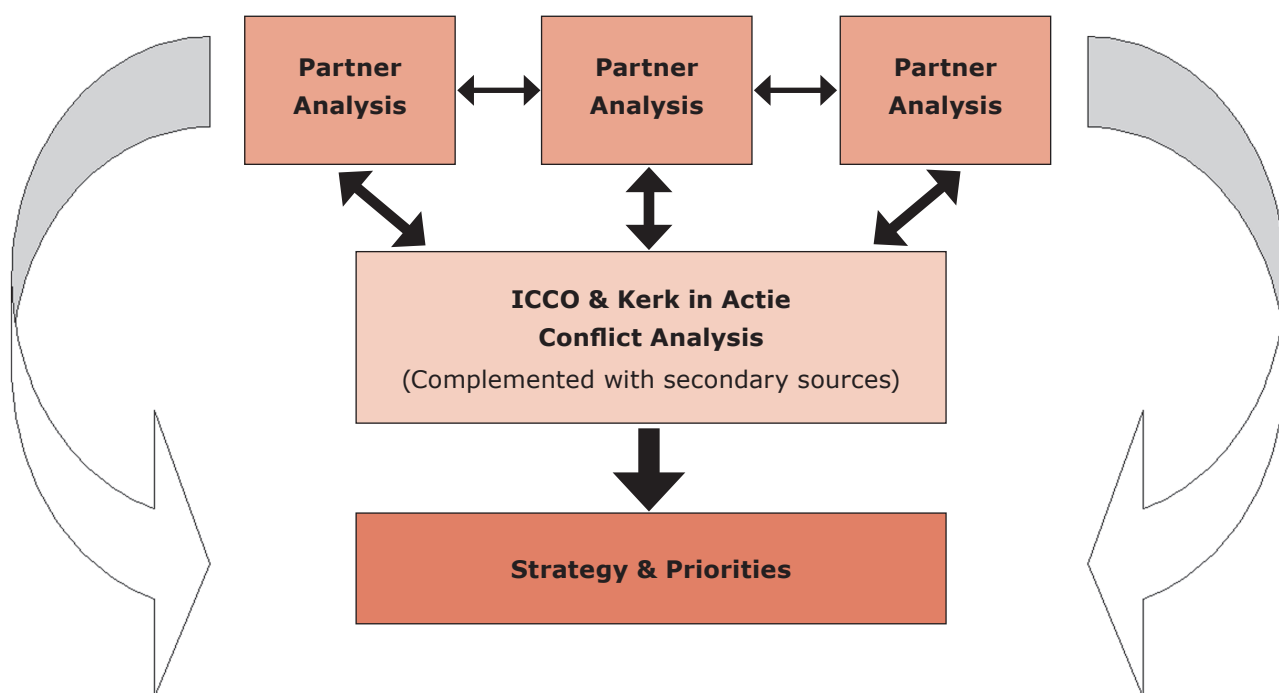


Figure 2.2: Actors in peacebuilding (Lederach, 1997: 39)





can fully understand the linkages between the different conflicts and start to develop the strategy as well as the impact indicators for a country-specific CT programme. In addition, partners will be able to analyse how their local actions are part of the bigger picture, and this will clarify which linkages they will need to establish with Track, 1, 2 and 3 actors. Their analysis, complemented with the insights from the broader analysis, should determine the focus of their specific projects.

One of the strengths of ICCO & Kerk in Actie is the ability to work ecumenically and even more so interfaith. This unique mandate should be recognized more explicitly. For example, Professor Gerrie ter Haar holds the view that the religious resources of people should be recognized and can be mobilized: “People’s full range of resources should provide the foundation for any development strategy. Among these, we have argued, are people’s religious and spir-

itual resources.” (Ellis and Ter Haar 2006). For ICCO & Kerk in Actie and its partners it is therefore to realise that religion can have positive or negative influences on conflict and as well as on conflict transformation. This should be recognised and become part of the conflict analysis, the CT programme policy and the CT evaluation. Only when described and analysed systematically, it can be judged what religion means and how religious capital can be mobilized for CT. At the same time it will inform us how to reduce and transform religious influence on attitudes and perceptions that fuel conflict.

Finally, not all partners work on the same conflicts within one country, and neither on the same level of the conflicts. But it must be realised that local conflicts influence each other and the national or regional situation as well as vice-versa. Compiling the different analyses from the partners into a broader ICCO & Kerk in Actie umbrella analysis will clearly show this.

## 4 Questions for analyzing the conflict

The following 13 Questions will help to analyse the conflicts you are working on, and the linkages they have with other conflicts. Under each question you find several examples from all over the world, to stimulate your thinking. These are not necessarily all apply to your context and should not be regarded as a check-list.

The answers to the 13 questions below should be minimum one-page per question. You are encouraged to be as detailed as possible. Please try to discuss every question with your colleagues and partners before answering. Look at the examples below to be inspired. Consider all the different dimensions and levels for answering the questions.

