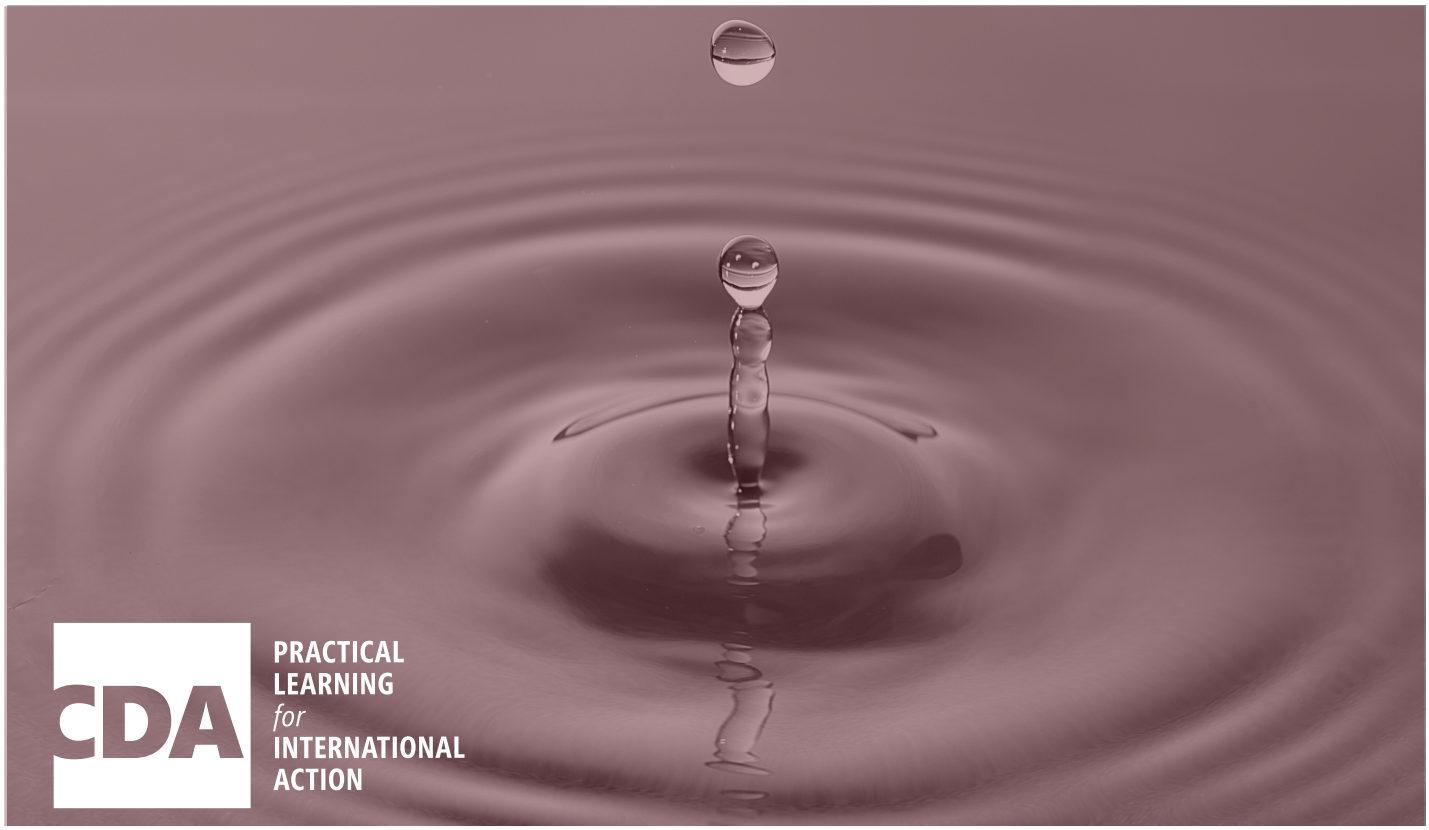
DO NO HARM WORKSHOP

Participant's Manual

2016



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About CDA

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA) is a non-profit organization committed to improving the effectiveness of those who work internationally to provide humanitarian assistance, engage in peace practice, support sustainable development, and conduct corporate operations in a socially responsible manner.

CDA combines rigorous analysis with pragmatic field-level work to deliver practical lessons and tools to field staff and policymakers alike.

An electronic copy of this resource is available on the CDA website: cdacollaborative.org/publications

CDA is keen to hear how you are using our materials. Your feedback informs our ongoing learning and impact assessment processes. E-mail your feedback to feedback@cdacollaborative.org

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Background, History and Lessons of the Do No Harm Program

This introductory module provides an introduction to Do No Harm, and the collaborative learning methodology through which it was developed.

CDA Methodology

CDA is a small nonprofit organization based in Cambridge Massachusetts, USA. CDA is a learning organization focused on helping international actors (humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and corporate) increase their effectiveness and their accountability to local people, who are the recipients of their goods and services. CDA's methodology is called collaborative learning.

Collaborative Learning begins with case studies. The cases capture a snapshot of a place at a certain time. They explore what the situation was, what challenges people faced, and how they tried to overcome them, how they succeeded or how they failed, and what else they tried. These snapshots are then placed side-by-side in consultations that include the case writers, the subjects of the cases, and other interested practitioners. In the course of the consultations, general patterns emerge from the case studies.

The second phase is the feedback phase. The general patterns and lessons from the case studies are then presented to people from as many organizations as possible back in the field. Practitioners weigh the patterns against their experiences to determine if the patterns and lessons from the cases hold up. We expect the feedback sessions to challenge the case studies and if something is wrong, we will discard it. In the Do No Harm program, about one third of what emerged from the cases was discarded during the feedback phase. This is why the feedback phase is so critical. We learn what parts of the cases are accidents of the moment in time, the general sense of the zeitgeist, or the unconscious biases of the case writers. But what remains has been confirmed and is powerful.

The feedback phase brings in hundreds of additional voices, perspectives and experiences. Participants in the feedback sessions can challenge the findings or support them. During the feedback phase, patterns and lessons which are not considered to be universal are discarded. What remains has been tested against the combined experience of thousands of international and national practitioners.

The third phase is implementation. CDA takes what are now solid lessons and put them into a practical form. Learning is not useful unless it's useable. CDA's learning is ongoing. CDA continues to draw lessons about how people use the tools in order to refine and adapt them.

CDA Practice Areas

CDA's work on ***Peacebuilding Effectiveness*** (formerly the Reflecting on Peace Practice Program) aims to improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding practice. The program's overall goal is to improve

understanding of what is effective in peacebuilding practice, and to strengthen strategy development, program design, and monitoring and evaluation to achieve greater impact.

The Listening Program existed to support local people in driving their own development. By listening to nearly 6,000 people in over 20 countries who have received, participated in or observed international assistance, the Listening Project gathered evidence on the cumulative effects of aid efforts and ideas how to make international aid more effective. Since *Time to Listen: Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid*, which summarizes this evidence, was published in December 2012, the Listening Program has shared the experiences and feedback from local people on how to more meaningfully engage them in aid efforts with a wide range of policy-makers and practitioners. This work continues in CDA's ***Aid Effectiveness*** Practice Area.

