



THE COLLABORATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT ACTION, INC.

Options

For Aid in Conflict

Lessons from Field Experience

Mary B. Anderson, Editor

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OPTIONS MANUAL FOR AID IN CONFLICT:

LESSONS FROM FIELD EXPERIENCE

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many international and local staff of many aid agencies have offered their experiences for the writing of this Manual.

Over a three year period, from fall 1997 through summer 2000, a number of NGOs that have programmes in conflict areas collaborated through the Local Capacities for Peace Project (LCPP) to "field test" the ideas and approaches reported in the book, DO NO HARM: How Aid Supports Peace – Or War.¹

During this period, the LCPP provided "Liaisons" to work with NGO staff in the field. These individuals visited the NGO programmes every three or four months, first training staff in the DNH Framework and then engaging with them in applying this analysis to the local context. Together, they traced the impacts of the aid programme on the conflict and identified options and alternatives for working that would do no harm and support LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE. It was a fascinating venture!

Twice a year, these Liaisons and representatives of each of the field programmes met with LCPP donors, NGO headquarters people and LCPP staff to share and compare experiences, "add up" the lessons being learned, give each other help on special dilemmas and, in general, push the learning as far as we could.

All of the people in the twelve field programmes and specifically those who worked together in the six-monthly meetings are the authors of this book. Many are listed below by name. An even larger number of national and international field staff also deserve appreciation for their involvement in developing the ideas reported here.

¹ Anderson, Mary B., Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado and London, 1999.

In the lists of acknowledgments which follow, we do not identify the countries where the NGO programmes occurred. In every location, the NGO staff transparently engaged with local authorities and military personnel; they found such openness and inclusiveness to be important in applying the lessons of DO NO HARM in their work. However, because many of these areas are tense and insecure, we are concerned not to increase the risks to field staff by publicizing their LCPP involvement beyond their immediate context. Therefore, we omit the identification of field sites of individuals—at their request—here.

Although most of this book reflects collaborative thinking and writing, some sections were authored by individuals who are identified in footnotes. In other cases, individuals took responsibility for developing the core ideas and text which were then amended and developed by many others. Some footnotes also note these particular roles.

Special acknowledgment is due here to J. Marshall Wallace whose job it was to ensure that liaisons submitted written reports so composite learning was possible; who took on the massive job of indexing a large number of these reports so that we could identify common themes that came up in all contexts; and who in recent months, applied his editor's pen and technical expertise to the layered text of this Manual to make it both more readable and more accessible.

Below are the many authors of this book:

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The Spanish Red Cross
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To these friends and colleagues, and the many others in the field who constantly seek better ways to work, I owe appreciation for their roles in the development of this book and for the inspiration they provide.

Mary B. Anderson
Cambridge, September 2000

INTRODUCTION:

"The most useful thing about the DO NO HARM approach is that it gives us a way of thinking about programming options. We knew some of our work fed into conflict. We just did not know what to do about it. Now, we have a way of thinking of new approaches."

- Field Staff involved in LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

This is a lessons-learned Manual. It is written by and for aid workers in conflict areas. Drawing on field experience, it is meant to help the field staff of international aid agencies to understand their working contexts better and to develop programming approaches that support peace rather than war.

WHERE DOES THIS MANUAL COME FROM?

Beginning in the early 1990s, a number of international and local NGOs collaborated through the LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE PROJECT (LCPP) to learn more about how aid that is given in conflict settings interacts with the conflicts. We knew that aid is often used and misused by people in conflicts to pursue political and military advantage. We wanted to understand how this occurs in order to be able to prevent it.

The collaboration was based on gathering and comparing the field experience of many different NGO programmes in many different contexts. Through this, we were able to identify very clear patterns regarding how aid and conflict interact. These lessons are reported in the book, DO NO HARM: How Aid Supports Peace--Or War (See Preface for reference).

Knowing how aid and conflict interact is not the same as doing anything about it, however. It is difficult to translate lessons from the past into proactive, operational guidelines for the future. This is especially true because it is in the nature of conflicts to involve the specifics of histories, contexts and personalities and to be constantly in flux and unpredictable.

IDEAS TO ACTION - THE PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

The challenge of translating the ideas of DO NO HARM into action was taken up by a number of the NGOs collaborating through LCPP who agreed to pilot the implementation of these ideas in the field. These agencies agreed to apply the DNH Framework in their ongoing programmes in twelve conflict settings over a three year period in order to determine whether it is practical and usable and, if so, whether the approach makes any difference to programme outcomes.

From late 1997 through fall 2000, from Kosovo to Congo, in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, Liberia and northeastern India, and elsewhere, aid workers providing both humanitarian and development assistance have been using the DO NO HARM Framework for Analyzing Aid and Conflict. They have redesigned and monitored their programmes seeking to find ways to work that do not inadvertently feed into and worsen intergroup conflict but, instead, support and reinforce intergroup CONNECTORS and LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE.

We learned a lot! This Manual reports the lessons of these three years for use by other aid workers in other conflict zones.

SOME FUNDAMENTAL LESSONS

In all of the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS we found:

- It *is* possible—and useful—to apply DO NO HARM in conflict-prone, active conflict and post-conflict situations.

And, doing so:

- Prompts us to identify conflict-exacerbating impacts of aid much sooner than is typical without the analysis;
- Heightens our awareness of intergroup relations in project sites and enables us to play a conscious role in helping people come together;
- Reveals the interconnections among programming decisions (about where to work, with whom, how to set the criteria for aid recipients, who to hire locally, how to relate to local authorities, etc.);

- Provides a common reference point for considering the impacts of our assistance on conflict that brings a new cohesiveness to staff interactions and to our work with local counterparts;

and, the MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE FINDING:

- Enables us to identify programming options when things are going badly. In fact, many people involved in the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS say that for some time they have been aware of the negative impacts of some of their programmes but that they thought these were inevitable and unavoidable. DO NO HARM is useful precisely because it gives us a tool to find better ways--programming options--to provide assistance.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

There are no "how to do it" prescriptions in this Manual.

Instead, there are many quotations from the reports of the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS and from conversations with people involved in applying DO NO HARM. These describe programming challenges, capture lessons learned, provide a window into the analysis and suggest programming options. These quotations form the core of this Manual because, during these three "testing" years, we have found that it is this kind of sharing of experience that has provided the grounding that leads to good programming options.

Most of the Manual deals with the range of programming decisions that international aid agencies face when they initiate and implement aid programmes in conflict settings. These include decisions about targeting aid's recipients, about staffing, partnering, programming inputs, delivery, and working with local authorities. Each of these "categories" of decision-making contains numerous other sub-decisions. It is through the details of aid programming represented by these ongoing decisions that aid has its impacts--negative or positive--on conflict.

The Manual is organized into ten **SECTIONS**.

SECTION ONE summarizes the DO NO HARM Framework for Analyzing Aid in Conflict. The details of how this Framework was developed and the field experience that lies behind it are more fully provided in the DO NO HARM book. (See reference in Preface.)

The next five sections take up critical programming decisions involving the WHO, WHAT and HOW of aid. **SECTION TWO** examines issues of WHO to work with and for (Recipients); **SECTION THREE** deals with issues of WHO to hire (Staff); and **SECTION FOUR** deals with issues of WHO to work through (Partners).

SECTION FIVE turns to the WHAT of aid, dealing with how the decisions about which goods and services to provide (and their quantity and quality) can affect conflict. This section also provides specific lessons learned about food, shelter, water, health and trauma programming. **SECTION SIX** then addresses the HOW of aid, specifically focusing on options for aid delivery, and **SECTION SEVEN** gathers what has been learned about the difficult issue of how to work with local authorities without legitimizing their control or violence.

Each of these sections sets out the lessons learned about how these programming decisions can inadvertently reinforce conflict and each offers ideas tried by field staff to avoid negative impacts and, instead, build on and reinforce intergroup CONNECTIONS. There is some repetition among the sections because all programming decisions are interconnected and because some lessons about how to do better apply across all areas. However, the many quotations from project reports that illustrate the impacts of each decision and possible programming options continue to add layers of understanding and insight.

Part II of the book includes two additional sections. **SECTION EIGHT** reports what has been learned about how to use DO NO HARM, including the processes for disseminating and spreading the approaches, areas of resistance or difficulty, and other practical USE issues. In the final **SECTION NINE**, we turn to IMPACT ASSESSMENTS, that is, what has been learned about how to trace and assess the outcomes of using DO NO HARM.

A **CONCLUSION** reflects briefly on additional steps that remain for learning more about working effectively to lessen conflict and promote peace. The **APPENDICES**—which you should read! —include a number of "tools" for using DNH in the field developed by field people involved in the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS. These are a rich resource for anyone initiating the use of DNH elsewhere.

WHY TRY TO DO NO HARM?

Although it is clear that, by itself, aid neither causes nor can end conflict, it can be a significant factor in conflict contexts. Aid can have important effects on intergroup relations and on the course of intergroup conflict. In an LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT area, for example, one NGO provided 90% of all paid local employment in a sizable region over a number of years. In another, the NGO estimated that militia looting of aid garnered US \$400 million in one brief (and not unique) rampage. Both of these examples occurred in very poor countries where aid's resources represented significant wealth and power.

At the same time, giving no aid would also have an impact—often negative. The LCPP has thus chosen to focus on how to provide aid more effectively and how those of us who are involved in providing assistance in conflict areas can assume responsibility and hold ourselves accountable for the effects that our aid has in worsening and prolonging, or in reducing and shortening, destructive conflict between groups whom we want to help.

Conflicts are never simple. DO NO HARM does not, and cannot, make things simpler. Rather, DO NO HARM helps us get a handle on the complexity of the conflict environments where we work. It helps us see how decisions we make affect intergroup relationships. It helps us think of different ways of doing things to have better effects. The aim is to help aid workers deal with the real complexities of providing assistance in conflicts with less frustration and more clarity and, it is hoped, with better outcomes for the societies where aid is provided.

SECTION I: THE FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING HOW AID AND CONFLICT INTERACT²

The DO NO HARM "Analytical Framework" was developed from the programming experience of many aid workers. It provides a tool for mapping the interactions of aid and conflict and can be used to plan, monitor and evaluate both humanitarian and development assistance programmes.

The Framework is NOT prescriptive. It is a descriptive tool that: 1) identifies the categories of information that have been found through experience to be important for understanding how aid affects conflict; 2) organizes these categories in a visual lay-out that highlights their actual and potential relationships; and 3) helps us predict the impacts of different programming decisions.

THE FRAMEWORK HAS SIX STEPS

Step 1: Understanding the Context of Conflict

Step one involves identifying which conflicts are dangerous in terms of their destructiveness or violence. Every society has groups with different interests and identities that contend with other groups. However, many--even most--of these differences do not erupt into violence and, therefore, are not relevant for DO NO HARM analysis.

DO NO HARM is useful for understanding the impacts of aid programmes on the socio/political schisms that cause, or have the potential to cause, destruction or violence between groups.

Step 2: Analyzing DIVIDERS and TENSIONS

Once the important schisms in society have been identified, the next step is to analyze what divides the groups. Some DIVIDERS or sources of TENSION between groups may be rooted in deep-seated, historical injustice (root causes) while others may be recent, short-lived or manipulated by subgroup leaders (proximate causes). They may arise from many sources including economic relations, geography, demography, politics or religion. Some may be entirely internal to a society; others may be promoted by outside powers. Understanding what divides people is critical to understanding,

² This Section is a summary of the findings presented, first, in Do No Harm: How Aid Supports Peace--Or War, (Mary B. Anderson, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder Colorado and London, 1999). In that book, we described the Framework as a three step process. The experience of the implementation projects has shown this should be expanded to six steps. The additions here are steps 1, 5 and 6.

subsequently, how our aid programmes feed into, or lessen, these forces.

Step 3: Analyzing CONNECTORS and LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE

The third step is analysis of how people, although they are divided by conflict, remain also connected across sub-group lines. The LCPP found that in every society in conflict, people who are divided by some things remain connected by others. Markets, infrastructure, common experiences, historical events, symbols, shared attitudes, formal and informal associations; all of these continue to provide continuity with non-war life and with former colleagues and co-workers now alienated through conflict. Similarly, LCPP found that all societies have individuals and institutions whose task it is to maintain intergroup peace. These include justice systems (when they work!), police forces, elders groups, school teachers or clergy and other respected and trusted figures. In warfare, these "LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE" are not adequate to prevent violence. Yet, in conflict-prone, active conflict and post-conflict situations they continue to exist and offer one avenue for rebuilding non-war relations. To assess the impacts of aid programmes on conflict, it is important to identify and understand CONNECTORS and LCPS.

Step 4: Analyzing the Aid Programme

Step four of the DO NO HARM Framework involves a thorough review of all aspects of the aid programme. Where and why is aid offered, who are the staff (external and internal), how were they hired, who are the intended recipients of assistance, by what criteria are they included, what is provided, who decides, how is aid delivered, warehoused, distributed?

Step 5: Analyzing the Aid Programme's Impact on DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS

Step five is analysis of the interactions of each aspect of the aid programme with the existing DIVIDERS/TENSIONS and CONNECTORS/LCPS.

We ask: Who gains and who loses (or who does not gain) from our aid? Do these groups overlap with the DIVISIONS we identified as potentially or actually destructive? Are we supporting military activities or civilian structures? Are we missing or ignoring opportunities to reinforce CONNECTORS? Are we inadvertently undermining or weakening LCPS?

Each aspect of programming should be reviewed for its actual and potential impacts on D/Ts and C/LCPS.

Step 6: Considering (and Choosing) Programming Options

Finally, if our analysis of 1) the context of conflict; 2) DIVIDERS and TENSIONS; 3) CONNECTORS and LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE; and 4) our aid programme shows that our aid exacerbates intergroup DIVIDERS, then we must think about how to provide the same programme in a way that eliminates its negative, conflict-worsening impacts. If we find that we have overlooked local peace capacities or CONNECTORS, then we should redesign our programming not to miss this opportunity to support peace.

Once we have selected a better programming option (more will be said about this in all sections below), it is important to re-check the impacts of our new approach on the DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE DO NO HARM FRAMEWORK

The effects of aid on conflict--on the things that divide people and on the things that connect them--occur in two basic ways.

A. RESOURCE TRANSFERS

Aid is a vehicle for providing resources to people who need them. Aid's most direct impacts on conflict are a result of the introduction of resources (food, health care, training, shelter, improved water systems, etc.) into conflicts. Aid resources represent both wealth and power in situations where these matter in intergroup struggle. What resources are provided, how they are distributed and to whom, and who decides about these matters all affect the economy of war (or peace) and intergroup competition or collaboration.

RESOURCE TRANSFERS Affect Conflict in Five Ways:

1. **Theft or Diversion for Use by Warriors.** Aid's resources are often stolen or taxed by military authorities who use them directly, or sell them, to support the war effort.
2. **Distribution Effects.** Aid is given to some people and not to others. Insofar as the groups included and excluded match or overlap with those in conflict, aid reinforces the conflict.
3. **Market Effects.** Aid's resources influence wages, prices and profits. Some people gain; others lose. Incentives to pursue a war economy or a peace economy are affected. These impacts can either reinforce intergroup conflict and the war economy; or they can reinforce economic interdependence and civilian economic activity.
4. **Substitution Effects.** When international aid agencies assume responsibility for civilian survival in conflict areas, this can free up the resources that are available internally for pursuit of warfare.
5. **Legitimization Effects.** How aid is given legitimizes some people and some activities and de-legitimizes others. These impacts can reinforce warfare or non-warfare.

B. IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGES

The second way that aid affects conflict environments is through IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGES. These are the immeasurable impacts that aid workers feel their own actions and attitudes have on conflict. They include the ways that aid workers operate to reinforce the modes and moods of warfare or, alternatively, to establish non-conflictual relations, mutual respect and intergroup collaboration.

Some IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGES are:

1. When international aid agencies hire armed guards to protect their staff or their goods, one IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is that it is legitimate for arms to determine who receives goods and who does not. This is one of the messages of warfare.³
2. When international agencies refuse to cooperate and, even worse, deride each other's work, the IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is that it is not necessary to work with people with whom you disagree. This is also a message that prevails in warfare.
3. When international agencies have different policies covering the safety and care of their international and national staff, especially when they evacuate international staff in times of danger but leave local staff behind, the IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is that different lives have different value. Again, warfare is based on this belief.
4. When international staff use aid resources for their own pleasure (as when they take an agency vehicle to the mountains for a weekend outing when petrol is in short supply), the IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is, if you control goods, you can use them for your own purposes without accountability to those for whom they were intended. Such behavior with impunity characterizes warlords and militias.
5. When international aid agency staff say, "But you cannot blame me for things that go wrong. I am just one person in a complicated situation. My headquarters makes me behave this way! The donors make me behave this way!" the IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is that individuals do not have to take responsibility for the outcomes of their actions in complex situations. This sentiment is frequently heard among people in war zones-- "We cannot help what we do. Someone else makes us do it."
6. When international staff approaches every encounter in a conflict setting (such as approaching a checkpoint or negotiating with a commander) with suspicion and belligerence, the IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is that trust is naive and that interactions are safest when undertaken from positions of toughness and power. Such actions reinforce the modes that prevail in warfare.

