



The document is based on the original paper, *Conflict-sensitive Development Co-operation: How to Conduct a Conflict Analysis* (Sida, 2004), by Erik Melander of Uppsala University, in collaboration with Mats Bengtsson, Patrick Kratt, and Björn Holmberg, and coordinated by Inger Buxton of Sida. Sida wishes to thank many others, including the members of the reference group guiding the work. This revised and shortened version, updated after the October 2005 release of Sida's new policy, *Peace and Security through Development Cooperation*, has been edited by Julia Ekstedt and Björn Holmberg together with the staff of the Division for Peace and Security in Development Cooperation, Sida.

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# Foreword

The goal of Swedish development cooperation is to help create conditions that enable the poor to improve their lives. Peace is a basic prerequisite to achieving this goal, as violent conflict always leads to poverty.

This premise has been adopted so as to guide Sida staff and partners in analysing violent conflicts and situations of insecurity. Such analysis will help them better understand how development cooperation is affected by and can in turn affect potential or ongoing violent conflicts. This premise applies in situations of submerged tension, rising tension, violent conflict, and post-conflict. Tools based on this premise can help in assessing conflict risks, so that strategies, programmes, and projects can become more conflict sensitive, that is, have no negative effect on the conflict dynamics, and so that interventions promoting peace and security can be devised. The point of departure of this document is the Sida policy, *Peace and Security through Development Cooperation* (Sida, 2005).

An in-depth conflict analysis can be carried out to complement a poverty analysis, and, in coordination with other relevant analyses, in formulating a coherent and integrated approach to achieving the goal of Swedish development cooperation. A conflict analysis emphasises the central component element “conflict management and human security” of the Swedish Policy for Global Development,<sup>1</sup> and should also relate to other elements, such as democracy and gender. In this way such an analysis should enable us to achieve the overall goals of poverty reduction and sustainable and equitable development.

Conflict analysis ought to be carried out at different stages of the development cooperation process, to ensure that a conflict perspective is taken into account all the way from the strategic planning for a country or region, to the implementation and

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<sup>1</sup> *Shared Responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development*, Government Bill 2003.

evaluation of individual projects. Such a conflict analysis tool has thus been developed to meet needs at the strategic, sector, and project levels.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Magnus Lindell', written in a cursive style.

Magnus Lindell

Head of Department for Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations, Humanitarian Assistance & Conflict Management

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# Introduction

The aim of developing conflict analysis methodologies is to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in places affected by violent conflicts and insecurity, to provide a better basis for assessing the potential of conflict-sensitive interventions, and to support peace and security. This document presents conflict analysis tools formulated using a multidisciplinary approach to peace and conflict research and based on lessons learned by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and other development cooperation actors.

This methodology is a key element in implementing Sida's policy, *Peace and Security through Development Cooperation* (Sida, 2005), and this policy should be used as a reference with regard to Sida's approaches, principles, and types of intervention used to promote peace and security. The methodology primarily aims to support Sida staff in assessing conflict analysis (as might be attached to a project document) or in preparing for or following up a strategic conflict analysis. At the project level, the analysis should be carried out by the implementing organisation, while in a strategy planning process it is most often an external consultant who carries out the analysis. Thus, this methodology can also support partner organisations and consultants in carrying out a conflict analysis. The methodology can also serve as guidelines to finding information regarding different types of conflict analysis.

Conflict analyses can be conducted at various levels and phases of the development cooperation process and programme cycle, during, for example, regional and national strategic planning, the design and planning of specific programmes, and the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of individual projects. The conflict analysis methodology includes tools applicable at three levels, namely, the strategic (regional/national), sector, and project levels. Please refer to Sida's policy *Peace and Security through Development Cooperation*, and to the Division for Peace and

Security through Development Cooperation website ([www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity)) for more in-depth information regarding the thematic area and specific issues related to it, such as causes of violent conflict, or the types of intervention that Sida supports in promoting peace and security. Another helpful reference is [www.oecd.org/dac/conflict](http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict), where issue briefs concerning specific conflict and security-related themes can be found.

It can sometimes be politically insensitive to use the term “conflict analysis” and to raise issues of violent conflict when dealing with governments and other agencies, especially in countries where tensions are rising. One option may be to avoid the word “conflict” altogether, and instead refer to the analysis as “context analysis” or “stability analysis”.

Before initiating a conflict analysis it is important to plan the process properly. The point of such an analysis is not simply to generate a report; rather, the opportunity to engage in the analytical **process itself** is equally important. Learning and dialogue concerning the conflict setting, how to carry out conflict-sensitive development, and options for promoting peace and security are important parts of any conflict analysis. A conflict analysis, especially at the strategic level, is a process involving various steps and actors. It should involve some of the following actors: in Sida, Officers of the thematic and regional departments and field based staff, Peace and Security Advisers, etc.; the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and other Swedish authorities; local and international researchers and thematic experts; and partner organisations and governmental authorities in the programme countries. The latter two actors are especially important in building local ownership of and hence accountability for the process. By considering the role and current activities of other external actors and by conducting joint conflict analysis, one may reduce duplication of tasks and responsibilities and improve overall coordination.

**Local ownership** of the process increases the chances of achieving positive results. One should try to arrange conflict analysis workshops in consultation with a broad range of local actors having different perspectives on the problems at hand. However, it is important to recognise that actors directly involved in or affected by a conflict may be overly sensitive, politically or even emotionally, to many aspects of the conflict analysis. Field staff should play a central role in the analysis, since they are obviously valuable first-hand sources of much of the information needed. Due to limited time and resources, extensive analysis including all the desirable steps might be impossible; in such a case, a limited desk study without extended participation and consultation may be the only option.

It is vital that the analysis should produce feasible **operational recommendations**, relevant to the programmes of Sida

or its partners, otherwise it will be of limited use. Once the analysis is compiled, presented, and approved, sufficient time and resources must be allocated to adapt interventions to fit the recommendations of the analysis. One may consult Sida's Peace and Security Advisers for guidance throughout the process of planning, implementing and assessing the conflict analysis.