CDA's ***Responsible Business*** Practice Area promotes the development of positive, constructive relationships between companies and the local communities where corporate operations take place. *Getting it Right: Making Corporate-Community Relations Work* (April 2009) encapsulates lessons learned during the first 9 years of the program and draws on the experience of companies and local stakeholders at over 40 operating sites of international companies working under difficult circumstances. It presents a framework for company managers to analyze the consequences of their decisions for communities, as well as practical management options for improving corporate impacts. The evidence gathering that led to *Getting it Right* is the foundation of CDA's ongoing work to help companies sustain and improve social performance.

CDA continues its work on conflict sensitivity through its ***Conflict Sensitivity*** Practice Area. This work aims to help aid workers understand and deal with the complexities of providing assistance with better outcomes for the societies where assistance is provided. CDA provides well-tested and rigorous analysis frameworks for reducing complexity and managing uncertainty.

From 2002-2011 CDA's The Steps Toward Conflict Prevention Program undertook a systematic review of fourteen conflict prevention experiences. STEPS visited communities in thirteen countries in order to examine how communities avoid participating in conflict in the face of extreme pressure to join the violence. The case studies have allowed CDA to explore the elements that are common to the prevention experiences and to learn from them. The STEPS Program was concluded when it published its book, *Opting Out of War: Strategies to Prevent Violent Conflict*.

In 2015, CDA's structure changed. It went from having four programs to organizing itself in two Wings: Collaborative Learning and Advisory Services. CDA continues to explore new questions and develop new collaborative learning projects through the Collaborative Learning wing, and it shares those lessons and supports the work of other organizations through its Advisory services wing. This new structure allows CDA to bring the considerable experiences of all of its practice areas to bear on the questions and challenges facing humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, and corporate actors today.

History of Do No Harm and CDA's Conflict Sensitivity Practice Area

CDA has been working on conflict sensitivity with humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding practitioners since 1994. Along with other thinkers, CDA has been a pioneer in the development of conceptual frameworks for conflict sensitivity, as well as work with organizations to integrate the concept into their programs.

Case Study Phase (1994-1996)

Do No Harm started as a collaborative learning project in 1994 to answer the question: *"How can assistance of any kind be provided in ways that, rather than feeding into and exacerbating a conflict, help local people to disengage and establish alternative systems for dealing with the problems that underlie the conflict?"* It was started based on the observation that aid had indeed contributed to conflict dynamics in the contexts in which it was implemented. This dynamic was observed in many contexts around the world, but was brought particularly to light because of the events in Rwanda in 1994. Several academics began to examine how and why aid programs had affected the conflict dynamics in the lead up to the Rwandan genocide.

CDA initiated what was then called the Local Capacities for Peace Project to better understand how aid interacts with conflict dynamics. Fifteen cases studies were written between 1994 and 1996, examining aid's impacts in 14 conflict zones. These cases represented large, international NGOs and small, local organizations; they were written in contexts of active and ongoing conflict, and in post-conflict contexts and situations of low-scale, but endemic structural violence. As CDA convened consultations, patterns began to emerge from these diverse contexts.

Feedback Phase (1996-1997)

As patterns emerged from the case studies, CDA captured these in a series of issue papers. These issue papers informed 23 feedback workshops, which convened over 750 practitioners from field offices, headquarters, and donor organizations. The purpose of the feedback phase is to test the patterns identified in the case studies against the experiences of a different set of practitioners.

Final Publication:

Anderson, Mary B. *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace—Or War*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999.

Implementation Phase (1997-2001)

In DNH's Implementation Phase, CDA sent liaisons into the field to support 12 organizations in applying the lessons from the case studies and feedback phase. The purpose of this effort was to demonstrate the utility of the DNH framework and improve the day-to-day programming choices of project staff in different contexts around the world. The role of the liaison was, first, to provide training and support for DNH implementation. Second, liaisons acted as advisors on how to use the framework. Finally, the liaisons gathered the results of organizations applying DNH.

During this phase, CDA convened twice yearly consultations to gather liaisons and practitioners to share their experiences using the framework. The Implementation Phase served as a test for the tool produced from the case studies and feedback workshops. The Implementation Phase also generated

a new set of experiences that added to and tested the learning. Further, it provided a way to check on the knowledge gained and the lessons learned in the previous two phases of the project.

Several hundred more practitioners were involved in the Implementation Phase. The learning process, in a sense, came full circle, but it did not end. These practitioners challenge, tested, and added to the learning. This phase further refined the tool, added to it and generated an understanding of what it meant for an organization to be conflict sensitive. At the end of this process, Do No Harm was clearly a robust tool and set of concepts that could change the way people did their work for the better.

Major Publication from the Implementation Phase:

Anderson, Mary B. *Options for Aid in Conflict: Lessons from Field Experience*. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2000.

Mainstreaming Phase (2001-Present)

The fourth phase of the DNH Program was dubbed the "Mainstreaming" phase, because it attempted to bring the practice of Do No Harm into the mainstream of aid work. This phase, which continues today, seeks to spread the DNH Framework, and the application of conflict sensitivity among aid practitioners, and to continue learning from their challenges of application, integration and process.

New Learning: Reflective Case Studies (2006-2012)

In 2006, CDA was still very involved in spreading DNH, engaging donors on their policies, working closely with organizations, and helping practitioners meet their challenges. However, several of our colleagues felt there was more to be learned. CDA began to explore how conflict sensitivity—or any new approach or methodology—is learned, used, thought about, spread, and integrated into practice, by organizations and by individuals. During this phase, 19 case studies were written documenting the challenges in a variety of organizations in 17 countries. Based on this refreshed understanding of current practice and the organizational, policy, and individual challenges of learning and adapting, CDA developed new guidance products, and a revised training approach.

Select Major Publications from the Reflective Case Studies:

- Goddard, Nicole. *General Principles for Adapting Do No Harm Training for Different Audiences*. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2013
- Goddard, Nicole. *Conflict Sensitivity Mainstreaming Efforts*. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2014.
- Goddard, Nicole and Maureen Lempke. *Do No Harm in Land Tenure and Property Rights Programming*. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2012.
- Wallace, Marshall. *From Principle to Practice: A User's Guide to Do No Harm*. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2014.

What is Do No Harm?

Do No Harm is one of several tools for the application of conflict sensitivity to aid policies and programs. Conflict sensitivity (CS) is the ability of an organization to:[1]

[1] Definition adapted from International Alert et al. (2004), 'Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack.'

1. Understand the context in which it is working, especially the dynamics of relationships between and among groups in that context.
2. Understand how the details of its interventions interact with that context. This includes not only the outcomes of the interventions, but also:
    a. Details of its **programs** (beneficiaries/participants selection, sites and timings of programs, etc.)
    b. Details of its **operations** (hiring, procurement, security, etc.)
    c. Specifics of its **policies** (criteria-setting for both programs and operations).
3. Act upon this understanding to minimize the negative impacts of its interventions on the context and maximize positive impacts.