³ Participants in LCPP workshops have suggested an alternative implicit message of hiring armed guards that is positive. This is that, within the space controlled by the aid agency, order and the rule of law will prevail. The impact of this message runs counter to the prevailing modes of warfare.

7. When international agencies use pictures of atrocities to raise funds, this can reinforce the demonization of one side in a war. The IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is that there are victims and criminals in warfare and--although this is certainly true at the extremes--in most wars individuals act both criminally and kindly and both sides perpetrate atrocities and suffer victimization. Reinforcing the sense that there are "good" and "bad" sides in war can reinforce the motivations of people to push for victory and excuse their own behavior.

PART ONE

SECTION II: DECISIONS ABOUT WHO SHOULD RECEIVE AID

SECTION III: DECISIONS ABOUT STAFFING OF FIELD PROGRAMMES

SECTION IV: DECISIONS ABOUT LOCAL PARTNERS

SECTION V: DECISIONS ABOUT WHAT TO PROVIDE

SECTION VI: DECISIONS ABOUT HOW TO PROVIDE AID

SECTION VII: DECISIONS ABOUT WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

A NOT-UNUSUAL PROGRAMMING STORY⁴

An international NGO found itself in a position to provide food to a sizable number of vulnerable people in an active war zone. Because intensity of the war varied across the country, the agency decided to link its feeding programmes to seeds and tools assistance to encourage areas where there was no fighting to adopt strategies for food self sufficiency. To integrate its food aid and agricultural support programmes, the aid agency hired its first in-country staff through the agricultural colleges in the region. The international staff felt fortunate to find these specialists with the appropriate skills for the work.

Both the food and agriculture programmes expanded over time. The NGO hired additional staff, most from the area where they had programmes, relying again on the Ag colleges and on "word of mouth." Often, the local staff recruited people when jobs needed to be filled.

This NGO operated on a partnering principle. Working with local NGOs would, they knew, increase the sustainability of their activities when they left and, in the meantime, give them a close connection to the villages where they worked.

To ensure that all parts of the country were reached by assistance, the international NGOs had each taken responsibility for a specific area. The region where this particular agency worked was populated mostly by one ethnic group who were Christian. Another, smaller ethnic group, primarily Muslim, had also lived in the area for many years. However, some of this group had fled during the war because they were aligned with an opposing militia in the fighting.

Prior to the war, the two groups had lived side by side. The dominant group were farmers; some of the second group, because they had difficulties establishing rights to land ownership, were traders transporting the agricultural produce of the first group to markets where they could get good prices. Land tenure had always been a somewhat touchy issue between the two groups in that ownership usually derived through usership, and decisions about land use were made by chiefs who, more often than not, represented the majority population group.

When a cease-fire was signed and the country returned to relative peace, the NGO took stock of its programme impacts. It was no surprise that their inputs had greatly alleviated hunger and helped many villages re-initiate agricultural production.

More surprising were the impacts of their programming on intergroup relations. As noted, the dominant population in the area where the agency worked were agriculturalists. Not surprisingly, this group also predominated in the agricultural colleges. Thus, when the agency hired its first employees through these institutions, they began a chain of single-ethnicity programming that had many consequences.

⁴ Text and ideas: Moussa Ntambara and Kenny Gluck

The agency found that all of their locally hired staff (several hundred) were of the same ethnic group. These individuals were in charge of establishing relations with recipient villages and of choosing which groups within villages would receive aid. Partly as a result of their own subgroup identity, but also because many of the other group had been displaced during the fighting, all of the village groups with which the agency worked were of the same ethnicity.

Programmes also were shaped by the early decision to work in agricultural production and by staff hiring processes. For example, one programme provided support to farmers to help them establish their own marketing systems to by-pass the traders. This added to TENSIONS between the two groups.

Committed to working through local partners and finding that, in many villages, there were no existing NGOs suitable for carrying out the agency's programmes, local staff had initiated the formation of a number of their local partnering groups. They had turned to their friends or others they knew to start up these agencies. The result: the partner NGOs were of the same ethnic composition.

As staff sat together to analyze their programme impacts, they identified the relations between these two groups as a likely cause of future violence. They realized that the first decisions about hiring had set into motion a series of subsequent programming decisions that led to a virtually mono-ethnic programme. At worst, this was fueling dangerous intergroup TENSIONS; at best, it was missing opportunities to help reestablish interdependent and respectful relations between these peoples.

WHO: THREE CRITICAL—OFTEN INTERCONNECTED—AID DECISIONS

The three WHO programming decisions--identification of *beneficiaries*, *staff* and *local partners*--are interconnected. A decision about who should benefit from aid's inputs can affect choices of local staff and local partners. Decisions about local partners can influence who gets aid as well as who works at the field-level as staff.

These three programming decisions can feed into intergroup DIVISIONS and, when they are interlinked, their negative effects are multiplied. The WHO decisions also offer immediate opportunities for lessening intergroup DIVISIONS and for supporting and promoting intergroup collaboration.

The next three sections of the Manual deal with these issues and their interconnections.

SECTION II: DECISIONS ABOUT WHO SHOULD RECEIVE AID

WHY TARGET RECIPIENTS?

Decisions about who should receive aid are driven by two realities:

1. Some people need help that we are able to provide, and
2. Because resources are always limited, we need a way to decide among all potential recipients.

EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT TARGETING CAN EXACERBATE CONFLICT:

When an aid programme is targeted toward one subgroup in a society that exactly matches or overlaps with one of the subgroups engaged in conflict, this targeting can feed into and worsen intergroup DIVISIONS. When this occurs, aid workers are perceived to be biased and this increases the likelihood that people will manipulate the aid for conflict.

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Agencies establish criteria to specify who should receive aid. Some criteria favor one group over others. For example:

- Identity. Criteria that specify an *identity* (such as Christian or Muslim) can match the lines of conflict. Sometimes such a designation is not intended to exclude people; it occurs because staff simply feel more drawn to or comfortable with people they understand.
- Political. Criteria (such as internally displaced, returnees, refugees, ex-combatants) can represent the DIVISIONS that cause conflict. When the conflict forces one group to flee, "internally displaced persons"—a criterion that is meant to reflect need—may also represent people from only one side of the conflict.
- Technical. Criteria (such as those with greatest need, houses that have been most damaged, the severely malnourished), although they are intended to be neutral and purely need-driven, can also overlap with specific subgroups in conflicts. A group that loses a war usually suffers the greatest losses. Aid directed to meet these needs can (and often does) serve one side—the losing side—and can feed ongoing intergroup tensions.

- Geographical. Criteria based on location can mean that one side is served while others are not. For example, an agency may be assigned a certain area of a country where only one group lives or security considerations may put other groups out of reach. Authorities can designate locations where they permit aid to be delivered—or not—to determine who receives and does not receive aid.
- Social or economic. Criteria (such as the poorest of the poor, landless, farmers) can mean that aid is directed toward one group where existing socio-economic structures have determined who does what.
- Success. Criteria that specify beneficiaries who possess qualities that will make the aid programme a success can feed conflict. For example, when credit programme access is based on "belonging to a village-level group" or "demonstrating knowledge of the enterprise to be supported by the loan," one group can qualify while others do not.

ADDITIONAL EFFECTS/ISSUES OF TARGETING

Decisions regarding who gets aid, and who does not, also have side effects.

They can:

- Reinforce and concentrate identity. We all have a number of different and overlapping identities. We are identified by sex, mother tongue, religion, residence, employment, level of schooling, race, history, nationality and many other characteristics. If one of these represents a particular advantage (because of X, we get aid from an NGO), this may increase our tendency to concentrate our identity in a single definition rather than in more flexible and interconnected ones.
- Homogenize the "Enemy." Specification of a target based on suffering can imply that all people of "the other side" are (equally) guilty of committing atrocities. By reinforcing demonization of the group not receiving aid, we can inadvertently support intergroup DIVISIONS.

"We tend to focus on the "losers" portraying them as the "victims." Apart from being seen by the other group as favoring their enemies, we also deny aid to the "winning" population forgetting that many of these people are similarly affected by the conflict. We treat the "winning" group as homogeneous, not recognizing that, within this group, there are many differences of viewpoints, of needs, and of willingness to make peace."

"In our area, a major UN agency cut its food ration in half for the winning population since they did not have to flee the town. But these same people had received many displaced families from other areas and, therefore, had very high needs. Ignoring these meant that the way food was distributed, resentment from this group towards the other one was only reinforced."

- Externalize Assessments of Need Targeting criteria developed by international aid agencies often do not match local communities' definitions of social and economic disparities. The difference between these definitions can heighten local misunderstanding of the aid community's actions and increase perceptions of bias. This, in turn, increases the likelihood that the distribution of aid's resources will be manipulated by conflicting parties.
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"If one asks the aid agencies who received food, they would answer that the IDPs were receiving it. If you asked the same question of local residents, they would answer that one ethnic group received food while others did not. If you asked the aid staff why that group received food, they would tell you that assessments had shown that they were the most in need. If you asked local residents why the aid agencies gave food to these people, they would answer that the aid agencies came from the West and that they (the West) supported the rebel movement backed by that group."

- Undermine local distribution or service systems: Criteria established by external agencies can undercut indigenous systems for sharing or for caring for the needy. When existing civilian structures are undermined, this tends to reinforce the power and authority of military groups over civilian functions and adds to the frequency with which social and economic decisions are made according to a military strategic criteria. Commanders can manipulate a vacuum in "civilian space" to expand their power and to control demographic trends in ways that support their pursuit of conflict.

"In our area, one group has a traditional system of sharing that means anyone, and this means anyone, who is hungry can eat from the pot of a family with food. When we established criteria for providing food to those in need, many of the local families complained that we disrupted their system of sharing. If we simply gave equal food to all families in the region, they said, then everyone would have access to food in the traditional way, by joining others at their eating pot."

- Devolve responsibility and reinforce local biases: International aid agencies may choose to devolve responsibility for beneficiary selection onto local structures. However, sometimes these use power to pursue intergroup advantage.

"We decided to rely on the local council to determine village needs and to designate aid recipients, but later we found that this council consisted only of well-off farmers. This proved to be a problem when we were asked to explain to those who did not receive aid why they had been excluded."

- Endanger beneficiaries; expand military control: Aid to certain populations can make these a target of local militias. In some cases, villages have asked not to receive aid supplies because this would provoke an attack. Additionally, military authorities routinely "tax" aid goods received by targeted populations. This increases the military presence in and control over these regions.

"Redistribution" of food commodities in the form of taxation occurs following aid distributions. Each household is required to contribute a percentage of their rations which is collected by the local representative of the military for the war effort. These commodities are carried by local residents under military guard to the local garrisons.

- Cause secondary advantages: Sometimes, the initial aid to a particular group has significant ramifications in terms of later advantage. For example, assistance to construct an emergency water system can alter land-use patterns, increase the value of adjacent land or reduce down-stream access to water.

"It has become clear that adding a water tank in this area increases the value of land by one-third. We have been discussing what our responsibility is for handling this over the long term. We started the water tank project in areas where an influx of displaced persons put strains on water supplies. Now we wonder, will there be later battles when those who fled the area return?"

***A Note on Donors' Roles:** Some field staff believe that their freedom to widen the beneficiary pool is restricted by donor regulations. LCPP examined a number of cases where NGO people felt this to be the case, and in every situation found that beneficiary categories were first defined in NGO proposals to donors rather than by the donors for the NGOs. Further, all donors with whom this was discussed, said that if the NGO indicated why the beneficiary pool should be changed, they would have agreed to it.*

"We have to educate our donors and put a wider group of beneficiaries into our proposals. Agencies often hide behind 'donor requirements' when we find ourselves not being able to respond flexibly to rising TENSIONS between groups as a result of aid distribution."

Clearly, setting the criteria for deciding who gets aid, and who does not, is a potent tool of aid agencies. All of the examples above show the many ways that these criteria can directly or inadvertently exacerbate intergroup DIVISIONS.

But these outcomes are not inevitable.

HOW TO DO BETTER WITH TARGETING: OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

If beneficiary selection can worsen intergroup relations, it can also improve them.

The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found many options for targeting aid recipients that reduced negative outcomes and supported intergroup CONNECTIONS and indigenous civilian, non-war systems.

However, two important "background" lessons emerged that should be understood before

turning to options. These are:

- Simply providing equal amounts of aid to "both sides" in a conflict does NOT in and of itself eliminate perceptions of bias.
- Not all unequal or one-sided distribution of benefits "qualifies" for DO NO HARM analysis! Aid can never be given to everyone (nor should it be), and inequality does not always lead to intergroup violence. Furthermore, aid programmes cannot, by themselves, overcome all inequality.

The focus of DO NO HARM is on intergroup DIVISIONS and TENSIONS that are dangerous to society--those that are violent and destructive. To understand how beneficiary selection can worsen conflict, we need to focus on whether (and, if so, how) our selection criteria match and reinforce dangerous societal DIVISIONS.

"When asked about the emergency phase distributions, the local NGOs said the major problem was with insufficient resources. The result was that TENSIONS were raised between those who received assistance and those who did not. When questioned further, however, they realized that the DIVISIONS between assisted and non-assisted did not map onto any other underlying cleavage in society (such as ethnicity, class or politics). Rather, when they found the resources insufficient, the local NGOs met and, on the basis of the census figures on vulnerability, divided the resources and distributed them in proportion among the regions. Importantly, they took care to ensure that there were no villages left completely uncovered."

"An issue was raised about the schools rehabilitation work done early in the project. During our field visit, one school director expressed his strong feelings that there had been discrimination against religious schools. Our local partner explained that because church schools had received support from their denominations during the war while government schools had received nothing, the NGO decided to focus on the latter."

"The discussion was dealt with in a kindly fashion during our visit, but when we returned to the office we re-examined this question. We concluded that there is an equity issue to be debated for the second project phase (when more aid will be provided to schools), but that since religious difference is not a factor in any of the various violent conflicts plaguing this country, the question is not significant for our DO NO HARM analysis. This discussion was useful in helping us clarify which differences in delivery need to be worried about in a DNH way and which are questions of equity that arise in any project irrespective of violence."

Note: However, sometimes in situations where violence is the norm, issues of equity--even when they do not overlap with pre-existing subgroup DIVISIONS--can create new areas of conflict.

"In one of the towns in our area, the distribution of survival kits to internally displaced persons caused local residents who were not included in the distribution to start a gun fight with the IDPs."

Ideas/Strategies from LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS:

1. Include Many Representatives in Decision-Making. This has two advantages:
 - a. It legitimizes the decisions that are made, reassuring people that all needs have been considered and that allocations are fair.
 - b. It reinforces collective and civilian decision-making processes rather than abdicating control to military authorities.

"We were concerned after the new war broke out that our road-building programme could become a flashpoint for TENSIONS across communities. However, these communities have now convinced us that they have confidence in the neutrality of the committees that manage the work and the resources. The committees are chosen by the communities, themselves, and comprise members of different ethnicity who are recognized and respected. In addition, as a communally-shared resource and as an economic and social priority, roads are an area where local people express strong interest in getting on with the work. (Naturally our local partner will continue to observe closely to ensure that this effort does not become a cause of new TENSIONS.)"

"The field staff team has expanded their points of reference beyond the local military authority and now include village level administrators such as local chiefs and representative councils in decisions over where to place water sources or health facilities. Associated is an effort to brief and educate these stakeholders about beneficiary selection according to needs. In fact, we were able to initiate a voting process among these stakeholders on the selection of sites."

2. Be Open and Transparent:

"During the drought the government did an excellent assessment of affected areas with technical assistance from international donors. NGOs, the government and donors made targeting decisions based on the maps that were produced charting out the affected areas and people. However, when our convoys were going in they encountered roadblocks, and the warehouse and staff were threatened. Food was looted by communities who were not at risk but who demanded they receive aid also. Only when our teams sat down with the maps and explained our targeting information did the violence abate."

"Loans were given out by the committee in front of the whole group, with everyone seeing how much each person received."

"Staff thought it would be possible to avoid this problem in the future by providing (excluded) community leaders with better information about the aid community's intentions and capabilities. These meetings would also need to convey a sense that the needs of their community would also be addressed."

3. Build on Economic Interdependence: Where groups in conflict have lived and worked in the same locations and where their economic activities have been complementary, strategies to re-initiate economic linkages can benefit both sides. Further, when non-recipients can benefit from some aspects of aid delivery (such as furnishing goods that the NGO purchases or contracting to transport aid goods) this, too, can reduce intergroup DIVISIONS.

"We have hired laborers from both groups to build the new houses, even though they are targeted only to X group."

"We are including cash crop trade promotion as one of our project proposals. This will be attempted as an effort to strengthen the trade links which exist between different ethnic groups in the region. Trade has consistently been identified by local staff as an important point of mutual interest between the conflicting groups."

"As we discussed plans for the upcoming credit programme, a number of DNH issues came up. We were especially concerned to find out who had provided credit in the village in the past. We need to know what kind of impact our programme may have on their livelihood and where our providing credit, therefore, will have a divisive impact."

"In light of the recent coup, we had to rethink all of our programmes from a DNH standpoint. Under the new circumstances, we decided that several of our programmes now have potential to evoke new levels of conflict. However, the soap-making project involving women from all subgroups appears to be a good place to continue work. Not only will this reassert a common economic need among groups, our continuation will also signal our commitment to staying in the area and to helping re-establish stability and normalcy."

