



From conflict analysis to peacebuilding impact

Lessons from the People's Peacemaking Perspectives project

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Report by Saferworld and Conciliation Resources

March 2012

About the People's Peacemaking Perspectives project

The People's Peacemaking Perspectives project is a joint initiative implemented by Conciliation Resources and Saferworld and financed under the European Commission's Instrument for Stability. The project provides European Union institutions with analysis and recommendations based on the opinions and experiences of local people in a range of countries and regions affected by fragility and violent conflict.

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Civil society representatives from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire in discussion at Mano River Union workshop, Freetown, 2011
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Executive summary

"It is very important for analysis to reflect the experience of those most affected by conflict, because if someone goes through crisis or conflict only they know what they have been through. It is important to hear their views and base future actions on that information."

President of local development organisation, Pakistan

This report presents key messages and findings from the People's Peacemaking Perspectives (PPP) project. They are relevant not only to European Union (EU) actors working in or on conflict-affected and fragile states and the peacebuilding community, but to anyone who recognises the importance of conflict analysis and is striving to do – and use – it more effectively.

The People's Peacemaking Perspectives (PPP) project was a joint initiative implemented by Conciliation Resources and Saferworld, in collaboration with a number of local actors and financed by the EU under the Instrument for Stability. It responded to an EU call for field-based conflict analysis from a range of contexts of conflict and instability around the world. Over 18 months our two organisations conducted 18 studies across a range of contexts. All sought to reflect the perspectives of those most closely affected by conflict through participatory approaches.

Saferworld and Conciliation Resources are non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working internationally on programmes and policies relating to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Participation and local ownership are core values in our work. For the PPP project we worked alongside local actors and organisations, some of them established partners. These relationships were central to the project's success.

Beyond research and analysis, the project sought to build the capacity of local actors to articulate their needs, views and ideas to decision makers and created opportunities for this to happen; through advocacy training, in-country meetings with national and EU officials, as well as by bringing local actors to Brussels and other EU capitals for face-to-face meetings. In so doing, we aimed to raise awareness among local actors that their views and ideas are legitimate and to convey to policymakers the need to listen to local voices. We sought to ensure that these contacts and channels of communication will continue beyond the project.

The number of locations in which we worked and the range of methods used across the two NGOs offered a rich seam of experience from which to draw lessons about the participatory approaches we employed. Through a learning process, we tested our assumptions about the kind of analysis that results from participatory approaches and documented their challenges and benefits. Our conclusions are presented in this final publication, along with some broader lessons about conflict analysis for donors, in particular the EU.

The PPP project was highly ambitious in scope and scale. In 18 months it has established that there is more work to be done to ensure that EU conflict response strategies are informed by the views and voices of people and communities living with conflict and poor governance. Conciliation Resources and Saferworld are committed to applying the lessons from this project in our future work, sharing them with a wider audience and taking forward this work with others, including the EU.

Key messages

1. Conflict analysis should be at the heart of international engagement in all conflict-affected and fragile contexts.

International actors need to base their strategies on an informed understanding of the local context, in order to improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions, as well as to ensure that all interventions have a positive impact on or, at the very least, 'do no harm' to local peace and conflict dynamics. This begins with adequate conflict analysis. Yet, at present this is neither systematic, nor standard practice, particularly within EU institutions. More work is needed to raise awareness and understanding among potential 'users' of conflict analysis about its purpose, how to do it and who should do it, as well as of the range of approaches and tools available.

The institution or organisation commissioning or undertaking the analysis needs to be clear on their aims and its purpose. Different forms of research and analysis are required for different needs; no single conflict analysis can meet them all and encompass all dimensions of a conflict. This may involve, for example, decisions about whether the analysis is designed to inform short-term responses to immediate crises, or longer-term assessments of how to address the root causes of conflict.

The approach adopted in the PPP was 'bottom-up': to start with the perspectives of ordinary people on the opportunities for, and obstacles to, peace. The breadth and depth of participation varied according to a range of factors, whether access, time or resources. In some cases the analyses focused on the perspectives of marginalised groups, such as youth. In others the analysis covered issues neglected by other research, such as the regional dimension of the Lord's Resistance Army conflict, or raised new perspectives on a familiar topic, such as the *jirga* system in North West Pakistan. In all cases, the research encouraged people to think about the underlying issues driving instability or inhibiting peace, rather than immediate crises and 'symptoms'.

Inevitably, the research showed that in some cases people did not share the same views or memories, or come to the same conclusions about what the conflicts were about or how best to respond to them. The final reports tended to show a spectrum of perspectives. More often than not the analysis, conclusions and some of the recommendations, were developed by Saferworld and Conciliation Resources teams, based on the overall findings and their extensive knowledge of the context, but reviewed and validated by key partners in country. In some cases this raised questions about how far participation can go without more investment in developing the skills, particularly in analysis, among local actors in country. It also raised questions about whether the analysis seeks consensus, or rather deliberately exposes dissent and challenges the standard, consensus view of a conflict.



Karamojong women participate in a focus group discussion on conflict and security concerns in Moroto District, Uganda
© KATIE HARRIS

Teams navigated these challenges and choices throughout the research. However, the experience convinced us that approaches that emphasise and amplify local voices and perspectives should be, at the very least, considered alongside other forms of conflict analysis by those planning conflict prevention or peacebuilding strategies and interventions. The findings offered decision makers analyses and responses, which are qualitatively different to more expert and elite perspectives on a conflict.

2. Pay more attention to the *process* of conflict analysis.

The process of participatory conflict analysis can have a peacebuilding value in itself. In several locations, workshops and discussion groups created opportunities for dialogue, reflection, interaction and the building of trust between people. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, where ethnic division persists, many young people expressed their appreciation of the opportunity to meet their peers from different ethnic backgrounds and understand each other's perspectives. In Senegal, the discussions were, according to the workshop participants, the first time non-state and state actors had met to reflect on the conflict. In contexts affected by conflict and violence, people will often not speak openly about what they really think and have experienced. The trust built through participatory approaches can increase the degree of 'disclosure', thus leading to a more insightful final analysis.

The process of reflection, through both analytical workshops and advocacy training, can help people to understand the factors affecting their situation and articulate potential responses. As such, it helps them understand that they are not just victims, but potentially actors with influence over their situation. In several cases, teams found that participants who initially expressed resignation as to what they could do about their situation, produced ideas and suggestions for action as the discussions went on. In some locations, involving donor representatives (in particular EU delegation staff) in workshops with civil society helped mutual understanding of respective concerns and constraints and produced more realistic ideas for action.

Conducting *participatory* conflict analysis also posed a number of challenges, many of which are common to participatory research more broadly. The selection of participants required sensitive and informed choices, in order to ensure a balanced representation of views in workshops and interviews, and clarity and transparency in our claims of whose views we were representing. Trusted local partners, or contacts with local knowledge and languages, were invaluable. In Yemen, the research took place as the popular uprising unfolded, and the local partner's advice and facilitation of access were essential. Where we had to build up these relationships from the start, we found that we needed more time to undertake the research and that there were greater challenges in verifying the findings.

In many cases, time and resources posed constraints on the extent of participation and the results gathered from the project indicate that, to get the full peacebuilding value of deeper and broader participatory conflict analysis, the process should be neither one-off, nor short-term. It also showed that international NGOs and academics with a track record and established partnerships in a particular context, can often undertake forms of research and access areas and populations that governmental and multilateral actors cannot. They are thus important partners in efforts to understand conflicts and build more effective prevention and peacebuilding responses.

3. Conflict analysis should include a focus on *responses*

The design of conflict analysis should build in a focus on responses, in order for analysis to inform conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. During the PPP we found that putting as much emphasis on *peacebuilding* analysis as on *conflict* analysis meant the research led more easily to ideas for responses. Rather than a sole focus on the features and causes of a conflict, the discussions looked at what could be done to build peace, who should do it and how. The approach was more motivating for participants, not least because it offered them a chance

to consider what they think should be done differently and what their own role might be in overcoming the conflict. In the case of the Lebanon and Sierra Leone – Liberia studies, the methodology was directly focused on learning the lessons of past efforts to end and manage conflict.

At the project outset, the EU made explicit its desire for “concrete and practical policy recommendations”, putting the onus on our two organisations to look at existing and potential EU responses in our research. It required us to broaden our own, and local participants’ knowledge about EU institutions, policies and actions to date, how they use analysis and how to influence them. For example, at the project outset a session on ‘EU Institutions and Processes’ was held for Saferworld and Conciliation Resources staff. During advocacy workshops with local actors and partners prior to meetings in Brussels, staff and partners devoted time to understanding EU decision making and relevant policies. We found that investing in local people, through advocacy training and organising direct contact with decision makers, was an important means to enable realistic recommendations to emerge and ensure fruitful exchange between policymakers and local actors.

The request for ‘actionable’ recommendations also pointed to a potential weakness in conflict analysis, whereby it stops at the analysis of the problem, leaving the end users, often busy policy makers, with the task of interpreting the implications of the analysis for their actions. Yet, there are many more reasons why analysis fails to inform effective responses. Producing good analysis is part of, but not the same as, designing and implementing good peacebuilding strategies; the skills required for each differ. Staff with competencies in both areas should be involved in the process of conflict analysis. Furthermore, organisations and institutions, which are serious about using conflict analysis to inform action, also need to allocate suitable time and priority to considering how to apply the findings to their area of work.

Participation in conflict analysis should apply not only to local actors, but also to those commissioning it. In order to increase ownership and investment in the findings and recommendations, the end users should be included and involved in the design and analytical process. Therefore, for the EU to see concrete changes in its policies and programmes on the basis of sound analysis, its staff need to be involved in key stages of the process.

Yet, ultimately, sustainable solutions to complex conflicts are those that are locally owned and locally led, and there are limits to the EU’s influence in these contexts. People living with conflict not only have a particular understanding of, and insights into, its history, drivers and dynamics, but they also have ideas for, and roles to play, in its resolution. Participatory processes, such as those deployed under the PPP, reinforce the importance of supporting local actors in finding solutions to conflict.

The report contains the following recommendations for donors and other institutions to use conflict analysis more effectively:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Undertake different forms of research and analysis for different needs**
- 2. Think carefully about who has ‘ownership’ and ‘agency’ of research and analysis**
- 3. Ensure that the *process* is appropriate, not only the end product**
- 4. Encourage analysis to focus on potential solutions, not only describe the problem**
- 5. Prioritise and make space within the institution to translate analysis into responses**
- 6. Support participatory conflict analysis as a peacebuilding intervention**

Introduction

IN RECENT YEARS, the international community has increasingly recognised the importance of peacebuilding and conflict prevention both for its own sake – so that people may live peaceful, secure lives regardless of their circumstances – and as a pre-condition for wider economic and social development. This requires international actors not only to improve the quality and quantity of their support for peacebuilding interventions, but also to ensure that all interventions, whether they are primarily concerned with aid, trade, politics, or security, have a positive impact (or at the very least ‘do no harm’) on local peace and conflict dynamics. This, in turn, requires international actors to base their strategies and actions on an informed understanding of conflict dynamics in the country, which begins with adequate conflict analysis.



Focus group, Kenya
© JAMES NDUNG’U/SAFERWORLD

Between October 2010 and March 2012, Conciliation Resources and Saferworld¹ undertook a total of 18 conflict analyses around the world as part of the ‘People’s Peacemaking Perspectives’ (PPP) project, which was funded by the European Union. As its name suggests, the PPP project emphasised the need to understand the perspectives of ordinary people on the opportunities for and obstacles to peace, in contrast to conflict analyses that rely more on expert and elite perspectives on a conflict. The project thus sought to carry out more participatory forms of conflict analyses, though the form that this participation took and the methodologies that were employed differed considerably, depending on the focus of the report, the context in the country or region and the varying level of resources available.

The PPP thus provides a rich seam of experiences from which to draw lessons about conflict analysis: How can we design, implement and use the findings of conflict analysis more effectively? What are the benefits (and challenges) of broadening public involvement in conflict analysis and of presenting and analysing a wider range of perspectives? And what are the challenges?



Focus group of young people in
Khorog, Tajikistan
© ERAJ SODATSAIROV

This report summarises the experiences and lessons learned from the PPP project. It should be of interest to anyone who is involved in conflict analysis, whether as an implementer, designer, manager or user of conflict analysis, or indeed as a participant in conflict-related research. As such, it should be relevant not only to EU actors working in or on conflict-affected and fragile states and the peacebuilding community, but to anyone who recognises the importance of conflict analysis and is striving to do – and use – this analysis more effectively.