The term "do no harm" is widely used—and abused—in the aid field. Many people talk about applying a "principle of do no harm" or using a "do no harm lens." Some people and organizations distinguish between capital Do No Harm (the framework) and lowercase do no harm (the principle or lens).

Principles, in and of themselves, are useful and positive things. They are the basis of important organizational polices and visions. However, in the case of Do No Harm, principles are not enough. In order to implement conflict sensitivity, an analytical tool and practical approach are needed. This is the Do No Harm Framework. The framework, built upon six key lessons which were derived from the original DNH case studies: helps organizations to understand the complex relationships among groups in their contexts of operations, using Dividers and Connectors as an analytical method; helps organizations understand how its programs and policies will interact with the specificities of its operational context; and gives practitioners a starting place for adapting their programs to minimize negative impacts of programming and build upon their positive impacts.

Rather than speak generically about "harm," we prefer to use specific language, such as "a negative impact on a Connector between Group A and Group B" or "a positive impact on a Divider between Group X and Group Y." Specifics will help us understand what type of harm we mean and whom that harm affects. This information, in turn, will help us address the causes of negative impacts with programmatic options. This will help link our programming to analysis, and generate a clearer, and better articulated, understanding of the context.

The Six Lessons of the Do No Harm Program

The Do No Harm Program learned six universal lessons about the interaction of assistance and conflict, which are captured in the DNH Relationship Framework. We call this framework the Relationship Framework because it shows the relationship between the elements in a context and the way they interact to create either negative impacts, or positive impacts on the context of conflict.

1. When any intervention enters a context, it becomes part of the context

This is not always obvious to outsiders who feel that they or their activities are not related to the overarching issues in the context. Becoming part of the context is unavoidable. As an intervention

enters the context, it will begin to have effects, even beyond what they intend. DNH addresses these unintended effects.

2. Every context is characterized by two sets of factors: Dividers and Connectors

Dividers are those factors that create division or tension among people or groups. They push people apart. Connectors are those factors that pull people and groups together. These are found in every context. Even in the most peaceful contexts, we find Dividers; even in the most violent conflicts, we find Connectors.

3. Any intervention will interact with both Dividers and Connectors

Any intervention can have a negative impact, increasing tension among people or decreasing and weakening connectors, or it can have a positive impact by minimizing divisions and increasing the connections among people. All organizations intervening in complex contexts hope to have positive impacts. DNH helps us to be aware of unintended impacts on Dividers and Connectors, which can undermine the positive goals we set for ourselves.

4. There are predictable patterns by which aid interacts with Conflict

There are common Patterns of Impact through which organizations and individuals that generate impacts on Dividers and Connectors: Actions (Resource Transfers) and staff Behavior (Implicit Ethical Messages). Organizations bring resources of some sort into a context. What resources are being brought into the context, and how? What we do says more about us than what we say. What messages do we send through our behavior? The evidence from the DNH Program has shown that there are specific patterns through which impacts on Dividers and Connectors occur.

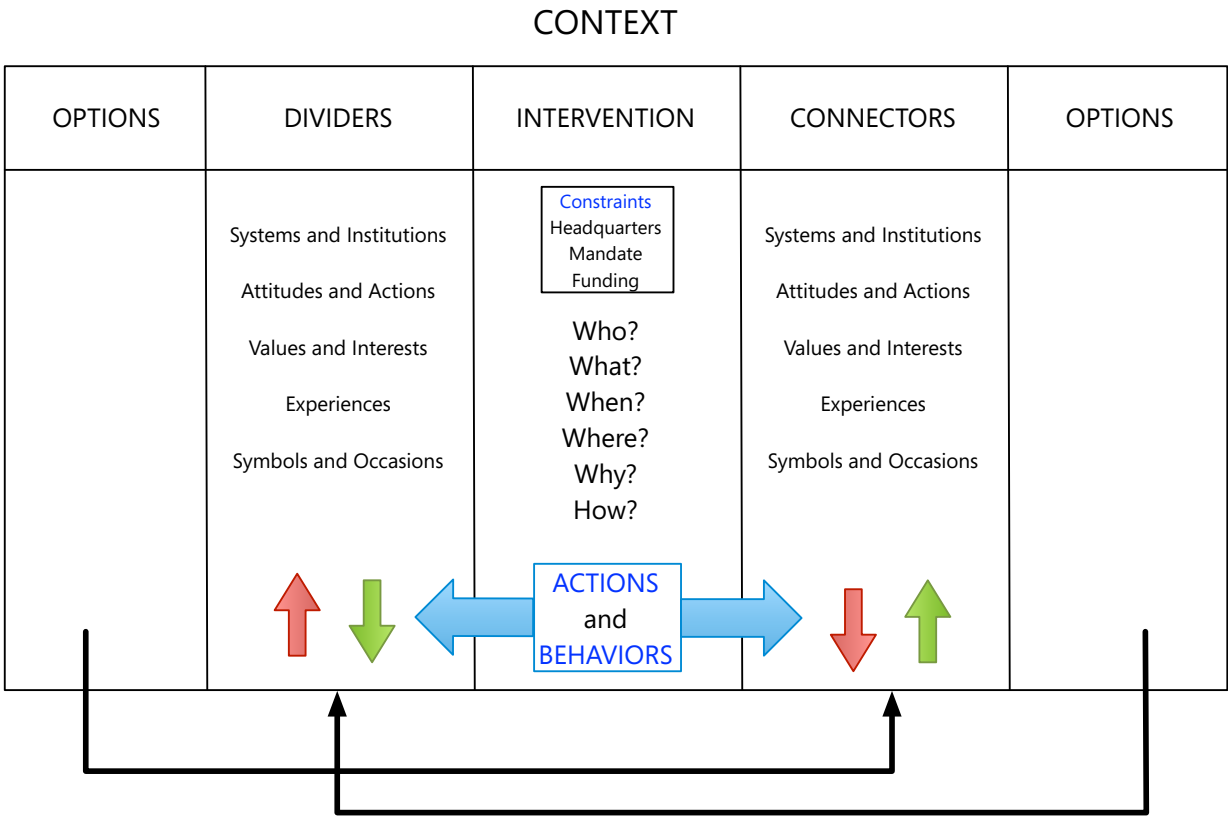
5. The Details of an intervention matter

An intervention as a whole is a series of choices. The entire intervention is rarely the source of negative impacts on Dividers and Connectors. Rather, the seemingly small or seemingly unimportant details are where the Patterns of Impact are generated. We have observed that if an intervention has an unintended negative impact, it does not have to change its goals or even most of its activities. Rather, it can adjust some of these minor, yet critical details of those activities. The same goals can be achieved in a number of different ways.

6. There are always Options

You can always do things differently than you are doing them. You can always learn and improve. If you see you are having a negative impact, you can make adjustments. If you see you are having a positive impact, you can sustain it, or capitalize on what you are doing right to build upon it.