4. Rely on Respected Representatives of the Excluded Group. Such representatives can interpret to their own people why others should have priority for aid.

"When we first did our consultations for the water project, we included one particular village that, ultimately, for purely technical reasons had to be left out. It so happens, that this village is populated by the X group and this poses real conflict problems when they learn they are not included. However, luckily our committee that makes all the allocation decisions includes representatives of X. We've agreed that next time our staff go out to this village, these members of the committee will also go to interpret to the people why it is they have been left out. We believe this will help them understand and respect the decision."

5. It is never too late!

"After completing the housing construction in the newly-established settlement (which targeted one group over another and benefited individual families rather than communities), an agency broadened its support to the wider community during the second phase of the implementation. They included people who lived in the settlement sites and the surrounding areas. They focused on school rehabilitation, support to health centers, and construction of water pumps. So that populations from different sub-groups benefited."

Two other ideas have been discussed but not tried by the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS:

- Define the beneficiary target in ways that cross conflict lines as, for example, focusing on children. The inoculation programmes carried out by UNICEF and others in war times represent such a strategy.
- Link immediate aid today (that goes to only one group) to subsequent, more broadly shared benefits.

Finally: When agencies work in areas where only one of the conflicting groups is present (as occurs when security reasons or local authorities determine where one can, and cannot, work), the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found that it is still possible to carry out work in ways that lessen intergroup DIVISIONS and support CONNECTIONS.

In one area where virtually all members of one group had fled, aid agencies found opportunities to avoid reinforcing the prevailing “demonization” of this group.

“Although virtually none of the X group remain in the area after the war, we found there were ways that we either fed into, or could relieve, the animosity between our aid recipients and their former neighbors, now enemies. For example, in our personal conversations and interactions with people, we found that we had been focusing on all the terrible things that had been done by ‘that’ group. We came to realize how much this feeds into the mood of mistrust and hatred. So we tried talking to people about how they feel about their neighbors having to flee, about who helped each other in the worst times, etc. We found that some people (sometimes, not very many!) expressed sympathy with the other side and longed for past or future days when they could live together. While this is a small thing, it did show us that it is possible not to make things worse by our own attitudes and, even, to provide some context in which people can express their connectedness to the ‘other side’ without fear.”

SECTION III: DECISIONS ABOUT STAFFING OF FIELD PROGRAMMES⁵

WHY HIRE LOCAL STAFF?

Many international aid agencies are committed to minimizing expatriate staff and hiring mainly local staff.

International aid agencies hire local staff to:

1. reach local beneficiaries, relying on the language ability of local staff as well as their knowledge of the culture, society and needs;
2. gain accurate information about the local situation;
3. provide employment and the resultant economic benefits to a war-disrupted economy; and
4. increase their outreach by having a larger staff than they could if dependent only on expatriates (because local staff are less expensive).

EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT HIRING LOCAL STAFF CAN EXACERBATE CONFLICT

Employment with an international aid agency often provides an important source of income for local staff and their families. Who gets hired (and who does not get hired), into which positions, and what they get paid (relative to others) can either exacerbate intergroup competition or can strengthen intergroup linkages.

National staff serve as an organization's public face. The predominance of one group in an agency's staff, or at the upper echelons of the staff, can create the impression that the aid agency is biased. This, in turn, encourages parties in conflict or local populations to interfere with aid projects or attack them. It can increase the extent to which groups compete over aid resources.

International agencies are often surprised to discover that they have hired preferentially.

⁵ Ideas or text: Kenny Gluck

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Preferential, single-group hiring occurs:

- When an agency works in an area where only one of the groups in conflict live and staff are drawn from this area. Sometimes in war situations, local groups are restricted from crossing boundaries where they might work with other groups, and international agency access is only possible when staff are members of the same group as the target beneficiaries.
- When criteria for hiring inadvertently limit access to jobs. For example, when a specific European language is required for employment and formal education has not been spread evenly among the population, those who have been favored in educational terms will also be favored for employment.

“The fact that we hire people who speak English turns out to send a political message. People say that it reinforces the identity of this area with the English-speaking neighboring countries to the south rather than with the other areas of the country with which this area is at war.”

“We have been hiring English speakers to work with the IDPs here, but this is now evoking a lot of grumbling from the local people. We provide services to people from the surrounding area, and they are offended by what they see as our favoritism to English-speakers when they, too, need jobs.”

“After the war, refugees who had resided in exile in neighboring English-speaking countries returned to their home country which was francophone. When agencies required English language skills for local staff this favored this ethnic group over others.”

- Agencies rely on word of mouth for finding employees. National staff people who are hired first often become the source for future staffing recommendations. Where the agency does not consciously recruit from among diverse communities, the first group hired will determine who is hired later. This tendency is not usually corrupt or intended to be discriminatory. In many cultures, employment heightens social responsibility to one’s friends and relatives. Where personal loyalty and trust are valued, staff will recommend people they know.

- When local authorities (often military) insist on having control over international agency hiring. Obviously, if they can control the benefits to be gained from employment in international agencies, this can buttress the political power of local commanders.

ADDITIONAL EFFECTS/ISSUES OF HIRING LOCAL STAFF

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found additional negative effects that can arise from a decision to hire staff who represent different sides in a conflict. They found:

- That the very act of announcing that this is the policy of an agency can increase TENSIONS.

“In this post-war context, we are not even allowed to mention the different groupings that fought. Neither the government nor our local staff wants us to designate who belongs to which group. This makes it impossible to know whether we have a mixed staff or whether we are hiring only from one group.”

“When we began to ask about DIVIDERS in this society, the local staff assured us that, since the war's end, there are none! They said that talking about the old DIVISIONS could possibly do more harm than good in that it could re-awaken them.”

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- Some local staff are insulted by the implication that, because they have a subgroup identity, they are biased. Many say that they are attracted to international agency work precisely because they want to express their independence from such bias.

“We discovered that all of our staff come from one ethnic group. When we began to try to hire more broadly, however, our current staff were insulted and threatened. They could not understand why we thought it important to have other groups represented; they say they are working with all the communities.”

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- In some conflict areas, even when an agency hires staff that includes conflicting groups, they cannot work together because security considerations determine who can work where. Further, when an agency makes a point by hiring from all groups, the staff sometimes reflect, and introduce into the agency, the TENSIONS of the broader society.

“Even though our local staff come from both groups, we have realized that there is some mistrust and resentment on both sides. Some of this comes from the fact that they operate as virtually two separate staffs with almost no interaction with their counterparts, even though they perform very similar functions on both sides of the line of conflict, sometimes mere kilometers apart. They almost never meet face-to-face because of travel restrictions and the difficulty of getting permits to cross lines. So, although each side is aware of the aid going to the other side and of the work of their "fellow staff," we have found that each group feels that the other receives a disproportionate share of the aid. (Even DO NO HARM is seen to "belong" to one side rather than to both groups!)”

- When international agencies hire local staff, this can attract local militias in control of programming areas to exert control over the hiring. International NGO jobs become "spoils" of warfare, used by armies to reward people they favor and to reinforce their own power.

“Our hiring constitutes 90% of all paid local employment in the entire region. Years ago, the controlling militia established its "right" to appoint all our local staff as well as the staff of all other international agencies working in areas under their control. One result of this has been that the military can put lots of pressure on our staff to use aid for their own purposes (such as "borrowing" the radio equipment, getting rides in our vehicles, using our petrol for their own vehicles or, even, taking food supplies when they need them). In addition, we pay income taxes on our local staff salaries directly to the military.”

HOW TO DO BETTER: OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIRING LOCAL STAFF

An agency's approaches to hiring and managing staff offer opportunities for reinforcing LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE. All aspects of employment--recruitment, hiring, orientation, supervision, support, promotion--offer occasions for ensuring that field programmes lessen intergroup TENSIONS and that they encourage and support intergroup cooperation and caring.

Ideas/Strategies from LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS:

1. In general, it is always better for international aid agencies to hire local staff who represent the range of subgroups in the society who are in conflict. The advantages include:

- No one side is favored over others, thus avoiding exacerbation of intergroup competition and jealousy as well as perceptions of bias that often prompt groups to manipulate aid for their own purposes;
- It provides a demonstration effect showing that people from different subgroups can work together effectively on common concerns;
- It provides a safe space for people who want to maintain relationships on "the other side" but who cannot do so because of war-induced TENSIONS;
- It openly advertises an agency's commitment to impartiality;
- It provides a work space in which mutual trust and respect are the standard;
- It encourages staff (when coupled with ongoing supervision and support systems) to become increasingly aware of the impacts of their work on community relations; and
- It demonstrates commitment to the equal value of all lives.

2. To mitigate the control of militias over hiring, Pilot Projects instituted broad-based systems for recruitment.

“We have little choice about involving the military in hiring, but we have been working on strategies to limit their control. First, we hired people for low-level jobs that do not control any resources without consulting them. They see these jobs as marginal. Second, through negotiations we got the army to agree that we could set up committees for advertising jobs and interviewing and hiring staff. These committees still include a representative of the military but also respected church people and other civilians. Apparently the military feel that they gain legitimacy from engaging in this committee hiring process.

“The committees work better than we could have anticipated. They take responsibility not only for hiring, but also for supervising and, in some cases, firing staff. When one of their appointees allowed a military person to use aid for his own purposes, the committee fired him.

“Third, we have tried hiring two people for a single job. One of these, as usual, is named by the military but we select the other one independently and we make sure that the person we hire has much higher qualifications than the military appointee. This means that, over time, "our" staff person simply takes over. “

“Some of the changes we have made are: recruitment through all church denominations (there are few organizations representing civil society other than the churches), open advertising, committee interviews, including an increased number of women and ethnic groups as representatives. All of these represent to a greater extent the diversity of this region. The key local military authorities no longer can dominate our recruitment. Hiring is now based on ability, decided through an open interview process conducted by a committee representing all parts of the community.”

“Every few months, the military would "draft" the men we had trained as mechanics to service our trucks and send them to the front to take care of military vehicles. We were a training wing of the army! We suddenly realized that we could stop this by training women as our mechanics. So far, none of them has been drafted.”

3. To overcome resistance to identifying staff by subgroups (because of fears that the process of identifying differences reinforces TENSIONS), the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS tried:

- Transparency and directness. Helping staff understand that hiring is one vehicle for conveying impartiality to the broader public (it is important not only to be unbiased among groups, but also to be seen to be unbiased).
- Quiet reliance on local "information sources." Some agencies have located individuals within the society who favor multigroup staffing and relied on them for information about which employees belong to which group. This information, though not public, helps ensure that they include staff from all groups.
- Use of "proxy" indicators. For example, hiring a balance of "returning refugees" and "people who experienced the war" might ensure representation of two conflicting groups. Or, hiring for certain areas of technical or professional knowledge (agriculturalists and pastoralists) can ensure an inclusive, representative staff.

4. To address schisms within staff that occur because of travel restrictions, security issues or staff unwillingness to work together, agencies have developed strategies of intervisitation, joint training and explicit information-sharing across agency lines.

“While it would be a mistake to read too much into this first cross-visit, it did seem to be a positive experience for everyone. On the one hand, it gave X exposure to the dilemmas his colleagues on this side face and to the conditions of areas where members of his group do not normally travel. On the other hand, it also proved useful for our region's staff to hear about conditions that X and his colleagues face. Our interactions went extremely well, and language difficulties were rendered unimportant due to ample good humor from everyone.

“As conditions permit, we will attempt subsequent similar cross-visits between staff in both directions to compare approaches, improve cross-fertilization of the learning that takes place and enhance transparency about our involvement with both sides. This is likely a good proactive tactic for preventing undue pressure on local staff from local authorities. We have observed that rumors of abuses are key to supporting war and can lead to real abuses. As doses of reality, cross-visits can help undermine rumors. Although it is still considered somewhat unsafe for the two sides to travel to areas controlled by the other, certain staff have indicated that they are willing to make the trip.”

SOME ADDITIONAL LESSONS ABOUT HIRING INTERNATIONAL STAFF⁶

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS have also found that hiring procedures for international staff can make a big difference in terms of how a programme affects conflict. In the rush to get international staff on the ground in newly forming crisis situations, aid agencies too often compromise on experience and fail to consider carefully enough the "fit" of the expatriates' attitudes and approaches with the local situation. (In one situation, some agencies hired large numbers of inexperienced personnel for periods of only two weeks! The result was increased opportunities for local warlords to manipulate staff decisions and to use aid resources for their own purposes.)

International agencies often hire expatriate staff who have no relevant language skills and they then have to hire local staff who speak the language of the expatriate staff. Above we described how language requirements for local staff can exacerbate intergroup inequalities. Or because of the language limitations of expatriates, agencies rely entirely on translators. Each degree of distance between outside staff and local aid recipients can increase the likelihood of programming decisions that either feed into intergroup conflict or miss opportunities to support linkages among people.

International aid agencies tend to reward (often explicitly, but almost always implicitly) expatriate staff for efficiently moving and accounting for large amounts of aid resources more than for developing programmes based on considerations of their impacts on conflict. Recognition for good work and promotion to higher levels are based on a track record of managing commodity transfers. Until headquarters reinforce the necessity of conflict impacts analysis, few international programme directors feel free to alter projects when their impacts on DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS become clear. In addition, (see **SECTION FIVE** on Decisions about What to Provide), the transfer of too many resources can, itself, worsen conflict.

“We made a lot of mistakes in hiring our international staff! First, we hired a field director who had known the country before the conflict. He arrived and immediately hired his former (peace-time) employees because he knew their skills. He also felt sorry for them because they had lost so much as a result of the war.

⁶ Text and ideas: Joop Gilling, Stephen Jackson, Marge Tsitouris

“Very soon, open demonstrations by people of another subgroup showed that his first decisions had not taken into account the changed circumstances and the increased intergroup TENSIONS since his pre-war experience. This director had to be replaced and our programme suffered.”

“We then hired a person well experienced in other warring societies, but his previous experiences had been with governments that were completely unreliable so he felt justified in acting like a "lone ranger." His failure to consult with local authorities and with his local staff resulted in a concerted move to frighten him away from the country.”

“Finally, we hired a person with long development experience in the region. His style is to integrate expatriate and local staff, to employ local staff representing different groups in the society and to work with all of them to build a team with a common concern for humanitarian action. So far, he has survived a record number of years in this context and our programme, of course, is greatly improved.”

HOW TO DO BETTER: HIRING INTERNATIONAL STAFF

International staff who work in conflict areas need to be selected for certain qualities and/or have training in working in conflict situations.

LCPP experience shows that the ability to remain optimistic and basically trusting of people with whom one works, to operate transparently, and to maintain a demeanor of calm and confidence in the face of violence are important traits of effective expatriate staff. These attributes convey positive implicit messages to people in conflict settings. These traits can be recruited for, or enhanced through training.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR HANDLING RELATIONS BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL STAFF

Finally, LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS learned some lessons about personnel policies that affect expatriate and local staff relations.

1. A negative IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGE is conveyed by staff policies that differ for expatriate and national staff. In particular, evacuation plans that include international staff but not local staff are thought to reinforce the acceptance of a prevailing attitude in conflicts--namely, that different lives have different value.

More and more international agencies are developing staff policies that explicitly assert the value of the lives of their national staff.

“We have always been clear that we will close down our programmes and, possibly, leave the area whenever our international staff are threatened. Making this clear from the beginning increases our chances of safety because the local militias know that if we leave, they will be held accountable for the loss of aid by the local people who depend on it.”

“However, we find that it is really our local staff who are pressured to provide aid resources to the local militias and, when they refuse to do so (as is our policy), are often threatened. Recently one of our health staff was killed and another injured by soldiers demanding drugs.”

“On the other hand, our national staff are reluctant to have us take action when they are threatened because they fear that this will result in even more threats.”

“We are working on a multi-pronged strategy for dealing with these problems. When the local staff was killed, we suspended all aid until those responsible were arrested, just as we would have done had expatriate staff been harmed. This immediate response conveyed a strong message and had a remarkable impact. There was a serious crackdown on incidents of lawlessness in relation to our local staff and goods. Random and casual use of weapons against them declined.”

“We now compile reports of all the coercive incidents against our national staff and present this to the local authorities on a monthly basis. Using a composite reporting system, rather than raising each individual case, protects the identities of the staff who are threatened and, thus, protects them from reprisals. They also alert the local authorities to the incidence of threats and force them to take responsibility for controlling the fighters under their command.”

“The agency maintains separate living arrangements for expatriate and national staff and has not effectively integrated national staff into programme management. This unnecessarily worsens the effects of government restrictions on expatriate staff movements. For example, all expatriate staff are confined to compounds from six o'clock each evening, which limits both the amount of informal interaction they are able to have with local residents and means that expatriate and national staff interact exclusively in the hospital where they both have many other responsibilities and demands on their time.”

2. Both expatriate and local staff need to be made aware of how their aid programmes affect conflict. Training, reinforcement through staff discussions, expectations that this analysis should be included in regular reports, development of new project funding proposals that explicitly deal with these effects--all of these reinforce joint accountability of the staff.

SECTION IV: DECISIONS ABOUT LOCAL PARTNERS:⁷

WHY WORK WITH LOCAL PARTNERS?