# Conflict Analysis at the Strategic Level

Violent conflicts and situations of insecurity can greatly worsen poverty. A *strategic conflict analysis* provides a deeper understanding of the conflict context and is **an important source of information for use in long-term planning** regarding how to reduce poverty through development cooperation in areas affected by violent conflict and insecurity. It can be carried out in a coordinated way with other types of analysis, and especially along with a poverty analysis. Strategic conflict analysis is usually undertaken during the formulation of the Swedish government's Cooperation Strategies, as these are the key documents directing Sweden's development cooperation in partner countries. They play a key role in Sida's dialogue with partner governments and comprise the basis for determining overall programme direction and for adopting positions vis-à-vis civil society, private sector, and other development partner actors.

Strategic conflict analysis deepens Sida's understanding of potential or ongoing violent conflicts and insecurities through the assessment of *structures*, *actors*, and *conflict dynamics*. It is essential that a strategic conflict analysis be carried out for countries and regions where there are *latent or increasing risks of the break-out of violent conflict*, for countries involved in *ongoing conflict*, and for countries in *post-conflict situations*. Such analysis helps Sida to elaborate on conflict-sensitive aspects of policies and programmes pertaining to both development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, and to develop programmes that promote peace and security. In undertaking a comprehensive strategic conflict analysis, we recommend that an external consultant be contracted, for which purpose draft terms of reference can be found at [www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity).

A strategic conflict analysis requires at least 6–12 weeks' work, but if time is limited a less thorough analysis can be carried out as a desk study. However, to include all relevant perspectives, it is important to conduct field trips to various regions of the studied country, to meet representatives of various key stake-

holders, local experts, other donors, and implementing organisations, and to consult thematic and regional experts within Sida. It is essential to identify recommendations that are relevant to Sida's operational work in the country in question. Thus, it is important to allow enough time to analyse what roles Sida and Sweden could play in contributing to peaceful change.

### **The Eight-Step Process**

1. Contact Sida's Peace and Security Advisers, the key resource person from Sida's peace and security network in your department, and the relevant Desk Officer for a preliminary discussion;
2. Contact other agencies and international organisations for information regarding any completed, current, or planned conflict analyses in your area, or to determine whether there is any interest in jointly carrying out a strategic conflict analysis;
3. Check Sida's Division for Peace and Security webpage ([www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity)) and Sida Inside (the Sida Intranet) for information and key documents;
4. Formulate the terms of reference for the analysis (see [www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity) for further details and examples concerning this matter);
5. Seek a suitable staff member or consultant for the task, one who has relevant knowledge and experience of the peace and conflict field, the specific country/region, programme management/development cooperation, and Sida's role and work;
6. Gather relevant existing materials regarding violent conflict and insecurity that are pertinent to the specific situation, and present them to the person/persons chosen to coordinate the analysis;
7. Enable an open and ongoing dialogue with the same person/persons and with programme staff, and if possible, with a more extended reference group. It is especially important that a seminar be held at the end of the conflict analysis process in order to discuss suitable operational recommendations relevant to Sida and the Country Cooperation Strategy;
8. Once the strategic conflict analysis process has been completed, it is a good idea to follow it up with discussion, in specific and concrete terms, of how the recommendations set forth in the analysis can be implemented.

### **Three Vital Elements of a Strategic Conflict Analysis**

The following subsections are intended to guide the consultant in conducting a strategic conflict analysis. As a Desk Officer,

you may also find this information useful, in that it gives an idea of the content of a strategic conflict analysis, as conducted in cooperation with the consultant and later in the assessment of the final analysis. For a more elaborate overview of causes of conflict, please refer to *What Causes Violent Conflict* (Sida, 2004) at [www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity).

### **Element 1: Conflict analysis**

Map the conflicts and/or potential conflicts in order to understand the causes, dynamics, and forces promoting either violent conflict and/or peace, by taking the following steps:

#### *Analysing Structures*

Start by defining key sources of tension and **structural causes/root causes** of the tension/conflict as well as factors contributing to peace. Crucial structural factors that should be analysed include economic development and equity of distribution, the political system, democratic structural causes, respect for human rights, natural resources, the environment, and other sources of violent conflict or positive structural influence. The ability (strengths and weaknesses) of institutions to address grievances, prevent opportunistic behaviour, and further the interests of confrontational actors should also be examined.

Questions to address:

- What are the key sources of tension and the underlying structural causes that could lead to structural instability in the society (e.g., poverty, economic inequality, poor governance, lack of democracy, uncontrolled spread of small arms, human rights violations, and scarcity of natural resources)?
- What structural factors can be regarded promoting peace (e.g., low levels of corruption, functional social safety nets, independent judiciary, and military forces under civil democratic control)?
- What is the government's institutional capacity to respond?

#### *Analysing Actors*

The next step is to identify critical local, national, regional and international factors and actors that influence or are influenced by the violent conflict in question. These include attitudes as well as identified organisations and actors involved in interventions promoting peace and security in the country or region. All key actors' attitudes and behaviour should be analysed in relation to the violent conflict, taking account of, for example, short-term incentives, interests, needs, capacities, and cultures of violence and of peace. When analysing the actors, focus on their incompatible interests in terms of **greed and grievances**,

and on how these factors affect and are affected by ongoing and potential violent conflicts. It is also important to look into the sometimes different roles and interests of women, men, and boys and girls, in order to find suitable options for action when it comes to addressing the needs, interests, rights, and opportunities of the whole population. **Fear** is a strong driving force of actors' behaviour in situations of insecurity. Examine various actors' expectations and possible gaps between these expectations and how they are met; also consider factors that connect actors and how to strengthen these connecting factors. It is also important to identify factors and activities that promote peace. These include those actors that can be identified as non-confrontational, that may actually have decisive influence on whether or not the confrontational actors succeed in furthering their belligerent agendas.

Analyse the power base and resources of key actors. A *power analysis* that identifies structures and power relationships between actors, for example, by describing discrimination and other human rights abuses, is an important part of any strategic conflict analysis. Since Sida may have already commissioned a power analysis, base your conflict analysis on the results of any such analysis already carried out, so as to avoid duplication and promote consensus. One should also make use of key conclusions of other analyses conducted as part of the Country Cooperation Strategy Process, for example, analyses of central factors such as gender and the environment.