The report is structured into three main sections. Section 1 provides an overview of the PPP, explaining what activities took place within the project, how they were designed and why they were designed in this way. The largest section of the report, Section 2, brings together all of the key lessons that have been generated by the PPP. It starts by exploring the motivations and uses of conflict analysis, then looks at what it means to undertake ‘participatory’ conflict analysis, moves on to the impacts of broadening involvement in conflict analysis and finishes with a summary of some of the key challenges and considerations that have arisen during the design and implementation of PPP studies. The final section, Section 3, then discusses these lessons from a donor perspective, identifying a number of challenges that regularly occur regarding conflict analysis and suggesting what can be done to overcome these challenges. Further information about the project is provided in the Annexes.

¹ In this report, the term ‘we’ refers to Conciliation Resources and Saferworld collectively.

SECTION 1

The People's Peacemaking Perspectives (PPP) project

THE PEOPLE'S PEACEMAKING PERSPECTIVES (PPP) PROJECT was an 18-month project, sponsored by the European Union, which began in October 2010 and finished in March 2012. It was designed in response to a call for proposals from the EU's Instrument for Stability, which sought to fund a limited number of organisations to undertake conflict analyses in various contexts around the world. Hence, at its most basic, the PPP could be described as a project that has undertaken 18 conflict analyses – twelve country-specific analyses and six regional/cross-border analyses – leading to the delivery of a range of analytical reports and associated policy briefs (see Annex 1 for further information on the location and content of each analysis).

From the start, however, the PPP was conceived to go beyond the minimum requirement for a number of written products. It sought to add value in various ways and to achieve other, complementary objectives at the same time. These related to five main areas:

- Broadening involvement in the analysis process
- Supporting the translation of analysis into action (by the EU, ourselves and our partners)
- Building the capacity and profile of in-country civil society organisations
- Informing our own understanding and future programming in each location
- Strengthening our own (and others') approach to and use of conflict analysis

Regarding the first objective, Saferworld and Conciliation Resources both had considerable previous experience in undertaking conflict analysis and in interpreting and acting upon others' analysis. From this experience, we shared similar views in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of conflict analysis as it is commonly conceived. Thus, the PPP was deliberately intended to offer something different that could complement some of the 'standard' forms of conflict analysis and address some of their weaknesses (see Section 2.1 for a more detailed discussion). In particular, the PPP was designed to broaden involvement in conflict analysis beyond some of the 'usual suspects' – both in terms of those who *do* the analysis and those who are *consulted* as part of the analysis. This was informed by both organisations' commitment to the principle of 'participatory approaches' and our desire to be more participatory in our own analysis processes; Section 2.1 below explains how this was implemented. Much of the learning in this paper has been achieved thanks to this commitment to broadening involvement.

Secondly, from our previous experiences we were well aware of the risk that even well-received analyses sometimes do not appear to translate into any notable changes to policy and practice. There are several reasons that this can happen, as discussed in more detail below (see Section 2). One obvious reason, however, is that agencies struggle to translate detailed contextual analysis into practical changes that are within their power to effect. The PPP therefore undertook to produce an EU-focused policy brief for each analysis. Each brief summarises the main findings in a short, more accessible format and offers a number of 'key outcomes' – four or five areas in which the EU can seek to have a positive impact on peacebuilding through its actions. The potential benefits of this approach were underlined through early contacts with EU representatives in Brussels who emphasised their interest in receiving 'actionable' recommendations from the PPP.

Another aspect of supporting the translation of analysis into action was to ensure that relevant stakeholders were aware of, interested in and, as far as possible, supportive of the research and its findings. The most visible element of this work is the advocacy activities that have been held to launch each report, in Brussels and/or in country. However, considerable work was also done to engage key stakeholders, particularly in EU Delegations, early in the process, starting from the process of agreeing the design and focus of each individual analysis – this was often time-consuming but very beneficial, as discussed in Section 2.

The third objective concerns the capacity and profile of local civil society organisations (CSOs). In most locations, we had existing relations with local CSOs as part of ongoing programmes. We therefore tried to avoid working with local CSOs in a purely 'extractive' or 'functional' manner, i.e. seeing them solely in a support function that helps us to achieve our goals. As far as possible, we sought to design and implement the analysis process in a way that was in line with their objectives and helped to strengthen their capacity to undertake conflict analysis or elements thereof; it should be noted, however, that this has varied according to the skills, capacity and focus of the organisation (see Section 2.4).

Local CSOs' capacity to undertake advocacy and their resulting profile were also seen as integral to the PPP from the start. We thus prepared an 'Advocacy Capacity Building Toolkit', which was used as the basis to support partners to develop their advocacy skills. This included running training workshops on advocacy for partners and research participants in eight contexts.² These workshops also increased participants' knowledge of and familiarity with EU structures and processes, both at delegation level and in Brussels. All of this was intended to support less experienced partners in playing a leading role in events to promote the findings of each analysis. In many cases, partners also had opportunities to engage with international and local decision makers earlier in the process, for example when EU officials attended analysis workshops. Hence, the PPP as a whole offered a number of opportunities for partners to strengthen their profile and build relationships, both with a range of local stakeholders and with the EU and other donors.

Fourthly, we saw the PPP as a means of informing and strengthening our own programming in each location. While the analysis was primarily intended for other actors, it is also invaluable for informing our own understanding of the context: analysing not only conflict dynamics but also, as discussed in Section 2.1, the opportunities for peacebuilding. Hence, the PPP has significantly informed our own programming strategies in each place. The analysis process has also helped us to strengthen our relationships with existing partners and in many places to expand our range of partnerships and contacts. The considerable investment in advocacy should also strengthen future programming, thanks to the actor analysis and relationships developed through the PPP.

Lastly – but by no means least – with 18 analyses in different contexts in a relatively limited time span, the PPP provided a golden opportunity to strengthen our own (and others') approach to and use of conflict analysis. A lesson-learning process was thus built into the PPP from the start (see the start of Section 2 for details). This included a commitment to produce a '19th paper' – this report – to draw together the lessons from the PPP and make them available to others who are committed to, or interested in, improving how they undertake conflict analysis and act upon the results.

In summary, when the PPP was designed, we thought about its benefits and impact not only in terms of its final 'products' – the written reports – but also in terms of changes that could be achieved through the way in which the whole project was carried out. Simply put, the *process* of the PPP is as relevant as the final *outputs*. As the rest of this report will show, the lessons learning process has deepened our understanding of 'analysis as process, not only product' and the possible peacebuilding impact of the analysis process. This has underlined to us the importance of designing conflict analyses in a way that takes this process into account.



Saferworld and Conciliation Resources staff members at the first of three learning workshops over the course of the PPP project, January 2011

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² Bosnia and Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Central Asia, Liberia and Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Western Balkans, Yemen and a workshop in London for Georgian and Abkhaz participants.

SECTION 2

Lessons from the PPP

THIS SECTION OF THE REPORT SUMMARISES THE LESSONS LEARNT across all aspects of the PPP programme, including all stages of the analysis process and the additional activities that were built into the programme (see Section 1), such as advocacy events in Brussels and in country and advocacy capacity building workshops. The lessons learning process included: an initial review of existing practices and tools, leading to guidance for the teams undertaking each analysis (see Annex 2); two learning workshops attended by approximately 40–50 staff from across our two institutions, to which several external guests were also invited as speakers and participants to challenge our thinking; and interviews with staff and consultants who had been involved in various analyses. This is thus, primarily, an internally driven exercise and does not claim to be 'objective'; an external evaluation of the PPP will be completed after the programme formally ends.

For the purposes of this report, the lessons have been drawn together into four sections, each of which corresponds to questions that we have regularly asked ourselves throughout the PPP – questions which should be relevant for any individual or institution that is involved in commissioning, implementing, or using conflict analyses:

- 2.1 What is conflict analysis and who and what is it for?
- 2.2 What does it mean to undertake 'participatory' conflict analysis?
- 2.3 What is the impact of broadening involvement in conflict analysis?
- 2.4 What challenges and considerations have we addressed when designing and implementing conflict analyses?



Mixed focus group in Taiz, Yemen
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2.1

What is conflict analysis and who and what is it for?

Conflict analysis is a means to understand better the complex dynamics of a conflict, set of conflicts, or situation of instability. Most commonly, it is undertaken or commissioned by external institutions, such as donors or foreign ministries for their own purposes, and by NGOs that work in conflict-affected and fragile environments.

In the case of the PPP, the research was commissioned by the European Commission, which had expressed a desire for conflict analysis and to improve the depth and quality of information on various conflict contexts in order to inform future programming.³ However, while EU bodies were the primary 'end user' for the PPP, we tried as far as possible to design the analysis in such a way that it was also useful for others. Hence, while the policy briefs were deliberately EU-focused, the longer analytical reports often had a more general audience of international and (educated) local stakeholders in mind. Moreover, the analyses also informed our own programme planning.

In theory, however, conflict analysis is often equally, if not more relevant to local actors who are ultimately those most affected by any conflict and who usually have the greatest role in resolving it and building peace. One of the most important lessons, that gradually became clearer during the PPP, is that if a participatory approach is adopted and properly designed, the conflict analysis process has great potential as a peacebuilding tool (see Section 2.3), with the PPP only scratching the surface of what could be possible. Thus a purely 'extractive' process, whereby local participants are involved only insofar as they provide information for international actors, misses a potential opportunity for peacebuilding.

This raises the question whether conflict analysis processes could even be designed expressly for the benefit of local people, rather than for international actors. Or perhaps there are two different forms and purposes of conflict analysis – one where the primary end user is an international institution, the other where the main beneficiaries are local – which are closely related, but separate. This question is discussed further in Section 3. In our own research, the end user determined how much local people were involved at all stages in the process (see Section 2.2).

Where conflict analysis is for international actors, its primary purpose is most commonly expressed as a means to formulate more effective programming and policy responses, which are sensitive to the conflict dynamics and have a positive peacebuilding impact. However, in practice this does not always happen – and non-governmental actors, as well as state institutions, can struggle to translate high-quality conflict analysis into conflict-sensitive programming.

The reason for this can relate to the institutions themselves; issues around structures, incentives, bureaucratic blockages and inertia that can hinder the best intentions. Another problem is that translating detailed analysis of a complex situation into tangible actions is difficult and so decision makers either struggle, or do not even try to do so. Too much available analysis can also inhibit action: at the start of the PPP, several teams reported that internationals based in country appeared to be suffering from 'analysis fatigue' and had to be persuaded that the PPP would offer them something new and useful. This was particularly true regarding conflicts with a higher political profile, which already generate more reports and workshops that are vying for attention.

³ The 'Outline of planned activities and Instructions for Submission of Concept Notes' for this funding (Ref: PAMF 2009) states that the Commission would provide support to "actions with international and/or trans-regional reach, with a focus on priority crisis countries and on: (i) raising global and local awareness of the existence of the crises in the different countries; (ii) providing independent, high-quality, field-based analysis of each crisis; (iii) proposing concrete and practical policy recommendations that can contribute to the resolution of each crisis, and (iv) seeking to mobilise global and local political will to act on the recommendations, *inter alia*, through high-level advocacy, briefings and policy advice."

The PPP tried to address these challenges in the following ways:

- By increasing the range and quality of information and perspectives on which analysis is based,
- By analysing responses and solutions, not only problems and causes.

The research undertaken sought to offer something different by focusing on issues or perspectives that are often overlooked or less researched. Often this meant getting away from capital cities and political centres towards more 'peripheral' areas – areas often at the heart of the conflict. For example, when designing the Transnistria conflict analysis it was felt that 'standard' representations of the conflict tended to concentrate on high-level politics and geopolitics and that the views of many ordinary people living on either side of the Nistru river were under-represented; our analysis therefore sought to canvass the views of local residents in these areas. The Bosnia and Herzegovina and Central Asia studies examined the views of youth, who have a potentially pivotal influence on future stability, yet whose views have not been regularly sought or considered. Similarly, there are numerous other groups and communities, such as women, minority ethnic or religious groups, border communities or small businesses, whose views are central to an understanding of instability or conflict and potential responses.

"Nobody has ever asked about young people's opinions."

Group discussion, Tajikistan

In some cases the PPP also addressed issues of overlapping conflicts through regional conflict analyses. These were expressly informed by the recognition that these conflicts do not fall within national boundaries (see Annex 1 for the full list of studies). The study of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) conflict spanned the border areas of three countries affected by the conflict and highlighted the complex regional dynamics at play. In West Africa, the regional approach made the choice of focus more difficult, given the number of interlocking issues. While the key strength of the Transnistria analysis was that it focused on local-level dynamics, it needed to be complemented with interviews to provide insights into the wider geopolitical dimensions of the conflict, such as the relationships between Chisinau (capital of Moldova), Tiraspol (capital of the unrecognised Pridnestrovian Moldovan Republic), Moscow, the EU (particularly Berlin), and the US.