International aid agencies, either by choice or mandate, often work through local counterparts in conflict settings. They do so because they believe that partnering with local organizations:

1. Enhances programme sustainability;
2. Ensures community participation;
3. Provides more accurate understanding of local communities since indigenous organizations have their roots in these communities;
4. (For humanitarian aid agencies) Lays a foundation for transitional and development programming.

EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT WORKING THROUGH LOCAL PARTNERS CAN EXACERBATE CONFLICT AND/OR MISS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTING PEACE

Missed Opportunities

People in conflict often talk about the importance of a visible and even large "international presence". They say that, because of its "outsider" status, this:

- Demonstrates neutrality and commitment to the welfare of everyone;
- Provides opportunities and "space" for local people to disengage from conflict and act in non-war ways and express non-war attitudes;
- Provides a calming and reassuring message of concern for civil society and the rule of law.

The advantages of an international presence challenge international agency decisions NOT to work on the ground in a conflict or, having started a programme, to close it down. In one LCPP project context where there was an abrupt takeover by a rebel group, local staff were fearful that closing down

⁷ Moussa Ntambara took responsibility for parts of this Section.

international programmes would increase the atmosphere of uncertainty, lawlessness and violence. They felt that decisions by international aid agencies to stay on site in spite of security issues definitely calmed the situation and allowed a speedier return to civilian activity. They even speculated that this prevented a great deal of violence.

Feeding into Conflict

On the other side, partnering with local organizations can feed into and exacerbate intergroup TENSIONS.

This international NGO was committed to working with local partners. They assumed these organizations would know their own milieu and beneficiaries and, therefore, would serve them as their own people. After seven years of conducting multi-million dollar programmes in this warring society, the international NGO evaluated its partnering work.

They found that the local NGO staff did not know much about the beneficiary communities where they worked and that they had not, in general, consulted communities or project participants in designing or implementing programmes. Instead, given the agencies' need to find local groups who could be their partners, local NGOs proliferated in response to the availability of international humanitarian funds. The new "local NGOs" saw themselves as service providers to their international partners rather than promoters of community-based initiatives.

The evaluation also revealed that the benefits of many project activities had been exaggerated by the local NGOs, both because they observed that the international NGO was always happy to hear about success and because their funding from this agency, on which they were entirely dependent, could be jeopardized if they reported problems.

Local communities did not trust the so-called local NGO leaders, feeling that they used local communities for their own benefit (employment, income, control over resources). Many of the local NGOs supported by this international NGO were initiated by, and served people from, one ethnic group.

In one village, the ethnicity of the individual who formed and led the local NGO meant that he promoted a pig multiplication project for the group with which he worked, unaware that the other ethnicity represented in that village (but not in his NGO) was offended by this because, as Muslims, they saw pigs in their midst as a provocative action. Having lost the war and the subsequent elections, this group felt that the aid community was punishing them for their political loss, and this feeling entrenched the divide between them and the other ethnic group with whom they continued to live.

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Partnering channels resources into conflict areas. Employment, salaries, and control over resources are advantages that local partners enjoy as a result of working with international agencies.

When partnering organizations are partisan, this can feed conflict. This can occur when:

- Organizations chosen (or created) as local partners are selected by local staff who represent only one side of the conflict (see **SECTION III** on Decisions about Staffing);
- Partner organizations are based in communities in which only one of the subgroups lives;
- Partner organizations are selected, or created, by the external agency according to criteria that, inadvertently, limit their identity such as: a) language (if one subgroup has had greater access to education that teaches an international language) or b) expertise (if one subgroup dominates a field such as health or agriculture in which the NGO is programming).
- Partner organizations represent local military or political interests.

“One major international agency operating in this area felt that its greatest contribution would be to support the development of new NGOs. The Field Director announced that he would fund anyone who could offer proof of legitimacy as a local NGO. We all now refer to the proliferation of organizations that this caused as "briefcase" or "breast pocket" NGOs. Many, maybe most of these, were in fact "fronts" for commanders of various militias who used the resources to curry the favor of local communities and to supply their own troops with food, medical services and weapons.”

ADDITIONAL EFFECTS/ISSUES OF PARTNERING

Partnering decisions can also have side effects. They can:

Weaken existing indigenous organizations. When international aid agencies committed to partnering find no "appropriate" local NGOs in existence, they often "build capacity" through supporting the creation of new indigenous organizations. To do this, they frequently turn to educated, middle-class individuals who speak the international language of the expatriates and are able to handle proposal writing and accounting.

However, the creation of new local NGOs "in the image of" international NGOs may overlook and, thus, weaken existing groups that better reflect local communities and that work with multiple groups. Such groups are often illiterate and are not thought to be competent to handle aid resources. In some cases, these groups may, in fact, be the best counterparts for crossing intergroup DIVISIONS and acting as CONNECTORS.

“When the refugees who belonged to the group that lost the war returned to find their homes either destroyed or occupied by families of the "winning" side, an international agency provided assistance for rebuilding the damaged homes. Soon, they were accosted by people from the winning side and accused of favoring their enemies. Later they found out that groups of elder women and men were acting as self-appointed negotiation committees to settle housing disputes when returnees found someone else living in their homes. These elder groups were very successful in settling all the disputes brought to them in ways that people saw as equitable and efficient. Had the international agency asked these groups to be its partners, the housing assistance they provided may have been more fully trusted by all local people.”

Increase military interest in or antipathy toward local groups. Channeling sizable resources through local partner organizations can increase military attention to the activities of these groups. It also can increase the risk for the staff of partner organizations who face threats if they refuse to hand over aid goods.

“Our NGO partners have access to far greater resources than the local military governor. This breeds resentment and increases the likelihood that he will try to shape their work to his advantage.”

(Mis)shape programmes. Even though one of the reasons international agencies work through local partners is to ensure better and more appropriate local programming, there is often a tension between the ideas and operational modes of the external agency and local realities. Local partners report that they are reluctant to challenge ideas from their international partners because a) they fear losing support and b) they figure that, with their vast experience, the international agency must know what it is talking about. Sometimes, this results in activities that, on the face of it, seem developmentally sound but, under the particular circumstances, inadvertently worsen intergroup relations.

“We provided funds to our local partner for a small enterprise and agricultural credit programme. We found out later that, in order to ensure that returns to the investments in these areas were strong, our partners developed criteria for involvement that required recipients to demonstrate that they already knew how to do the work for which they sought the loan. Also, farmers had to have sufficient land to make the agricultural improvements worthwhile. Of course, these criteria meant that people who already had business experience or land were favored by the assistance. These were also the people who had stayed in the country during the civil war (and were identified, therefore, with a certain faction) while those who had left as refugees (and were identified with another faction) did not meet the loan criteria.

“Our partner told us they felt a lot of pressure from us to show programming results. It is true that we urge them both to show success in development terms and to do DNH analysis, but they say that the reports we ask for emphasize the importance of "bottom line" results over impacts on intergroup relations. “

HOW TO DO BETTER: OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN PARTNERING⁸

Recognizing the positive influence that maintaining some kind of strongly visible international presence can have in conflict settings, international aid agencies nonetheless have very good reasons to work closely with local organizations. Doing so offers additional opportunities for positively affecting intergroup relationships. The LCPP experience provided the following ideas.

⁸ Ideas and text: Greg Hansen, Stephen Jackson, Wolfgang Jamann, Abikok Riak

1. Partner with existing local structures that cross lines among groups. In many situations, local structures exist that already reach across the lines of division among groups. Often, they are not formally constituted and, therefore, can be overlooked in partnering decisions. Further, they often do not fit the profile of a local NGO that we have imagined as partners; they have few of the language, accounting and reporting skills we think we need in partners, but they can do a better job of distributing aid to people fairly than anybody else.

“Our local partner is said to be "impartial." This is because its Director is known to be a man who works across ethnic lines in spite of his own identity. He actually started this NGO as an umbrella organization to bring together many of the village- or region-based NGOs that, because of their locations, serve just one subgroup. So far, it seems to be working.”

2. Work with and link different local partners that represent different sides of the conflict. The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found opportunities to link several partners, each representing a subgroup, around the common activities of providing aid. However, this impact must be explicitly organized by international agencies or it may have the opposite effect of reinforcing competition among the local NGOs as they compete for international resources.

“Most of the local NGOs, of which there are many, are truly community-based and, therefore, represent only one of the groups in conflict. We have been encouraging them to work within their own communities as they are best suited to do, but also to link with another local NGO representing another subgroup. These links give them a chance to exchange ideas, share labor, visit each other's work and, in general, create new CONNECTORS around shared experiences, problem solving and common concerns. As the international agency that funds each of these local NGOs, we can support this interchange. We can realize the advantages of partnering with community-based groups and, at the same time, use our multiple partnerships to reinforce intergroup collaboration.”

“In the second phase of its post-conflict programming, an international agency opted to work at the level of *inter-groupements*, which are collectives of several local associations, rather than with individual associations as it had in the past.”

This approach allowed the agency to promote dialogue and exchanges among different associations, ensured that various subgroups in the society benefited and fostered interdependence. A management committee comprised for representatives from each member association was formed to direct and guide the activities of the *inter-groupement*.

3. Provide space, through partnering, for local concerned people to organize and participate in non-war activities. There are always people in conflict settings who genuinely want to be involved in serving civilian needs, but conflict often disrupts opportunities for non-military employment and limits opportunities to cross DIVISIONS. By supporting local NGOs that explicitly want to work on all sides, international agencies can provide some protection for these activities.

“We think that most of our partners come into the relationship because it gives them access to our resources. However, once we are working together, we sometimes learn that they also value our "neutrality" because it allows them to work across DIVISIONS.”

4. Use partnering to support and reinforce civilian authority vis a vis military authority. Partnership with an international NGO can strengthen a local partner's ability to operate in relation to the local military. This, in turn, adds weight to maintenance and sustenance of non-war activities.

“We observed that some of our partner organizations, while not truly independent of the local militia, seem able to exercise a greater degree of independence from the military authority than others. We spoke with many of these organizations to find out how this could be. We found that the local organizations with more autonomy have strong support from the communities where they work, and beneficiaries in these villages express a sense of ownership of the activities. This means that when outsiders try to control or influence the partner's work, they have to answer to the community rather than only to the partner. In addition, these partners note that availability of funding from independent sources leaves them less vulnerable to manipulation. Finally, each of the more independent organizations has very strong leadership.

“Seeing this, we are developing models and tools such as needs assessment, SWOT analysis and the like which we can use to support and promote greater community involvement in partners' work. We are also creating a training module for partners to help them develop stronger leadership and closer community ties.”

“Most of our "capacity building" workshops with local partners in the past focused on accounting procedures, management of assets and donor reporting requirements. The staff want to broaden the scope of these workshops to include assessment techniques, project design and management. More importantly, they want to include community representatives because they see that the workshops can encourage and facilitate institutional changes helping the NGO partners to become more representative and more accountable.”

5. Encourage partners to do DO NO HARM analysis so that they can also see the impacts of their programming on group relationships. Partnerships can provide a vehicle for spreading the use of programming tools and approaches that, cumulatively, can have more positive outcomes.

“In our evaluation session, the local NGOs agreed strongly that DO NO HARM was useful to them. They said that the best part of using it was the way it helped them find programming options.”

“Our staff team identified a new set of criteria for partner selection to ensure greater accountability to beneficiaries and greater inclusiveness of different groups. These are: broad-based management and staff in which different villages and groups are represented with particular attention to groups that are in conflict; broad-base of symbols and names which are acceptable to all groups in the area; involvement of women in staff and management; and a representative board reflecting the diversity of the community.”

“Partners have been invited to participate in all training sessions with our staff so that they can learn the DNH approach and better understand about why and how we intervene, with whom we work, and who will benefit. Before, some of the decisions seemed arbitrary, biased or unfair; with an understanding of the LCPP approach, our partners now know that there are other factors we consider in project design and management, beyond the technical aspects.”

SECTION V: DECISIONS ABOUT WHAT TO PROVIDE⁹

Decisions about WHAT to provide also can affect intergroup relations.

WHAT decisions are usually focused on recipients' needs. However, these decisions also can have important effects on the broader economy.

WHAT decisions involve both tangible goods (such as food, shelter, blankets, credit, etc.) and intangible services (such as health care, training, etc.).

EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT BOTH THE GOODS AND SERVICES THAT AID PROVIDES CAN EXACERBATE CONFLICT.

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Decisions about WHAT to provide affect conflict directly and indirectly.

Direct effects occur when:

- Aid goods are stolen or diverted for support of the war effort;
- When the inputs provided, coupled with decisions about beneficiaries, reinforce and worsen (dangerous) DIVISIONS between those who receive aid and those who do not.

“Our staff team reviewed the programme in light of the DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS we identified. The seed bank/farm input shop programme was developed in accordance with the perceived needs of the community. The programme, however, responds principally to the needs of village rice farmers, even though other people engaged in other activities continue to reside in these areas. This exclusiveness is potentially problematic because of the economic segregation by ethnicity characteristic of this area.

“This incomplete definition of community need is likely the result of a variety of factors. The villages on which the community workers based assessments may have been mono-ethnic traditionally or they may have been places where the minority

⁹ Text and ideas: Kenny Gluck, Wolfgang Jamann, Abikok Riak

population had not yet returned after the fighting. It is also possible that the community workers simply chose to define the communities in this way as a result of their own base in the community.

“Clearly our choice of inputs has determined who we serve.”

Indirect effects occur when:

- Incomes that are gained or lost as a result of international assistance (through levies, wages, price changes and profits) overlap with and reinforce intergroup DIVISIONS or increase incentives for continuing war and undermine incentives for civilian economic activities.

“The simplest and most direct form of transfer of our materials to the military comes in response to their requests for diesel or food. These sometimes come with the veiled threat that the materials will be taken by force if they are not handed over voluntarily. Requests for food which generally come when troops are being moved to the front, have been for up to 10 tons.

“Other forms of transfer are subtler but far larger than the direct "gifts" to the army. These include the taxes that the military routinely places on farmers' incomes that are higher as a result of our grain production programme; the taxes that we pay on staff salaries; and profits made by the authorities who control currency exchange rates when we exchange large amounts of money.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY

In general, the larger the amount of aid resources (*quantity*) and the greater their value (*quality*), the greater the potential for negative impacts. More and better goods prompt theft or bring in higher tax revenues (with which authorities can wage war). When the goods seem to serve some groups more than others, the TENSION this provokes in groups who do not receive aid is greater the higher the *quantity* and *quality* of the goods.

“We will be taking greater care to avoid any large stockpiles of aid materials as we restart operations in the area. Many fear that the earlier stockpiles of food contributed to the looting by the militias.”

ADDITIONAL ISSUES/EFFECTS OF "WHAT" DECISIONS

The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS developed a list of additional considerations related to the WHAT decisions. They found it is important to consider:

- How broad or narrow the usefulness of the input is. When goods can be used by military personnel as well as by civilians, they are more apt to be diverted by the military. In addition, delivering goods that are of use to militias can cause the intended beneficiaries to become a military target. In some cases, villages have asked not to receive aid (especially food) for this reason. In addition, militaries routinely "tax" aid goods they can use and this increases, in general, their presence in and control over regions where aid is given.
- Potential negative side-effects of making some people better off. If an aid agency improves the livelihoods of its programme participants, it is, at the same time, increasing the resources available for armies to tax or divert to pursue warfare. Likewise, if aid is focused on one of the subgroups in conflict and they become much better off as a result of services provided by aid, this can exacerbate intergroup DIVISIONS.

“Our programme has led to a huge increase in the level of food production here. Most farmers have no means of storing or transporting their produce and would only grow enough for their own use if it were not for our purchasing it from them as aid. In the first years only several dozen tons were purchased; after word spread of our programme, the amount purchased will likely pass 700 tons this year. All the food we buy is taxed at approximately 10% by the local military whose tax collectors are allowed to travel with the grain purchase trucks. This tax is on top of taxes on food collected at the village level by the civil administration.”

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- Currency Issues. Choices aid agencies make about how much and which currency to use in any location can have impacts on conflict. In general, authorities control exchange rates and import fees and, the more exchange that occurs, the more income they realize. Even more important, the choice of currency for transactions can "signal" alliances or cause shifts in relative power of the controllers of various currencies.

“The regional office management agreed to use the neighboring country currency to pay salaries and to purchase grain, the benefit being that this exchange rate is not as easily manipulated as that of the national currency. It also allows for easier trade with that country. However, some people see this as an indication of our support for the partition of our country and independence for our region. The use of this foreign currency also has created problems for the traders coming in from other areas. Since trade has been identified as one of the CONNECTORS between local people and the group these traders represent, this could worsen relations between the two.”

- Individual v Collective Benefits. Intergroup TENSIONS are more often heightened by deliveries of goods or services that benefit individuals than by aid that supports community, shared structures. For example, credit programmes can benefit individuals and their families; public health programmes have broad, inclusive impacts.
- Accuracy of estimates of need. When the numbers of people in need are exaggerated so that more aid is delivered than is actually needed, this gives recipients a surplus vis a vis other groups. How they use or misuse this surplus can worsen TENSIONS and DIVISIONS between groups

“Resentment over perceived exclusion from aid benefits was worsened by a recent IDP recount carried out by one aid agency. This recount, conducted with support from most of the international NGOs working here, led the agencies to lower their estimates of the IDP population from 70,000 to 50,000. The other groups were even more upset when they realized that the IDPs had gotten more than they needed.”