Of course, the analysis itself will not provide the answers on how to develop a CT programme, but a thorough understanding of the conflict you are working on is the first essential step. In this manual, the last question (13), asks to identify windows of opportunity for social change and your answers are the first step in analysing the potential for peace. Identifying the potential for peace is the essential second step after understanding the causes of conflict. In 'Chapter 5: Next Steps', an overview is provided for the additional work that is required to move from conflict analysis to a vision of change, and a CT strategy and programme towards peace and social change.

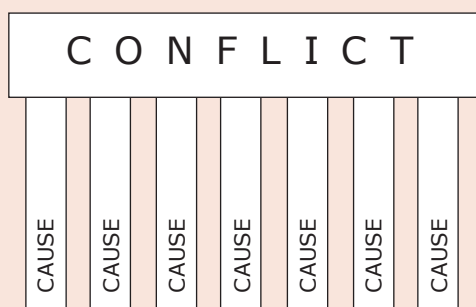
## Question 1:

What are the **underlying structures and causes** that created the grounds for the conflict?

### WHY?

In CT, all interventions need to be linked to deeper structures of injustice and inequality, so that even the smallest intervention contributes to social change and, ultimately, to sustainable peace. One of the main features of conflict transformation is to really address the underlying causes of conflict, the so called root-causes, in order to ensure that social change and peace can be sustainable. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze these root causes as thoroughly and historically far back as possible.

### Every conflict has many causes



### EXAMPLES:

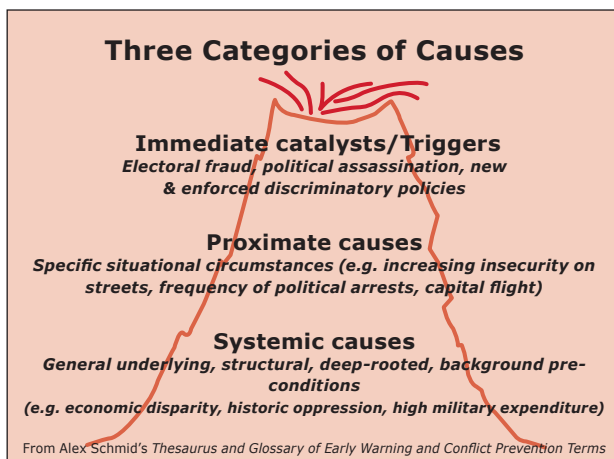
- One ethnic group is not regarded as the true owners of this land, they are still seen as foreigners;
- Economic and education policies have for centuries only focused on building the capital city and its direct surroundings;
- Since colonial time, people have been provided with hand-outs and, therefore, became fully dependent on the ruling parties;
- Since the change of religion and its rules, women no longer have a voice in society;
- Inequality between the two populations have been systematically held in place, and also through foreign influences;
- The natural resources have never been managed properly and its benefits are regarded as being owned by the one that exploits them;
- Youth are not regarded to have any opinion until they become parents themselves;
- Raiding cattle is part of the culture because you need to have a lot of cows to marry;
- Political and economic interests of neighbouring countries;

## Question 2:

What are the **more recent** causes of conflict and why is the conflict continuing?

### WHY?

When analyzing the causes of conflict it is helpful to differentiate between the deep underlying causes that created the grounds for potential conflict, but also the more recent causes. Among these “proximate causes” it is important to describe the conflict dynamics and, for example the way the war economy functions. If conflicts take long, they are in fact creating their own causes. This level of analysis will not identify why the conflict started but why it is continuing. It also describes some of the causes that directly relate to the underlying causes. The drawing below explains the differences between Question 1 (structural causes) and this question which focuses on proximate causes and triggers).



### EXAMPLES:

- The global markets in both natural resources and arms made rebellion easier to finance and equip. Rebel groups can now sell the future rights to mineral extraction (conditional on rebel victory) to raise funds for weapon purchases;<sup>4</sup>
- The economic decline that started 5 years ago marginalized the ethnic group in the North even further;
- While both rebel groups started off as fighting against equality and the mistreatment of the population by the Government, in the past years they seem to be mainly driven by greed. It almost looks like they use the term inequality to justify their opportunistic behaviour;
- Since the majority of the schools closed, children became even more vulnerable to recruitment;
- Over the past years criminal networks have gained too much influence on political actors.
- The economy in transition caused allocation disputes over economic resources;
- Due to the war, no training other than war-skills is provided in the army;
- Changes in the political system (from dictatorship or military potentates (junta) towards broader participation of the civil society) have created scope for the development of new (and more radical) political actors.