Questions to address:

- Who and what are the key actors?
- What are their interests?
- What are their power bases and resources?
- What are the roles of men and women in this conflict situation? What are their specific needs, interests, and potential strengths?

Next:

- Try to link actors and their interests in order to define ongoing and/or potential conflicts in which actors have incompatible interests. Try also to link actors and interests so as clearly to define the common ground where actors may have compatible interests.
- Look at actors' positions and assess their incompatible interests in terms of greed and grievances.
- Look at actors' expectations and assess possible expectation gaps.
- Look at fear and insecurity as driving forces of various actors.

### *Analysing Conflict Dynamics*

Certain events, actions, and decisions could well serve as accelerating or **trigger factors**, leading to an increase in negative attitudes and violent behaviour. These factors obviously can both heighten the risk of violent conflict and insecurity and continue driving an ongoing violent conflict. Such factors may include rapid economic decline, changes in the degree of state cohesion, shifts in internal control on the part of the central authority, and shifts in the distribution of power. Thus it is vital that such trigger factors be identified.

Questions to address:

- What events, actions, and decisions can be identified as actual or potential trigger factors?
- What consequences have these trigger factors had or will they have on structural causes and key actors?
- What is/are the main mechanism(s) driving the conflict: for example, structural instability, struggles for power and influence, security dilemmas, or a combination of the above? What is/are the main mechanism(s) driving the conflict: for example, structural instability, struggles for power and influence, security dilemmas, or a combination of the above? See the Analytical Framework section.

Having identified and analysed the effects of structural factors, actors' interests and power bases, and institutional responses, you should be able to define the mechanisms driving the conflict. This can be helpful when it is time to determine appropriate forms of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance or interventions to promote peace and security. Note that in most cases more than one mechanism will be in play.

### **Element 2: Scenario Analysis**

Taking the above mapping as a starting point, assess possible future scenarios that may contribute to changing the conflict dynamics. Such a scenario analysis makes it easier to plan for **various contingencies** and establish a more **flexible approach**. It is often difficult to foresee violent conflicts and changes in conflict patterns. Since a strategic conflict analysis constitutes a basis for long-term planning, it is important that the analysis also be forward-looking through the inclusion of a thorough scenario analysis. Instead of trying to *predict* the future, we ought to think through beforehand what to do under a range of circumstances. However, scenario analysis is not an early warning system; for more information regarding early warning systems, please refer to [www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity).

Questions to address:

- What does a given scenario mean in a given context (e.g., a shift towards peace in a situation of rising tensions is very different from one in a situation of full-blown war)?
- What events must take place for this scenario to be realised? Events should be outlined using clearly identifiable factors, including changes in the status quo when it comes to structural issues and actors' behaviour and attitudes.
- What observable signs should appear if this particular scenario is to be realised?
- What can development cooperation actors do to exert a positive influence over the course of events if a given scenario is realised? In connection with this, it is important to identify historical opportunities and risks, so that a proactive stance can be adopted and suitable interventions planned and prepared beforehand.

Next:

- Try to identify realistic future scenarios, looking at potential changes in the level and type of violence.

### **Element 3: Strategies and Options**

After concluding the conflict analysis and scenario analysis steps described above, one should then assess the possible impact of future Sida engagements and identify opportunities and risks connected with Sida's work in a given country or region. The aim is to **produce clear recommendations** regarding how to work at the operational level with conflict-sensitive development cooperation and various programmes to promote peace and security. It is important that this part of the analysis be based on a thorough understanding of the processes and activities that Sida is currently supporting, and of the areas in which Sida can have a comparative advantage. Other donor activities, ongoing diplomatic efforts, trade sanctions, and the like should also influence the direction of development cooperation.

It is important to refer to Sida's policy, *Peace and Security through Development Cooperation* (Sida, 2005) when considering options for action. The policy identifies three main types of activities to promote peace and security: promoting dialogue, promoting security, and promoting structural stability. These types include sub activities that might provide appropriate support for the results of a conflict analysis, see below. The examples of activities that promote structural stability, or address root causes of violent conflict, presented in Appendix II of the Policy are especially relevant. One should also consider the analytical framework (see section An Analytical Framework), which suggests options for activities in relation to the type of problems/opportunities identified in the analysis.

- *Promoting dialogue:* Efforts to change attitudes and promote or create conditions for dialogue, negotiation and peaceful conflict resolution between primary and secondary parties to conflicts. For example, activities dealing with the culture of violence, education, media, reconciliation, mediation and other activities aimed at forming public opinion, increasing awareness and addressing violent behaviour, incompatibilities and structural instability.<sup>2</sup>
- *Promoting security:* Activities primarily addressing behaviour and that can give individuals and groups affected by violent conflicts or insecurity a greater degree of protection. For example, civil peace monitoring, observer functions, distribution of relevant and accurate information, monitoring and documentation with the aim of stabilising a conflict situation, disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration of ex-combatants (DDR), collection and destruction of small arms and light weapons and de-mining.
- *Promoting structural stability:* Activities that consciously target, as their primary or secondary goal, structural, or root, causes of violent conflict and insecurity. To achieve this, a situation of real or potential violent conflict or insecurity must have been identified. In a given context, it is also necessary to have identified which factors constitute structural (root) causes through a conflict analysis. This definition is needed because not all types of development co-operation efforts are seen to contribute to peace and security. Indeed, they might “do harm” or have no effect at all on the conflict situation.

Examples of promoting structural stability are initiatives to control conventional and small arms and light weapons and security system reforms. Other programmes and projects can have a more indirect impact and be designed specifically to promote structural stability and thereby promoting peace and security, such as:

- House or road construction in post-conflict societies can be designed also to improve inter-group relations.
- Good governance and democracy initiatives can include marginalized groups that might otherwise rebel.
- Trade can be promoted also as a means to improve relations between different groups or countries.
- Projects training journalists in countries affected by violent conflict and insecurity can include components of conflict-sensitive reporting.
- Agricultural programmes can be expanded to address land rights disputes.