- Timing and sequencing. Delays in meeting needs can feed intergroup TENSIONS.

“Local staff found that the late timing of our assistance could have contributed to more TENSIONS between the groups which, fortunately, did not become violent but which, they judge, was very much felt. This is because before our resources arrived, local people helped the IDPs and their resources were depleted. But, of course, they were not eligible for aid. They told our staff that a system of "piece work" could have served as a CONNECTOR; everyone who wanted to could have had the opportunity to work and receive payment in commodities.”

“One agency faced two different situations where donor deadlines and schedules had negative and positive effects. In the first, the donor solicited proposals for reconstruction of several hundred new homes in settlement areas. The donor’s budget cycle required that the construction be completed in nine weeks or the agency would be obliged to return all funds. In considering whether to submit a proposal, the agency determined that they could complete the construction on time but that doing so could fuel existing tensions. The agency declined to submit a proposal.”

“In the second instance, the agency had funds remaining from a housing project but had to spend the money within one month. After consulting with local agencies and community groups, the agency decided to use these funds to build a much-needed secondary school that served all groups.”

SPECIAL ISSUES FOR DIFFERENT INPUTS

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS provided a range of types of aid inputs. They found that special issues arise for each type of input. Following are the lessons learned in the areas of food, shelter, water, health and trauma. These also illustrate the issues discussed above about the WHAT of aid.

Food:¹⁰ Food is an aid resource that is as useful for militaries as for civilians. It is thus highly likely to be stolen or diverted for military use. Communities that receive food are often targeted and attacked by militias. Authorities very often manipulate where food may be delivered as a way of determining where people live. The control of food prices provides a source of income for financing warfare and this means militaries often try to control food supplies, including those delivered by aid agencies.

“There is a long history here of grain traders and military commanders manipulating food shortages to reap windfall profits. Local residents and aid staff fear that these groups will provoke violence in town in order to stop the flow of aid food.”

¹⁰ Ideas and text: Kenny Gluck

Thus, it is particularly difficult to provide food aid in conflict settings without feeding into conflict. Yet surplus food is the commodity most frequently provided by donor countries and is often needed by civilians in war areas.

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found that the quantity and quality of food aid are of particular importance in determining its impact in conflict settings. Large quantities of food stored in warehouses are subject to raids by militia (especially in countries where the payment of salaries to the military is sporadic). High quality food brings high profits when sold which often prompt theft. Furthermore, when programmes are driven by the availability of food and the need to move it out of the warehouses, rather than considerations of need coupled with local intergroup relations, many distortions occur and conflict can be reinforced.

“According to staff, their ability to respond effectively to the programming problems they identified as likely to cause conflict was hampered by the large amounts of commodities in their warehouses. At the beginning of this year, there were over 17,000 tons of food in storage, and some of it was beginning to spoil. The staff were worried that spoilage could raise problems with their primary donor. They also felt that allowing aid commodities to spoil sends a negative message about the value of relief aid. In the past, newspaper reports of food aid spoilage in this country have provided an excuse for looting of aid supplies.

“Given this situation, our agency sharply increased the amount of food we moved through our programmes. Field staff were told to increase the scale of their programmes. They say that, even though there were no formal instructions to this effect, they felt the pressure to "ask fewer questions" about new project applications. As a result, the number of institutions we supported by food inputs rose dramatically and far more "social service institutions" than the community could ever support were created to take advantage of this food. The commodities went largely to the staff of these institutions, diverting their activities in a direction that represented a continuation of a war-time emergency economy rather than a transition towards a peace-time economy.

“Now because the neighboring country suddenly needs more food, our headquarters is shifting our commodity supplies there. So we are suddenly facing sharp declines in the food we have available and we know that the competition for what now remains will only be heightened by the sudden increase in institutions that received inputs in recent months.

“One potential alternative we are discussing to eliminate the loose system of selection we currently use, is the development of planning sessions involving local government, NGOs, community organizations and service providers. In these planning sessions, estimates of the need of particular institutions could be developed along with estimates regarding our possible long-term support mechanisms. After a number of institutions have been identified on the basis of need and available resources have been assessed, choices could be made among them based on their relative strengths, geographic distribution and other relevant criteria.”

In general, the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found:

- While it is important to assess needs in all areas accurately, it is especially important in relation to food aid.
- When food is supplied, methods of selecting recipients, storage, transport and delivery become particularly important. At each point, food is susceptible to manipulation and theft.

In **SECTION SIX** below, on Decisions about HOW to Provide Aid, these issues are more fully addressed.

Shelter, Land, Settlement.¹¹ Aid programmes that deal with where people live also raise special problems.

Wars cause displacement and redistribute property (including housing). Large movements of people into new areas can create new or exacerbate old frictions. Land related issues (ownership, use, settlement and resettlement) are particularly loaded in conflict situations.

“Even where the displaced group is returning to the region, they face difficulties in regaining access to land they had farmed before the war. Land ownership in these areas is rarely accompanied by formal deeds or titles even when the land was purchased. It is more often established by agreements with community leaders--a process generally controlled by the majority group. With the war-time deterioration in intergroup relations, many of the arrangements by which the displaced had user rights are no longer recognized.

“Issues of house and land tenure were identified as potential triggers of conflict, capable of setting off wider violence as refugees return.”

¹¹ Text and ideas: Greg Hansen, Stephen Jackson, Luc Zandvliet

Housing is a target in intergroup warfare. Therefore, aid to rebuild houses often re-excites TENSION and becomes a flash-point for renewed intergroup violence. Because housing is owned by individual families who are usually identified with one subgroup, and neighborhoods also often reflect subgroup identities, rebuilding undertaken area by area favors some families and some groups over others.

Aid programmes can easily become involved in population movements and attempts by different groups to dominate particular locations. Aid can be used by local authorities to move civilians for military reasons. Aid may result in investment in property that is occupied or disputed, thereby making return or compromise difficult. Initiating post-conflict housing programmes before all groups have been able to return to an area can lock in one group's dominance of that area.

“The bulk of assistance is provided to the internally displaced and communities affected by displacement. In many areas, we are providing assistance to residents who are not the original owners of the land they are now farming. The problem is not unique to one side; both try to resettle population groups in certain areas to deliberately change the ethnic demographics and land tenure relations.”

“In areas where land ownership is potentially contested, we are confronted with a number of dilemmas. The most obvious is how our interventions reinforce or legitimize the change in land tenure. We are involved in activities that upgrade agricultural land. Disputes may arise in the future over the ownership of the land that we have helped maintain or improve.”

“The village where the displaced people were located was a part of a government "colonization" incentive scheme that resulted in an influx of mostly poor people who support the government. The government maintains that the area was unpopulated before the scheme so they provide settlers with land, assistance to build a house and access to water. The land on which these people are being supported, however, is in the region of the country contested by anti-government forces. The government's scheme is changing the demographic landscape.”

“Our assistance is meeting a genuine need in sanitation. However, it is also supporting population movements engineered by one side of the conflict for its own purposes.”

“The water tanks we have rehabilitated increase the value of arable land one third.

Currently our selection criteria for tank rehabilitation are based on cost-benefit analysis. However, our staff now see that the location of tanks also needs to be considered.

“We need to know if the area around a tank was populated before our rehabilitation. Especially in areas that are seen as "strategic" the effect of our tanks on resettlement should be considered.”

Given the impacts of aid related to housing and land on conflict, one PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT adopted a policy of supporting no new settlements and no new housing construction. In addition, they established a series of protocols to determine legal ownership before they provide aid of any sort and, where settlement is involved, developed contractual arrangements with beneficiaries stipulating temporary custody and responsibility for property pending the return of the original owner.

Although there is no certainty that such arrangements would be legally binding, the NGO felt this policy established a system for dealing with future disagreements and sent an important message.

Water.¹² In arid areas, water is the single most valuable resource. Control of water sources can, therefore, represent both wealth and power. Water often becomes a contested resource in conflicts.

Aid programmes that address water availability can exacerbate conflict in several ways. Every running water source has "upstream" and "downstream" users. When an aid programme facilitates access for some groups along a river, this always affects the access of people downstream. Furthermore, water is also important for militaries. In one situation, when an international NGO brought in a manual drilling rig, the first place they were told to drill was at the army garrisons. When they refused to do so, the rig and its vehicle were "borrowed" for a while.

¹² Text and ideas: Stephen Jackson

“We have analyzed the impacts of our programme to install gravity fed water systems from the hill area to the villages below. In this programme, a water source is captured in the mountains and channeled to a reservoir in the valley from which pipes bring water to points in several villages. Two possible TENSIONS are identifiable. First, the labor for this project is provided communally by the villages that share the water. However, a shortfall of resources has meant that some villages involved in the initial work have not gotten water. Though these villages share a common identity with those who have benefited, family and clan differences have become charged in what may be dangerous ways.

“Second, although when this programme was first planned, the same group lived both in the mountains and villages, since the war-induced migration, the hills are now mostly populated by the other group. What began as a plan to share water among a cohesive group now is seen to take water from one group and give it to others.

“We have been thinking about actions to address these issues. For villages in the valley that were left out, we will simply continue to extend the system. For the question of the hill communities, things are a bit more difficult. One option is to locate water sources high in the hills and help these communities use them. Another is to identify shared services, such as clinics or schools, which we might help rehabilitate in the interests of all communities. We should underpin all our efforts with consciousness raising, helping communities understand their common interests.”

“Water has become a source of grumbling between the two regions where we are working. The name of one of these districts means "plenty of water" while the name of the other means the opposite, so our egalitarian, even-handed approach has not been unanimously accepted. The sector is problematic also because the several agencies involved have needed time to develop a coordinated approach but this has given room for local authorities to manipulate these decisions.”

Health.¹³ In many of the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT areas, health services represented an actual (or potential) CONNECTOR. In war situations, many people seem to believe that all sides should have access to health care. However, some aspects of health programming can exacerbate intergroup DIVISIONS.

“In addition to the perception of bias in our food distribution, there are aspects of our health interventions that also create an impression of preferential targeting to one

¹³ Text and ideas: Luc Zandvliet

community. To respond to the health needs of the displaced, several NGOs established clinics in the areas where IDPs had congregated. In other areas of the city, the existing health system continued to function and the NGOs did not provide support.

“However, clients in the state-run clinics were required to pay a fee for medical services while, at the NGO clinics, both the services and the medicines were provided free of charge. In the hospital this contrast is particularly sharp as we provide free medicines to the inpatients, who are overwhelmingly of the displaced group, while the outpatients (who live in the town and are of the other group) pay for medicines and consultations.

“The recognition that our assistance had become an item of competition between the two groups is not, in the eyes of most of our staff, an argument for abandoning the principal that aid should go to those most in need. However, we need to search for operational strategies to provide health services to those who need them in ways that lessen the sense of exclusion among others.”

“We want to re-create a public health surveillance system in the region. This system will gather public health and epidemiological information for all the area clinics and provide training to all of them. This would be a step towards reintegrating the clinics that are operated principally for the IDP camps with those operating in the other areas.”

Dealing with War Trauma: a DO NO HARM Perspective

by Rupen Das

With increasing and intentional targeting of civilian populations in conflicts, there has been a growing awareness of the need to deal with trauma. However, with this growing awareness there has also been a lot of controversy as to how best to address this issue. On one end of the spectrum are those who say that in the history of warfare citizens have always been targets and that people have, thus, learned to cope with trauma. On the other end are mental health professionals who assert that, although trauma has always existed as a result of war, with the greater understanding we now have about mental health and the tools to address dysfunctional behavior, it is a moral obligation to help deal with trauma so people can live more fulfilled lives.

Both ends of the spectrum hold truth. Many communities have traditional methods of coping with trauma. But, with the breakdown of traditional societies and their social support structures, much knowledge of traditional medicine and coping strategies is also getting lost.

How communities and individuals deal with trauma from conflict can either be helpful in bringing healing between various groups in conflict or can deepen the DIVIDERS that separate them.

In all trauma recovery programmes there are two issues to be addressed. First is the issue of local capacity to deal with trauma. How is trauma understood and experienced in a particular community and what then are the culturally appropriate ways to programme for trauma recovery? Second, does this local capacity move the conflicting communities toward peace? Does the trauma recovery approach bring healing between groups or does it deepen the DIVIDERS between groups in conflict?

Key to healing of trauma is recalling the traumatic event. In the recalling and retelling a number of things happen. The cathartic process breaks the hold of the event and its associated emotions on the individual. If this process is carried out in the context of significant relationships, the experience and emotions can be affirmed as valid and, thus, be dealt with. This is an important step in the healing process.

The danger in the process is that, in recalling the traumatic event, the focus can be on those who caused the trauma and the need to seek retribution through revenge. Retelling may institutionalize a commitment "to never forget".

It is important to separate the event from those who caused it--though admittedly this is not easy. While there has been much controversy surrounding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the basic thinking has been that trauma needs to be brought into the light and the truth told. There is healing in just that. Forgiveness then is the responsibility of the individual; justice is the responsibility of the legal system.

OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN "WHAT" DECISIONS

In the next **SECTION** on HOW to provide aid, many ideas are put forth about ways to mitigate the negative impacts of the WHAT decisions.

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS also learned a few lessons directly relevant to the choice of inputs. They found CONNECTORS could be reinforced through:

- Aid to support community-owned assets rather than individually-owned assets. Aid goods or services that are focused on rebuilding or re-supplying things that have in the past been shared by groups can re-establish linkages among them. For example, support for irrigation systems can reassert interdependence and make everyone better off whereas reconstruction of individual family housing can put people into competition with each other.
- Aid that supports community-service institutions. The institutions of civil society that are most likely to cross DIVISIONS among groups are schools and clinics. In the worsening economic situations of warfare, these are the institutions that suffer the most in terms of official public support (as monies are diverted to fighting). Aid to support these, either in rebuilding in post-war or simply in maintaining their operations during war, can provide space and opportunity for people to remain connected across lines.

NOTE: In one PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT area, a focus on working with the existing schools completely excluded communities where schools had been destroyed or where because of previous patterns of discrimination between groups, they had never been built. This is a reminder that DNH analysis requires really learning whether some things--such as schools in this instance--are a CONNECTOR or a DIVIDER.

- Aid to broaden ownership. Even when the inputs determine a single group as primary beneficiaries, sometimes providing minor additional inputs will broaden the programme participation.

“Although there are practical reasons for keeping the rice mill, grain and seed bank in a single location, we should consider some mechanism for spreading the ownership and benefits derived from our inputs. A wider spreading of the benefits could be obtained

by shifting the village improvement projects, financed with the shop profits, to other villages which also use the shop services. Likewise, the structure of the management committee could be altered so as to include representation from other villages. Both of these changes could increase the inter-village linkages supported by our programme and reduce inter-village jealousies generated by our current way of operating.”

SECTION VI: DECISIONS ABOUT HOW TO PROVIDE AID¹⁴

The sections above report the lessons learned through the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS about decisions regarding WHO should receive aid, WHO to hire as staff, WHO to work with as local partners and WHAT to provide as aid.

They also present many programming ideas and options developed by the Pilot Projects for lessening intergroup DIVIDERS and supporting intergroup CONNECTORS.

At the heart of the options is the issue of HOW aid is provided. Specifically related to all the impacts discussed above are issues of: HOW to decide the WHO and WHAT of aid; HOW to distribute goods and services; HOW to time and sequence aid; HOW interagency coordination affects programme impacts; and so on.

It is in the details of HOW aid is provided that aid programmes have their most significant impacts. In the Options and Opportunities discussions of each of the sections above, examples of better ways to provide aid--the HOW--are offered. This sections gathers these lessons, states them as "principles" of operation, and provides more illustrations from experience.

The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found principles of operation that were consistent across all project sites. These are:

- Inclusivity. Under most circumstances, representatives of all sub-groups in conflict should be included in: a) programming decisions; b) among recipients; c) on staff; and d) among partners.

"The reduction in resources forced a second survey for setting priorities among needs in each village. Here the distribution committees which exist at the distribution center level (including about eight villages) came into their own. These committees are chosen by village members and consist of people from each affected group: handicapped, widows, elderly, etc. as well as representatives from the local official Development Department. The traditional authorities were also influential in the process particularly when it came to public announcements of the re-prioritizing: the 'why' and the 'how

¹⁴ Text and ideas: Ernest Cummings, Stephen Jackson, Wolfgang Jamann, Abikok Riak

much' of the aid were openly discussed so there should be no jealousy or misunderstanding. The experience of the distribution committees appears to have been positive, limiting disruption and reestablishing the principle of community coalition."

"We held a lot of meetings with local officials where we invited representatives of the beneficiaries to show that it was in the best interest of everyone that these people should be served. It became clear that, even if only for security reasons, it was wise to ensure an integrated approach to giving out aid."

However, there are two caveats for this principle.

First, communities themselves can be so deeply embroiled in the conflict that their involvement is simply another aspect of manipulation of aid for power vis a vis other groups. In such cases, people in conflict areas often welcome the external, neutral decision making power of an international agency.

"Community? What community? To "consult with the community" is a worthy reflex for relief as well as development, but in our region, what does it mean to consult "the" community? After this war, is it meaningful to assume there is such a thing as "the" community? And, if we presume one when it doesn't exist, we risk doing harm because we may be feeding into coercive power structures maintained through conflict."