<sup>4</sup> Based upon Collier 2003

### Question 3:

*Who are the **actors** and stakeholders in the conflict? Describe how and why they are the conflict's stakeholders.*

#### WHY?

In CT, great emphasis is placed on engaging and linking actors. Therefore, we need to fully understand which actors there are in the conflict and what their role is. Try to describe all conflict-related actors at all levels (including Governments, armed groups but also civil society actors, donors, international actors and communities, individuals, men and women). In Question 10 later on, you are asked to describe all actors, also those not involved with the conflict and describe their linkages. Here, please focus on those causing and fuelling conflict.

#### EXAMPLES:

- In the areas “controlled” by the larger rebel groups, military or political leaders often decide not to follow the nationwide agreements and temporarily follow their own destination, which sometimes includes clashing with their official partners. They can upset a district and cause suffering and damage ( refugee flows);
- Government has full control over civil society. Civil society keeps quiet, critical people close their mouth or flee;
- International donors and governments mainly support and work in line with the government, because they are strongly criticized when they support critical NGOs or churches and when they express critics or other opinions;
- The business community fully benefits from the chaos and has tripled export of natural resources without any taxes being collected. Many Government officials benefit directly;
- Armed men tend to treat women as their property and girls are handed over to higher ranks as if they were an item to possess. Giving a commander your most beautiful girl is regarded as loyalty and helps you in your military career;
- Parents started sending their children to enrol in the armed forces, as this is the only way that the rest of the family will survive;
- Many NGOs became part of the conflict because their affiliation is purely based on ethnicity. They became political instruments;
- Criminal networks were able to increase their freedom of action and participate in the war economy;
- Foreign governments are seeking more influence in the country or the region, by supporting one or more of the fighting groups.



## Question 4:

What **attitudes** do people have that inflict conflict and where do these attitudes come from?

### WHY?

Peoples' attitudes and perceptions shape their behaviour, also in terms of using or advocating violence. Before we can start thinking about transforming violent behaviour into more constructive behaviour, we must therefore understand what the underlying attitudes and perceptions are. Perception and attitude is, furthermore, largely shaped by the context people are living in as well as by the experiences they make. Therefore, this question links to question 1 (the one addressing the root causes of the conflict). In analysing attitudes, you must identify whose perceptions they are and where they come from. Include perceptions among civilians that are older, rooted in the culture as well as the attitudes and perceptions of violent actors. Pay attention to the changes in attitudes that are a result of the conflict.

### EXAMPLES:

- Some want access to power and wealth, and for the rest it is personal interest in power and thus wealth (greed). Some might be advised by foreign interests;
- There is more and more distrust between leaders and population groups and fear for exclusion and persecution. The lack of trust that existed for centuries has been used by the ruling party to create more fear and control over the population;
- Ethnic differences between people have always brought some tensions but these differences have been exaggerated by the government to create more divide and hatred. Now, parents pass on these ideas to their children;
- The divine justification of the superiority of one group over the other is justifying hatred and intolerance;
- The arrogance of the occupying power reflects their attitude that they are in fact entitled to this land;
- While apartheid has officially stopped, in the minds of the majority of the people the other race is still minor to theirs;
- While all armed groups claim to fight for justice and equality, they seem to be in competition about what that means: equality and justice for whom?
- The refugee camps and the preferential treatment of the refugees by the donor community are creating serious tensions in the host communities;
- NGO's have changed their attitudes towards the government and are unwilling to be controlled or coordinated by any government related body;
- Since the rebel group has been internationally labelled as a terrorist organization, the group has lost many supporters from the diaspora who have become afraid;
- The attitude of donors is that they cannot pay for the salaries of the police, but the government is in no position to do so. Therefore, the police are not paid and are harassing people;
- While the UN might have helped to monopolize the power back in the hands of the government, it is not clear what they are thinking of when they say they are improving security. The question remains, security for whom? The rebel group is still recruiting local youth in order to ensure community security, which according to them includes food security;
- The attitude of political supremacy was existent before the conflict, was questioned during the conflict and today it is still there and remains a source of conflict.

## Question 5:

*In what **contexts** do people live that creates the potential for violent behaviour and the attitudes of intolerance? What are the consequences of the conflict on the context?*

### WHY?

Another important dimension to describe is the context in which people live, at this point in time. The circumstances people live in are another determining factor that affects the way they view the world and how they will behave. Access to basic services and economic opportunities, environmental conditions, health issues, but also to what extent people can influence national and local politics, existing mechanisms of social exclusion, etc., are all part of the context. In CT, it is stressed that part of transformation must change those elements in the context that frustrate people and, therefore, are likely to trigger perceptions of injustice and, ultimately, violent behaviour. For these reasons, it is important to map the context people live in. In this part, also describe how the war has changed the context, such as changes in income levels, unemployment rates, numbers and locations of IDPs, refugees, regional dimensions, etc.