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<sup>2</sup> Support to mediation at other levels than the local should be decided in collaboration with the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

- Security system reform programmes to reform the police can increase the efficiency of the police service and make it more aware of human rights and thereby increase people's security and the legitimacy of the state.

Questions to address:

- What structural processes need to be supported in the interest of greater structural stability?
- How can projects/programmes support the roles of actors promoting peace and reduce the influence of those promoting violence?
- What areas of development cooperation could have the greatest impact on the identified conflict situation(s)?
- How can one ensure that the proposed development cooperation interventions are being carried out in a conflict-sensitive manner?
- Is there a need for specific projects to address the identified conflict situation(s)? What interventions could be supported?

After having completed the analysis, it is **essential to organise a seminar** in order to discuss suitable operational recommendations relevant to Sida. Persons and institutions involved in the process should all be invited. Later on, the conclusions reached at the seminar should be integrated into concrete operational options. These can be reviewed in light of programme development, and when appropriate, a new conflict analysis can be conducted when monitoring and evaluating existing programmes and strategies and designing new ones.

# An Analytical Framework

The analytical framework below contains a number of ideas for appropriate responses to the different types of conflict problems. The framework consists of three parts. Each table dealing with one of the three principal mechanisms driving violent conflict and war: structural instability, the struggle for power and influence and the security dilemma.

- *Structural Instability*: When one or several serious conflict motives, such as poverty, economic inequality, ethnic discrimination or lack of democracy, are present in a society, that society is afflicted by structural instability. In other words, the society contains conflict motives that could be embraced and contested by force, leading to violent conflict or war. In contrast, structural stability is defined as “social peace, respect for the rule of law and human rights, social and economic development, supported by dynamic and representative political institutions capable of managing change and resolving disputes without resorting to violent conflict”.
- *Struggle for Power and Influence*: This is a mechanism by which ambition, grievance or greed can lead to violent conflict or war. It can be defined as incompatible positions plus military overconfidence. It entails a situation in which the parties to a conflict not only differ greatly on one or more issues (incompatibility is great) but also hold divergent expectations about the likely outcome of a violent confrontation, so that at least one side is underestimating its adversary’s relative strength.
- *Security Dilemma*: The security dilemma is a mechanism through which fear can lead to violent conflict or war. In a security dilemma, two sides are mutually vulnerable and fearful and, as a result, may contemplate or even initiate pre-emptive strikes, though their differences in terms of incompatible goals are manageable.

For a more elaborate overview of the three factors above, please refer to *What Causes Violent Conflict* (Sida, 2004) at [www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity). In the left-hand column, the three mechanisms are disaggregated into separate problems that could be addressed. The middle column contains the corresponding goals as well as potential windows of opportunity for support to peace and security. The right-hand column lists examples of types of intervention suitable for working towards these goals and addressing the identified conflict problem.

### Structural Instability and Structures Working for Peace

Problem	Goals and Opportunities	Means (examples)
Structural instability and structures causing violent conflict	Do No Harm – Do Maximum Good	Conflict-sensitive development co-operation and promotion of peace and security
<i>Structural instability caused by</i>	<i>Reducing structural conflict motives</i>	<i>Promoting structural stability</i>
– Poverty and economic inequality	– Addressing economic inequalities of marginalised groups and elites	– Job creation for marginalised youth – Improving socio-economic opportunities for marginalised ethnic minorities
– Poor governance and weak state institutions	– Democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights (including minority rights) – Independent and pluralistic media (freedom of expression)	– Institutions capable of managing change and resolving disputes, such as ombudsman and independent judiciary – Media support: press institute, training of journalists, conflict-sensitive journalism – Security system reforms (democratic control/transparency) – Democratic culture
– Absence of cross-cutting social and civil society organisations	– Development of a vibrant and democratic civil society with cross-cutting interdependence	– Support to civil society organisations promoting a multitude of cross-cutting identity markers (commerce, politics, human rights, culture)
– Environmental insecurity (resource-based conflicts)	– Sustainable use of natural resources – Stopping the possibility of looting natural resources as a means for financing war	– Support to reform of systems of land rights – Diversification of economy or support of state control of natural resources
– Gender inequality	– Women's active participation in peace processes – Decreased abuse of women in armed conflict	– Capacity building for women's networks – Capacity building for military in the rules of war and international humanitarian law
– Availability of small arms and anti-personnel mines	– Promotion of disarmament and arms control	– Mine-clearing operations in post-conflict countries – Increased small arms control, weapons collection and destruction – Changing gun culture to a culture of non-violence

## Struggle for Power and Influence

Problem	Goals and Opportunities	Means (examples)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Incompatible interests, based on grievances, for example</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understanding of counterparts' positions</li> <li>– Power-sharing and co-operation &amp; adherence to international law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supporting independent and pluralistic media</li> <li>– Supporting democracy through power sharing and participatory processes</li> <li>– Supporting civil society/NGOs</li> <li>– Mediation</li> <li>– Reconciliation</li> <li>– Peace education</li> <li>– Information about rights</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Underestimation of adversary's strength</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understanding the cost of violent conflict</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Facilitating dialogue</li> <li>– Information exchanges on weapons and mine maps</li> <li>– Security system reforms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Attractiveness of violent conflict, based on greed, for example</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increasing the cost of the use of force</li> <li>– Increasing the benefits of peace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Smart sanctions</li> <li>– Employment for ex-combatants</li> <li>– Arms limitations and reductions</li> <li>– Reducing the pool of potential recruits</li> <li>– Improving social services for key groups</li> <li>– Dealing with common problems co-operatively (such as the sustainable use of natural resources)</li> <li>– Undercutting the war economy (greed)</li> <li>– Supporting a war crimes tribunal</li> <li>– Disarmament, demobilisation &amp; reintegration of ex-combatants</li> </ul>