"So, what are our options? If we consult with the chiefs, we favor the group in power. If we consult with chiefs from both sides, we risk alienating both. (In some societies, you might find respected neutral authorities, such as Imams in Tajikistan. Here, all religious, governmental and civilian authorities, as well as traditional powers, are suspect.)"

"Perhaps we might cautiously construct mixed management structures for relief projects which mix representatives from all communities together. This will work only if tempers have cooled sufficiently, I suspect; otherwise this kind of engineering itself risks doing harm."

Second, it takes time to locate the types of representatives who make consultation work, and a mistaken choice can worsen intergroup DIVISIONS. Ordinarily, early programming decisions cannot wait for the identification (or development) of systems of trusted representation. (Because of this, the next two principles are more useful in the start-up days of an aid programme.)

Factors that affect whether inclusive representative involvement will work, or not, are:

- Representatives are trusted and respected (either because of their traditional roles or because the system for their selection is seen as fair) by both their own community and others; AND
 - The representatives, themselves, see the value of inclusivity and take on a "bridging" role intentionally aimed at reducing intergroup DIVISIONS.
- Transparency. When decisions about how aid is to be distributed are open and public, and when the actual distribution is also open for all to see, this can reduce intergroup competition and TENSIONS. Lack of transparency creates fertile ground for rumors about inequitable aid, and enables manipulators to generate animosity around this. Transparency needs to include explicit messages about the purpose of aid and criteria for beneficiaries; without this, open distribution can simply feed into and worsen intergroup relationships.

"We know that how we allocate the next round of assistance is going to raise alarms. So many villages need--and want--this support. But, the local NGOs have mapped out a plan that they think will keep intergroup conflict down. They are going to advertise the criteria for decision-making well in advance and invite feed-back on these criteria right up front. Then, when the decisions are made about who will receive what, they are going to publish the list, again referring to the criteria and showing how each recipient village meets them."

"Transparency can undermine corruption by allowing people to know what they are entitled to and thereby enhancing their ability to demand accountability from their own elites. Corruption/abuse of aid resources has been implicated in facilitating looting and intergroup theft of aid. It can certainly worsen intergroup violence or heighten the atmosphere of lawlessness in an area. Aggressive transparency (that is, bringing community leaders into targeting decisions) can legitimize otherwise problematic aid agency decisions."

"We found that by carrying out our planning in the market place or village square, we made it possible for everybody to take part, or at least hear what was going on. Then, when we went back to distribute the goods, we did this also in front of everyone. This really seemed to help keep the rumor level, and the competition, down. This result is partly because we distributed modest amounts of food. If we had been giving away something really valuable, this could clearly have increased intergroup anger."

- Demonstrating/strengthening community. Reinforcing the strength of civilian structures reduces the vacuum where military authority can assume power. It helps keep decisions about civilian welfare free from military "strategic" considerations.

"The reconstitution of the leadership structures in the eyes of several members of the aid community has been a key factor in improving the security situation for the IDPs in the region. The leaders in the IDP community, because of their status and, in many cases, their personal relationship with local government authorities that pre-date the war, have been able to lobby for better protection against the local militias."

"The violence in the feeding centers has become a real concern. Not only is it terrible to see our guards using clubs to control the pushing and shoving of the crowds, this chaos also opens the way for misappropriation of food that ends up supporting the army."

"One of our sister agencies recently pioneered a new way to control this violence. When people are first admitted to one of their feeding centers, staff assign them to a small group. Each group has a staff mentor who takes personal responsibility for ensuring they are well served. The result is that everyone feels a part of a small "community" with a person who cares about being sure they get food. These groups continue intact over the course of the feeding programme."

Finally, specific learning about HOW to distribute goods showed the importance of the principle of:

- Quick and small. When aid is provided to intended recipients speedily and in amounts that do not represent much in terms of wealth or power, this lessens opportunities for diversion or manipulation. It also lessens the probability for intergroup jealousy.

“In our region, the army ‘diverts’ the food after we deliver it to the beneficiaries. Our strategies to avoid this include: a) giving smaller rations every week rather once a month to make secondary distributions more cumbersome; b) not providing containers for the food but having beneficiaries bring their own to transport their rations home; c) providing wet rations (where appropriate) that are consumed in our centers; and d) decentralizing distributions to limit the distance that the recipients have to carry the food home. (Some mothers in our programme literally have the water boiling over the fire while their children run home from the distribution center and drop the grain into the boiling pot.)”

“We tried to use non-monetary incentives wherever possible in supporting the hospital. The minor rehabilitation of the wards, along with new uniforms for hospital staff succeeded in improving staff morale and the quality of care without our providing large-scale resources. This approach stands in contrast to our more traditional operations where we directly hire and pay clinic staff.”

“We have decided to avoid any large stockpiles of aid materials. We will distribute inputs to villages directly from the trucks as they arrive in the area.”

TO AVOID THEFT

Thieves need four things to be able to steal. They need a) knowledge (what and where the aid goods will be); b) opportunity; c) incentive (they have to be worth the effort); and d) impunity (they need to be able to get away with them without being held accountable). Interrupting any one of these needs can reduce theft.

For example, secrecy about aid deliveries, or systems for delivering aid episodically and never in the same place undercut knowledge and opportunity. Providing food without containers or delivering very small amounts in dispersed locations makes it difficult to steal enough food to make the theft worthwhile. Lowering the market value of goods (e.g. cutting blankets in half eliminates their market value though they are still usable by a family who can sew the blanket back together or use its two halves) reduces incentive. Finally, locating control over goods in respected community structures can increase their ability to hold thieves accountable.

From: Anderson, Mary B., DO NO HARM: How Aid Supports Peace or War, op. cit.

ADDITIONAL EFFECTS/ISSUES OF HOW TO PROVIDE AID

*A Note about Security.*¹⁵ Risk is inherent in the working conditions of aid agencies in conflict situations. How an aid agency approaches the security of its staff can either reinforce war-like attitudes and behaviors or can demonstrate alternative ways of thinking and living that are more compatible with peace. How an agency's staff approach their daily interactions with security forces, other authorities, local people and each other can either add to prevailing insecurity or reduce it.

The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found:

- The safety of staff depends, to a large extent, on the attributes of that staff. An ability to defuse potentially difficult situations, to be calm and clear-headed in crises, to treat others with politeness and respect, to communicate professionalism and impartiality and to handle one's own stress--these are the characteristics that seemed to reinforce staff security and, also, helped reduce TENSIONS in general.¹⁶

¹⁵ Text and ideas: Marge Tsitouris

¹⁶ Others, notably the Overseas Development Institute in London and InterAction in Washington, D.C. have been doing excellent work on devising security approaches for NGOs that do not only rely on guards. They find that security

The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS also found many ways that their programming could affect their own, and general, security. These include:

- When aid agencies hire armed guards, they appear to accept the legitimacy of arms to determine safety rather than reinforcing the rule of law or other civilian structures.
- When aid agencies seek (or are "given") military protection, the question must be asked, "which military?" Choosing or accepting military protection, connects and identifies the agency with that force. (This may provoke attacks from opposing militaries, making aid a target instead of a providing a nonviolent space.)
- When aid workers accept the safety from traveling on convoys with international protection, such a temporary show of force may provoke resentment that actually increases subsequent danger. Military might often provokes response.
- Employing a homogeneous staff in an ethnic conflict can raise security issues for an agency; the identification with one subgroup can create TENSION and ill will among other groups.
- When agencies delegate security concerns to non-programme, non-humanitarian staff (many of whom are ex-military), this reinforces the tendency to think of security only in terms of its effect on the agency staff, themselves, without consideration of the effects on the conflict or local situation.
- When aid agencies protect international staff exclusively, this can signal fighters that it is acceptable to attack local staff and local people as long as expatriates are not harmed.
- Some forms of security arrangements (staff compounds, use of armored vehicles, maintenance of constant radio contact, nightly curfews) isolate aid workers from local communities, undermining the staff's ability to understand the context and relate to the people. It also reduces acceptance by people and, thus, safety.

“The office and the house of the agency were a walkable distance from each other. Nevertheless, staff always took a Landcruiser to move between the two. Interaction with the local population was limited to professional relation with domestic and office staff. After a few weeks, the house and cars were increasingly subject to stoning. The team discussed the "obvious" options of increasing the number of guards, complaining to the police, etc. Instead, the team decided to walk from house to office and greet

rests on three principles: acceptance by the community, prevention, and in the most difficult circumstances, deterrence.

people they encountered on the street. Within days, the stoning stopped.”

- In situations where aid agencies are required by local authorities to accept "protection," it is sometimes possible to work with the assigned soldiers to reduce the negative image this presents.

“The regional government required that we use a guard whom they provided. They said that they did not want any expatriate kidnapping to happen in this area and, if we wanted to work here, we had to accept this protection. The first guard they assigned always walked in front of me and brandished his gun. This made me feel a lot less secure! So, I requested a new guard and was lucky that this was a man I could work with. He kept his gun mostly out of sight and simply walked, and worked, alongside me. I also was fortunate that this assignment was a man from the group that is considered neutral. This meant that I was not identified with either of the two sides actively engaged in conflict.”

- Aid agencies can worsen insecurity for others. Withdrawal of expatriate staff can signal an expectation that violence will erupt and, some local staff have noted, increase the likelihood that violence actually follows an evacuation. Agencies' focus on preventing violence against their programmes can appear to signal that violence in other areas is acceptable. Insensitive programming can also lead to violence.

“Some staff urged the aid community not to limit our protests to the theft of humanitarian supplies. They felt this would send a message to the government and army that looting of civilian property was acceptable so long as aid agency materials were not affected.”

“Hoping to improve the inter-ethnic relations in the area, the agency proposed intergroup communal gardening projects. In one village where relations had been particularly tense, people refused to work together. Thinking they could encourage the project, the aid staff opened a discussion on the reasons for their refusal. The discussion descended into a heated argument about the war, its causes and atrocities and quickly got out of control. The agency staff left in a hurry feeling they had worsened intergroup relations and harmed their own ability to work with both groups.”

“Having restocked the warehouses, we found a return to the cyclical looting of aid that has characterized this war. We think that high government officials sanctioned the looting this time as a means of compensating fighters who are otherwise going unpaid. Several local people referred to this round of looting as "Operation Pay-Yourself.””

“A potential flashpoint around the distributions has been the frequent presence of local military who are deployed by the administration to "protect" the distributors. These guards themselves often ask for assistance on the basis that they, too, have been affected by the crisis and are "vulnerable." Our local partners believe that some of these soldiers are in a very bad way; unpaid for more than a year, torn from family support structures and perhaps traumatized by the violence they have seen or perpetrated. Others, however, are clearly on the make. We discussed a number of options for this problem including a rigorous and public observation of eligibility criteria, or a public acknowledgment of the military's "self-sacrifice" in guarding distributions while "refusing" to take any benefit from them!”

***A Note about IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGES:** The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found that every aid decision they made carried implicit, as well as explicit, messages, and many of these related directly to conflict.*

The most obvious, always, was the implicit message of partisanship conveyed by aid that favors one subgroup over others (through beneficiary selection, staff hiring, partnering, community involvement, etc.). Of equal importance were the ways that staff reflected--and reinforced--mistrust, fear, concern with power in their interactions with local people and authorities. The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT reports often referred to staff discussions about how to change these messages and, instead, to reinforce--and demonstrate--trust, lawfulness and collaboration. One example suffices to illustrate:

“The widespread sense is that the corrupt diversion of our aid resources is a result of our poor targeting. This corruption undermines the public legitimacy of aid and furthers the sense that aid is just another resource for the ambitious and powerful to compete over.”

*A Note about Interagency Coordination:*¹⁷ Another issue always discussed by agencies working in conflict is the need for interagency coordination. The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found:

- There is always some degree of competition among aid agencies for resources from donors but also, on the ground, for qualified staff, for suitable office space and housing, for access to authorities, for beneficiaries, for partners and for the variety of "favors" needed to work efficiently (such as permits to travel, import and vehicle licenses, telephone lines, etc.)
- These on-site elements of competition open the way for local authorities to play agencies off against each other. Relationships that one agency develops with local authorities can affect other agencies' work. For example, when one agency applied what they called a "pragmatic approach" suitable to the local culture in which they offered per diems to government authorities to accompany them on field visits, other agencies who did not think this was appropriate had difficulty getting visas and travel.
- On the other hand, coordination by international NGOs can be seen by local authorities and local people as a coercive attempt to exert external power.

“Throughout this period, the coordinating agency for the international NGOs has been representing our positions to the authorities. Thirty-five of us issued a joint statement refusing the authorities' latest demand. This was not very effective.

“Since then, many of us have pursued unilateral negotiations with the authority and have had a great deal of success dealing with them one-on-one where we are able to discuss issues gradually and rely on personal interactions and discretion. We are beginning to think that our show of solidarity was counterproductive in achieving our goals and in loosening up the authorities to be more responsive and responsible to the people.”

¹⁷ Luc Zandvliet deserves credit for much of the text of this section.

- Salaries paid by international agencies are a major source of TENSION within societies. When different agencies pay different rates, this increases the possibility that groups in the society will see this as favoritism.
- When international NGOs address issues of coordination through inter-agency meetings to which only expatriates are invited, suspicions among local people are roused and messages of differential importance are conveyed.
- In one PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT, field staff reported that when they tried to coordinate programmes with other agencies, the local authorities took advantage of the time to manipulate the aid.

"Many of the international agencies here partner with local NGOs that are staffed by well-educated and talented individuals. In areas such as this one with significant elite TENSIONS, NGOs could help reduce these TENSIONS because the NGO programmes cross areas. However, competition among the international NGOs has meant that the potential for linking elites across different areas has not been realized. As part of their coordination, the international NGOs divided the country up by region with each international agency taking responsibility for specified districts. Although this arrangement was intended to apply only to seeds and tools distribution, it caused competition for territory among international agencies and their local partners.

"Some observe that the competition among NGOs for territory almost mimicked the fighting of the warring factions! Throughout the war, these factions competed for territory without regard for the interests of local residents. The failure of NGOs to establish collaborative relations across regions means that an opportunity has been missed to create a model that differs from the previous relations of authorities with communities. Instead of building linkages among elites of different ethnic groups, the international division of territory feeds into existing DIVISIONS. This is further worsened for two major international agencies where many people perceive the territorial division to reflect the composition of the agencies' senior staff."

Some LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found that they were able to establish improved coordination among agencies within their operational areas by meeting together to do DO NO HARM analysis. When expatriate and local staff of a number of agencies met for this purpose, they were able to discuss the implications of their different ways of operating and, in some cases, agree on common

modes that grew out of their shared concern to reduce intergroup DIVISIONS and support CONNECTORS.

SECTION VII: DECISIONS ABOUT WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES¹⁸

A constant challenge to the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS (and to all aid in conflict settings) is how to work with the local authorities who control the areas where aid is provided.

Often the authorities--whether civilian or military--are part of the conflict. Their interactions with aid are shaped by their desire for power and military/strategic advantage. They exert their control through suppression and violence (or the threat of violence). They exploit the labor and wealth of communities for their personal power. Their claim to authority over the communities under their control is questionable.

EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT AID CAN REINFORCE THE ILLEGITIMATE POWER OF AUTHORITIES.

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Local authorities can misuse aid by:

- Stealing, taxing or diverting aid goods for use in their pursuit of war or power;
- Determining where and when aid's resources can be delivered, thereby affecting population movements and concentrations;
- Using interactions with international aid personnel to convey their "message" to the world thus gaining sympathy, resources and broader legitimacy; and
- Interacting with aid workers to create the appearance of serving the interests of local people without actually doing so.

OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS found options for working with and under local authorities that avoid reinforcing their illegitimate exercise of power and, instead, reinforce both their ability to assume responsibility for civilian welfare and the likelihood that they will do so.

¹⁸ Text and ideas: Joop Gilling, Kenny Gluck, Andrew Hurst, Abikök Riak, Stephen Jackson, Luc Zandvliet

Work in this area involved a series of steps:

1. First, the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS acknowledged that because local authorities control the space where aid work occurs, aid agencies cannot avoid them.

2. Second, they recognized that governance is not something to avoid. In fact, supporting good governance is one way to reinforce intergroup CONNECTIONS and reduce intergroup TENSIONS. The challenge is to reinforce legitimate authority rather than illegitimate authority.

3. Third, and most importantly, they realized that aid agencies cannot define "legitimate" governance for others. Rather, agencies need to know how people who live under the authority think about legitimacy.

4. Fourth, several of the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS consciously sought the ideas of people in their areas about what constitutes "legitimate" and "illegitimate" authority and found remarkable agreement among all their settings. People agreed that legitimate governments:

- Do not coerce their own people through the use or threat of violence;
- Provide services (those most frequently mentioned were schools, roads and health care);
- Allow some form of interaction between themselves and the public so that people feel as if their ideas and needs can be heard in some way.

5. Fifth, with this in mind, the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS asked the question: Are there ways that we can provide aid that will reinforce, support and expand the engagement of local authorities in legitimate governance and avoid feeding into their illegitimate activities?

"Villagers identify social service provision as a key aspect of proper government and this is an activity that we are partially fulfilling through our aid. The challenge for us is to play a positive role in mediating the power of the local authority and to operate as a point of contact between the people (our beneficiaries) and this administration."