The Do No Harm Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Aid on Conflict



These are the basic lessons of the DNH Program, and the framework that they create. This framework can help you analyze your own work and understand the relationship between what you are doing, and the context in which you are operating.

Context Analysis: Dividers and Connectors

The first step in the DNH process is to understand the context in which your organization is operating. There are many good tools for context analysis, and CDA does not recommend any one over another. Before beginning a Dividers and Connectors analysis, you should understand some basic things about the context in which you work:

There are three primary tasks to generating an understanding of the context:

1. Identify the elements of the implementation area for analysis of the context.
    a. What is the area (geographic or conceptual) relevant to your organization's work?
    b. At what level will the intervention be implemented? (i.e., local, national, etc.)
2. Identify actors in the context.
    a. What groups (ethnic, political, social, etc.) exist within the program implementation area?
    b. Can the implementation area be defined as "belonging to" or "territory of" any particular group or groups?
    c. What other interventions are taking place that will have an impact on the context?
        i. What is the government doing?
        ii. What are NGOs doing?
        iii. What local efforts are taking place?
3. Identify intergroup conflicts that have caused violence or are dangerous and may escalate into violence.
    a. Have any conflicts between identified groups erupted into violence?
    b. Are there non-violent conflicts that are significantly destructive, and/or have the potential to erupt into violence?

Conflicts are not always violent, dangerous, or destructive. Conflict is a vital part of society; disagreements between individuals and groups can generate thoughtful debates. Conflict sensitivity is concerned with destructive conflict. This can mean violence and war, or latent conflict that prevents constructive progress in a society. We need to track the elements of conflicts in order to be able to predict potential tips into destruction.

Dividers and Connectors

Evidence from the DNH Program shows that all contexts of conflict are characterized by two factors: Dividers and Connectors. Our interventions will have an impact on both. Dividers and Connectors analysis will supplement your existing context analysis. Dividers and connectors tell us about one set of things in the context: relationships between groups of people.

Dividers are those things that:

- Increase tension, divisions or capacities for war between groups of people.
- Increase suspicion, mistrust or inequality in a society.

In contexts of conflict, Dividers are obvious, you can see them at work and people talk about them a lot. In contexts with no overt conflict, Dividers still exist and still have the potential to lead to violence, but they might not be readily visible to outsiders.

Connectors are those things that:

- Bring people together despite their differences
- Decrease suspicion, mistrust and inequality in a society.

In contexts of conflict, Connectors are sometimes difficult to see. People don't tend to talk about them and outsiders may think they do not exist, and yet we see them in every context. Connectors are clearly not always strong enough to overcome dividers, but this does not mean they are not important.

Categories for Dividers/Connectors Analysis

It is easy to say: "Identify the dividers and connectors in a context." It is not always so straightforward to do it. It is much easier to do this work in teams, and it is much much easier to do this work when your team includes local people. The following categories can be useful for brainstorming about Dividers and Connectors. These categories can help you to disaggregate dividers or connectors that seem to be quite big. Ask yourself: HOW is this dividing or connecting people? Or what aspect of this divides people? Does any aspect connect them?

Systems and Institutions

Societies function through systems and organize to govern themselves through institutions. These structures can serve as powerful forces, which either help to connect groups or promote difference and division between them. Systems and Institutions can be either inclusive or exclusive, legitimate for all or only for some. When examining systems and institutions, it is important to look beyond formal mechanisms for governance. There are informal, religious, and traditional systems and institutions as well. Technological systems (communications, electrical grids, etc.) also fall into this category. Some sample questions for analysis include:

- Which formal or informal governing policies, institutions or local, economic, technological, or cultural systems keep people apart or increase tensions between groups?
- Which institutions or systems help people overcome their differences or promote coexistence?

Attitudes and Actions

This category covers the things people say, and the things people do. People can promote connection or division through their actions (e.g. welcoming behaviors or aggressive behaviors) or their attitudes (e.g. sharing messages of peace or promoting stereotypes). These attitudes and actions can be small scale (how groups interact in a community) or large scale (what national-level politicians say).

- What kinds of attitudes, stereotypes, threats or acts of violence exist in the context?
- How do people express tolerance, acceptance or appreciation for other groups?

Values and Interests

Values and interests are the things that are important to people, their concerns, their principles, and their standards. Shared values and common interests connect people and different values or competing interests divide them. Interests can be economic or political, and values are more likely to be ethical or cultural. Values and interests represent deeply held or incredibly strong beliefs and positions, and are very difficult to influence. They are important when considering dividers and connectors because they help shape people's behavior and interactions. They may represent the reasons behind attitudes and actions.

- What are the specific values that may differ between groups and lead to tensions? What are the specific values that are shared among groups?
- Do groups share interests? Do they work together? Do groups have different interests in relation to shared resources?

Experiences

Experiences are a strong factor of either connection or division. Shared or common experiences can unite people across lines of division. Different experiences of a singular event can shape people's perceptions and create positions of division in a society. Group experiences are the source of its narrative and history, so much so that generations after an event or experience, those historical events can still be the source of connection or division. How groups have interacted or been on the same or opposing sides in the past is a key feature of their present-day relationships.

- Have groups experienced a past or historical event differently?
- What experiences have groups shared in the past?

Symbols and Occasions

Symbols are representative of something larger than themselves: a flag represents a country or a movement; a color represents a group; a street named after a war hero represents a piece of history. Occasions bring people together to celebrate, mourn, remember, or compete. These symbols and occasions can unite people across lines of division, or further divide them. A street named after a war hero looks different to people on the winning and losing sides of the war. A celebration of remembrance or independence may bring together all groups. Symbols and occasions should be analyzed not only for what they are, but for what they represent to people and whom they include, or exclude, as the case may be.

- Are there symbols, events, holidays or occasions that celebrate one group over the other? From which certain groups are excluded?
- Are there universal symbols of togetherness or peace recognized and celebrated by all groups?

DNH Practitioners use all kinds of categories to help them brainstorm and identify Dividers and Connectors in their contexts. People find the categories above very helpful, but it is by no means the only way to categorize Dividers and Connectors. The idea is not to follow a formula, but to find a process for identifying Dividers and Connectors that works for you and your team.

Considerations in Context Analysis

There are several key challenge to watch for when identifying Dividers and Connectors.

Prioritizing Dividers and Connectors

Usually, when making lists of Dividers and Connectors, we can come up with dozens of factors in the context that are increasing tension or bringing people together. It is going to be very difficult to apply dozens of Dividers and Connectors to inform program planning, or track them all over time. DNH practitioners prioritize Dividers and Connectors in order to effectively monitor changes to those factors. People prioritize Dividers and Connectors in various ways, but usually they ask themselves:

- Which Dividers are the most dangerous or cause the most tension between groups?
- Which Connectors can I work with and have positive impacts on?