## Security Dilemma

Problem	Goals and Opportunities	Means (examples)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fear (perceived security threats)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reducing fear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Facilitating dialogue and reconciliation</li> <li>– Trauma healing</li> <li>– Confidence-building measures</li> <li>– Supporting independent and pluralistic media</li> <li>– Rule of law</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Vulnerability (real security threats)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reducing vulnerability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Demobilisation, disarmament &amp; reintegration of ex-combatants (DDR)</li> <li>– Monitoring missions</li> <li>– Human rights observers</li> <li>– Supporting law enforcement</li> <li>– Security system reforms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Distrust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Building trust</li> <li>– Reconciliation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Confidence-building measures</li> <li>– Dealing with common problems co-operatively (vaccinations, water management, housing)</li> <li>– Cultural exchanges</li> <li>– Temporary cease-fires and days of peace</li> </ul>

# Conflict Analysis at the Sector Level

In recent years, international agencies have paid greater attention to opportunities for working at the sector level. This development reflects a shift towards long-term commitments to and closer partnerships with countries. The Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp), which includes Sector Programme Support (SPS), embraces a country's sector policy and proposed expenditure programme. This approach is developed in dialogue with the partner, when the goals and policy framework for the sector are being established. The health, education, and agricultural sectors are examples of sectors suited for such sector programme support, as they are part of the public sector and ideally encompass the entire country. However, programmes in these sectors, as in others, affect and are in turn affected by violent conflict and situations of insecurity, and hence require the exercise of conflict sensitivity in order to avoid negatively impacting the conflict dynamics. These sectors are relevant from a peace and security perspective, because they often offer ample **opportunity for tackling structural causes** of conflict and thus for working to **prevent conflict**.

A more obvious sector to work with is the security sector, in which it is important to distinguish between internal and external security and the different roles played by the civilian and military elements. Development cooperation is generally concerned with civilian aspects of the security sector, including reform of the police and justice systems. Good governance programmes may be related to democratic control and civil society's monitoring of the military. The educational sector might also be of interest, as it is directly involved in shaping the democratic norms and values of coming generations. Respect for human rights, peaceful conflict resolution, and preventing emergence of a negative gun culture are aspects that may be integrated into a national curriculum.

SWAp require a certain degree of macro-economic and political stability, strong institutional capacity, accountability, and inclusive processes involving all levels of society, as well as suitable

opportunities for pursuing long-term development cooperation. Consequently, it might be difficult to apply a SWAp in countries affected by violent conflict. Despite this, considerable support is still given to SWAp in countries and regions facing latent or ongoing conflicts. The close relationship arising from sector-wide collaboration between international agencies and the partner government presents an opportunity but also a risk. Such a close relationship could well lend legitimacy to a government which is confronted with specific problems, and might even lack popular support in light of problems of corruption, lack of transparency, deficient democratic processes, and particular political priorities. This undesired appearance of legitimacy can itself increase tensions. Budget priorities, or the risk of fungibility, is also an important criterion to consider when initiating sector programme support. Government budget allocations should display a sound pattern of priorities, with military expenditure being an obvious item to examine. The long-term commitment and perspective needed when attempting to meet the long-term needs addressed by sector-wide approaches, also make it difficult to make sudden modifications based on changes in the conflict dynamics.

### **How to Conduct a Conflict Analysis at the Sector Level**

When sector programme support is considered in a Cooperation Strategy planning process, it is important to assess its impact on the potential or ongoing conflict situation. The sector needs to be seen in its broader social context. A strategic conflict analysis should thus be carried out at this early stage, in order to understand which actor interests and structural issues are affecting the current situation and are likely to affect future developments. Once a decision has been made to offer sector support, it is important to carry out a conflict analysis geared to the specific sector support on the table, in order to ensure that it is conflict sensitive. The government's own priorities and the priorities of other donors are highly relevant in this regard. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Comprehensive Development Framework outline the overall priorities for a country and need to be taken into consideration. These documents also describe the opportunities inherent in stakeholder consultation processes as well as opportunities for dialogue between the government and international agencies. **Cooperation and dialogue** are key in addressing conflict- and insecurity-related issues. The decision as to whether Sweden should get involved in a particular sector support programme is made during the country cooperation strategy planning process. This process represents an important basis for making such a decision in countries subject to latent or increased risks of violent conflict or involved in ongoing violent conflict or even in a post-conflict phase. The process puts the sec-

tor into the wider development context of the country, presenting the actors and structures relevant from a peace and security perspective and highlighting how they interact, either to fuel further violence or promote peace. The Poverty Reduction Strategy and Comprehensive Development Framework for the country, if they exist, are important starting points for a sector analysis. Issues such as participation, governance, accountability, and transparency are at the heart of the impact of sector programmes implemented in situations of potential, ongoing, or post violent conflict, and thus need to be at the core of the analysis.

Ideally, the same consultant who conducted the strategic conflict analysis will also assume the task of conducting the sector-specific analysis. However, in some cases no conflict analysis at the strategic level has been developed, so a new consultant needs to be contracted. Please see the eight-step process outlined in the Conflict Analysis at the Strategic Level section to learn more about how to go about; alternately, you could contact the Conflict Advisers directly.

When conducting a conflict analysis at the sector level the following need to be considered:

- Key sectors that need support and can assist in promoting peace by addressing root causes of conflict;
- Content of the PRSP and other poverty-reduction strategies;
- Level of accountability and transparency of government decision making, especially concerning budget levels and priorities;
- Opportunities and risks, concerning conflict issues, of a close/closer partnership with the government;
- Likely impact of suspension of assistance to the current government;
- Level of risk that funds will be diverted for other purposes (corruption/ fungibility), such as military ends;
- Position of other donors concerning a Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp); and
- Cross-sector issues, such as governance and human rights standards, that need to be addressed by various sectors and levels of society.

Questions to address:

- Are there any risks that Sector Programme Support (SPS) will undermine peace, for example, by fostering greater divisions in society?
- What opportunities for preventing violent conflict and building peace could emerge from SPS?
- What forums exist for dialogue between the government and other stakeholders regarding the development and implementation of SPS?

- What opportunities exist for donors to cooperate in jointly conducting conflict analysis and in promoting dialogue with the government regarding conflict-related issues in relation to sps?
- How can donors support the involvement of civil society and local government in the process?