“To avoid the possibility that the government is reducing its own funding for health care because we are providing these services, we lobbied aggressively for the Ministry of Health to commit additional resources to the hospital to complement our support. We made such increased government involvement a condition for our work. Our lobbying resulted in the appointment of a full-time medical doctor . Until recently, the hospital was staffed with new graduates who were fulfilling a three-month obligatory posting.”

“Although our program has increased the resources available to the military through this tax, this process is not without a silver lining. Before our programme, the confiscation of food in the villages was often arbitrary and accompanied by threats and violence. The routinization of the grain tax collection has meant the authorities have moved to a system of regular tax collection This change can be seen as part of the general attempt to transform the local authorities from a rebel military movement to a responsible local government capable, among other things, of establishing discipline over its soldiers and protecting the rights of the civilian population.

The LCPP PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS identified four considerations important for working with local authorities.

- Understand that no authority is monolithic. Even the most repressive includes individuals with different opinions and different motivations. NGOs can find those people within the system who share some of their objectives with regard to support of civilians. Working with them can both maintain an agency's humanitarian principles and reinforce the ability of these progressive authorities to push their views vis a vis their more oppressive counterparts.

“Many people go into the military because it is one of the only jobs that pays regularly. This can even reflect an ambition that is positive. For example, in our area one young soldier at a checkpoint always wanted to practice his English and was constantly asking us for books. We gave him some material about our agency's missions and programmes, and this not only made him happy, it also gave us a chance to clarify the roles of humanitarian agencies in the region.”

“Some staff noted that working with the authorities does not have to involve compromising of accountability and participation. There are instances when individual officials have made decisions that go against the edicts of the hard liners. In one city, the local representative was able to overcome the rule preventing women from working for the NGOs by having a Ministry of Health official present when the staff received their salaries. The wages were handed to the Ministry official, who then passed them on to the NGO's female staff.”

- Identify the barriers that make the authorities and NGOs distrust each other.

“The authority remains suspicious of us because we are "foreign." Also, our staff receive generous salaries in comparison to their wages and many of them have not even been paid in six months. We draw from the ranks of the well-educated people for our staff, and to the current authority, they symbolize the past regime which they condemn.”

“The local authorities resent the fact that the NGOs have access to international aid which is not directly available to them. In some ways, our international support of the local NGOs is driving a funding wedge between them and this new government which is trying to establish itself.”

- Identify areas of common interest and work with the authorities in these areas.

“The NGOs have in general been wary of the authorities. Staff are suspicious of government functionaries and see their interactions with them as necessary but fruitless. But these attitudes have worked to the disadvantage of the NGOs. One worker told the story of a local authority figure who put significant resources into fixing up a road. The NGOs assumed he was doing this for military purposes and refused to support his effort. But now they find that the road serves the people in the region. It also helps the NGOs, themselves, in that it cuts their travel time between the two cities in half.”

“We have several examples where we have been able to leverage resources from the authorities for services for the people. One instance involved building a bridge. When the NGOs approached the authority for a contribution, he first refused, maintaining that he had no resources for this. But the NGO pointed out that he had diesel, so he agreed to supply this to run the construction machinery. The NGO also pointed out that the authority collects money at one of the checkpoints on the way to this area. So, again,

the local representative agreed to donate one week's income from the checkpoint. Finally, when the NGO pointed out that there were idle soldiers under his authority, he also agreed to provide labor to the project. The bridge got built.”

- Promote opportunities for local authorities to interact with civilian groups in ways that strengthen civilian structures and that encourage authorities to be more responsive to the public.

“We decided to include representatives of the local command in our DO NO HARM workshop. We wanted them to know where our aid programmes are coming from. Using a step-by-step explanation of the lessons of LCPP, we emphasized issues such as responsible use of aid resources, budgeting and accountability to the people. We were really amazed--and pleased--that the authorities who attended got into the discussions and saw the value of the approach. They said we should include all their higher-ups next time so they could also understand this way of doing things.”

“We developed our list of villages that should receive aid but had to submit it to the we could begin the deliveries. One of the officers changed the list and took one of our seventeen villages off of it. We decided to call a meeting of the village people and beneficiaries from all the other villages. We invited the official to come and explain his decision. He changed the list back and all the original villages ended up receiving the help they needed.”

“We arrived at a stalemate in identifying proper beneficiaries for the housing construction. One of the local authorities kept putting his friends from the city, who already had houses there, on our lists. Finally, we went on the radio and invited all identified persons (including both our list and that of the local authority) to be present on the site where we were to build on a certain day. We invited the authority (who had to come) and, when he saw how many more people there were than houses, he backed down and accepted our list of "the most vulnerable" since that was (as we all knew) "official policy.””

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS also highlighted several cautions that need to be taken into account when working with local authorities.

First, there are multiple layers of authority, including administrative, military and traditional. NGO relationships with each one not only affects its power but also its relationships to the others.

Second, if people have established functional alternatives to the collapse of authority (as they often do) such as systems for home schooling, self-supporting clinics or, even, homeguards, agencies' working with authorities could disrupt and undermine these structures.

Third, aid agencies' ability to work well with local authorities is dependent in part on how well positioned this authority is in relation to the conflict. When things are going well for the authorities, they are more forthcoming with the NGOs; when they are pressed militarily, they often become more rigid and oppressive. This means that NGOs should constantly update their understandings of the motivations and possible points of cooperation with authorities.

One Field Report summarized its strategy for working under a difficult authority as follows:

“Our staff identified three ways to work creatively with the authorities:

- a. We can create space for dialogue between authorities and communities;
- b. We can affect the capacity of the authorities to take on proper governmental roles, provision. (So many of the functionaries in this new "government" were, or still are, military personnel. They know next to nothing about how to govern!);
- c. We can affect the willingness of the authority to address social civilian needs.

These points grew from our analysis using LCPP and each point represents an option aimed at reducing the four major TENSIONS we earlier identified as likely to erupt in further conflict. These were: a) political party DIVISIONS based on past alliances; b) tribal DIVISIONS that have existed for many years but that overlap, in some instances, with the political alliances; c) TENSIONS between the authorities and the "others" (who were pushed aside when this side won; and d: DIVISIONS between returnees and stayees (which also sometimes overlap with past political identities).”

PART TWO:

SECTION VIII: LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT HOW TO USE AND DISSEMINATE THE APPROACHES OF DO NO HARM

SECTION IX: IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF DO NO HARM

SECTION X: CONCLUSION

SECTION VIII: LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT HOW TO USE AND DISSEMINATE THE APPROACHES OF DO NO HARM

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS experimented with many approaches to introducing and using DO NO HARM in their field settings. From their experiences, they arrived at some common lessons about what works and where problems arise.

Training:

1. Start with DO NO HARM training; repeat over time (but don't let repeated training substitute for doing!).

- Sessions can be as brief as two hours or as long as one week.
- Always cite where the ideas come from--namely, other people's field experience in lots of settings. This is important because people need to know that the ideas are NOT theoretical but practical.
- Introduce the Analytical Framework
- Get people to apply the analysis to their own context and their ongoing programmes.

“Although most of the people in our training session had been through DO NO HARM workshops before, they seemed suddenly to get excited and involved in it this time. They said that this was because we applied the Framework to the new set of partner criteria they had just been working on. They found it really helpful to use the Framework on something they knew well and were about to start using. They also were surprised that they found some problems with what they had done. They made several important improvements in the criteria on the basis of their DO NO HARM analysis.”

Who Should Be Involved:

Everybody!

- senior management provide impetus and legitimacy to the process;
- field staff who interact directly with partners, local authorities and aid recipients are the "front line" workers who can use the ideas daily;
- drivers, clerical staff and other support positions who learn about DO NO HARM can often provide the most accurate information about local circumstances for the analysis and, in some cases, have been instrumental in interpreting the ideas to local authorities and local communities.

“Staff from all sections of the agency participate in LCPP trainings—drivers, accountants, staff assistants, as well as program managers—so everyone understands how and why the agency makes decisions about both internal matters (staff hiring, contracts, et.) and projects in the field. Local authorities and partner agencies are invited for the same reason, as are representatives of sister agencies. Their participation strengthens the analysis”

Partner organizations

- spread use of the ideas
- increase the accuracy of the analysis
- reinforce transparency about aid's purposes and accountability.

Local authorities

- encourage them to assume responsibility for civilian welfare
- reinforce transparency

Communities

- provide grounded information about programme impacts. In some cases, local people have found the insights into CONNECTORS extremely useful in understanding their own peace-promoting possibilities.

“The staff wondered why one region had been so much better at keeping the agency's impacts on conflict in view than the other agency where DNH had been introduced. Several participants in the discussion noted that, in the area that had trouble, the agency had appointed field office managers with commodity logistics backgrounds. These individuals gave priority to logistics because of the high monetary value of the assets they managed and this limited the degree to which they addressed programme quality issues, raised by DNH analysis. In the area where use of DNH was more effective, the area managers worked closely with a programme coordinator who actively and consistently raised concerns about programme impacts on conflict.”

“LCPP has provided the opportunity to bring staff (including local staff from different ethnic groups as well as expatriate) together to increase the sharing of ideas and solidarity. Local staff claim that now they are able to explain why they refuse to hand over programme resources or other "favors" asked for by local authorities or community members. They are also able to explain agency policy and to increase community understanding about why we do what we do. They can now explain that they are not just "exercising power" and personally choosing what to agree to and what to withhold, but that when they refuse to let authorities use aid resources, they are carrying out an agency policy that has a clear rationale.”

“It was a great advantage to have people from two regional offices at this training. They brought different perspectives and had different experiences of the conflict in their areas, but they also considered each other colleagues so they could give and take ideas or criticisms without getting defensive.”

Doing the Analysis:

1. Start with Context Analysis. Liaisons found that people often want to begin by looking at their aid programmes. However, when the DO NO HARM analysis starts with understanding the context--in particular the DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS between the groups where conflict is active or likely--this can bring out ideas that were not considered in the original aid plans. This is how new insights into programming impacts emerge.

Note: Make no assumptions. Context analysis is just that--a genuine look at the realities that exist in THIS setting at THIS time.

2. Identify WHO is in Conflict. As was noted in the introduction to the Framework (Section I), it is extremely important to focus on the schisms between groups which are dangerous and destructive. Not all differences within societies are dangerous.

Note: Often there are more than two groups involved in conflict. For example, insecurities and violence can come from wandering gangs or multiple local militias under different commanders.

3. Analyze DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS. Liaisons found that the first impulse is to define things that divide and connect people superficially. For example, groups will say that NGOs are CONNECTORS. However, single group NGOs can be biased toward one side of a conflict or, as we have seen, the work of NGOs can increase intergroup TENSIONS. The analysis should push people to define what it is about our NGO that connects people (or divides them)?

Note: DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS need to be disaggregated. For example, in one society, people of the older generation remained connected across DIVISIONS because they had lived under a regime where they were educated and worked together; younger people who had no memory of those times were much more deeply divided.

4. Analyze the aid programme. It is in the details of aid programming (as all the preceding Sections have shown!) that the impacts of aid on conflict are found.

5. Identify impacts and options. Liaisons found that people often know when there are problems with programme impacts. However, without the analysis, they do not know how or why these impacts occur. When they understand how and why programmes have negative impacts, they can identify options. (See Section Nine for ideas on how to identify programming impacts.)

When? How Often?

DO NO HARM analysis is useful both for designing new programmes and for monitoring ongoing ones.

Liaisons found it useful to re-do Context and DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS analysis regularly in order to stay alert to changes that affect programming impacts. At a minimum, they encourage people to re-do analysis:

- When there are changes in the aid programme
- When there are changes in the conflict.

Liaisons found repetition useful. Since the analysis is in the details, the more times that people re-consider, the more details they recognize.

“Repetition is good. Since this is really a new way of thinking about how we do out work, it takes time to incorporate the ideas of DO NO HARM.”

“We have incorporated LCPP analysis into our quarterly progress reports to donors and modified our reporting format to reflect this.”

Note: One project report noted that, after one and a half years of using DO NO HARM, field staff of the partner agencies used it as a "reflex." It was an expected, familiar part of the discourse when they talked about programmes.

Stumbling Blocks:

Liaisons found some consistent stumbling blocks to using DO NO HARM in the field:

1. Side-lining. Some people tended to categorize DO NO HARM as "peace-making" and to assume it is relevant only for peace programmes. It takes some effort to demonstrate to them that DNH approaches grow out of, and are relevant to, all programming activities of both humanitarian and development assistance.

2. Pressure of time. In "hot humanitarian crises," management and field staff often claim to have no time for analysis. Liaisons were able to demonstrate how the analysis can be helpful even in the early, difficult days of conflict crises.

3. Confusion of TENSIONS existing between the aid agency and people with TENSIONS that represent intergroup DIVISIONS. In many project sites, local staff were concerned about the complaints--or even threats--they received when people are disgruntled with some aspect of the aid programme.

Often, however, such complaints reflect dissatisfaction with the way aid is given rather than its relation to intergroup DIVISIONS. People may complain that the food they receive is difficult to cook or unfamiliar; they may complain that they have to wait too long for deliveries, etc. For DNH analysis, it is important to distinguish between the problems that arise from bad programming unrelated to conflict and the impacts that aid is having on intergroup conflict.

4. Reluctance to re-visit issues of conflict. Finally, most projects encountered some resistance to acknowledging either that aid might be worsening conflict or that conflicts even existed in the local society. We noted above that, in post-conflict societies, people often want to leave the recognition of differences behind. They fear that talking about them will only make them worse. In such situations, Liaisons found that they should not "tell" people about their society's problems. Rather, by asking careful questions about local circumstances, eventually, if DIVIDERS did exist, local people identified them. When field staff, partners and local communities do their own analysis, they become directly engaged in dealing with problems they identify.

“Overall, not just for this one project but for all the partner consortium work, we have agreed that we should start to integrate DNH more formally into field reports so that issues that arise can be monitored directly. We agreed to start including paragraphs on DNH in bi-monthly reports from animators in each area. As a basis for the monitoring, we also agreed that it is now time for the consortium headquarters staff to take the provincial level analysis of TENSIONS and CONNECTORS they have done and deepen it to treat all the different sites where the local partners work. This will require a good deal of work by animators, to be accomplished with village-level meetings. Once it is done, however, it will provide the best possible basis for work in these areas which are so conflicted at the present.”

SECTION IX: IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF DO NO HARM

The PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS struggled with the challenges of measuring impacts. Early in the three years of Pilot Projects, it was clear that field staff found DNH useful and usable. The question remained, however, as to whether using it to redesign programmes was making any difference. To answer this, each Pilot Project experimented with ways of assessing impacts. They asked two basic questions:

- Are we making intergroup DIVIDERS worse or feeding into the war effort?
- Are we supporting and strengthening CONNECTORS and LCPS?

They found the answers to these questions in people's

- Attitudes (toward the "other" and toward the fairness of the agency's aid); and
- Actions and behaviors (toward the "other," and toward aid).

The Framework categories suggest indicator categories:

1. DIVIDERS:

- How often is the aid agency accused of favoritism? (With programme redesign--ensuring representation of all sides among partners, staff, participants--such accusations should lessen.)
- How often is our aid stolen or diverted by militaries or by disgruntled people? (Again, with improved programming, the incidence of diversion should drop.)
- Whose incomes, and what types of incomes, are being raised by our work? Are these supporting a continued war economy or supporting a transition to an inclusive peace? (If we have made changes in programming, can we see a shift in people's activities?)

2. CONNECTORS:

- Are we strengthening and supporting CONNECTORS? For example:
 - a. Are people from all sides coming to our aid sites (such as clinics, training, etc.)? Do they complain of unequal service or do they think everyone is treated fairly?

- b. Are we relying on inclusive representative groups to allocate and distribute aid? (If we are doing this well, complaints about inequality along the lines of divided groups should not exist. Nor should there be raids between groups.)

PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS used the following as specific indicators of the effectiveness of their application of DNH approaches:

- Reduced theft or diversion of aid goods for use by the military;
- Reduced levels of violence in areas where the agency provides assistance as compared to adjacent or similar areas where the agency is not present;
- Increased incidence of people approaching the agency with security information to protect aid personnel and goods;
- Increased incidence of people providing ideas for improved intergroup programming to agency staff and partners;
- Increased use of/participation in CONNECTORS that have been identified by people of various sides in conflict (e.g. parents sending children to multi-group schools, using clinics with people from the other side, using roads that connect villages where "others" live, increased intergroup trade, etc.);
- Increased interactions about civilian affairs of civic groups and local authorities;
- Increased assumption of civil responsibility by local militaries (e.g. opening roads, clinics, clearing mines, reducing check-points that limit interactions, lessening threats and coercion toward civilians, etc.);
- Increased helpfulness by local authorities for enabling aid to function without bias (e.g. travel permits, licenses, etc.);
- Increased friendliness toward the agency by people from all sides (reflecting their sense that aid is "fair" and effective).

It is clear that some of these "indicators" could reflect a lessening of TENSIONS not traceable to aid programmes. Others are more closely linked to actual aid impacts.

In the specific contexts where aid agency staff identified ways that their aid was feeding conflict, they were also able to trace directly how a change of programming did, or did not, reduce the negative effect.