The PPP also sought to look as much at responses and possible solutions to the conflict(s) as the causes of conflict and the problems that conflict has generated. By doing so, it addressed the risk that conflict analyses unintentionally hinder peacebuilding by painting such a complex picture of the conflict that it is hard for the intended audience to know what can be done. It also allowed for analysis of the success or failure of past responses in addressing underlying conflict drivers. Framing research as 'peacebuilding analysis' can also help to focus on what can be changed in future, not only on why things are the way they are. This can make the process more attractive and less intrusive to local participants, and help them to think through their own role in the conflict and desires for the future. In Yemen, participants were encouraged to look at the factors driving the protests and their ideas for more peaceful and legitimate state – society relations. The resulting study was described as youth perspectives on peacebuilding, and brought out some interesting ideas from young people about their own role in building the future that may not have been generated by a conflict analysis.

"One thing we were pleasantly surprised about was how constructive the youth were about finding solutions to the conflict. It surprised us and many Yemenis when we produced findings that showed that young people do have a grasp of the conflict and very credible ideas for resolving it."

Saleem Haddad, Yemen programme, Saferworld

Furthermore, in some contexts it is inadvisable to talk about 'conflict', either because the word is politically sensitive, or because it is associated only with *live, violent* conflict – in such cases, discussing 'peacebuilding' and how 'tensions' can be addressed may be a more productive line of enquiry.

PPP researchers at a meeting with villagers in Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan
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2.2

What does it mean to undertake 'participatory' conflict analysis?

A key lesson from the PPP is that different forms and 'depths' of participation may be appropriate at different stages of the conflict analysis process. Before discussing this finding in detail, therefore, it is helpful first to outline how these different stages fit together.

For the purposes of this report, the process of undertaking a conflict analysis has been split up into four broad stages; no doubt there are other ways of presenting the different stages, but this is useful for a discussion of participation and analysis.⁴ Thus, the four stages are:

Design → Research → Analysis → Dissemination/advocacy

- The **design** phase: Decisions are made about the focus, scope and objectives of the report, who will be consulted and who will participate at each subsequent stage.
- The **research** phase: Research activities such as interviews, focus groups and workshops are carried out to collect primary data; desk research is usually also carried out to gather secondary data.
- The **analysis** phase: All of the data that have been collected are synthesised, analysed and a written analytical report is prepared; often, the final part of the analysis phase is to develop recommendations on possible responses by one or more institutions to the challenges identified in the report (e.g. how can an institution re-design its programme strategy to have a greater peacebuilding impact).
- The **dissemination** phase: The findings and any recommendations from the analysis are shared with key stakeholders proactively, through advocacy activities that seek to ensure that they are aware of the analysis and are encouraged to engage with its implications more deeply, or more 'passively' (i.e. simply providing them with a copy of the written report).

⁴ Monitoring/evaluation/lessons learning' constitutes an additional phase. At all stages in the process, it is important to reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of the analysis, identify gaps for future study and ways to improve future research and analysis processes. In this sense, conflict analysis should be understood as continuous and ever-improvable, rather than a one-off document. However, for the purposes of this report it is easier to discuss conflict analysis according to the four stages presented here.

We work closely with CSOs in every country and context in which we operate. As such, every analysis had some degree of local CSO involvement in all or most stages of the process, though the scope and depth of this involvement differed considerably according to context, our partners' strengths and weaknesses – and indeed our own strengths and weaknesses. It was clear from the start that there is no 'perfect' form for this engagement, and there are various reasons why it may not be appropriate for the whole process to be thoroughly 'locally owned', as discussed below. The following sub-sections look at the issues that arise at each stage and give examples of how the PPP addressed each issue.

2.2.1 The design phase

The question of how 'representative' the analysis should be is certain to arise from early in the design phase – and the decisions that are made are often questioned once the final report is presented (i.e. 'whose views does this report represent?'). Given the PPP's commitment to participation, this issue was given particular consideration. Ultimately, this led towards greater clarity about the purposes of 'participatory' analysis and the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.

The issue of representativeness revolves around the question of 'breadth versus depth'.⁵ In 'broad' participation, the ideal is to ensure that all different groups have been *consulted* and thus that a full range of opinions is represented – including views that may be offensive or unpalatable – but it does not necessarily imply any forms of participation beyond basic consultation. By contrast, 'deep' participation emphasises a *shared analysis* process between key partners and stakeholders, leading to *shared ownership* of the findings. These are not necessarily mutual exclusive and are perhaps better thought of as a spectrum, with a decision made for each analysis as to where to lie on the scale. Nor are they the same thing, however, and simply labelling a conflict analysis as 'participatory' may obscure as much as it reveals. The important thing is to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each approach and choose appropriately.

The advantage of 'broad' participation is that – if done well – it can plausibly claim to represent the views of all or many sections of the population. Ideally, such analysis would also be based on perception surveys which provide quantitative data, with more qualitative research methods, such as focus groups and interviews, providing more detail. In the case of the PPP, however, it was not possible to undertake perception surveys for reasons of costs and time, but also local sensitivities: in Pakistan, partners advised against this approach in the local context; in Yemen, the crisis made a survey approach unfeasible.

There are a number of weaknesses to which 'broad' analyses can be susceptible, which should be borne in mind:

- 'Representatives' of a community may be less representative than they claim to be, or the researchers believe them to be. For example, it is usually dangerous to assume that educated, capital-based NGOs can speak for 'civil society' as a whole. The choice of 'target' participants is thus critical and researchers must avoid picking the 'usual suspects'.
- Such research is often limited by 'gatekeepers' – people in positions of authority relative to others within their community (such as 'community leaders', elders, local officials), who overtly, or more covertly, influence who the researchers have access to and what kind of responses they receive. This can be mitigated to some extent when researchers (or their partners) have a strong network of contacts in target communities and can steer through the social and political sensitivities.

⁵ This paper does not attempt to precisely define different forms of participation as 'broad' or 'deep'; rather, these words are used to illustrate a distinction between two different approaches and ideal types of participation, in order to demonstrate the considerations that come into play during the design and implementation of such analyses.

- Similarly, people may choose not to participate for a variety of reasons, or may participate but not share their views entirely openly or honestly. Researchers can try various methods to make their research more accessible and attractive to such target groups, but they must also be conscious that it is not always possible to achieve 'equal' representation and must avoid skewing the final analysis as a result.

By contrast, the strength of 'deep' participation is that most or all of the participants feel ownership of the analysis, including, ideally, the ultimate findings and any recommendations. This can include not only local non-governmental partners, but also local and international decision makers. Many PPP studies invited relevant officials from EU Delegations to attend research activities; this was found to be beneficial not only in terms of the extra perspective they could offer, but also in terms of them taking a greater interest and making an investment in the analysis during the research process (rather than simply receiving the report at the end). In the case of West Africa, the EU Head of Delegation to Sierra Leone attended part of a workshop in Freetown, which helped enhance mutual understanding: for the EU – of local perspectives and concerns; and for the participants – of EU actions, priorities and constraints. At a later stage the draft policy brief was shared with EU delegation staff in Liberia and Sierra Leone and their inputs reflected in the final product. Hence, deeper participation can build a wider constituency of people who support the findings of an analysis, including those with the greatest power to act on these findings.



Civil society representatives in discussion at Mano River Union workshop, Freetown, 2011
© AUBREY WADE

The main challenge with deeper participation is that there is great potential for disagreement amongst participants. It is perhaps unsurprising that discussions of long-seated violence and conflict can struggle to find agreement on issues that are deeply divisive within society more generally. As a general rule, the wider the circle of participants, the harder it becomes to reach common views. Of course, conflict analysis does not have to conclude with a unified analysis of the situation that is supported by all: it can be extremely useful simply to summarise the key issues and points of division, thus highlighting the gaps between how different groups perceive a conflict, its causes and what can be done to improve the situation. This is the approach of Conciliation Resources' *Accord* methodology, which was used for some of the PPP analyses. Similarly, the researchers working on an analysis of border disputes in the Western Balkans (led by Saferworld) soon recognised that it would not be possible to reach a common understanding across the board: the format of the report thus sought to present contrasting perspectives on each border dispute without passing comment on the validity of each view.

Where there is no shared analysis, however, whose role or right is it to identify recommendations for change? For the final PPP policy briefs, we took this role upon ourselves as discussed below. Yet this highlights an important lesson, which is that it is important to ask oneself at the outset what the role of an organisation like Conciliation Resources or Saferworld is in the analysis: how much are we *doing* the analysis ourselves, and how much are we *facilitating* other people to come to a better understanding of the conflict and possible responses?

Another lesson is that since these are not the same thing, we must be very clear about what forms of participation we have employed, why, and how this has affected our analysis. For example, the Yemen team acknowledged that while their research was extremely relevant and insightful, for numerous reasons it was limited in scope – and they were thus aware of the risks that readers would interpret the findings to be more universal than they actually were. It was therefore important to be upfront about the methodology and its limitations. In fact, every conflict analysis should be explicit both in explaining its methodology and acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of that approach.

Towards the end of the PPP, we began to ask ourselves whether it was actually helpful to describe their work in terms of 'participatory conflict analysis' at all. As discussed above, participation can actually mean several different things. Describing research as 'participatory' may inadvertently mislead or confuse others who have understood the term differently from the forms of participation that have in fact been employed, or the degree of participation at all

stages of the analysis process. Hence, it may sometimes be better to present such analyses as a way of highlighting the views of inaccessible and marginalised groups, rather than claiming that they are 'participatory' *per se*.

Indeed, in many cases, PPP studies dealt with the issue of representativeness not by trying to be fully representative in themselves, but to make the overall body of knowledge regarding a particular conflict more balanced. They focused on the perspectives of those whose views are currently under-represented in existing narratives about the conflict (internally and/or internationally), such as women, youth and groups that are marginalised because of their location, religion or ethnicity, as in the Transnistria example quoted in Section 2.1. In the case of the Georgian – Abkhaz context, the policy brief represented the (marginalised) views of those working on either side of the conflict divide to find non-violent ways to address the conflict. Hence, while the PPP studies were not always 'representative', they played an important role in broadening involvement in discourse about the conflicts.

We sought to increase the degree of participation at the design phase by engaging stakeholders – partners, donors and other participants – in identifying the focus of the analysis. For example, one of the first steps in the Lebanon research was an 'electronic consultation' with a wide range of contacts, which asked them to identify the three main issues that they thought were most important and useful to analyse. Similarly, as mentioned earlier, the Liberia – Sierra Leone and West Africa regional conflict analyses were informed by an early workshop in Freetown, which asked very broad questions about conflict dynamics, that then shaped the design of the main research phase. This helped to overcome initial scepticism from some in the EU delegations towards the project and to build ownership – or at least 'investment' – in the analysis, which increased their interest and willingness to engage in the PPP studies. Furthermore, Terms of Reference for all the studies were circulated to relevant staff in the delegations before work began, to allow for initial responses on the focus and scope. A lesson that might be drawn from this is that it is usually beneficial for those you want to act on the analysis to be engaged from early in the process. This should also be relevant for international and bilateral institutions that struggle with cross-institutional (cross-departmental) ownership of conflict analysis (see Section 3).



Young people take part in a focus group discussion in Murghab, Tajikistan
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2.2.2 The research phase

In one sense, the research phase was the most obviously participatory. Every study involved tens, sometimes hundreds of people in one form or another. In every case, the practicalities of organising and implementing the research were shared between our two organisations and local organisations or partners. Partners thus had varying degrees of control over some or all aspects of the research – in some cases, particularly where there were security concerns (such as in Yemen, Pakistan or the North Caucasus), all or nearly all the research was implemented by local partners.

In terms of methodologies and tools, both organisations had undertaken conflict analyses and similar research before and therefore had familiar methodologies that were felt to be 'tried and tested' and reasonably participatory in nature. For two of its studies (Sierra Leone/Liberia and Lebanon), Conciliation Resources research led to the production of editions of *Accord*, which document the lessons of peace processes. The *Accord* methodology is participatory, both editorially and in terms of activities. Its editorial methodology requires that authors and interviewees for the project publication encompass diverse disciplines and perspectives – both applied and analytical – and include researchers, activists, communities, marginalised voices, parties, practitioners and policymakers. Project workshops involve project contributors, authors and others to inform and complement the publication structure, content and outreach, including to develop collective conceptual understanding of the project, themes for practical learning and policy conclusions. Similarly, for their studies of the Lords' Resistance Army and West Africa, Conciliation Resources used a mixture of focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and workshops. External consultants were used to help organise and carry out the research. The policy brief on the Georgian-Abkhaz context drew from a range of participatory analysis sources, including focus groups on either side of the conflict divide and conclusions from an earlier perceptions survey among Internally Displaced Persons.

Similarly, the analyses led by Saferworld were based on a methodology that combines focus group discussions, key informant interviews (either with people who have specific responsibilities, knowledge or perspectives and/or with 'ordinary' people, to explore their views in more depth than other methods allow), and desk research. As noted above, while it was not possible to undertake new perception surveys under the PPP, some studies, such as Pakistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina, were explicitly designed to build on existing survey data.