# Conflict Analysis at the Project Level

Project level conflict analysis should be carried out in making a country strategy operational, i.e., when assessing a funding proposal, preparing for a meeting on issues related to conflict, reviewing interventions promoting peace and security, or simply working more proactively on peace and security activities. Such an analysis need not be done in connection with a conflict analysis at the strategic level, nor is it necessary to undertake a conflict analysis for all programmes and projects. However, in situations of rising tension, violent conflict, or in post-conflict situations, development programmes and projects always run the risk of increasing tensions in society, thus reducing their intended positive impact. A minimum requirement in these situations is to think through how a project relates to a certain conflict situation, in order to make the project conflict sensitive.<sup>3</sup>

Conflict analysis at the project level should be **carried out by the implementing organisation**, in order to analyse the impact of the project on the conflict dynamics. Thus, the primary aim of the following subsections is to help desk officers assess analyses conducted by partner organisations. However, they can also be used by the project owner to produce a conflict analysis of a specific project.

Furthermore, conflict analysis should be carried out for all projects to be implemented in countries or regions where development cooperation aims to promote peace and security and where this is a clearly expressed goal of the cooperation strategy. Of course, projects that specifically aim to influence conflict dynamics – that is, programmes and projects that promote peace and security – should include such analysis. In these situations, it is important to link the project analysis to a strategic conflict analysis, a linkage that will enhance understanding of the overall conflict context.

To be eligible for Sida support, a project promoting peace and security should include some kind of conflict analysis, based on a

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<sup>3</sup> This model of analysis is sometimes called a “do no harm” analysis.

methodology like the one presented here. If the proposed project does not incorporate any analysis of conflict factors, the partner organisation should be asked to include such an analysis; alternatively, Sida could conduct the analysis itself if the situation warrants. Please refer to [www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity) for guidelines applying to organisations applying for funding for such initiatives. Such a *project conflict analysis* examines the potential impact of the project on the conflict dynamics and facilitates the assessment of partner organisations, programmes, and specific projects. It should not be regarded as essential only to the design and planning phases of a project, but also as an important instrument during the implementation, follow-up, and evaluation phases.

### **How to Assess the Conflict Sensitivity of a Project<sup>4</sup>**

Development cooperation is part of the political context in which it is implemented, which is why understanding the local and national conflict situation is necessary. It is especially important that development cooperation efforts do not have a negative impact on the conflict dynamics. This is why both the risks and opportunities related to the violent conflict should be exposed when assessing a project. Most projects do have positive effects in relation to their objectives. However, it is necessary to **minimize unintended negative impacts** as well as **maximize all positive impacts** on the conflict dynamics, if a project is to achieve its full potential. Development cooperation is seldom neutral, but either reinforces conflict or strengthens local capacities for peace through direct and indirect impacts.

The transfer of resources and the way in which development cooperation support is implemented can affect conflict in the following ways:

- Resources are often appropriated by the military and used to support armies and buy weapons;
- Aid may distort economies and reinforce either the war or the peace economy. For example, an influx of rice for humanitarian purposes might undermine local markets and lead to unemployment among rice farmers, making them more easily mobilised by regular and guerrilla forces;
- Distributional impacts may affect inter-group relationships, either exacerbating tensions or reinforcing shared interests. For example, the authority and legitimacy of local administrations might be undermined by donor-financed NGOs that have far more resources to provide public services than local governments do;
- Substitution effects may free up local resources for military uses. One dilemma facing external aid providers is that the

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<sup>4</sup> This section is basically a summary of the ideas presented in Anderson, Mary B., *Do No Harm: Supporting Local Capacities for Peace through Aid*, Cambridge: Local Capacities for Peace Project, Collaborative for Development Action.

- government authorities or guerrilla organisation controlling a specific territory might not live up to their responsibility to provide for the civilian population. Thus, the resources provided in the form of development cooperation can instead be diverted and used to continue the war;
- Legitimization of people and actions can support the pursuit of either war or peace. The implementing organisation might not be an impartial actor in the conflict, and thus may manipulate the development cooperation for political purposes, or it may have insufficient knowledge of the local context and risk endangering partner organisations.

The above discussion gives an idea of the various problems encountered when planning projects in situations of submerged tension, rising tension, violent conflict, or post-conflict. Most countries where Sida is working find themselves in one of these situations. Thus, many of the project assessments conducted by Sida need to examine whether a project is indeed conflict sensitive, something that can be done through the following four steps:

#### **Step 1. Identify Dividers and Sources of Tension Between People**

Start by examining the conflict setting: list tensions and dividing factors in society (such as ideological differences, leadership struggles, resource scarcity, destroyed infrastructure, or ethnic tensions) that could be exploited and thus become *dividers*. These dividers could lead to increased violence in the specific conflict setting where the project is to be implemented.

- **Analyse patterns in the tensions/dividers:** Are most dividers the results of fighting or do they have a long history? What are the patterns and common features of the observed tensions/divisions; what are the differences between them?

#### **Step 2. Identify Connectors and Factors that Connect People**

There are always things that connect people. Even in situations in which the conflict itself conceals these “connectors” (such as common languages, religion, culture, schools/clinics/social services, markets, trade, common workplaces, intermarriage, or common infrastructure), they do exist, or at least did exist before the conflict began.

- **Analyse patterns in the connectors:** Are most connectors linked to recent developments and are the results of fighting, or do they have a long history? What are the patterns and common features of the connectors; what are the differences between them?