### EXAMPLES:

- The government becomes more confidential and increasingly centralises the power. Space for other opinions and for dialogue diminishes. It develops into a one-party dictatorial state;
- The refugee camp is getting so full that the tensions between the ethnic groups are really getting out of hand;
- Salaries of soldiers and police have not been paid for 6 months and they have started to massively hassle the population;
- The complete lack of services in the rural area is pulling thousands of people to the capital where they live under very bad conditions and where violence is part of daily life;
- The child soldiers grew-up in the war and do not have any reference to what a normal society looks like; therefore, their life skills and mentality are hard to change;
- The forced disarmament programme of the government is leading to escalations between neighbouring groups that are still armed and leave communities behind in complete fear for attacks without any protection;
- Impunity for acts committed by government-related persons or military;
- Although Liberia is a rich country (full of natural resources), it is actually the poorest country in the world (HDI). The majority of the people have only one meal a day;
- Natural resources of daily use (like water) are scarce in the country or region, fuelling conflict and disputes of allocation among individual people or groups;
- A lack of employment opportunities forces people to join criminal and/or armed groups to earn an income;
- Inequality has risen because of widespread corruption;
- Lack of governmental control over the military or military resources;
- Due to a state of ongoing conflict, the military became a dominant societal actor, influencing cultural perceptions of the people.

## Question 6:

Which types of **behaviour** fuel the violent outbreaks of conflict and why do people behave that way?

### WHY?

In the conflict triangle, attitude and context make people behave in certain manners and, consequently, people adapt their context and attitude to their behaviour. Intervening in this triangle to transform some of these dynamics demands a deep level of understanding of the behaviour of people. Describe the conflict-related behaviour of different groups of people and try to understand why they behave the way they do. Don't make any judgments; just try to understand, by placing yourself into their minds and contexts. Use your answers from Questions 2 and 3 to describe where their behaviour comes from.

### EXAMPLES:

- The corruption of the government is making people furious and results in a complete mistrust. The lack of control and enforcement capacity to punish corruption leaves the path open for anyone to take what they can get;
- Men have become really violent towards their wives and daughters. This relates to their frustration due to long unemployment and feelings of failure to take care of them. Alcoholism and violence at home are consequences of this;
- The border between our territories is not respected, and the other group constantly tries to steal more of our land. This clearly shows they do not intend to respect the international agreements;
- The youth are becoming increasingly more difficult to control; their frustration over the political situation combined with the closure of the university is fueling their anger;
- The international community awoke only when atrocities, like cutting off limbs and group rape, came into publicity;
- The fact that so many young people were given drugs by the warlords is resulting in serious misbehaviour of the youth;
- The misuse of guns increased due to their availability;
- Criminal gangs are pressing money from small shop owners and sell drugs in the neighbourhood;
- Radical rhetoric in the media is increasing and people start to adapt radical views.

## Question 7:

*How do the local **conflicts relate** to bigger national or regional conflicts?  
And how does the bigger conflict influence local dynamics and conflicts?*

### WHY?

Most partners have limited capacities to significantly impact on the greater national or international conflicts. The majority of the partners are most effective when concentrating on local conflicts, which might be linked to a greater context. Especially when combining behaviour, attitude and context of the conflict they are working on, most ICCO & Kerk in Actie partners simply do not have the capacities to do this on a larger-scale basis. However, it is important to link the conflict on which a partner is working to the national, regional or even international conflicts. Developments at global, regional and national levels do influence conflict and peace dynamics at local levels. Therefore, it is crucial that all CT actors start developing horizontal and vertical linkages to the Track, 1, 2, and 3 actors. In order to do so, we must understand what the dynamics are between the conflicts.

#### Analyze all levels of conflict

- Conflict between neighbouring states
- Conflict between centre and religion
- Situation of minorities within autonomous regions
- Conflicts between different opposition groups
- Conflicts between warring factions and civil population

### EXAMPLES:

- Local conflicts are mostly related to the higher-level conflict as local leaders and warlords are part of a higher level party;
- Economic policies destroy the local market and thus the position of farmers or small shop owners, which are of one specific ethnic group, is very bad;
- The UNDDR programme provided exclusive benefits to the former combatants, and this is raising tensions in the communities;
- The Peace Accord resulted in men returning home and pushing women back into traditional roles, which they are not willing to accept. The increase in domestic violence is enormous;
- Government policies allow settlers to construct new houses on the land of the local population. Tensions between them are resulting in death, fear and anger, which have thus caused the self-defence group to arise;
- Refugees from the neighbouring country have led to an increased lack of access to basic services;
- Many of the young former soldiers have crossed the border to assist their relatives in the neighbouring war;
- The global war on terror is seriously influencing the HR situation on the ground;
- The fact that the Government is arming civilians, especially youth, to defend themselves and the communities is creating enormous tensions between the generations;
- Internationally operating criminal networks, linked to other conflict zones in the world, are exploiting the war economy for their own benefit;

## Question 8:

*What are (and have been) the roles, positions, ambitions and frustrations of **youth** in the society?*

### WHY?

One of the issues a CT programme needs to address is the cycle of risks for young people in order to break it. A structured and coherent response should target young soldiers and civilian youth simultaneously, building on the solidarity and recognition of youth's distinct identity and role in society. Youth are the future of the society, but also the most important potential threat to peace. "Youth are being regarded as agents for change", the "only hope for the future", "the vulnerable", as well as a great potential source for instability and war. It is important to stress that youth, as such, have common features but are not a homogeneous group, and neither are the young ex-combatants. What they share, however, is having been socialized in violent environments and having been forced to make their future in war-torn societies and economies"<sup>5</sup>.