It should be noted, however, that despite efforts to learn about participatory tools and approaches that are used in other sectors and to consider how they might be used in conflict analysis, the two organisations largely stuck to the methods and tools with which they were most familiar, though they did think through how such methods could be done in a way that encourages greater participation. Some staff expressed an effort in trying new methods in future, such as participatory video research and systemic action research, but explained that they had not felt confident to experiment during the short life span of the PPP.

Research teams also became more aware of the strengths and weaknesses of existing tools, in particular focus groups. It was noted that in very unstable environments, focus group discussions about the immediate security situation do not always produce 'objective' information. This is because when the situation is changing rapidly, people's views may be heavily influenced by recent events; thus a focus group on Monday may come to quite different conclusions from the same group of participants on Friday. By contrast, perceptions of and attitudes towards longer-term issues are less likely to fluctuate: hence a focus group discussion in Pakistan, on a topic such as the usefulness of different types of *jirga*, may be more revealing and 'reliable' than a discussion about recent violence.

Other weaknesses of focus groups were also identified. Some research teams asked themselves whether such methods are able to capture and explore more radical views, either because the researchers may have been less inclined to invite such groups, or because people with



Saferworld gathers young researchers from across Central Asia for an analysis and advocacy workshop in Ala-Archa, Kyrgyzstan. The research involved young people themselves in conducting the research in their local areas
© SAFERWORLD



Validation workshop for young researchers, Iliđza, Bosnia and Herzegovina
© NINO VADAKARIA/SAFERWORLD

Research *among* young people *by* young people

Partly in recognition of the risks and weaknesses of focus groups, the research team for the Bosnia and Herzegovina study added in an extra participatory research phase in which young people who had been active during initial focus group discussions implemented research themselves.

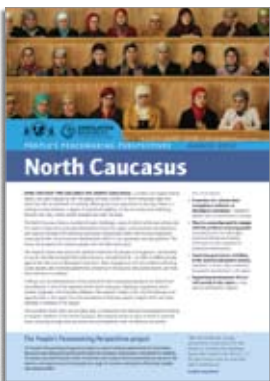
Saferworld staff worked together with 15 young researchers representing different geographic regions and ethnicities, to choose issues for further research and agree methods for undertaking the research. Apart from transport and associated research costs, the researchers worked on a voluntary basis. After receiving basic research skills and methodologies, the young people undertook research in their own communities. Interviewees were identified using the 'snowball' method, in which interviewees suggest contacts for further interviewees from among their acquaintances.

While this approach limited the responses and perspectives mainly to their own communities, it often offered much greater insight and depth than focus groups alone. In combination with the other pieces of research, it contributed significantly to the quality of the final analysis – as well as allowing the young researchers to look at the conflicts within their society in a new light.

such views were considered unlikely to participate in these measures. In one highly politicised context, supporters of an under-pressure regime were less likely to show up, or to stay, than participants who were critical of the regime. Similarly, in another environment, researchers suspected that the findings were more positive than expected, implying perhaps that participants had not fully expressed their true feelings. This again emphasised the importance of being transparent and clear about the methods employed and of avoiding over-extrapolation and over-generalisation when presenting findings based on focus groups.

Another familiar issue is expectation of payment for participating in a focus group, though this varied widely depending on the context. At one level, small payments for attendance can be legitimate, given that participants are being asked to take several hours out of their working day. On another level, however, when such methods are widespread thanks to heavy donor representation, as in Timor-Leste, researchers can begin to wonder whether participants are truly participating freely and answering honestly. Yet, in some cases, such as with young researchers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Caucasus, participants were so glad of the opportunity to meet for discussion and reflection, that they did not expect payment.

2.2.3 The analysis phase



The 'analysis phase' refers to the process of collecting together all the data that have been generated by different methods during the research phase, analysing these data in order to better understand conflict dynamics and the specific issues on which the research has chosen to focus, and then presenting this analysis in an accessible form (usually written). This includes any attempts to develop conclusions and recommendations based on the analysis, i.e. suggestions for action by local or national actors that could have a positive peacebuilding impact.

Since written reports were seen as a central output of the PPP, and since strong analytical and writing skills (implying also the need for native English speakers) are required to prepare such reports, we recognised from the start that much of the analysis would be done 'in house'. This raises the issue of *whose* analysis the PPP reports represent: where we have gone beyond simple quotes and have analysed the findings, and particularly where we have offered recommendations, are these the analysis and recommendations of participants themselves, or only of our two organisations? This section discusses how we addressed this issue; it also suggests that it is important that such questions are asked every time a conflict analysis is commissioned, written or used.

While the precise relationship between the lead organisation and its partners differed in each place, most of the 'heavy lifting' during the analysis phase was done by core staff at Saferworld and Conciliation Resources, with occasional input from consultants who had been hired to run the research and analysis process. This was true even for studies where the strongest emphasis was put on the participation of partners at *all* stages of the conflict analysis process (such as the brief on the Georgian – Abkhaz conflict), ultimate responsibility for drafting and publishing papers remained with us. There were at least four reasons for this.

Firstly, as already noted, it was felt by both organisations that producing a final written report of the right style and quality requires a particular combination of language, writing and analytical skills that is hard enough to ensure even among experienced, Western-educated staff; asking partners to take a greater role in this process thus risks being a false form of participation that could be ultimately disenfranchising, if there are serious disagreements about the quality and style of the final product.

Secondly, given the nature of the PPP, the analysis was aimed primarily at external audiences, and this requires a degree of familiarity with the interests, policies and practices of these audiences. International organisations such as the EU and their policies often appear inaccessible and complex to the outsider and this can make it hard to present the research accordingly. The authors of the analysis must also be familiar with the principles and values of the organisation(s) that are publishing the work (i.e. Conciliation Resources and Saferworld), since we obviously need to be comfortable with the content and presentation of any report that is published in our names. In the case of the policy briefs, there was also a need for consistency of style and format across the two organisations.

Thirdly, in some cases it was felt that it might not be possible to consider information received from primary research run by partner organisations as objective or 'neutral'. Of course, no research is truly neutral and every researcher has their overt and covert biases. Our partners are generally well respected and do not wish to be seen as 'partisan', however, in some places the political operating environment is such that acting as a 'disinterested observer' becomes particularly difficult. In one case, for example, the research appeared to suggest that the situation is largely peaceful – but experienced observers might interpret this differently, knowing that many people in that context would not be prepared to discuss their perceptions of security and conflict openly and honestly. In another politically charged environment, analysts were aware that local NGOs are mostly perceived as 'pro-opposition' and that this could have affected who attended focus groups and what they chose to say. In such circumstances, analysts from outside the area may have more space to interpret the findings than local actors.

A related challenge is what the data *do not tell you*, which can be critical in conflict analysis, given that the key issues that drive conflicts are not always explicit and are not always openly discussed. Some external analysts acknowledged that they did not always have the depth of contextual knowledge to interpret the motivations behind certain statements, and why people had – or had not – made certain statements; frank discussions with partners can be very beneficial in this regard. Nonetheless, in more politically sensitive environments, it may well be that external actors are more able to express certain ideas and analysis than local actors.

Fourthly, as noted in Section 2.1 with regard to Moldova, conflict analysis ideally requires different levels of analysis – from high-level geopolitics through to local-level impacts of the conflict. Some local partners are more able than others to analyse ‘their’ conflicts at these different levels; it is likely that a combination of local and external knowledge and analysis may lead to the most complete and insightful analysis.

These four points are intended to explain why we chose to maintain considerable control over the analysis phase, but should not be taken to imply that this is always the case for all conflict analysis. The presumption should still be towards greater local participation wherever possible. In the PPP, we sought to ensure that local stakeholders had some degree of ownership of the analysis through validation workshops, and in some cases advocacy workshops as well. Thus, validation workshops were not only intended to validate the research and analysis (i.e. to ensure that the information was accurate and that the analysis was reasonable), but also to give partners and other stakeholders the chance to absorb and challenge our analysis before it is formally published, and thus (re)build their ownership of the findings and of the analysis process more generally. Where they were held, advocacy capacity building workshops played a similar role, as they also allowed participants an opportunity to discuss the findings and to participate in the development of recommendations and associated messaging.

Returning to the question of ‘whose analysis’, it is clear that even though the research process for the PPP was quite participatory and that particular emphasis was placed on hearing the voices of those who are often marginalised, the *analysis and recommendations* presented in PPP reports were primarily developed and owned by our two organisations, though with varying degrees of input from local partners and with opportunities provided for partners to discuss the findings and propose changes. Ultimately, as elsewhere, the most important lesson is that when analysis is presented it should always be clear and transparent whose analysis this is, to avoid the risk of misrepresenting either individuals’ views or the report as a whole.

2.2.4 The dissemination phase

The last stage in the process is dissemination, i.e. ensuring that key stakeholders – particularly those whose activities or policies might be expected to change as a result – are aware of the analysis and its key findings and recommendations. This includes formal advocacy events (e.g. launches of reports and presentations at relevant policy forums) and informal advocacy opportunities (e.g. one-to-one discussions with international and national decision makers), both at headquarters level (i.e. Brussels) and in-country, alongside the physical and virtual distribution of the report. In terms of participation, the key question is the degree to which partners participate in advocacy events and meetings (including the planning of such events).

Given the PPP’s focus on EU institutions, all reports were shared with EU officials in Brussels, either at standalone events, one-to-one meetings, or as part of existing forums such as the Civil Society Dialogue Network. While we wished to have local stakeholders present at all of these events, in practice this was not always possible for reasons of cost and accessibility (partners were not always able to get visas – see Section 2.4). Local CSOs varied regarding their level of previous experience in advocacy environments with international actors, including the EU, and some thus required more preparation and advice than others. This was particularly the case when those who were less familiar with how to engage EU audiences were brought to Brussels.

Civil society representatives from Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia discuss conclusions of the West Africa studies with an audience of policymakers and non-governmental experts in Brussels, December 2011
© SARAH BRADFORD/
CONCILIATION RESOURCES



Some reported that they had found it a significant challenge to change their approach to engaging people, ranging from issues around the timeframes in which the meetings were held, through to more culturally-based issues around the way people interact and discuss certain subjects, particularly the sensitive issues that arise within a conflict analysis. An appreciation of these challenges from EU officials, as well as a willingness to accommodate different approaches through increased flexibility, was thus a factor that affected the success of advocacy efforts.

Both our core staff and local CSO partners also noted the importance of clearly defining the roles that each would play during dissemination meetings. In the same way that responsibility for and ownership of analysis and recommendations was primarily kept with our two organisations, so the partner involvement in dissemination activities was seen to be of greatest value when it brought the experiences and knowledge of a particular context to an EU audience. Allowing local stakeholders to focus on issues for which they have most credibility and complementing this with our organisations' expertise on EU institutions and processes, generally ensured that the appropriate messages were communicated via appropriate messengers. It also ensured that we avoided either 'false participation' or tokenistic involvement at this presentation stage.



Women attend a demonstration to demand the ousting of Yemen's President Saleh in the southern city of Taiz
© THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION/
KHALED ABDULL AH ALI AL MAHDI

"The unfolding situation in Yemen was of particular concern to Western policy-makers at the time of the research. As soon as we returned from conducting initial research we met with key figures in the EU and UK governments to relay our immediate findings and try and ensure that their responses to the crisis incorporated the views of young people. We launched the policy brief a few days after the initiative was signed which signalled the beginning of the transfer of power. As the crisis was transforming from a popular youth-led uprising into a more elite conflict, it was important that the voices of youth were consistently heard. In meeting in Brussels with EU policymakers we reinforced the messages from the research about the importance of inclusive political processes, which incorporate the perspectives of youth, including women."

Saleem Haddad, Yemen programme, Saferworld

In general, bringing local partners to Brussels was seen to be worth the costs and organisational challenges, as policy makers appreciated the opportunity to interact directly with local actors, especially as this often provided a different perspective to the 'usual' voices in the room.

Where advocacy activities were also held in-country, partners were usually more directly involved in the organisation and delivery of such events, including identifying participants, presenting and facilitating discussions. As well as the logistical advantages in local partners leading on this, partners often have greater authority and credibility when presenting findings to local stakeholders than external researchers do. In some cases the research appeared to open new doors and channels of communication between national and international decision makers and local civil society actors. At the end of advocacy training in Central African Republic, participants met with national decision makers and EU representatives, the first opportunity some had had to voice their concerns and ideas. The participatory workshop prior to the meetings had helped to articulate and condense these into clear messages.

Some challenges were nonetheless noted with regard to dissemination in-country. In particular, language could be an issue where English was not widely spoken. Since the reports and briefs were written for an English-speaking audience, they were not very accessible for local populations – including participants who wished to receive feedback and follow-up on their initial involvement in the research – yet resources did not usually stretch to translating reports into local languages and holding further presentations in-country. On the other hand, some partners decided to use the research reports for their own policy and advocacy work, for example some of the partners in the Western Balkans research.