People as Dividers or Connectors

It is tempting to identify individuals as Dividers or Connectors. However, it is likely their specific actions and behaviors that have a divisive or connecting effect, not their whole person. Just as your intervention will have an impact on Dividers and Connectors, individuals, through their actions and behaviors are also having an impact. People can be **symbols** for a larger movement, system or institution. And they can play upon and actively work to strengthen certain dividers to the point where it is difficult to see them as separate from the divisions they are creating or they can be representative of peaceful attitudes and ways of interacting with other groups.

When talking about people, especially about living people, as symbolic Dividers or Connectors, keep revisiting your analysis regularly. People change their behaviors and actions quickly, and someone who is a symbol for a peaceful movement can become an actor in a broader system perpetuating violence over time. This is especially true of actors who are symbolic Connectors outside of a governing structure (e.g. Nelson Mandela, Aung San Su Kyi). While these actors are outside of the system they can be symbols of a broader movement. Once they become part of the government (South Africa, Myanmar) they will make political decisions that will shift their status; their connecting power may wane.

When something seems to be both a Divider and a Connector

When you do your analysis, sometimes a factor will appear to be both dividing and connecting people. In these cases, it is important to **disaggregate** by asking yourself, "how is this factor dividing and how is this connecting?" or "what about this factor divides people, and what aspects of it connect?" Referring to the categories may help you break down the Dividers and Connectors into their basic components, so you can really see how you are having an impact on them. Saying that something is both a divider and a connector makes it hard to determine exactly how we are going to change that factor.

Level of Analysis

When identifying Dividers and Connectors, it is important to clearly specify your level of analysis. At a very local level, something may connect people quite strongly. As the analysis widens and includes more groups and different inter-group dynamics, micro-level Connectors could become macro-level

Dividers. For example, Kurdish independence is a very strong Connecting interest among Kurdish people. If, for instance, we are analyzing the whole of Iraq, Kurdish independence would be a Divider between Kurds and other Iraqis. To ensure clarity, it is vital to **establish clear boundaries** to your analysis in order to understand how these factors should be sorted, and therefore what the impacts of strengthening or weakening a single factor may be. For the same reason, it is essential to **specify which groups are being divided or connected.** For example, rather than simply identifying Kurdish independence as a divider, clarify that Kurdish independence is a divider *between Iraqi Kurds and other Iraqis*.

Dividers and Connectors are a tool for sorting elements of the context that tell us about how people in that context relate to one another. These are important to understand for all interventions. When organizations are working in contexts of conflict, e.g. doing humanitarian and development assistance in a context of conflict, they must understand how they will have an impact on Dividers and Connectors. When organizations are working directly on the conflict, e.g. doing peacebuilding, they must still pay attention to Dividers and Connectors in order to avoid unintentionally making them worse, even as they seek to address the key drivers of the broader conflict.

We have seen that Dividers and Connectors are useful to understand ongoing violent conflicts, as well as latent or underlying conflicts that are not violent. Latent conflict can still be destructive. These conflicts are not as obvious to outsiders, but they are still important to track. As we have said, all interventions will have an impact on BOTH Dividers and Connectors in the context. As we go forward with our programming, we will begin to see HOW those impacts occur.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is a D/C analysis sufficient for conflict or context analysis?

A D/C analysis is a specific kind of context/conflict analysis. It tells you one thing: the dynamics and factors in the relationships among groups in the context. It should supplement other context analysis tools (e.g. actor mapping, power analysis, etc.). Depending on the goals of your program, you may need to do additional conflict analysis as well. If you are doing a peacebuilding program (working ON conflict), for instance, it will be important to analyze the key drivers of conflict in the context in order to determine which of them you will attempt to address. A D/C analysis should still supplement a further conflict analysis when it comes to determining HOW to implement your programs.

How long does the list of connectors and dividers have to be?

A D/C list can attempt to be exhaustive (and exhausting!), and capture all the D/C in any context. Capturing these in a list can be a vital exercise, especially as teams begin to talk through the context and its dynamics for the first time. However, priority D/C will begin to emerge—those most powerful and dangerous Dividers, or those Connectors that might be easy to influence. As they emerge, these should be carefully tracked. There's no hard and fast rule for list length, but 5-7 items can easily be remembered by program teams, for ongoing monitoring purposes.

Are all Connectors positive?

No. Sometimes the factors that connect people across conflict lines are hardships, trauma, or discrimination. These are factors that, obviously, a program will not aim to support or strengthen. However, they do exist, and they do manage to bridge differences, and sometimes create opportunities for collaboration. These "negative connectors" should be closely monitored.

What do you do when you cannot identify any Connectors?

Ask! Often community members, local officials, even local staff know of Connectors, which may not be obvious. Get as broad a set of perspectives (gender, age, ethnicity, livelihoods, etc.) as possible. Maybe there are some shared historical experiences among groups, maybe children or youth are coming together because of new music or movies, maybe people collaborate across group divides for economic reasons. There are always Connectors. They are not always obvious.

How often should you do a D/C analysis?

Analysis should be iteratively updated. There is no prescribed, or even preferred interval for analysis. It is, like most things, dependent on the context. Some organizations revisit their D/C analysis on a scheduled interval, others add a "What's changed in the context?" line to their regular meeting agendas. Still others make it a point to revisit analysis following major events in the context. Analysis can be updated formally—on a scheduled basis—or informally—based on observations made by staff in the community, based on conversations, based on beneficiary/participant feedback.

Who should participate in D/C analysis?

Adding diverse perspectives to a context analysis, or program planning session, will enrich and nuance the available data. Local perspectives are critical, but it may not always be possible to have participatory analysis sessions. As an alternative, analysis can also be validated with communities, local staff, and other local people in both formal sessions and informal conversations. It is important to hear perspectives from different sides of the conflict, in order to seek balanced information.

Can a Connector also be a Divider?

Yes, and no. This question illustrates the need to disaggregate by asking yourself, "what about this factor divides people, and what aspects of it connect?" If, for example, you are doing an analysis of a single village, you may identify water as a shared resource among all the villagers. However, if you expand the analysis to a group of nearby villages, there may be competition for that same resource, and water is seen as a divider.

Can Dividers and Connectors be applied at the household level?

Dividers and Connectors analysis was developed in order to understand the dynamics of intergroup relations at the societal level; however, this analysis can yield insights at the household level as well. Applying D/C analysis at this level may draw out important gender and inter-generational dynamics to consider when during implementation. A note of caution: analyzing D/C at the household level can become problematic if it leads to making overgeneralized assumptions about "all men" or "all women" or "all children."

Patterns of Impact

The evidence from the Do No Harm Program's work with agencies providing all kinds of assistance in conflict has found that there are distinct patterns through which aid programs have impacts, both positive and negative, on the contexts in which they work. Having identified these patterns, we can anticipate how aid will interact with conflict, we can think of ways to avoid negative impacts and reinforce positive impacts. These patterns are tools. The fact that these patterns exist is reassuring, because if we can identify the patterns at work in a context, we can anticipate how they will have an impact on that context.