### EXAMPLES:

- Traditionally, youth do not have the right to speak during community meetings. Youth exposure to Western governing methods, as they see on television and through the Internet, has empowered them, but not the elders. The conflict between the generations is enormous and is pushing youth to leave their rural homes;
- Unemployed youth have been the main target group for recruitment into the army as well as into armed groups and militias. For most young people, this was the only job available;
- Along with the diamond trade, cocaine has come to this country. Many young people are addicted and become fully depended on their suppliers. Prostitution of girls and boys are among the direct results, together with an enormous increase in youth criminality;
- Youth that are in the segregated schools are taught about their enemies and are preached hatred and willingness to defend their own people. The brainwashing of students is of very high concern;
- The youth are at the forefront of demanding change and justice. Listening to this generation provides hope for the future of this country. The issue is to create more space for them to create the better world they are calling for;
- GBV against girls has reduced but has been replaced by transactional sex, which is a direct consequence of the lack of economic opportunities for girls, as well as a result of their very low self-esteem. Traditionally girls were well respected and protected but the massive amount of rape during the past decade has left its marks;
- Frustrated youth are susceptible to radical political rhetoric and are willing to enter conflict;
- A disproportionate part of the population consists of male youth.

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5 IDDRS 2.20 Youth in conflict



## Question 9:

*How are the various religious leaders and religious organizations reducing or fueling conflict? What is the influence of religious beliefs on people's attitudes, behaviour and relationships? What place does **religion** have in the underlying structures of the conflict?*

### WHY?

Transforming potential negative influence from religious leaders, organizations and also from beliefs and attitudes is a crucial objective of ICCO & Kerk in Actie's CT policy. Spoilers of peace can be those actors or doctrines who preach intolerance and reward violence with spiritual approval. But it can also be that religious organizations hinder social change due to their conservative approaches, rules and unchangeable hierarchies. Another risk can be the exclusion of non-believers from the community or project benefits. Assessing the role of religion and religious actors should be part of the conflict analysis in order to strategically mobilize positive religious capital, while transforming or at least reducing potential spoilers of change, justice, equality, human rights and lasting peace. Building a country-specific CT strategy should mobilize religious capital which has the potential to contribute to creating positive social change. It should also reduce the negative potential of religious actors and beliefs that might spoil or hinder social change and peace. In this it is important to analyze.

### EXAMPLES:

- Churches that have the greatest access to the population, in any case, are more important than the political parties or rebel groups. However, there are many who would like to see the role of the churches to become more pro-active and outspoken;
- Religion is used increasingly more as a way to legitimate power and social exclusion of non-believers;
- Forgiveness and healing the community has always been an important feature of the culture. Also today we see the traditional healers of the communities ensuring that people who are returning are cleansed of their evil spirits and can therefore be reaccepted back home;
- It has become clear that a number of religious leaders are actually preaching hatred and intolerance, which justifies the extreme violence used by the members of that group;
- The interfaith activities of civil societies are managing to cross borders which have been understood to be impossible to cross;
- The belief in reincarnation partly explains the increase in suicide rates among youth in this area;
- The promise of and faith in rewards after death, when fighting for what is believed to be the good cause, is very difficult to discuss and challenge;
- The churches and mosques are the only organizations left that provide basic services to their members. Without these services, many more would have died from illness and starvation.
- Foreign combatants are entering the country on a grand scale, fighting for their own religious beliefs without having anything in common with the local population;

## Question 10:

What are the **gender dynamics** in society? Describe the attitudes, behaviour and context of men and women before and during the conflict.

### WHY?

Perceptions of male and female roles before, during, and after conflict play a crucial role in the peace-building process. Gender roles change during and after conflict, and these dynamics need to be taken seriously throughout the CT process. CT strategies must include women in the peace-building activities, drawing on the local traditions of conflict resolution, but CT must move away from approaches that only insist on the victimization of women. Instead, the essential role of women in economic and social spheres must be promoted, including their political involvement and recognition. But gender is also about men and their roles before, during, and after conflict. How violent is the notion of masculinities and are there more constructive notions of manhood? Describe here the current gender dynamics in society.