2.3

What is the impact of broadening involvement in conflict analysis?

As the previous section has demonstrated, we sought throughout the PPP to approach each analysis in a way that would broaden involvement in the process. This was done by broadening the range of voices heard and/or by deepening the involvement of various stakeholders – particularly local civil society participants, but also national and international policy-makers – in various stages of the process, from designing and undertaking the research through to analysing and sharing the results. At the start of the project, there were two primary motivations for doing this: to improve the overall quality and range of analysis about each conflict, by exploiting the depth of information and analysis that can be achieved through participatory methods; and to make good on a commitment to implement conflict analysis with partners in a way that is mutually beneficial, rather than as an extractive process for the benefit of external actors.

As the PPP developed, however, and the first lessons learning activities were held, it gradually became clearer that the *process* of conflict analysis can – and should – be as important as the final product (i.e. the written reports) and that this process has significant potential to contribute to peacebuilding in its own right (rather than simply being a step that informs future peacebuilding). This is not to say that the PPP always succeeded in achieving this potential in full; indeed, some of the impacts listed below are closer to 'happy accidents' that were only recognised later, rather than deliberate design. In fact, there is a sense that the PPP has merely scratched the surface in terms of what might be possible. This section thus discusses the key results that were noted from broadening analysis in the conflict analysis process and concludes with some suggestions about how this potential might be harnessed in future.

Firstly, however, it is worth considering the proposition made above that broadening involvement in conflict analysis can improve the overall quality and range of analysis available about a conflict. Conflict analysis is not a one-off activity that can be 'completed', but rather an ongoing process of gaining more information and deeper insights into a conflict and ensuring that this remains relevant and up-to-date. Rather than attempt another 'high-level' conflict analysis, most PPP studies deliberately focused on particular issues that were felt to be under-researched and/or canvassed the views of groups that were felt to be under-represented. Did these reports thus have an impact on international or national decision makers?

It is of course difficult to answer such a question objectively and the independent evaluation should provide a more detailed answer to this question in good time. In several cases, however, EU delegation representatives and others did indicate that the analysis had been useful in filling a gap in understanding of a conflict dynamic and had raised issues that tended to be overlooked in the standard 'expert-level' analysis. For example, the Liberia – Sierra Leone study was successful in highlighting the 'unfinished' issues of post-conflict recovery in an area where it is often assumed that the conflicts finished long ago and the countries are increasingly seen through a standard developmental lens. Similarly, the Western Balkans shed light on a set of dynamics around borders that are often overlooked by macro-analyses of conflict in the region. In Central Africa, the study was the first which sought the views of local populations across the region affected by the LRA and offered ideas for non-military action.

The quotes provided in all the reports were also very helpful in presenting the perspectives of those directly affected by the conflict to a wider audience. While these views do not necessarily contradict the top-level 'expert' analysis that is already available, they offer a more nuanced understanding of the conflict. They demonstrate that the concerns of the centre and the elite are often different to those of 'ordinary' people and that conflict causes and dynamics can be interpreted very differently by different people. They are also a useful reminder to policy-makers

that they need to think not only about how their interventions affect different people, but also how they affect different narratives about the conflict, and thus that there are risks in analysis that is over-dominated by analysis of high-level politics and the incentives of elites.

However, impact should not be seen solely in terms of the effect of the final analysis on the key targets (in this case EU policy makers). As the PPP progressed, staff increasingly realised that the analysis *process* has several potential benefits for peacebuilding. Firstly, it can build trust and understanding by creating space for interaction between different groups within a conflict context. In West Africa, for example, participants reported that it was often the first time that security officials, ex-combatants, civil society representatives and others had sat together to discuss conflicts in an open and non-combative (but facilitated) manner and that they had very much benefited from this: several participants suggested that there should be an opportunity to come together regularly for such dialogue.

Similarly, the validation and advocacy workshops related to the Yemen research provided a rare opportunity for people living in the North to listen to views from the South, and vice versa. Even more strikingly, the workshop with young researchers in Bosnia and Herzegovina gave them an opportunity to get to know people from across the country and discuss sensitive issues in a 'safe' environment. This changed their preconceptions and built relationships between participants; one participant said, 'if there's another war, we don't want to shoot at each other.' One of the (international) researchers suggested that this was where the greatest value came from the PPP:

"People said that more such workshops are needed, they're a space for us to discuss things – and maybe that's more important than our survey, as they'll stay there and we won't."

Being involved in the research process also created opportunities for reflection which allowed participants to recognise that they can be proactive agents of change and identify actions to improve their own situation (see case study on the LRA conflict). For example, the youth involved in research in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Central Asia initially described apathy among young people as a major problem, yet the researchers themselves soon became very proactive, despite the limited resources that they were offered to participate in the research. In Pakistan, the focus group discussions on the role and inclusiveness of different forms of *jirga* may have been a catalyst for further thought within local communities about how they use and manage the *jirga* system (although limited access to the North West of Pakistan makes it difficult to explore how far this is indeed the case).

"We, my friends and I, always used to wonder what to do for our community. However, everything was very scattered. Due to the workshops, we have come together and realised many things. With proper guidance, it is now easy for us to achieve our goals and work together for our communities."

President of local development organisation, Pakistan

A *Jirga* in Malakand Division,
Pakistan
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Cultural and religious leaders from Uganda, Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan meeting to discuss the Lord's Resistance Army, Entebbe, July 2011

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Challenges in conducting participatory analysis in central Africa

Under the PPP project we conducted research in areas of South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic affected by the Lord's Resistance Army.

We talked to a wide range of stakeholders, ranging from women, young people, former abductees, community leaders, political and religious leaders, refugees and internally displaced persons at the community level, as well as military commanders in the field. We also held a number of interviews, discussions and workshops with national and international decision makers in regional capitals.

One key challenge we faced in conducting the research was logistical: the affected area is vast and communication and transport links poor. So, for example, travelling between South Sudan and Central African Republic to conduct the research posed a number of practical issues.

Another challenge was in pulling together the diverse perspectives on the conflict and triangulating what we heard from different communities across such a wide area. The issues raised were very broad and narrowing them down in an analysis, while staying true to the views expressed, was difficult. To help address that, we shared the draft conclusions in the report with key civil society and community representatives from across the region. Representatives of those involved in the research also came to Europe – Brussels, London and Paris – to communicate the messages from the study and then took the findings back to each community to share with them.

Finally, when it came to formulating responses, some participants felt they had little to contribute because they saw the LRA as a foreign rebel group from Uganda, thus a problem for the Ugandan authorities to solve. They felt powerless to change the situation, "we are victims and what can victims do?" Yet it was interesting to see that, the further we got into discussions, the more they realised that actually they had a lot to offer. To help this we organised training sessions in advocacy in which the community representatives communicated directly with government or foreign embassy officials in their respective countries.

In all, the research helped to highlight different perspectives on the conflict. In South Sudan it was interesting to see how issues identified by women differed from those highlighted by other groups, and these in turn differed completely from the official line voiced by the local government. So the workshops were very important not only in raising the issues, but also in squaring the views of a range of different groups of individuals.

Kennedy Tumutegereize

Director of East and Central Africa Programme, Conciliation Resources

The PPP intended not only to create opportunities for reflection, however, but also for action, and to build the capacity of partners to take action (for example, through joint involvement in the research process and through specific trainings on research methods and on advocacy). While obviously only a limited amount of such support could be provided through the PPP due to time and resources, participants clearly perceived it to be useful. In particular, the advocacy workshops appeared to have helped participants to think through how to formulate their recommendations for positive change in a realistic and persuasive manner. Greater local involvement in the analysis process as a whole should also lead to more locally owned (or at least 'locally tested') proposals for action, which should therefore be more likely to be relevant to the context and sustainable. This was evident for example in the workshops relating to the LRA, Western Balkans, Bosnia and Yemen analyses, where participants were enthusiastically involved in developing recommendations.

The PPP process did not only build relationships and opportunities for interaction between different groups within a conflict context, however, but also created opportunities for those affected by conflict to meet with national and international decision makers and learn about each other's perspectives and constraints. For example, a meeting in Juba in South Sudan which presented findings from both the South Sudan and LRA studies received positive feedback from both local and international participants. For civil society partners, it was a good opportunity to be exposed to national and international actors (especially for those who travelled from Warrap and Unity states and who do not often get the opportunity to engage at that level). International stakeholders also benefited from making contacts with these civil society actors and hearing their views directly. As noted in Section 2.1.1, the PPP has shown that engaging international stakeholders earlier in conflict analysis, particularly during the design phase, improves the relevance of the research to their own needs and interests and thus increase their investment in the research.

Such dialogue also helped to 'bring' the EU to civil society groups and community representatives and make it appear less remote. In West Africa, for example, some participants had initially been cautious about interacting with the EU, but the opportunities for interaction allowed them to learn more about the EU and to have a more informed understanding of what the EU – and international actors more generally – can and cannot do to support peacebuilding in their context. It was also noted, during the final lessons learning workshop, that such interactions could provide an opportunity to draw directly on the positive example of the EU as a peacebuilding project in itself.

Lastly, the PPP process has also been of benefit for our own longer-term programming in each context. This is not only because of the detailed analysis generated by the PPP, which has deepened our understanding of each conflict and helped us to identify directions for future programming, but also because of the deepened relationships with partners (including better mutual understanding of each others' strengths and weaknesses) and international actors.

It is of course not new to suggest that participatory forms of conflict analysis can be used as a peacebuilding tool. However, given all of the possible peacebuilding impacts outlined above, it may be that the peacebuilding impact of the process should be more consciously considered when designing and implementing conflict analyses, even in cases when the donor has primarily commissioned the research in order to inform their own programming.

2.4

What challenges and considerations have we addressed when designing and implementing conflict analyses?

The previous sections have looked at our understanding of the purposes and benefits of conflict analysis; what we have learnt from broadening involvement in conflict analysis; and how the conflict analysis process can have a positive peacebuilding impact in itself. This last section draws together other challenges and considerations that arose as we implemented the analyses. These cover the following issues:

- Overarching and design issues
- Working with local partners
- Pros and cons of having existing relationships in-country
- Managing expectations
- Managing access
- Language issues
- Converting analysis into actionable recommendations

2.4.1 Overarching and design issues

How much should a conflict analysis cost and how long should it take? Of course, there is no simple answer to this question – it depends on the purpose of the analysis and on how many resources (time and money) the sponsoring institution is prepared to allocate to it. Experience under the PPP showed that the time frame for the studies and available budget determined the degree and breadth of participation. Where we had existing partners on the ground, the initial inception period was shorter – where we did not, we had to spend more time building up local knowledge and relationships. However, careful and sensitive planning and the implementation of participatory research does require investment of staff time and resources for the process to happen. As such, there is no ‘quick and dirty’ participatory conflict analysis.

This does not mean that more participatory forms of conflict analysis are not worth the investment. As the previous sections have demonstrated, such analysis can add vital new layers of insight into conflicts (and peacebuilding responses) and the process of doing such analysis can have a positive peacebuilding impact in itself – they thus often represent good value for money because of the extra benefits they offer. Nonetheless, it does suggest that more participatory forms of analysis are easier to carry out for ‘slower-moving’ conflicts, i.e. conflicts that are relatively stable within a particular phase, than in ‘hot’ situations where conflict dynamics are rapidly changing; or perhaps more precisely, that participatory analysis offers greater insights about longer-term structural causes and longer-term peacebuilding opportunities, than it does about immediate triggers and short-term responses. Nearly all PPP studies looked at underlying drivers or causes of instability of conflict, and even where the focus was on a current crisis (Yemen) or potential flashpoint (Timor-Leste), the studies examined the longer-term issues behind the short-term outlook.

2.4.2 Working with local partners

Sections 2.2 and 2.3 considered what it meant to translate a commitment to participation into action and what peacebuilding impacts may accrue as a result. It should be noted, however, that working closely with local partners is also hugely important to the efficiency and quality of the research process itself. At the most practical level, partners often have a depth and breadth



Conciliation Resources staff worked closely with Georgian and Abkhaz partners in the development of policy messages to the EU
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of capacity to undertake research in the local context that external actors are unlikely to have, in terms of ability to organise research activities, their range of contacts and their knowledge of how to manage bureaucratic, practical and political obstacles. Local partners may be more credible and authoritative interlocutors than external actors in the eyes of local participants (though the opposite can also be true; sometimes international researchers can pose questions that local actors could not), and may thus get greater access. In some places, *only* local partners can get access (see Section 2.4.5 below). Partners inevitably also have a greater understanding of local nuances and sensitivities, which can help to frame research in the most acceptable way for different actors and to pick up on subtleties and incentives regarding what people do and do not say.