These patterns, which are universal and come from the field experience of agencies working in vastly different contexts, can help to isolate the small elements of a program THAT CAN BE ADJUSTED in order to increase, preserve or build on positive impacts or decrease or compensate for negative impacts. Making these adjustments will be covered in the next session.

1. An organization's **ACTIONS**:
    a. **WHAT** - the goods and services that an organization transmits to the context can either increase or decrease equality and security in the context.
    b. **HOW** – the mechanisms used to transmit goods and services can significantly affect Dividers and Connectors.
2. Individual or group **BEHAVIOR**:
    a. **HOW** – the ways in which staff interact with each other, with other organizations, and with local people sends messages about their intentions, their values and their goals.

It is important to note that patterns of Actions and of Behavior can be both positive and negative. Organizations that are not regularly monitoring their impacts on the context, or which fail to link their program to their context analysis may have negative impacts without being aware of them, while organizations that are strategic, and consistently monitoring changes in the context AND reacting to them, will be better able to see opportunities to generate positive patterns.

Resource Transfers/Actions

All programs transfer resources, tangible or intangible, into the context where they work. These resources include money, goods, skills, food, shelter, and advocacy. The transfer of resources are organizational Actions. We need to keep in mind:

When outside resources are introduced into a resource-scarce environment where people are in conflict with each other, the local people see these resources as representative of power and wealth and thus, the resources become part of the conflict. People in conflict attempt to control and use assistance resources to support their side of the conflict and to weaken the other side. The impacts of these transfers occur in five spheres:

1. Theft

Goods or money intended for distribution or payment may be stolen and used by fighters. Goods or money can be diverted or "taxed" to fund ongoing fighting.

2. Market Effects

In violent conflict settings, assistance affects prices, wages and profits and can reinforce the war economy by enriching activities and people that are war-related. In all settings, such increases in the prices of goods and services can price local people out of their own markets. Agencies can also have effects on markets by bringing in goods and services from outside which could be sourced locally, and giving them away for free. This drops the prices of local goods, and can force farmers and sellers to seek alternate employment—sometimes in fighting.

3. Distribution Effects

Distribution of goods, money, time or opportunities along the lines of an existing conflict can exacerbate tensions and dividers by unfairly benefiting one side over another.

4. Substitution Effects

Organizations sometimes find themselves substituting for the role of governments by, for example, building roads or schools. This substitution allows the government to invest the money they would have spent on services in extending an ongoing conflict or misappropriating funds. Substitution can also weaken the state's ability to respond, manage disasters, conflicts, and its own development.

5. Legitimization Effects

An organization can inadvertently lend legitimacy to a government, leader or institution by involving them in the aid process (in distribution, in publicity, etc.). This becomes problematic when it legitimizes a government, leader or institution that is considered responsible for violent or unjust behavior.

It is possible to avoid negative effects in these five spheres, and in fact, have positive impacts on the context by designing programs that are linked to your context analysis, allow for creative approaches, take into account local definitions of fairness, and strategically plan for the future of the program (including the exit strategy).

Positive Patterns of Actions

It is possible for aid agencies to have positive impacts on contexts of conflict though their patterns of resource distribution, though this requires some strategic thinking, good analysis which is revisited regularly and context-specific programing choices. Working using these strategies may intersect nicely with agencies' broader agendas and build on their impacts in other spheres. In other cases, using these strategies could occasionally conflict with an organizational mandate (with the exception being Theft Prevention—everyone can and should work to prevent theft).

1. Theft Prevention

Thieves need four things in order to steal:

1. Knowledge: They need to know that there is something to steal, where it is, how to get it, etc.
2. Value: The thing to be stolen must be worth the risk of stealing it.
3. Impunity: They need to know they can get away with it.
4. Opportunity: They need a chance to steal it.

If you can take away one of these four things, you can reduce theft, if you can take away more than one, you can reduce theft more. Creative and context-specific solutions work best. Preventing theft keeps resources from being diverted for conflict purposes, and saves resources which can then be put towards peaceful purposes.

2. Market Effects

Agencies have the power to boost, balance or stabilize markets for local goods and services, in order to reinforce a civilian peacetime economy, and to ensure that local people can still participate in local markets. Agencies need to analyze local markets to determine what goods and services are sold there, how they might be distorted by agency efforts, and how this may affect Dividers and Connectors. There are usually options for sourcing goods locally, supporting local growers, producers, and vendors.

3. Distribution Effects

Agencies can distribute goods and services to their target populations in a way that does not exacerbate conflict, but can actually build upon connectors. The key to a balanced distribution is understanding what local and specific definitions are for fair distribution in the context (an up-to-date understanding is key, based on current conflict dynamics). Equitable distribution is not always equal distribution. Ask local people what would be fair. Transparency about project goals is vital to gaining the trust of local people when distributing across the lines of a conflict.

4. Substitution Effects

Sometimes, it becomes necessary for an aid organization to substitute for a government or leadership responsibility (times of natural disaster or crisis). Substitution should be strategic, short-term and negotiated with the appropriate authorities. The authorities should be involved in the program design so they understand and are held accountable for their role, including the transfer of responsibilities and the establishment of timeframes and exit strategies, to help ensure that future governance capacity is strengthened.

5. Legitimization Effects

Agencies can strategically and purposefully legitimize a government, leader or institution with the goal of changing or improving local perceptions of that entity's ability to support unity or to be responsive to constituent needs. This can also have the effect of creating a demand for more accountability from government. In order to do this, it is important to understand HOW and WHY the entity will be legitimized, where there might be pushback from local people and how the agency will be viewed in light of current conflict dynamics.

Aiming for a positive effect in one of these five spheres is a way to create added value for aid efforts and build positive relationships in local communities. However, agencies attempting to balance markets, distribute fairly, substitute for government in the short-term, or strategically legitimize a leader MUST do regular analysis of the impacts of these efforts. There could be unforeseen and unintended consequences of these types of actions, and agencies must be ready to respond if the context pushes back against any program element. These efforts, by necessity, are grounded in the local context. Programs may have worked in other regions, but they could have a completely different outcome if transferred to a new context without full awareness of potential impacts.

Implicit Ethical Messages/Behaviors

The second way organizations have impacts on a context are through the patterns of behavior displayed by staff members. The way staff members behave send messages about their values and their intentions. A person's behavior is often a more trusted indicator for their intentions than their words. We are always sending messages through our actions, and others are always receiving them. Our messages can either reinforce the moods and modes of destructive conflict, or they can promote ethics that strengthen peaceful coexistence.

Patterns of behaviors fall into four categories:

1. Respect

Respectful interactions with local people are calm, collaborative, trusting, and sensitive to local concerns. Disrespectful interactions are suspicious, indifferent, belligerent or dismissive. Respectful interactions are open to and encouraging of feedback and grievances. Disrespectful interactions give information without inviting comments or feedback and present solutions not grounded in the context.