**Step 3. Assess the Impact of the Project on Dividers and Connectors**

Now look at the proposed project and try to answer the following questions:

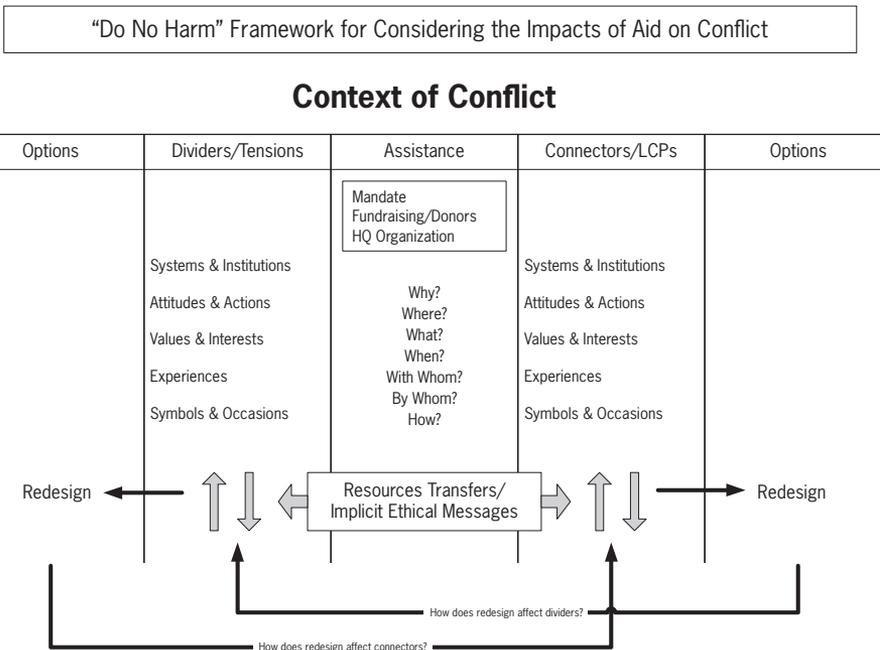
- What impacts does the project have on the tensions/dividers and connectors?
- How and why are the dividers and connectors affected?  
Does the project reduce or worsen tensions, support or undermine connectors?
- Is there a need to redesign the project? If so, discuss the needed redesign.

**Step 4. Redesign the Project if Needed**

- How could the project be redesigned to avoid having negative impacts?
- How could the project be redesigned to maximize positive impacts?

The above steps should be an integral part of project preparation for most projects. The website of Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) ([www.cdainc.com](http://www.cdainc.com)) presents several case studies illustrating how such a conflict-sensitivity assessment can be carried out. However, there are situations when a more comprehensive analysis of a project will be needed.

**Figure 1: Analysing Conflict Sensitivity<sup>5</sup>**



<sup>5</sup> [www.cdainc.com](http://www.cdainc.com)

## How to Conduct a More Comprehensive Conflict Analysis

If there is a risk that the project will have a negative impact on the conflict dynamics, or if one is assessing a peace and security project that aims more directly at influencing the conflict dynamics, a more comprehensive conflict analysis should be undertaken. Some context-specific information is usually incorporated into the project proposal, but this may provide insufficient background. Of course, any conflict analysis conducted at the strategic level – for example, as part of a country cooperation strategy planning process or other organisations – can be a big help in project assessment. Going through the following steps, using any available strategic conflict assessments, will help structure a comprehensive analysis.

### Step 1. Identify and Map the Conflict Setting

As a first step, try to map the conflict setting by looking at the factors that currently drive the conflict (please refer to the section An Analytical Framework and *What Causes Violent Conflict*, Sida, (2004), at [www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se)), for example:

- structural instability
- struggle for power and influence
- security dilemma

It is important to define the larger context of the conflict as well as relevant local features in the area or region where the particular project will be implemented. Be aware that more than one conflict problem is often present. The following questions regarding structural causes and actors should guide the mapping process.

#### *Structural Factors*

Which of the following structural factors are evident and can be regarded as important sources of violent conflict or could lead to violent conflict in the near future?

- rapidly increasing poverty
- economic inequalities
- poor governance and/or weak state structures
- lack of democracy
- uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons
- human rights violations
- lack of institutions or political will to deal with the scarcity or unequal distribution of natural resources
- other structural factors

What other structural factors in society could be exploited by confrontational actors?

Which of the following structural factors are evident and can be regarded as promoting peace?

- low levels of corruption
- functional social safety nets
- participatory and inclusive democratic processes
- independent judiciary
- military forces under democratic control
- other structural factors

By the end of this part of the assessment you should have compiled two sets of structural factors, one set of factors that could increase the risk of violence and another that could reduce the risk of violence in society.

### *Actors*

What actors advocating or using violence to further their interests in this conflict are mentioned in the proposal or could otherwise be identified in relation to the proposed project?

- Do any actors oppose the use of violence? How can those opposing violence dissuade or prevent confrontational actors from using violence?
- What social factors, as mentioned in the proposal or otherwise known, can be regarded as connecting key actors?
- What social factors, as mentioned in the proposal or otherwise known, can be regarded as dividing key actors?
- What are the contested interests and beliefs that may make at least some confrontational actors willing to act violently? For example, do certain actors expect to achieve economic and political gains through the use of violent means?
- What are the roles of men and women, boys and girls in this conflict situation? What are their specific needs, interests, rights, and potential strengths?

Considering the structural factors and actors thus identified can give an overall picture of the conflict setting. Then one should highlight the most likely conflict setting(s)/problem(s) and the best opportunities for peace. Try to pinpoint key characteristics of the conflict setting, as identified in the proposal and in the analysis. If there are several potential sources of conflict and opportunities for peaceful change, try to prioritise them and determine which have the highest risk of leading to violence and the best chance of leading to peaceful development in society.

### **Step 2. Assess the Project's Relevance**

The next step is to think through how the proposed project could impact the defined conflict setting/problem. To be relevant, a proposed project promoting peace and security ought to

focus on the types of conflict factor that are driving the conflict in question or on the factors that offer a window of opportunity for positive change.

Questions to address:

- What is the initial risk that the project will have a negative impact on the conflict dynamics as identified above?
- If implemented, can the proposed project reduce the risk of structural factors contributing to violent conflict and instead strengthen the structures working for peace, for example, by supporting institutions to deal with grievances?
- Will the project increase security or a sense of security?
- Will the proposed project in any way support those opposing confrontation, helping them to develop initiatives and resist violence, or will it work to the disadvantage of confrontational actors expecting to profit from violent conflict?
- What will be the impact on gender equality and the roles and interests of women and men? How can the peace and security potential of women and men be strengthened through the project?
- Are the goals of the project, as mentioned in the proposal, realistic in terms of the likely ability of the project to influence the situation? That is, endeavouring to have a long-term impact on local conflict dynamics can often be more fruitful than trying to have an immediate, short-term impact on the overall conflict dynamics.