One challenge that did arise on occasion, however, is the quality of research outputs provided by partners. This relates not only to analytical writing, which requires particular skills, as argued in Section 2.2.3, but also other outputs such as transcripts of focus group discussions and write-ups from interviews – the challenge here being that the less detail that is provided, the less possible it is to synthesise and analyse this information for the final written conflict analysis.⁶ While the PPP sought to build the capacity of local partners through relevant training and support, thus aiming to overcome these problems, we concluded we could do more to identify and address capacity issues in this area, both in our own organisations and long-standing local partner organisations.

2.4.3 Pros and cons of having existing relationships in country

Following on from the previous point, in general it is clearly an advantage to have long-standing experience in the country/area where the conflict analysis is to take place. In such places, our organisations were likely to have 'tried and tested' partnerships, bringing all the benefits listed above and also recognising each other's weaknesses. Obviously, having greater experience in a particular context also makes analysis much quicker and more insightful. It also makes it clear to participants and other stakeholders that the analysis is part of the organisation's longer-term commitment to working on/in a particular conflict.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that there can be disadvantages to having existing relationships and ongoing programming. It goes without saying that conflict analysis is a very sensitive matter and that there is very real potential to cause offence – or worse – through the way in which the analysis process is managed and particularly with how findings are presented. While experience of working in that environment generally helps the researchers to steer through these sensitivities, an organisation may decide that investigating a particular issue has risks for its ongoing programming and therefore seek to avoid or minimise this issue within the research. By contrast, Conciliation Resources approached its study of the Lebanon peace process as a 'newcomer' with no previous engagement in the country, but presented this as a positive. Working closely with an established expert, the study sought to learn the lessons from the Lebanon experience through a series of discussions and in particular by documenting a range of Lebanese, as well as some international, perspectives in a larger publication. In so doing it encouraged reflection among the contributors themselves.

2.4.4 Managing expectations

People may respond differently to being asked to participate in a conflict analysis process. In some places, people have already seen similar research and no change as a result, and thus may be cynical about the worth of engaging in further such activities. By contrast, participants can sometimes become very enthusiastic about the process and expect that it can deliver more than is realistic, or that the implementing organisation will instantly be able to provide follow-up support. At the workshop on in Senegal, for example, some participants suggested activities

⁶ Incidentally, these same challenges can also apply where international consultants are hired to take on part of the research.

that Conciliation Resources could support and questioned why, given their activities elsewhere, they could not take on activities there. It is important for researchers to be clear and honest from the start about the purpose of the research, what it might lead to and what is likely or unlikely to change as a result.

2.4.5 Managing access

In a couple of environments, access was a serious obstacle to deploying joint local/international research teams. This was due either to concerns about physical security, as in Yemen and North West Pakistan, or due to restrictive political environments in which international actors are treated with suspicion, as in North Caucasus in the Russian Federation. In such circumstances, the only option was to work through local partners that could gain access to these regions. While we were lucky to have experienced and respected partners that could manage the risks involved, this nevertheless raised questions about our role in such cases and what we could do to support our partners effectively. Moreover, it complicated the analysis process because different researchers had had different experiences and, in some cases, those that were responsible for writing up the final English-language report had not been able to experience significant parts of the research at first hand.

Access was also an issue at the advocacy end of the project. We were keen to bring local partners or participants in the research to Brussels for direct contact with policymakers. However, in some cases it proved time-consuming, complicated and costly to get visas for them to travel, either due to the need to travel to another regional capital and/or the length of time required for the application process. In the case of Yemen, a highly restrictive visa regime prohibited local participation in advocacy activities in Brussels.

2.4.6 Language issues

In contexts where English is the dominant language, or is at least utilised by educated sections of the population (including partners), language was not a major issue. In other areas, however, language can act as a complicating factor which can make the research and analysis more difficult – and more costly. Given the sensitive issues that conflict analyses can address, accuracy of use in language is extremely important; hence, research should always be in the language of the local population. However, translating this information so that is accessible to those writing the final analysis adds an extra ‘filter’ on the information and increases the risks that subtleties will not be picked up or will be mistranslated. We sought to minimise these risks as far as possible through detailed clarifications with local partners, working from source material as far as possible and validation and checking of the final reports, but the extra difficulty still needs to be acknowledged. It also needs to be recognised that this translation requires at least some extra time and money.

Since the final reports were all in English, there were also issues about the accessibility of the analysis for local participants and stakeholders. Wherever possible, our organisations tried to ensure that reports were translated into the local language, but this was not always possible in the given timescale and with available resources. It is also extremely important to check the quality of the translated report – words are often chosen very carefully in an analytical report, but a translator may not understand all the considerations that have shaped the final text and thus inadvertently end up with a less conflict-sensitive text.



Focus group in Afghanistan
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Audience listen to the presentation of West Africa research findings, House of Commons, London
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2.4.7 Converting analysis into actionable recommendations

As mentioned in Section 1, one of the PPP's ambitions was to support the translation of analysis into action. As peacebuilders, we want to see conflict analysis used to inform programming by donors and other stakeholders, as well as ourselves, to ensure that it is more conflict-sensitive. We recognise that institutions often struggle to translate detailed analysis of a complex situation into concrete actions that they themselves can implement, not least because they often lack the time and space to do so. This was one of the reasons for committing to produce a short policy brief targeted at an EU audience for each of the analyses.

It is for others to judge how successful we have been in presenting the policy briefs and articulating the 'key outcomes'/recommendations in a way that is genuinely useful to the EU and other audiences. From a lessons learning perspective, however, it should be acknowledged that producing the policy briefs was often a challenging and time-consuming process. The key challenge is that in order to make useful recommendations, it is necessary to have a very good understanding of one's target audience(s), including not only the policies and programmes for which they are responsible, but also the operational and institutional constraints to which they are subject. This requires the analytical team not only to have a very detailed understanding of the conflict, but also to have a detailed understanding of the target institution(s) – which usually involves considerable communication with those who have a 'policy' or 'advocacy' function and are thus more familiar with the EU. Achieving consensus within our organisations and with local partners on what the primary messages were, amidst a wealth of research findings, was also a useful process, but one which required discussions and time.

A related question was just how precisely to target the recommendations. If the target is very broad ('the EU should...'), this risks being not focused and concrete enough to overcome the challenges of translating analysis into action. Yet how far is it necessary, or possible, to break down recommendations into different EU institutions, or to different departments within each institution – or to changes in specific policies and programmes? In short, what is the balance between keeping the analysis and recommendations general enough that they are of some relevance to a reasonably broad audience, and making them specific enough that key target audiences find them particularly useful? This is ultimately a design question that depends on the purpose of the conflict analysis and who it is for.

SECTION 3

What does this mean for donors?

AS ITS NAME SUGGESTS, the 'People's Peacemaking Perspectives' project employed forms of conflict analysis that emphasised the views of 'ordinary' and marginalised people and sought to increase their participation in the process of conflict analysis. Section 2 above explores the many lessons and ideas that we have gained from the analyses undertaken by the PPP. This final section considers what implications these lessons might have from a donor/international actor perspective. It looks at where participatory forms of conflict analysis add most value, but this is framed within a wider discussion of how donors and other governmental, multilateral and non-governmental actors can use (and commission) conflict analysis. This is informed not only by the PPP, but also by informal discussions with donor officials and by our two organisations' years of experience on working both internally and with others on conflict analysis.

3.1

Four institutional challenges regarding conflict analysis

Over the past 10–15 years, many development agencies (including non-governmental organisations), as well as other ministries and departments (particularly ministries of foreign affairs and defence), have increasingly recognised the relevance and importance of violent conflict to their work. While different institutions and programmes are affected by, or motivated to work on conflict in different ways, they are united by a need to understand conflicts better. Conflict analysis is the obvious way to respond to this need.

During the lessons learning process for this project, it gradually became clear that the words 'conflict analysis' actually contain several related but different ideas:

- a) A particular document, formally called a conflict analysis, carried out according to a more or less standard format, in order to meet specific institutional planning needs or requirements (e.g. the UK Department for International Development's 'Strategic Conflict Analysis').
- b) More broadly, more or less any piece of research or analytical writing where the primary intention is to generate more information and understanding about a conflict, conflicts, or particular aspects of a conflict could be called a 'conflict analysis'. For example, the PPP carried out 18 conflict analyses, but they were not done according to a particular institutional format or according to specific institutional requirements.
- c) A particular interpretation or understanding of a conflict, as in "our institution needs to have a shared conflict analysis in order to be able to plan effectively".
- d) Lastly, as explored in Section 2, conflict analysis is as much a *process* as it is a *product*, i.e. it is not only the final written report that has value, but the whole process of design, research and analysis.

It is important to make these distinctions to avoid the risk that those involved think they are achieving one thing when in fact they may be doing something else. For example, there is no

particular reason why an institution should have a shared understanding of a conflict (as in (c)) just because it has carried out – or commissioned – a formal conflict analysis (as in (a)). Similarly, while a formal conflict analysis (as in (a)) may have more overall use for an institution, because it has been specifically designed to meet that institution's needs, other pieces of analysis from a respected writer, academic institution or NGO (as in (b)) may be much more insightful regarding specific conflict-related topics that are of particular concern to policy makers.

Leading on from this, there are at least four challenges which occur frequently for donors and other institutions with regard to conflict analysis. This section looks at each of these in turn, while the next section makes some broad recommendations on how these challenges could be overcome.

Challenge 1

An assumption that one form of conflict analysis can meet all needs

Perhaps the biggest risk facing donors is an assumption – possibly for ease of bureaucratic management – that one form of conflict analysis can meet all needs. However, one analysis cannot address the many institutional reasons why a 'conflict analysis' might be necessary, or helpful, which include:

- Informing long-term, overarching strategic programming in a particular country (e.g. Country Strategy Papers, three- to five-year development plans, cross-governmental strategies for working in a particular conflict-affected environment).
- Informing medium-term sector-based strategies, both those that work directly *on* conflict (peacebuilding, security and justice sector development, etc) and those that work *in* conflict (e.g. delivery of basic services in fragile and conflict-affected states).
- Informing specific programmes or projects in any sector operating in a conflict-affected environment, with the aim of ensuring that these programmes are operating in a conflict-sensitive fashion.
- Informing short-term, urgent action, such as crisis response mechanisms and high-level political management of high-profile issues and situations.
- As part of an early warning mechanism – linked to increasing political interest in conflict early warning, e.g. at EU level and in member states, conflict analysis can be a tool to help identify potential flashpoints and crises that may develop.

Different institutions may be interested in conflict analysis for different reasons and share varying degrees of background knowledge both of the specific context and of ways of understanding and addressing conflict more generally. A desk officer covering a conflict-affected country in a ministry of foreign affairs may have very different needs from a development professional working on water and sanitation, who has never considered how to design their programme to have a positive peacebuilding impact. Headquarters-based staff may require something quite different from those based permanently on the ground in delegations and donor agencies.

Donor agencies have tended to focus too much on doing a large, set-piece conflict analysis, often at considerable expense and taking large amounts of time, and then assuming that they have 'done' their conflict analysis for the next year or two. While there is definitely a need for top-level strategic conflict analysis, it should not be done to the exclusion of other forms of analysis that meet other needs. This is discussed further in Recommendation 1 below.



Young boys cross the railway line in Ferizaj/Urosevac Kosovo
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Buildings abandoned and destroyed during the civil war in Dungu, Democratic Republic of Congo
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Challenge 2

'Stagnant' analysis which is hard to update

Due to the time and costs involved in doing large, set-piece strategic conflict analyses – including the amount of time and staff involvement that can be required to form an institutional consensus about the findings of the analysis – they tend not to be undertaken very often. While this may not be a problem for conflicts which are in a relatively 'stable' phase and are not changing rapidly, it is more of a challenge when conflict dynamics are more obviously in a state of flux. In such cases, the analysis can rapidly become outdated and 'stagnant', and thus of limited value for informing decision making – yet institutions become reluctant to update the analysis because of the time and costs involved in going through the process again.

Again, this implies a need to see conflict analysis as continuous and ever-improvable, rather than as a one-off document (see Recommendation 1 below).

Challenge 3

Difficulty translating analysis into action

Translating analysis into action tends to be the biggest challenge for any agency. There are at least three key reasons why this seems to be so difficult. Firstly, analysis is not necessarily timed to fit well with planning cycles. If an agency works according to a three-year planning cycle, a major strategic conflict analysis will be most useful in the six to twelve months before adoption of their new strategic plan – not six months into the new cycle. Making sure that the right forms of analysis are available at the right time to the right people and institutions requires a considerable degree of forward planning and flexibility.