2. Accountability

Organizations and staff display accountability for their actions and decisions by: taking action, rather than displaying powerlessness; by taking responsibility for their errors rather than displaying impunity; by abiding by the rule of law rather than relying on arms to display power. Accountability is often focused upward, to headquarters, donors and organizational higher ups. However, Accountability here refers to local people and responsiveness to local concerns. If staff refuse to accept responsibility for their errors, or do not take action when action is required, local people will lose trust in the organization as a whole to respond to their needs.

3. Fairness

Patterns of behavior that are fair recognize the value of input of all members of a community, rather than assigning different value to different lives and are responsive to the expressed needs and goals of the entire community, not only those with voice, power or influence. It is important to note, however, that equal access and equal distribution are not always considered to be fair. We must understand local, contextual and historical definitions of fair treatment and distribution in order to determine what equitable distribution or access looks like.

4. Transparency

Transparency cuts across all of the other patterns of behavior. Being clear and open about an intervention and its aims, inviting local people to participate in the process, give their feedback and share their concerns reinforces positive patterns of behavior. Shielding an intervention from critique or criticism from outsiders leads to perceptions that an organization does not respect or trust local people, and is not willing to be held accountable for their actions. Only through transparency can an organization design an intervention that is Respectful, Accountable and Fair as defined in the local context.

The chart below breaks these broad categories into more concrete types of behavior and messages.

Negative Patterns of Behavior		Positive Patterns of Behavior
▪ Competition ▪ Suspicion ▪ Anger and Aggression (Belligerence) ▪ Indifference ▪ Fear ▪ Telling (people about themselves, what to think, what to do)	**Respect**	▪ Cooperation and Collaboration ▪ Trust ▪ Calm ▪ Sensitivity (to local concerns) ▪ Courage ▪ Listening (to what people say is important to them, to why they think what they think)
▪ Claiming Powerlessness ▪ Impunity ▪ Arms & Power	**Accountability**	▪ Taking Positive Action ▪ Responsibility ▪ Rule of Law or Nonviolence
▪ Different Value for Different Lives ▪ Ignoring Rules ▪ Unfairness	**Fairness**	▪ Recognition of Value ▪ Following Rules ▪ Fairness
▪ Closed ▪ Decision making process unknown ▪ Hide information *Lack of transparency contributes to **all** above behaviors*	**Transparency**	▪ Open ▪ Decision making process shared ▪ Share information *Transparency contributes to **all** above behaviors*

Using the Patterns

Program Design

When designing interventions, considering Actions and Behaviors can help link your context analysis to your program design. The Patterns of Impact are predictable. Because they can be predicted, negative impacts can be avoided and organizations can plan interventions that are appropriate for the context. The Patterns of Behavior also help give organizations guidelines for developing policies about how staff interact with local communities as well as with their colleagues.

Understanding Impacts

As you begin to see the impacts your program is having on the dividers and connectors in the local context, the patterns become vital to understanding HOW those impacts are taking place. Once you understand how the patterns operate, you will quickly be able to see what the consequences of the positive and negative impacts are in your context.

Finding Options

The Patterns of Impact can offer some "hooks" for generating Options to adjust your program and to address changes in Dividers and Connectors. Once you identify the pattern that is causing the impact, you can adapt or change that pattern and hopefully reverse a negative impact. You can also identify and build upon positive patterns.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do Patterns of Impact only apply to international organizations and their staff? No. We have seen these patterns at work in local organizations, in government interventions, and in corporate operations—across the range of types of intervention.

How do we measure the intensity of an impact?

Measurement is challenging, especially in complex contexts with multiple ongoing interventions. Is a market effect considered "bad" if a dozen people are made jobless? Or if large numbers of farmers join militias because the price of their crops has dropped too low to sustain their families? The best way to determine the level of impact on a community is to ask community members, as you attempt to address the impact, regardless of its scale.

How do you address an issue like aid's contribution to corruption?

Corruption is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. Aid can, and does, contribute to it, and to its effects on society. What we have seen that works to begin to understand these contributions is to break corruption into components, using the Resource Transfer and Implicit Ethical Message Patterns. Is aid contributing to legitimization of the corrupt system by taking part in it? Are staff mirroring an attitude of impunity that is present in corrupt officials? Reversing these patterns of impact will most likely not change overarching patterns of corruption, but it may help an organization avoid contributing to it.

What is the difference between equity and equality?

To some, it helps to think of 'equity' as a process, and 'equality' as an outcome. One marginalized group may require more input, resources and support to achieve equality because they are at a greater disadvantage than the groups around them. Thus an equitable process for this marginalized group is one that requires greater effort and resources. Equality is when each group has reached equal status, shares the same rights, and can access the same opportunities in a context.

Program Analysis

One of the earliest lessons of the DNH Program was that the details of an intervention matter. In terms of impact on Dividers and Connectors, it is rarely an entire program that causes an impact. Rather, the small details of well-intended programs can cause unintended negative impacts. We don't see these impacts on the context until we unpack the aid program and link it to our Dividers and Connectors Analysis.

Evidence from the field shows that there are certain Critical Details of any intervention that often lead to impacts on Dividers and Connectors. In addition to those details, there are other questions and ways of understanding the program that can help an agency fully understand their aid program's impacts.

A program analysis helps organizations unpack all of the details of its interventions so that it may begin to understand how those details interact with the context. These include:

1. Details of its **programs** (beneficiaries/participants selection, sites and timings of programs, etc.)
2. Details of its **operations** (hiring, procurement, security, etc.)
3. Specifics of its **policies** (criteria-setting for both programs and operations).

Many organizations only focus their analysis on the programmatic parts of its intervention, and do not reflect on operations or policies. But operations have just as much impact (some might say more) on conflict dynamics as programmatic choices. And policies establish criteria and processes, which are the basis of both programmatic and operational decisions.

The Elements of Program Analysis

WHO are we working with?

When it comes to conflict sensitivity, most impacts come down to the details of who is—and who is perceived to be—benefiting from the presence of the agency. These benefits are conferred through participation in programs, being hired or contracted by the organization, or being identified as a partner. It is important to review policies for partnership, hiring, and beneficiary selection criteria, which may, in a given context, create an actual or perceived bias (when, for instance a "most affected" criterion means that aid is being distributed to one group along conflict lines—creating a distribution effect). All of the other program analysis questions end up linking back to who.

- Staff (who are we hiring? Who are we not hiring?)
- Beneficiaries (who are our beneficiaries and why them?)
- Partners (What other agencies/government entities are we partnering with?)
- Authorities (are we working with authority structures? Why and how did we choose them?)
- Who is left out of all these categories?

WHERE are we working?

Program planning involves a lot of "*Wheres*." From where to locate an office to where to hold meetings with community members, to where jobs and other opportunities are advertised; these questions matter. Again, this comes down to who is included and who is left out.

- On a smaller scale, where are distributions taking place within a certain zone? Is this location accessible to all people in the community?
- Do budgetary constraints mean we are eliminating some people from programming? If we are only doing community visits in a radius of four hours' drive from the office, do we have access to people with the most need?
- Who is left out because of our choices of location?