After having gone through these questions, you should have a better understanding of the impact of the project in the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases. This will allow necessary changes to be made in order to reduce the negative impacts and reinforce the positive impacts of the project. If there is insufficient information to address these questions, further information should be sought from the implementing organisation or other sources.

# Further Information and Support

The Division for Peace and Security in Development Cooperation has the thematic responsibility for peace and security concerns. Its advisers can engage in collaboration and ongoing dialogue, and may offer support by:

- Participating in planning processes;
- Assisting in writing Terms of Reference;
- Identifying a consultant who can coordinate a conflict analysis and draft the analysis report;
- Participating in an initial meeting with the consultant;
- Participating in a final seminar discussing the analysis and in particular the recommendations;
- Reviewing and commenting on existing or planned programmes and projects;

Each Sida department contains a member of Sida's **Network for Peace and Security**. This person can also be a useful source of information and assistance.

At [www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity](http://www.sida.se/peaceandsecurity) you can find this document and other relevant information, such as the Sida policy on *Peace and Security through Development Cooperation* and thematic studies containing programme recommendations. As well, thematic guidelines from the OECD-DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation (CPDC) are available at [www.oecd.org/dac/conflict](http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict).

The Division for Peace and Security in Development Cooperation has a **Help Desk** offering support from academic and programme partners. This service is available to Sida staff, to support the development of the peace and security theme in development cooperation. More information on this is available at Inside, Sida's Intranet.

Some sources of **early warning information** and **analysis of conflict dynamics** are the International Crisis Group ([www.crisisweb.org](http://www.crisisweb.org)), the FAST International Early Warning Program ([www.swisspeace.org/fast](http://www.swisspeace.org/fast)), and the Uppsala Conflict Database at Uppsala University (<http://www.pcr.uu.se/database/>).

# Appendix: Terminology

**Armed Conflict/War:** Conflicts fought between enduring, organized and armed parties who have publicly proclaimed goals that are seen to be incompatible. In most cases at least one government is involved as a primary party. In addition to whatever other issues may be involved, armed conflicts and wars are usually fought for the control of or jurisdiction over territory or influence over or control of the government of a state. An armed conflict is a conflict of the type outlined above that causes at least 25 battle-related deaths in the space of a year; a war is an armed conflict that claims 1,000 or more battle-related deaths within one year.<sup>6</sup>

**Confrontational Actors and Non-Confrontational Actors:** In a conflict analysis, it is easy to overlook actors who are not taking part in the fighting. To make other types of actors stand out, we make a simplifying distinction between confrontational and non-confrontational actors. Confrontational actors are those who are willing to threaten or use lethal force to advance or protect their position in a specific conflict. They are thus willing to confront their adversary with violence. Non-confrontational actors are those who are not willing to threaten or use violence (although they may be willing to confront their opponent in other ways). Note that over time actors may change in this regard.

**Connectors and Dividers:** Connectors are those factors that actors have in common and therefore can have a positive impact on a conflict situation because they strengthen adversaries' common identities or interests, such as societal structures, marketplaces, bridge clubs, language or religion. Dividers are those factors that can be exploited by confrontational actors to separate "us" from "them".

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<sup>6</sup> This definition is based on the definition of armed conflict from the *Uppsala Conflict Data Project*, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University.

**Phases of Conflict in the Conflict Circle:** According to Sida's terminology, conflict is conceived of as a circle consisting of different phases that can reoccur unless the circle is broken. The phases are: submerged tension, rising tension, violent conflict and post-conflict. The goal of activities promoting peace and security is to escape the vicious circle.

**Submerged Tension:** Submerged tension refers to underlying conflict motives, which can be caused by structural instability in a country or region. These often appear as greed or grievances from various population groups and elites in the society. In the long run, these grievances can increase the risk of political instability and armed conflict.

**Rising Tension:** Rising tension refers to a situation in which grievances increasingly are accompanied by violent demonstrations and open protests. Often an open political power struggle is underway, and political violence has increased. The situation often includes gross violations of human rights and/or threats of violence. This situation entails the risk of armed conflict.

**Violent Conflict:** Incompatibilities or differences between groups of people that result in organized violence. This can range from violent confrontations and manifestations in society, such as violent riots and massive crackdowns on protestors, to wars, genocide and massacres.

**Post-Conflict:** The situation following open confrontation. Post-conflict need not be the end of the conflict, as it can also entail the beginning of a new conflict if developments do not move in a favourable direction.

**Promotion of Peace and Security:** Include all activities, within the specific framework of development co-operation, that consciously target the attitudes and behaviour of parties to a conflict as well as the structural instability, and that have the primary or secondary goal of increasing security, preventing violent conflict or contributing to its resolution. There are three types of activities: promoting dialogue, promoting security and promoting structural stability. According to Sida, promotion of peace and security includes activities carried out at any stage of a conflict, that is, submerged tension, rising tension, violent conflict or post-conflict. It includes conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building activities.

**Security Dilemma:** The security dilemma is a mechanism through which fear can lead to violent conflict or war. In a security dilemma, two sides are mutually vulnerable and fearful and, as a result, may contemplate or even initiate pre-emptive strikes, though their differences in terms of incompatible goals are manageable. It is one of the two main mechanisms driving armed conflict, the other being the power struggle.

**Structural Instability:** When one or several serious conflict motives, such as poverty, economic inequality, ethnic discrimination or lack of democracy, are present in a society, that society is afflicted by structural instability. In other words, the society contains conflict motives that could be embraced and contested by force, leading to violent conflict or war. In contrast, structural stability is defined as “social peace, respect for the rule of law and human rights, social and economic development, supported by dynamic and representative political institutions capable of managing change and resolving disputes without resorting to violent conflict”.

**Struggle for Power and Influence:** This is a mechanism by which ambition, grievance or greed can lead to violent conflict or war. It can be defined as incompatible positions plus military overconfidence. It entails a situation in which the parties to a conflict not only differ greatly on one or more issues (incompatibility is great) but also hold divergent expectations about the likely outcome of a violent confrontation, so that at least one side is underestimating its adversary’s relative strength. The power struggle is one of the two main mechanisms driving violent conflict, the other being the security dilemma.





*Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.*



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