Secondly, the perception that the analysis and therefore the conflict are too complicated can leave decision makers at a loss to know what should be done differently. To a certain extent, it is necessary to accept that conflicts normally *are* complex and that responses need to take this into account as much as possible; on the other hand, decision makers cannot be expected to be experts in both the conflict and country or context which they cover. The answers lie in focusing analysis on responses and solutions, not only problems and causes (Recommendation 4) and, more importantly, in making sure equal time and space are given to planning the translation of analysis into action (Recommendation 5) and to the conduct of the initial analysis.

Thirdly, internal disagreements can arise between institutions or departments over the analysis, its conclusions, methods or focus. For example, officials from a ministry of defence may not always be persuaded of the relevance of a conflict analysis produced by a development agency, and vice versa. Issues of ownership and agency therefore need to be addressed from the start of the conflict analysis process (Recommendation 2).

Challenge 4

The process for generating the analysis misses peacebuilding opportunities

One of the key findings of this paper is that the process of conflict analysis is as important as the final product and can have a positive peacebuilding impact in itself. However, a tendency by institutions to focus on their own needs from a conflict analysis can mean they focus less on the way they go about it. At worst, conflict analysis may be undertaken in a somewhat insensitive, 'extractive' manner, whereby little thought is given to the effect on, and the impression created, among those consulted (or not consulted) during the research. It also misses the opportunity to use the analysis as a peacebuilding activity. Hence, whoever is managing and/or commissioning the analysis needs to think carefully about who has ownership and agency of the analysis (Recommendation 2) and ensure that the process is also appropriate (Recommendation 3).



Meeting of the platform of women's organisations in Dungu, DRC, May 2011
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Community members in Karamoja, Uganda
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3.2

Six recommendations to use conflict analysis more effectively

Based on the analysis above of these four institutional challenges regarding conflict analysis, and on the wider findings of this report and the PPP lessons learning process, this paper concludes with six recommendations for donors and other institutions about how they can use conflict analysis more effectively. For each recommendation there is also a brief discussion of the relevance of more participatory forms of conflict analysis.

Recommendation 1

Undertake different forms of research and analysis for different needs

As argued above, while superficially it appears bureaucratically easier and cheaper to do one 'conflict analysis' that meets all needs – or at least to try and design conflict analysis guidance and methodologies for this purpose – this will not be successful in meeting the full range of institutional needs around conflict analysis. Instead, donors will need to balance set-piece strategic analyses with smaller, better targeted and more frequent pieces of analysis. They should thus undertake directly and/or commission a range of forms of analysis.

In particular, it may be helpful to draw a distinction between short-term and longer-term analysis. Immediate crises require immediate responses – and similarly, early warnings require early responses – and this requires concise, quickly updated ('quick and dirty') information and analysis that can provide suggestions for short-term, immediate action. Longer-term analysis looks more at the root causes of conflict and assesses what outsiders can do to address them and promote peacebuilding. These two processes should operate simultaneously, with more in-depth analysis to provide insights into longer-term issues and planning, and 'quick' analysis methods to keep institutions informed of rapidly changing situations.

The analysis undertaken under the PPP falls more obviously into the longer-term, more in-depth category of conflict analysis. Because of the amount of research required, the associated operational and organisational challenges (see Section 2.4) and the time required for the process of participation to complete, it is not possible to complete such research in very short timescales. Its value lies in ensuring that a wide range of voices are heard and in providing more depth and different perspectives on conflicts that are commonly examined from a strategic, elite and/or capital-based perspective.

Participation can also lead to a more insightful final analysis, because in contexts affected by conflict and violence, people will often not speak openly about what they really think and have experienced ('violence creates silences'). The trust built through participatory approaches can increase the degree of 'disclosure' and thus provide more insightful analysis. In this regard, international NGOs and/or academics with a track record in a particular context can often undertake forms of research and access areas and populations that governmental and multilateral actors cannot, and are thus important partners in efforts to understand conflicts and build more effective prevention and peacebuilding responses.

For those with direct responsibility for managing conflict analysis, this suggests that they need to be able to:

- a) Gather conflict-related information from a wide variety of sources, including other relevant institutional resources, such as political reporting, and tools, such as political economy analyses.
- b) Fund, commission and manage a range of new research that can continuously add to the stock of up-to-date and insightful information and analysis about the conflict, including analysis which reflects local perspectives and ideas.

- c) Synthesise this information so that it can be provided to decision makers with different needs in a format that is most useful to them, but ensure that it draws on the same underlying, shared analysis.
- d) Play a facilitation role in ensuring a shared analysis of the conflict and necessary responses, within and across relevant departments and institutions.

Recommendation 2

Think carefully about who has 'ownership' and 'agency' of research and analysis

A key lesson learned from the PPP is that those who need to act on the analysis are more likely to do so if they have been engaged early on in the process (Section 2.1.1). This does not necessarily mean that decision makers need to do the research, or even much of the analysis, but they do need to have some form of 'ownership' – or investment – in the process. One potential way to ensure this is to pool resources to fund an analysis. In practice, however, it is not always practical, desirable or efficient to fund conflict analysis from several different sources and it may increase the risk described above that all stakeholders try to ensure that the conflict analysis meets all of their institutional needs, resulting in an over-complicated and unfocused analysis.

Including all relevant stakeholders in the design phase is probably the most efficient way of ensuring cross-departmental or cross-institutional ownership of a study. Achieving a common viewpoint from the outset on the purpose of the analysis (and what can be achieved through other forms of analysis), how the research will be undertaken and, crucially, how the relevant institutions will translate the analysis into actions (see Recommendation 5) is key. The earlier such issues are addressed, the more likely it is that the analysis process will be seen as useful by a wide range of stakeholders.

It is also important that externally-driven analysis processes do not become so focused on internal co-ordination and consensus that they ignore local ownership of conflict analysis and sideline local perspectives. Ultimately, it is local actors who are most affected by conflict and local actors who will play the biggest role in its resolution. 'Local ownership' should refer not only to the partner government, but more generally to citizens of the partner country/region, not least because governments in conflict-affected states are rarely disinterested and impartial actors in a conflict.

In some situations strong local ownership may be impractical, not least due to political sensitivities and, as argued here, conflict analyses fail when they try to meet too many needs simultaneously. Different types of analysis may be needed for different purposes. Some can be deliberately aimed at understanding a range of local perspectives and/or building local ownership of (new) narratives on a conflict and possible solutions. Hence, the type of analysis carried out by the PPP is not an alternative, but a complementary form of conflict analysis which can lead to more rounded overall analysis of a conflict situation.

The question of 'agency' – i.e. who actually *does* what – is equally important to consider and closely linked to the question of ownership. While officials and institutions should have some investment in the process, much of the research and initial analysis can indeed be done by outsiders – such as research institutions, think tanks and national and international NGOs. Where serious internal engagement is required is in translating analysis into recommendations for concrete changes to institutional policies and practices (see Recommendation 5). To get the most from the research, the institution therefore needs to be an 'intelligent customer'. This includes:

- a) Knowing what it wants and why, and articulating this in clearly formed objectives;
- b) Understanding what it can reasonably expect from those it is commissioning, meaning that it is helpful to have some basic knowledge of the tools and methodologies that will be employed, their strengths and weaknesses⁷ and the costs and challenges involved in delivering a high-quality product;
- c) Designing contracts/contracting mechanisms so that they work well for both contractor and implementer, which includes ensuring that contracts are flexible enough to respond to changing demands (quite probable when dealing with conflict and conflict analysis);
- d) Engaging with the implementer at appropriate points to ensure that the process is proceeding in a way that satisfies both parties and that any problems can be addressed at an early stage.

Lastly, within their institutional mandates donors also need to think about whether it is more helpful to commission research and analysis centrally or locally. There are advantages and disadvantages to both. Because they have less ownership of centrally managed or contracted analyses, in-country officials may be more sceptical of them and less sure how they can be designed to meet local needs and knowledge gaps (Saferworld and Conciliation Resources experienced this from some delegations at the start of the PPP, which was centrally funded through the EU's Instrument for Stability). However, regionally or globally managed project structures are more capable of studying regional or cross-border conflict dynamics, such as the LRA conflict. They can also provide added value by offering space for comparative learning during and after the programme, as the PPP has done (with this report being the final product of that process).

Recommendation 3

Ensure that the process is appropriate, not only the end product

This paper has repeatedly emphasised the importance of the conflict analysis process, and noted that at worst it can risk being conflict-insensitive in itself (Challenge 4 above). Hence, those involved in implementing and commissioning the analysis must ensure that they do not only focus on the end product (the final document), but also ensure that the process is appropriate and ethical. This could include:

- a) Thinking proactively about opportunities to make the process less extractive and offer opportunities to support peacebuilding, as discussed extensively in Section 2.3;
- b) Being conscious of the dangers to participants in the process and ensuring that every possible step is taken to minimise the risks to them;
- c) Being clear and explicit about how this analysis will link into a wider, longer-term peacebuilding process and ensuring that participants' expectations are carefully managed, so that they do not expect too much too quickly.

Recommendation 4

Encourage analysis to focus on potential solutions, not only describe the problem

One of the simplest but most useful lessons from the PPP is that the research and analysis was often most effective when it was framed as a 'peacebuilding' analysis rather than a 'conflict' analysis. This entailed a shift in analysis from why the conflict exists towards discussions of what can be done to build peace, who should do it and how. This includes space to consider existing responses by local and international actors and an assessment of what has worked well or less well.



Focus group in Taiz, Yemen
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Young people in a workshop
in Ilidza, Sarajevo
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⁷ In addition, it should be recognised that these actors also have their own incentives and objectives for engaging in such work. For example, do they perceive themselves as neutral observers, or as advocates for positive change? One approach is not necessarily better than another, but as this report has argued, it is important that those doing the research and analysis are open and honest about what they have done and why and do not misrepresent the analysis process.

Not only can this approach be more motivating for participants – by offering them a chance to consider what they think should be done differently and what their own role might be in overcoming the conflict – but it is likely to generate more actionable and locally owned ideas, which donors and other institutions can either implement directly or support others to implement. Moreover, these ideas have already undergone a ‘reality check’ which should also give decision makers an idea of what is feasible or unrealistic in the current context. More participatory forms of analysis can offer solutions that are locally generated and owned and ultimately more sustainable.

Recommendation 5

Prioritise and make space within the institution to translate analysis into responses

As observed above – and as some PPP studies experienced – there is a risk that so much effort is invested in the design, research and initial analysis phases, that little time and energy and few resources are left to translate the analysis into responses. However, as the primary purpose of conflict analysis is most commonly to inform programming and policy decisions, failings in this phase of the exercise undermines its whole value.

There is no easy solution to the challenge of turning analysis into improved responses and greater peacebuilding impact; however it is extremely important to see this as a vital phase in the conflict analysis process and allocate proportionate space, time and priority to it. Failure to do so risks conflict analysis becoming a ‘box-ticking exercise’, which meets an institutional requirement, without leading to the changes it is expected to achieve. Some possible steps to this end could include:

- a) Ensuring that the conflict analysis is clearly and appropriately located within the relevant programme cycle(s) and that the objectives and expected uses of the analysis are recognised by all relevant stakeholders (see also Recommendation 2);
- b) Recognising that translating analysis into action is in itself a process rather than a one-off activity. This means that decision makers must regularly ask themselves how their programme is interacting with the conflict context;
- c) Ensuring that relevant policies and practices are flexible enough to respond to changes to conflict dynamics and can cope with the unpredictable nature of conflict, for example by planning long-term, but allowing very regular updates to strategies;
- d) By considering using external or ‘neutral’ facilitators, with peacebuilding experience and skills, that can guide an institution or group of institutions through the process of translating analysis into action by offering tools, prompting questions and acting as a challenge function.

Recommendation 6

Support participatory conflict analysis as a peacebuilding intervention

Lastly, this report has argued strongly that participatory conflict analysis can be a peacebuilding intervention in itself. This suggests that such conflict analysis should not only be funded when it meets institutional needs for greater information and analysis, but also as part of donor support for peacebuilding; and that it should be funded under long-term peacebuilding and development funding streams, rather than shorter-term mechanisms. This would mean that participatory conflict analysis would be evaluated as much in terms of its contribution to peacebuilding, as by the quality of its written products. Criteria for success might therefore include the extent to which: it builds trust and understanding; builds or shifts ownership of the analysis and of narratives about the conflict; builds participants’ own capacity to conduct analysis and advocacy; and influences their ideas about their own role in improving the situation.

Annexes



Two Armenian girls from a family displaced by conflict. Originally from Baku, the family now live in Shusha in Nagorny Karabakh
© LAURENCE BROERS/
CONCILIATION RESOURCES

Annex 1

Summary of studies under the PPP

In addition to the reports listed below and this publication, Saferworld and Conciliation Resources produced an Advocacy Capacity Building Toolkit, a resource to aid advocacy training particularly with local actors and partners. This was used for training in a few of the PPP contexts and translated into French and Arabic for use beyond the project.