### EXAMPLES:

- Since the war, the only acceptable way for men to behave is to be violent. Women have always encouraged men to behave violently. Young wives rewarded the violence and their looted items by welcoming them back with loud dancing and singing. Boys with uniforms are surrounded by girls. Men who refuse are laughed upon;
- Demobilized girls are having serious problems reintegrating into the community because they did things that were not expected of them as girl;
- Women gained more freedom during the war because men were absent;
- Parents started killing female babies, since more men are needed for the war and food is limited. This is a recent practice and cannot be found in the tradition. Government has taken action and has forbidden the practice;
- The fact that men and women have to serve in the military creates gender equality;
- While the men have always been in charge of earning a living for their families, many became unemployed during and after the conflict. Most men expect the wives to bring in the family income now and force them to engage in criminal activities such as smuggling, prostitution and drug dealing;
- Most girl combatants were sexually involved with a male fighter during the war. Both non-fighting girls and higher- and lower-ranked fighting girls have difficulties in their relationships with "bush husbands".<sup>6</sup>
- Because looting seems to have become the only way to get some luxury items, women started to encourage their husbands to go out for that and in fact promote violence;

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<sup>6</sup> Specht 2006, p. 65

## Question 11:

*What are the horizontal and vertical **linkages** between actors in society?*

*These actors include government, civil society, communities, international organizations and donors, etc. What has changed?*

### WHY?

Another crucial feature of CT is to ensure that linkages are established amongst all levels of actors in a society. These linkages should ideally be horizontal and vertical among all actors of Track 1 (government and decision-making bodies), Track 2 (civil society) and Track 3 (communities). For the type of linkages, conflict transformation focuses on relationships between different levels in society (vertical), where conflict resolution mainly focuses on relationships between similar level organizations (horizontal). Therefore, it is important to map how these linkages are currently functioning. This question relates to Question 5 on actors, but the difference is that you are now asked to describe all actors in society, not only the actors of conflict. You are also asked to focus specifically on their linkages. You are encouraged to use drawings to illustrate the linkages.

### EXAMPLES:

#### Vertical

- While NGOs were traditionally very critical of government, due to the lack of resources their main role seems to be reduced to implementing donors' and governments' projects;
- NGOs seem to have little contact with the communities they pretend to represent;
- The government is in full control of the army, or better said the other way around;
- Civil society is seen as implementing government-developed policies and is not allowed to have their own position and ideas. Critics or open comments are not accepted. Critical NGOs or persons are threatened or their functioning is being made impossible. Independent media doesn't exist, save with one or two exceptions;
- Parties include the government (the political elite) and internal opponents within the ruling party and other rudimentary views are sometimes expressed from civil society or the churches;
- Because working with the police is not regarded as a part of the new framework of CT, the donors have stopped funding NGOs on these important activities.

#### Horizontal

- NGOs work well together in the new network while previously they were more in competition;
- Government agencies and ministries do not communicate with each other;
- The opening of the marketplace and the access roads to the market have increased community interaction, but there is still a serious lack of trust;
- Civil society isn't one group with one position. This varies from neutral to strongly allied with one of the groups. For example, churches sometimes even play a stimulating role in conflict;
- Traditional power structures have disappeared;
- Since the donors have coordinated their strategy and jointly prioritized funding, only certain types of projects get funding, while the other important projects such as trauma healing have stopped.

## Question 12:

What is the current **human rights** situation and has it gotten better or worse?

### WHY?

Human rights violations are among the most common and most devastating features of conflict. The first immediate objective of CT is to transform violent conflict into constructive conflict. Therefore, it is important to describe the situation on the ground in terms of human rights. Please give a historical perspective: are violations recent or long standing? Are there new types of violations or are they embedded in traditional culture or military tradition? Is the situation improving? Describe the types of violations by different actors and explain the effects this has on the conflict and the society. Include an analysis of Gender Based Violence.

### EXAMPLES:

- The numbers of reported cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) have increased, but it is not clear if this is due to an increase of actual GBV at home or due to the improved mechanism for reporting;
- The human rights abuses within the prisons are shocking and has increased enormously since the new president is in place;
- While the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has helped to ease tensions in society, it is feared that many of the most serious perpetrators never came forward and also stayed away from the DDR programme out of fear for the Special Courts;
- While many children have been demobilized, reports suggest that recruitment is happening at a faster speed than release;
- The war economy and its actors have replaced the collapsed economy of the pre-war society, maintaining activities such as smuggling, human- and drug-trafficking as well as arms trading as a major economic factor in the post-war society. These activities as well as the power of criminal networks thereof are undermining human rights in many aspects;

In order to gear our minds towards the future, we have added Question 13 which provides us some entry points for programming.