WHAT are we doing?

When we think about "what" from a conflict sensitivity perspective, we are not only talking about the outcomes or impacts (actual and hoped-for) of any project or program, but the inputs into that program as well. What resources will be needed, how will they be sourced, and who might benefit are all "what" considerations. The "what" needs detailed analysis. If you are building a school, the school is not the only "what." The building materials, labor, financing, land, and decisions about all of the above are all resources in the community that could overlap with conflict dynamics.

- Is the intervention type (skills, services, goods, etc.) appropriate for the context?
- Is there something else we can distribute/do?
- Is what we are giving or doing acceptable for all groups in the context?

WHEN is our intervention taking place?

Timeframes and timing for programming can be seen on the micro level—when during the day, during the week, during the year a program or set of activities takes place—or on the macro level—when in relation to the context of conflict does an organization or program enter or exit a context or implement a program. In order to maximize positive impacts, timeframes and timings should be appropriate for the context, rather than based on organization fiscal years or donor spend-down schedules.

- Are we arriving/starting activities at an appropriate time?
- In an immediate post-emergency or post-conflict context, is a specific program type necessary? Will it distract from reconstruction or reconciliation efforts?
- If we hold activities or distribute resources at midday, who might be unable to attend or receive goods?
- Is it a good idea to plan activities during the rainy/dry/planting/harvest season? Who may be left out based on our timeframes?
- Do we have a plan for exit strategy?

WHY and HOW?

Why and how are cross cutting elements to all of the above program pieces. These questions examine the REASONING for decisions as well as the PROCESSES of decision making: Based upon which CRITERIA did we make this choice? Who was involved in the decision making process? How did we integrate local perspectives?

- When we ask ourselves What? We must also ask "Why that?" and "Why not something else?"
- When we ask ourselves Who? We must also ask "Why us? Do we have the appropriate skills and expertise, or do we just have the money?"
- How we will do all of these things? How will we distribute what we have brought?
- How are we selecting staff?
- How will we know when we are finished with our intervention?
- Who is involved in our decision making processes?
- How are these decisions made transparent to the community?

Outlining all of the details of an Aid Program not only allows you to see where your intervention will have an impact on Dividers and Connectors (if you're hiring from all one group, for instance, this could clue you in to a potential increased divider), it also helps you to be transparent and outline your decision making processes to partners, beneficiaries, staff and non-beneficiaries alike.

The good news about Aid Programs is that most of the Critical Details can be adapted or adjusted to suit the context without changing the organization's Mandate or structure and without requiring much more funding. Indeed, the DNH Program has seen that often making adjustments to an Aid Program can save an organization money that would otherwise have been spent on mitigating negative impacts.

Constraints

There are, of course always some details that are not within our power to adjust. Decisions are made at agency **headquarters** in far-off countries, **policies** or criteria are set by **donors** or programs are constrained in their reach because of organizational **mandates**.

These factors may limit an agency or program's ability to make the perfectly conflict-sensitive choice. However, conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm do not always mean making the perfect decision. Rather, it means being AWARE of the consequences of any specific choice, and then adapting a program, agency operations, or policy to have the most positive impacts possible on conflict dynamics.

Options Generation and Program Redesign

Knowing that programs and contexts interact is not the same as doing something about it. In order to implement conflict sensitivity, you must continually adapt your programs to suit the evolving context. Even with strong advance planning, unanticipated negative impacts will arise. When they do, it will be your job to identify practical real-time options for achieving the **SAME PROGRAM GOALS** without having an unidentified negative impact and, where possible, enhancing the positive impacts.

There is no prescription for which program adaptations will work best in your context. You must use what you know about the context, what you know about your potential and actual impacts, and your team's creativity to develop appropriate responses to changes in the context.

These adaptations will be important, but they may not be large. It may only require a small adjustment to what you are already doing well to amplify a positive impact. It might be a change so seemingly insignificant that you don't even consider tracking its impact. It's worth remembering that impacts often arise from the details of, rather than the entirety of, a program.

At this point, you have analyzed the Dividers and Connectors in the context, you have pulled apart the details of aid programs and identified the patterns of impact. Now, your job is to use your understanding of the relationship between context and your program to make your program as good as it possibly can be.

Generating Programmatic Options

- **Review D/C regularly for changes.** Revisit priority D/C to monitor them and adjust prioritization as needed.
- **Identify the Patterns of Impact.** If a change is observed in the priority or intensity of a Divider or Connector, ask yourself "Why? Which Patterns of Impact caused that change? Which program details is that pattern linked to?"
- **Identify Options to Change the Pattern of Impact.** This sounds easy, but it's not always straightforward. However, if you identify that a specific type of negative impact is occurring, and you don't change that pattern or address the negative pattern, you have not found a conflict sensitive option.
- **Cross-check your Options.** Before finalizing your decision on which option to implement, think again about the Dividers and Connectors to ensure that the newly adapted intervention will not have unintended negative effects.

Tips and Tricks for Making Options Easier

- **Work in teams!** More perspective and experiences generate more ideas.
- **Brainstorm!** If you can generate a list of 50 possible options, maybe 5 of them will be good, of those, maybe three will be possible with available resources, of those, maybe one can be implemented easily. Be open to creative solutions

- **Root your thinking in the local context.** What works in one place won't necessarily work everywhere.
- **Collaborate with local communities.** Locals know their own context much better than outsiders. They will have a good sense of what can work and what won't. Ask for their perspectives.

The Ongoing Do No Harm Process

DNH is more than a tool; it is an ongoing process that can be incorporated into an organization's or a team's work. The process is iterative and it must be repeated in order to make interventions conflict sensitive. You must constantly monitor impacts, update your analysis, and revisit the Critical Details of your program. However, this regular monitoring need not always be a formal process - you will naturally observe changes and impacts in the course of your everyday activities.

There are seven steps in the Do No Harm process:

1. Understand the Context of Conflict.
2. Analyze Dividers and sources of tension in the context.
3. Analyze Connectors and local capacities for peace in the context.
4. Understand the critical details of the intervention
5. Analyze the intervention's impact on Dividers and Connectors through its Actions and its staff Behavior.
6. Generate programming Options
7. Test options and redesign the intervention.

After completing the seven steps, you must revisit the context and the Dividers and Connectors to see if the intervention, as redesigned, is having its intended impact.

These steps can be incorporated into planning, design, and monitoring and evaluation processes, in addition to program implementation and community engagement. In the planning phase, teams can establish intervals for DNH analysis as a group, or set regular meetings for staff to discuss their observations of Dividers and Connectors in the context. This is one means of monitoring changes in the context.

Revisiting the lists, and priorities, of Dividers and Connectors regularly (and often!) is vitally important for ensuring conflict sensitivity. Though we have an impact on the context, we are not the only actors that do so. Things are happening in the context all the time, and though we may not be **responsible** for a change in a Divider or a Connector, we must be **responsive** to it.

The more you go through the process of applying DNH, the easier it will get, and the more details of the context you will see.