Region	Focus area	Lead NGO	Brief outline of study	Policy brief published	Other publications
Central Africa	Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, (Uganda)	Conciliation Resources	Regional/cross-border analysis of LRA conflict	October 2011	'When will this end and what will it take?' <i>People's Perspectives on the address the Lord's Resistance Army conflict</i> (November 2011)
	Uganda	Saferworld	Exploring disarmament and community security dynamics in Karamoja	March 2012	<i>Tracking key conflict and security dynamics in Karamoja – an update</i> (March 2012)
	South Sudan	Saferworld	Conflict dynamics in South Sudan, pre- and post-referendum	March 2012	<i>Sudan: Hoping for the best, preparing for the worst?</i> (December 2010); <i>Jonglei State: An initial assessment of insecurity and peacebuilding responses</i> (September 2011); similar assessments also produced for Warap State (September 2011) and Unity State (October 2011)
West Africa	Kenya	Saferworld	Key governance and political issues in run-up to 2012 elections	March 2012	<i>Transition and reform: People's Peacemaking Perspectives on Kenya's post-2008 political crisis and lessons for the future</i> (March 2012)
	Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, Senegal, Nigeria	Conciliation Resources	Analysis of 3 conflict systems: 1) Mano River region; 2) Jos/Niger Delta in Nigeria; 3) Casamance – Guinea-Bissau/Senegal/Gambia	February 2012	<i>People's perspectives on instability in West Africa – case study report</i> , (March 2012) (available on-line)
	Liberia and Sierra Leone	Conciliation Resources	Lessons from peace processes, on-going conflict dynamics and responses	November 2011	<i>Accord 23 – Consolidating peace: Liberia and Sierra Leone</i> (March 2012)
Europe	Western Balkans (Serbia, Bosnia, Kosovo)	Saferworld	Territorial and border demarcation disputes and peacebuilding responses	November 2011	<i>Drawing boundaries in the Western Balkans: a people's perspective</i> (October 2011)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Saferworld	Engaging young people and civil society in exploring the role of young people in peace and conflict dynamics	March 2012	<i>Leaving the past behind: The perceptions of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina</i> (March 2012)
	Moldova	Saferworld	People's perspectives on the unresolved conflict over Transnistria	May 2011	'Routes across the Nistru' <i>Transnistria: People's Peacemaking Perspectives</i> (May 2011)

Region	Focus area	Lead NGO	Brief outline of study	Policy brief published	Other publications
Caucasus	North Caucasus	Saferworld	Challenges and responses in the human security sphere	March 2012	<i>North Caucasus: Views from within. People's perspectives on peace and security</i> (March 2012)
	South Caucasus – Nagorny Karabakh	Saferworld	Local level analysis of security mechanisms and early warning systems	April 2012	Main report to be published in Spring 2012
	South Caucasus – Georgian-Abkhaz conflict	Conciliation Resources	Perceptions and understanding of the conflict and prospects for conflict transformation, role of the EU	March 2012	Analyses of focus group discussions (available on-line) Also draws on: <i>Displacement in Georgia: IDP attitudes to conflict, return and justice</i> , (April 2011)
Middle East	Lebanon	Conciliation Resources	Peacebuilding: links between society, state and sovereignty	April 2012	<i>Accord 24</i> to be published Spring 2012
	Yemen	Saferworld	Youth perceptions of the drivers of the current crisis and potential responses	November 2011	<i>Public protest and visions for change. Yemen: People's Peacemaking Perspectives</i> (November 2011)
Asia	Central Asia	Saferworld	Importance of youth to conflict dynamics in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (with outreach in neighbouring states)	March 2012	<i>"Nobody has ever asked about young people's opinions" Young people's perspectives on identity, exclusion and the prospects for a peaceful future in Central Asia</i> (March 2012)
	Pakistan	Saferworld	Peace <i>jirga</i> system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region: community conflict resolution and justice delivery	February 2012	<i>The jirga, justice and conflict transformation</i> (March 2012)
	Timor-Leste	Saferworld	Risks of electoral violence in 2012 and underlying causes	February 2012	<i>Assessing the risk of violence in Timor-Leste's 2012 elections</i> (March 2012)

Annex 2

Guidance questions to PPP lead researchers

At the start of the PPP, a set of guidance questions were developed for the lead researchers for each analysis. These served as a checklist of prompt questions to assist the planning and design stage of the participatory analysis and dissemination processes. They were thus an internal planning tool, but are presented here both as an insight into the factors that were considered during the design of each analysis and as a potential resource for those with responsibility for designing, commissioning or using conflict analysis.

Identifying the focus of the conflict analysis

- 1) Which conflict or conflicts are you looking at and why?
- 2) What other analysis of these conflicts are available/planned? How will this analysis differ from what else is out there?
- 3) What relevant EU activity and other donor activity is going on/planned (particularly IFS and CSDP, but also work under other EU instruments, such as EIDHR, ECHO)? Look also at EU Country Assistance Plans (CSPs).
- 4) Can you find out from EU counterparts what they do and don't know and what they're most interested in learning more about/thinking through in more detail?
- 5) How will the analysis look at the relationship between this conflicts and other conflict (dynamics)?

For regional analyses:

- 1) Have you identified national government, EU and other donor counterparts in each country? Is there any kind of cross-border strategy or approach to the conflict at the moment? How do they address the conflict in their national strategies, if at all?

Once an initial choice has been made, it is worth considering the following questions, which may help to sharpen the focus:

- 1) How far will it help to improve our own understanding of the situation? Will it help us in terms of future planning and programming? Will it help us to identify potential future NGO partners? Will it help us to identify key actors for advocacy?
- 2) What impact is this research likely to have on our existing programmes in that country/context? Is there anything we will need to be particularly careful about?
- 3) What impact will the project have on our partners? Will it boost their capacity, their profile? How will it affect their relationships with the government, the EU, other donors, other NGOs, etc? Have you mapped out existing relations with the EU in-country and in Brussels?

Starting to develop a dissemination strategy

At this stage, you might also start the thinking about dissemination:

- 1) Have you identified the key European stakeholders in your country/region and in Brussels? Which are the key targets for your advocacy work? What is the political and economic context for your work? And what internal resources are available to you for advocacy?
- 2) Have you identified which policies and processes are relevant to your analysis, and how your analysis could inform further development of them?
- 3) Have you thought about the likely outcome of your analysis and how this will challenge current thinking? How are your targets likely to react to the recommendations? Are you clear who your allies and challengers are likely to be? And how will you engage with them?
- 4) Have you considered the role of local partners in your dissemination activities?

What form of participation?

- 1) What balance are you aiming for between 'broad' participation (as representative as possible) and 'deep' participation (as jointly owned as possible)? Why?

Regarding breadth of participation:

- 2) How far are we going beyond the 'standard' voices – NGOs, 'community leaders', etc, and how will we overcome them gatekeeping and/or blocking the conversation?

- 3) How well will the research allow us to hear the voices of all possible groups in society, depending on how you break them down (men/women, ethnicity/caste, age, religion, location, income level, education level, etc)?
- 4) How well will the research allow us to hear the voices of people representing different interests and professions (law enforcement, authorities, NGOs, businessmen, opposition politicians, international representatives, etc)
- 5) What can we do to encourage people who are less willing to participate (either by not coming in the first place, or by not talking once they are there)?
- 6) Have we recognised the different risks our own staff, partners and sources run in contributing to an analysis, and taken steps to mitigate these?

Regarding depth of participation and ownership:

- 7) Who do we want to 'own' the analysis? (Partners, community members, EU officials, others)
- 8) At what points do they need to participate most deeply in order to build this sense of ownership? (Shared understanding of what has happened? Shared understanding of why it has happened? Shared ownership of recommendations on *peacebuilding responses*? Shared advocacy activities?)
- 9) Do we expect 'ownership' to mean that there will be one interpretation of the conflict that all relevant stakeholders sign up to – or can we have an analysis that accurately presents different and opposing views?

Plotting out the stages

- 1) Have you allotted enough time for each of the following stages:
 - a. Initial preparations, desk research, etc
 - b. Information collection
 - c. Information analysis
 - d. Preparing the final analysis document(s)
 - e. Presenting the analysis
- 2) Have you allocated clear roles for each actor at each stage?
- 3) Have you timed it so that the final report will come at a period when people will be interested and will be able to use the information?
- 4) How quickly can you get from information collection to sharing results? Will the results still be relevant, given the rapidly changing context? What can be done to speed up the process?

Information collection

- 1) Are you collecting information both about conflict dynamics and about peacebuilding responses (existing or potential, successful or unsuccessful)?
 - a. If not, why not?! (you probably should be – it's important to look at the current state of peacebuilding so that our recommendations are more grounded)
- 2) What mixture of the following activities will you be using and why? Are you doing these just because you always do, or you are sure that they are right?
 - a. Desk research
 - b. Planning workshops
 - c. Conflict mapping workshops
 - d. Joint analysis workshops
 - e. Focus groups
 - f. Key informant interviews
 - g. Feedback workshop
 - h. Follow up activities
- 3) What tools will you use in these activities to draw out the information? How will you draw out 'implicit' information (i.e. things that people won't tell you directly/immediately)? Are you sure these are the best tools you could use? If not, it may be worth looking for inspiration at reference materials we have posted on the PPP shared space (wiki).
- 4) When presented with a certain viewpoint, how will we identify how widely held it is (within that group/community, within society as a whole)?

Information analysis

- 1) Who is responsible for doing the analysis? Do they have the necessary skills/experience? If more than one person/organisation, how will they divide up this task between themselves?
- 2) Have you allocated enough time and resources for analysis?
- 3) What format for conflict analysis will you use? (Drivers and actors? Different causes? Etc)
- 4) How will we indicate whether a point of view is a minority position or whether it is widely shared within certain communities?
- 5) Do we need to be careful when presenting certain viewpoints that we do not sound like we are endorsing this point of view?

Recommendations and peacebuilding responses

- 1) How careful will you need to be about making recommendations in a public document? (i.e. how direct can they be without damaging our reputation/relationships/etc in country, and how much does this matter?)
- 2) How well do you know the EU (and other target audiences) – their policies, practices? The key people who can act on the analysis in country/in Brussels?
- 3) Are these our recommendations, or are these also developed with partners and other stakeholders?

Training/capacity building regarding advocacy and working with the EU

- 1) Are any specific measures planned to boost partners'/others' advocacy capacity, particularly with regard to working with the EU?
- 2) Which local stakeholders would most benefit from training/capacity building on how the EU works and how to do advocacy?
- 3) Who will deliver this advocacy/capacity building?
- 4) If something is planned, at what point in the process does it ideally need to take place? Ideally the learning process should take place over the duration of the project, but where can this fit in with your planning process?

Articulating the outputs

- 1) What will the final document look like?
 - a. What languages will it be published in? (how much will this cost and how long will it take?)
- 2) How will the final analysis be formally presented?
 - a. In country – will there be an event? Will there be any attempt to publicise this in the media (press releases, articles, short film presentation?)
 - b. What role will we play, and what role will be played by local stakeholders?
 - c. In Brussels – is this likely to be a priority study for Brussels? Does it require a separate event? Is there an opportunity to invite partners/representatives of affected communities to present the findings/their personal experiences?
- 3) Are there any opportunities to present the analysis *informally* to key stakeholders?
- 4) Can we tailor the findings for different audiences? If so, which audiences? How much extra work will this involve?
- 5) Will it be possible to share initial findings earlier in the process? If so, with whom and when?

M&E/learning lessons as we go along

- 1) What can we do to ensure that we are learning lessons throughout the programme: about how to do participatory conflict analysis? About working in this country/context?

Boys play in a camp for internally displaced people, Pakistan
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Conciliation Resources is an independent organisation working with people in conflict to prevent violence and build peace. We're there for as long as we're needed to provide advice, support and practical resources. In addition, we take what we learn to government decision-makers and others working to end conflict, to improve peacebuilding policies and practice worldwide.

Our programme work focuses on eight conflict-affected regions around the world and we take a further in-depth look at specific conflict contexts and peacebuilding themes through our *Accord* publication series. In addition, we work to improve global conflict policies, with a focus on the UK, EU and UN, and the regions in which work. For more information visit: www.c-r.org

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Saferworld has 20 years experience of working in the field of international conflict prevention, contributing to the development and implementation of a range of policies and programmes in the areas of small arms control, security and access to justice, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding. Saferworld is operational in over 15 countries and territories, in all cases working closely with local partners. We strive to ensure all our work is locally-grounded, and place a high premium on local level involvement in the design, implementation and oversight of our engagements. We pride ourselves on our ability to facilitate access for local communities and vulnerable groups to decision-making processes.

Saferworld has its headquarters in the United Kingdom as well as offices in Brussels, Colombo, Juba, Kampala, Kathmandu, Nairobi and Pristina. We also have staff based in New York, Dhaka and Vienna. For more information visit: www.saferworld.org.uk

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