### **Question 13:**

*What **positive changes** have the conflict triggered? Are these changes expected to be lasting?*

#### **WHY?**

A distinct feature of CT is that conflict is not automatically seen as negative. In the positive sense, conflict can bring the necessary changes required for a more equal and just society. CT does promote the transformation of violent conflict into non-violent, and views this as a means of achieving social change. It is important to identify the positive and negative changes that are created by the conflict and to start analyzing if these changes will be lasting or not. Conflict has dividing dynamics and connecting dynamics and this final question concentrates on the connectors.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

- Women gained more independence and decision-making powers during the war. In order to maintain this positive change, programmes should build on these dynamics and avoid pushing women back into traditional roles;
- Population is tired of war and violence and sees the negative consequences of having small arms circulating among civilians; many women's groups are increasingly advocating for peace;
- Youth never had anything to say, but through the conflict their voice has been heard loudly. Programmes should work on empowerment of youth and on non-violent democratic decision-making methods as well as lobbying for youth involvement in government and communities. The media should be encouraged to give the youth a voice;
- International monitoring of, and pressure on, local and foreign actors is leading to opposition to unlimited power and power abuse by authorities and others;
- A number of war criminals have been prosecuted – they are finally out of our society;
- We can see new roles of civil society in relation to state and international community, there is more lobbying and advocacy;
- While the Tsunami impacted heavily on the population, it did draw the international community into this region which has definitely contributed to the improved human rights situation;
- The INGOs and bilateral donors have started to become more active in their lobbying and influencing international policies. The civil society is empowered to hold the government responsible for their failure to protect the population;
- Many people (especially youth) have left during the conflict and came back with a better education and also business ideas. They are better able to identify business potential and use their skills respectively.



## 5 Next Steps

It is important to realise that you have just completed the first step of designing an effective CT strategy. Understanding the conflict with all its facets and history is crucial for developing any proposals for change.

There are many different methodologies available to move from your current level of understanding of the conflict, to a full-fledged CT programme with a vision, objectives, activities, outputs, outcomes and ultimately impact indicators. It is not within the scope of this conflict analysis manual to provide full guidance on this, but some of the next steps are mentioned below.

While designing your strategy, please keep in mind that conflict transformation's guiding question is this: How do we end something not desired and build something we do desire? (John Paul Lederach). You have now seen the causes and context of the not desired kind of conflict, and the art is now to determine what a "desired" situation should be. We can then start strategizing and prioritizing our CT interventions, taking full account of the potential and limitations of peace at this point in time, and realizing our own and other's capacities.

### ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIALS FOR PEACE AND CHANGE

While in the conflict analysis we have identified the roots and dynamics of conflict, a similar exercise is needed to identify the potentials for peace and change. This assessment can follow a similar list of questions but would now focus on identifying entry points for change, finding windows of opportunity for peace. While every society has agents of conflict, gladly every society also has agents and resources for peace. For example, identifying actors that can be transformers of conflict to peace is equally important as identifying the actors of conflict, as we did. Also, in this peace analysis it is important to maintain a historical perception: what social, religious and political resources are and have been available in the society to foster non-violent social change? Who are the lobbyists of justice and respect? What is the potential of a change in national and global politics? Who is assisting the oppressed or vulnerable elements in society? How ready are people to change themselves? An analysis of the potential and agents for peace is equally important as the conflict analysis.

### VISIONS OF PEACE

Once we have understood and described the underlying and immediate causes of conflict and we know who the actors in the conflict are, and what the potential for change is, the next step is to visualize the future. What should peace look like and what are the main features of this peace? Which structural and proximate causes need to be addressed in order to have real, lasting peace? If the conflict is an opportunity for social change, what are the changes we would like to see in the near and distant future? What are the pre-conditions for peace? One methodology to help you visualizing the potential change is the "theory of change". It helps us plot our journey from where we are now to where we want to be. Or, to put it another way, it helps us answer the question: What is the change we are working for, and what needs to happen for the change to come about? What is the long-term, sustainable social change we want to help bring about? A theory of change starts at the end of the change process: with a long-term vision of success. This needs to be more than just a general statement of a mission or goal – it needs to be a detailed picture of what success would look like. What needs to happen for this change (or vision of success) to come? We then proceed to identify all the prior changes that must happen for the vision of success to be achieved. These are necessary preconditions for success which means that they all have to exist if the long term change is to be realized and sustainable. What needs to happen in order to achieve the pre-conditions? <sup>7</sup>

### FROM ANALYSIS TO A CT STRATEGY

Then, when the conflict and its causes have been analyzed, the potential for change identified, and the better future and its conditions visualized, it is important to start to see what must and can be done, and by whom. For this, it is crucial to go back to the conflict analysis and to make a logical bridge from the analysis to the formulation of a country-specific conflict transformation strategy and policy.

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<sup>7</sup> Based upon Keystone, tool 2 Developing a theory for change at <http://www.keystoneaccountability.org/node/115>

### **THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT SET OF QUESTIONS ARE:**

1. What are the preconditions for achieving our vision (which you can find in your analysis) All of those things that are roots of the conflict need to be addressed in order to create lasting change.
2. Who should be doing what? On which part of the conflict are we currently working and what is the expected impact? What other projects are ongoing in the area that addresses some dimensions of the conflict? Which parts of the conflict and needs for social changes are not addressed by other actors? The answer to the last question will highlight the need to either find new partners for addressing this dimension or to see if ICCO & Kerk in Actie partners can refocus or expand.
3. What can realistically be achieved, given the current capacities? What is the timeframe? What are we really good at and what are our weaknesses? How much funding can we obtain? How much political space do we have to initiate the desired changes? Who are the potential spoilers of our efforts and how will we engage them?

Partners should also be encouraged to explain why they choose for a particular activity in a context with scarce resources and this choice must be linked to the conflict analysis focusing on identifying transformation issues relating to attitude, behaviour and underlying structures. They should also explain in what ways they intend to strengthen the capacities of local actors and what consequences this might have on the transformation of the conflict. The bottom line is that partners need to reflect and describe what their expectations are with regard to the contribution to conflict transformation. What impact will they have? In what way does it address proximate and underlying causes? The ultimate question in CT remains: In using the conflict as an opportunity to create social change, what did we achieve?

### **MEASURING OUTCOME OR IMPACT:**

It is crucial to identify, based upon the above, what the intended outcome and impact will be and to allocate time and resources to measure this. While measuring transformation is not the easiest thing to do, the CT programme has aims and it can be measured in which way the ICCO funded projects influenced and contributed

to these goals. Based upon a thorough conflict analysis in one country, in one locality, it must be measured if the intended impact has been achieved, recognizing that partners can neither be fully held responsible for failures, nor can take all credit for the success. For more guidance on impact indicators, please consult the ICCO baseline on conflict transformation.

### **MUST DO**

1. Address local conflicts while ensuring links to national and international policies. Although some partners do, in most cases it is hard to find the linkages to the CT work at the national level to the local conflicts that derive from them. A good CT programme will always ensure these linkages.
2. CT stresses that conflict can be seen and used as an opportunity for social change. In each country, based on the conflict analysis, ICCO partners must explicitly describe how they want to use the conflict as a window of opportunity to stimulate change. It must also be made clear what types of changes will be worked on.
3. ICCO especially needs to reinforce its work on the structural causes.
4. Develop more activities to mobilize religious resources for CT.
5. Be gender-sensitive.
6. Measure impact.

## Annex A Recommendations to improve CT

*Based upon the baseline on CT in 2006*

1. There is an overall lack of impact indicators and therefore a lack of measuring impact. This is one of the most urgent issues to address for ICCO.
2. The necessity to work on all 3 corners of the conflict triangle (behaviour, attitude and context).
3. To undertake one national and several local conflict analyses and to base the strategy on the outcome, with a special focus on addressing root causes and underlying structures of the specific conflict(s).
4. To implement a comprehensive set of conflict transformation focused activities in one country.
5. To ensure that all levels of actors are involved and to ensure that linkages between these actors are established and strengthened, horizontally as well as vertically.
6. To establish internal partnerships within ICCO (democratization, human rights, transitional support but also basic services, Fair Economic Development, etc.) and external partnerships in order to ensure effective implementation of the conflict transformation strategy.
7. To focus on transforming negative relationships and violent political, social, religious and economic structures, also building on the organization's strength to work with and through religious organizations in achieving this goal.
8. Conflict analysis needs to be more thorough, in-depth and detailed and should explicitly inform strategy and policies. It is advised to do this in close consultation with the partners, possibly through a workshop with all partners at the national levels. The existing conflict analysis manual should be rewritten into a more practical and applicable tool.
9. ICCO needs to work more on underlying structures and root causes of conflict in order to further evolve from conflict resolution to conflict transformation.
10. ICCO does not work with private sector actors which should be developed as part of working on economic empowerment but also to lay the foundations for future FED, etc., work.
11. ICCO should recognize its potential to mobilize religion as a vehicle for peace-building and social change processes.
12. In its programmes, ICCO should pay more attention to the linking between Track 1, 2 and 3 actors.
13. Gender dimensions of CT should be brought out more systematically in conflict analysis, strategies, activities and impact evaluations.
14. ICCO should engage youth organizations as partners in order to ensure their inclusion in the CT strategy and programmes.
15. ICCO is advised to start working on economic development at the very early stages of CT, as it is a root cause to many conflicts and is one of the causes of continuous asymmetric relationships which again fuel frustration and hatred that might result in violent behaviour.
16. Increasing work on context will be a challenge as these are huge issues, and addressing them requires more serious investments. Partnering with other actors and influencing their policies might be one approach to this, but also additional resource mobilization through the UN and other actors in the countries should be developed.

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