For example, when the military drafted mechanics trained by the aid agency to service its vehicles and the agency, then, began to train women as mechanics rather than men, drafting of the agency's mechanics ended.

When the agency discovered that all of its local staff were of one ethnic group and began to hire more broadly, they found that more people of the other ethnic group began to participate in their programmes.

When the agency car was being stoned driving between the office and staff house and staff began to walk the streets and interact with people; the stoning stopped.

These three examples, and many more cited in the Sections above, show that in cases where programmes are redesigned to reduce negative effects, it is possible to know very quickly whether the redesign has had the intended impact.

The basic lesson learned by the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS is that we can demystify impact assessment. Attentiveness to the local context presents a variety of "indicators" that, in context, are visible and verifiable. Also, in context, it is often (not always!) possible to trace the causation of an improvement. We can be pretty clear when our programmes are making things worse. We can be equally clear when we stop making them worse. It is, however, more difficult to assess the degree to which our actions make things better, though local people will have opinions! In most circumstances, we should take these opinions, too, as credible "indicators."

How complicated is it to find out what people think? Many projects use the "tea shop" approach to data collection. That is, they sit with people in the places where they gather (tea shops, bars, markets, on buses) and listen to what they are saying to each other--and directly to the aid staff. If TENSIONS are rising between groups, this will be obvious in conversations (or in the absence of people in these public places). If TENSIONS are lessening, this also will be talked about. The roles of the aid agencies in making either of these things happen, in areas where aid is a prominent aspect of daily life, will also be a topic of discussion.

SECTION X: CONCLUSION

Aid's negative effects on conflict seem more obvious and more profound than its positive effects. The manipulation of aid to worsen conflict seems more widespread than the use of aid to achieve harmonious and just relations. We can see three reasons for this imbalance in aid's impact.

First, the positive and beneficial impacts of aid are clearly focused on its immediate humanitarian and developmental purposes. Aid saves lives and alleviates much suffering. Aid supports the development of sustainable improvements in peoples livelihoods and social well-being. Aid has effective positive impacts that are directly related to its primary purposes. Until recently, aid was not also expected to address issues of peace and war.

Second, when positive things happen within societies, it is correct that local people and institutions (rather than "outside" providers of aid) should receive the credit . Because aid neither causes wars nor ends them, aid cannot be blamed for war nor credited with its cessation. People within their own societies are in charge of their own political circumstances. Aid, at best, can support, influence, provide space for and encourage peaceful attitudes and actions. It cannot make them happen.

But, finally, the imbalance in aid's impacts may be less fixed than it now appears. We may have less evidence that aid can help create harmonious and just intergroup relations only because we have fewer examples of this having occurred. As more and more aid agencies assume responsibility for the side-effects of their aid on conflict, and on peace, and as they train and support their staff to be creative in linking the aid they provide to the broader social and political contexts where they work, more and more examples of peace-supporting programmes may emerge. Donors, NGOs, and many local groups are seeking ways to prevent conflict and promote peace. Integrating the approaches of DO NO HARM is one, of many, steps that may help us become more aware of, and sophisticated about, opportunities to overcome war and support peace.

INTRODUCTION TO APPENDICES:

Each of these Appendices was developed by one of the PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS as a “tool” for DNH training people or for monitoring and evaluating programmes. There is some overlap among them; we have included all because they may be helpful for others who want to develop training approaches, case studies, explanatory notes, monitoring systems of other programming tools based on the LCPP approaches.

Included are:

APPENDIX I: LCPP IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

A five-stage explanation of how to use the LCPP Framework in Programming.

APPENDIX II: A SAMPLE DIVIDERS/CONNECTORS ANALYSIS

Many people ask for a sample filled-in DNH Framework; this is a sample, based on a real situation, of the kinds of issues that may be included as D/TS and C/LCPS.

APPENDIX III: STEP BY STEP METHOD/LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE (LCP) TOOL

A one-page outline of the five steps of the LCPP Framework.

APPENDIX IV: A CASE STUDY EXERCISE

Useful for training in LCPP or for illustrating how people in the field use the analysis.

APPENDIX V: A PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

A sample of a training exercise developed in one region, this is useful as a “model” for how to develop exercises of this sort.

APPENDIX VI: A TOOL FOR ASSESSING AND RANKING PROJECT PROPOSALS FROM PARTNERS, VILLAGES, ETC.

A schema worked out by the staff of one agency that they now use to assess project proposals, incorporating LCPP criteria.

APPENDIX VII: WHEN IS A DIVIDER A CONNECTOR?

A brief vignette that lays out a range of levels of analysis regarding one situation.

APPENDIX I: LCPP IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

LCPP Implementation Framework

The LCPP approach is best demonstrated by getting people to use it. The following is a guide for the team to assist program and implementation staff to use the LCP analysis on current or existing programs. Helping people “*walk through*” the analysis should highlight the relationship between our assistance and development programs and the conflicts which plague the communities in which we work. The overall goal will be to use this analysis to improve program implementation and design so that they do not worsen TENSIONS or conflict (and possibly even lessen them) and to be able to design better programs in the future.

When helping the staff walk through the analysis it is necessary to raise difficult issues. At the same time the point is never to criticize our staff or our partners, but rather to help them learn and to learn ourselves. Reward field people for doing good analysis. Keep reminding them that *there are options* to avoid negative impacts so that we are not stuck with bad outcomes.

STAGE I – Context of the Conflict

Goal: To assist the program or implementation staff to identify the critical DIVISION(S) which are violent or could become violent or destructive and which should be analyzed.

Key Questions: What are the DIVISIONS in the community or between communities which could lead to violence or tension?

NB: People will often need help in identifying which divisions are most likely to produce violence. Many times there will be more than one conflict which is relevant, but it will be important to identify the ones which are the mostly likely to become violent or undermine the community’s ability to develop. In some areas the DIVISIONS might be ethnic, while in a neighboring area the DIVISIONS might be between ex-fighters and villagers or even between specific villages.

Take the time to help people distinguish between the conflict and the factors which are driving the conflict which will be examined in **Stage II**.

STAGE II – Identifying Tensions and Connectors

Goal: To assist the program or implementation staff to recognize the sources of TENSION and the CONNECTORS which exist between the groups in conflict identified in **Stage I** and the factors in the society which lead to violence.

Key Questions:

Tensions

What are the differences between the groups which cause friction?

- Ethnicity
- Differing lifestyles/ occupations?
- Religion?
- Political Affiliation?
- Different class/status groups?

What actions are individuals or groups taking which lead to tension or violence? Inside the community? From outside the community?

What attitudes exist which worsen relations between the groups or lead to violence?

How do the perceived interests of the groups differ?

What do the groups compete over?

- Resources
- Economic Benefits?
- Political Power?

What Institutions exist which are promoting the conflict or increasing the likelihood of violence? Inside the community? Outside the community?

Who stands to gain from continued tension?

Other sources of tension?

Connectors

What activities or institutions do the groups share in common? (Past/Present?)

- Economic Activities
- Cultural/Religious traditions

What areas of shared interests exist between the two groups? (Past/Present?)

- Economic interests/trade
- Social services such as schooling, health care, etc.

What actions are being undertaken inside the community to lessen tensions?

What role do different groups in the community play in reducing tensions or restraining violence?

- Different age-groups
- Women
- Religious leaders

What attitudes exist which tend to reduce violence or promote reconciliation? How did the community resolve disputes in the past?

What factors exist which restrain violence in the communities? Present/Past?

- Traditions
- Cultural Values

Other factors which restrain violence or encourage cooperation?

It will be necessary to spend time with people so that the whole breadth and depth of the relationship between the groups become clear. Use these questions as starting points only. Based on the answers given, use further questioning to help people broaden the scope of their information gathering. Only when the different sources of tension and connectors are clearly laid out will it be possible for people to see the relationship between their programs and the conflict.

Help people visualize the different aspects of the relationship by writing out the lists of CONNECTORS and TENSIONS which they develop.

The broader the list of tensions and connectors, the richer and more productive the further analysis will be.

STAGE III - Describing the Aid Program

Goal: To help people lay out all the aspects of an aid program's implementation and design.

Key Questions:

Who are we as an agency/NGO?

Who is funding the program? Why this program/Who was involved in program design?

Where are we implementing/How are these sites chosen? What does the assistance consist of? Who are the beneficiaries/How are they selected/What is their role in implementation?

Who are our staff/partners/How were they chosen? How do we implement the program?

It is necessary to help people see the whole of their aid program rather than just a simple program description, because people will need the details of program design, implementation and process to conduct the analysis in **Stage IV**

STAGE IV Analyzing the Impact of the Aid Program on the Conflicts

Goal: To identify the ways in which our programs effect the TENSIONS and CONNECTORS identified in Stage II.

Key Questions: How do our program design and set-up affect the TENSIONS and connectors identified? Does our program create any *new* TENSIONS between the groups in conflict? What opportunities exist to use the program to strengthen connectors or weaken tens TENSIONS?

This is the analytic stage of approach. Go down the list of TENSIONS. Encourage people to identify ways in which the program can affect these TENSIONS. Remember to consider all the details of the program implementation and design. Look at both *actual* effects and *potential* effects. Remember that in some cases it will be the process by which program decisions are made (targeting, implementation) which present opportunities or problems. In other cases it will be the resulting decisions.

Remember that aid can worsen conflict by (among others):

1. undermining positive connectors between groups
2. delegitimizing factors or institutions which restrain violence in the community
3. transferring resources to groups or institutions which promote tension or violence
4. changing market or trade relations between groups (changing prices cannot undermine local employment)
5. creating competition or jealousy between groups for aid resources
6. heightening the authority and power of groups or individuals who cause TENSIONS or promote/allow violence

Remember that aid can lessen conflict by (among others):

1. strengthening positive CONNECTORS between groups
2. reinforcing factors which limit violence
3. strengthening groups or traditions which bind groups together or restrain violence
4. strengthening or creating systems of mutual benefit

(These are incomplete lists. Always help people look for other ways that aid can effect TENSIONS and conflict!)

Note the actual and potential effects the program is having on the connectors and tensions between the groups. These are factors which could be re-examined in follow-up sessions and in regular reports and monitoring.

STAGE V Developing Programming Options

Goal: To incorporate the findings of the analysis in **Stage IV** into program design and implementation procedures.

Key Questions:

The analysis in Stage IV might have identified certain ways in which aid is worsening conflict. How can we redesign the program or the implementation plan so that the program's objectives are met, but without worsening the conflict? Does the analysis suggest any new areas of programming which we should consider?

The analysis in Stage IV might have identified certain opportunities by which the aid could serve to lessen tensions or strengthen connectors. How can we redesign the program or the implementation plan so that the program's objectives are met, while at the same time using the aid to lessen tensions or strengthen connectors between groups in conflict?

NB: Remind people that there are always options to avoid negative impacts. We are not stuck with bad outcomes. Remind them that their headquarters is committed to examining impacts and wants to change if evidence shows that negative impacts exist.

Sometimes people will feel that options are limited by our headquarters or by donor policies. When this happens, bring this to the attention of the country office staff to discuss what policies might need changing.

APPENDIX II: A SAMPLE DIVIDERS/CONNECTORS ANALYSIS

X Country with ethnic groups A and B

TENSIONS/DIVIDERS	CONNECTORS/LCPS
1. Rivalry for positions, competition for political power	1. Shared towns and cities–history of positive interaction
2. Division of X Country , by district	2. Frequent intermarriage, particularly among the educated
3. Competing NGOs, mostly A managed	3. Common enemies–fought on same side of war
4. A domination of educated county elite	4. Some mixed villages
5. A participation in religious society. B do not participate in the religious society.	5. Cooperative trading arrangements (A , B , and traders from outside X) in cash crops
6. Different language groups	6. B employees in A dominated NGOs
7. Different farming practices	7. Common markets
8. Some religious divisions	8. Some common religious institutions

APPENDIX III: STEP BY STEP METHOD / LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE (LCP) TOOL

1. What are the sources of TENSIONS or conflicts (what divides or separates people) that exist between different groups? Consider the past, currently or potentially in the future? locally, regionally, at the national level?
 - a. Systems and institutions (e.g. armies, exclusion, competing livelihoods, etc.)
 - b. Attitudes and actions (e.g. lawlessness, prejudice, competition for resources, etc.)
 - c. Experiences (different perceptions and experiences)
 - d. Symbols and occasions (sub-group symbols or occasions that incite unease and accentuate differences or can be manipulated)
2. What CONNECTORS (things that bring people together) or capacities for peace exist between the above groups?
 3. Systems, institutions (e.g. markets, infrastructure, services, etc.)
 4. Attitudes, actions (e.g. shared experiences)
 5. Occasions, symbols (e.g. national art, ceremonies, etc.)
6. What is the goal/purpose?
 7. What are the objectives?
 8. How will the program be implemented?
 9. With whom? By whom?
 10. When? Where?
11. In what ways does the program impact the TENSIONS, the CONNECTORS? Will any part of the way the project is implemented increase TENSIONS? Will it reduce them? In what ways does the program reinforce or weaken CONNECTORS or capacities for peace? Are new TENSIONS or CONNECTORS created as a result of our intervention?
12. What options exist to strengthen the CONNECTORS (or at least not weaken them)? What options exist to reduce TENSIONS (or at least avoid feeding into them)?

APPENDIX IV: A CASE STUDY EXERCISE

A Water Programme in Trouble

1. In 1992, a local NGO based in Goma, North Kivu province, eastern Zaire, approached the European Union for funding to support a water programme some three hours drive away in a hilly region known as the Masisi. The aim of the programme would be to supply water to the town of Nyabiondo and surrounding villages. The geography of the region is very similar to that of nearby neighbour, Rwanda: a stunning green upland of fertile, rolling hills and valleys on which intensive terraced agriculture and cattle-herding are both practiced.
2. The town of Nyabiondo is situated in the bottom of a valley, and had been a major commercial centre since the 1930s when it began as a cluster of dwellings around a colonial tea processing plant. Congolese from a number of different areas settled in the town over succeeding years, working either in the plant itself or, increasingly, engaged in petty-commerce along the central trading route leading northwards up into Uganda, bringing soap, matches, batteries, and other small goods to trade or sell to the traditional inhabitants of the area. By 1992 Nyabiondo was a thriving, cosmopolitan town with reasonably good relations between its various peoples.
3. The request for water was based on needs assessments with the community in the town and the villages in which those consulted had listed water as an urgent need and were enthusiastic about the NGO's proposal. Ordinarily, inhabitants from the town would make the climb into the hills to fetch water from spring sources overlooking Nyabiondo. The proposal planned to begin with identifying, "capturing" and "managing" a water source in one of the hills: management in this instance would mean the construction of a sand and gravel-filled concrete filter over the spring source and the directing of the resulting flow into a PVC pipe. From there, the water would flow down the hill under gravity through further piping until it could be captured in a specially constructed concrete reservoir (a large communal water tank). From there pipes would run to several water points in Nyabiondo town, and to central points in nine outlying villages.
4. The European Union approved the funding, and some preparatory work had been undertaken when tragedy struck; the "divide and rule" policies of Zaire's dictator, Mobutu, finally resulted in a resurgence of inter-ethnic war in the Masisi. This war began between members of the Hutu and Tutsi populations in the Masisi; soon it involved other groups as well. The project was suspended as war rolled on for several years, resulting in large population displacements (Nyabiondo was not immune) and the profusion of militia movements. Initially begun as "self-protection committees" for each ethnic group, they slowly became more and more "economic" in character until they started to attack and loot even their own communities. Traditional chiefs could be heard bemoaning the lack of control evident in even "our own children". The fighting was further complicated by events in Rwanda in 1994; the genocide and its aftermath resulted in massive refugee flow over the border to North Kivu, and Masisi experienced a considerable influx of Rwandan-speaking peoples. In the Nyabiondo area, fighting was principally between two groups: the Hunde and the Hutu. The Hunde see themselves as the indigenous inhabitants of the

region, by comparison with Rwandan-speaking Hutu who arrived in various waves over the last hundred years or so.

5. Finally, the AFDC rebellion led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila from the Kivus, backed by Rwandan political might, brought him to power in Kinshasa in May 1997. Mobutu fled, and Kabila rapidly renamed the country from Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). By middle 1997, much of the militia activity and other violence had ceased in the area.
6. In late 1997, the local NGO once more approached a donor to resume work on the water project. This time, it approached the Canadian Government, and secured funding for Nyabiondo's water as part of a larger programme involving seed and tools distributions, and infrastructure rehabilitation (roads, schools, and clinics with small Food for Work to be provided by the World Food Programme). By early 1998 work had begun: the "capture" and "management" of the same water source in the hills originally identified in 1993. Unfortunately, financial resources turned out to be insufficient, and one of the nine surrounding villages – Bushani – which had contributed community labour to the construction of the major pipeline turned out to be too far for the water to reach. Bushani village elders expressed some anger at this fact, and the project team met to consider what could be done.
7. However, no sooner had they begun their analysis than it became clear that some more serious complaints recently voiced about the proposed project were likely to be even more explosive than those from Bushani.

What were these complaints? And what would you propose to do about them, and about the situation in Bushani?

1. As always, first analyse what we know about tensions and connectors in the area.
2. Second think about how the proposed actions might aggravate tensions or weaken connectors.
3. Once you have identified the problem, brainstorm two or three programmatic options to make the impact better.

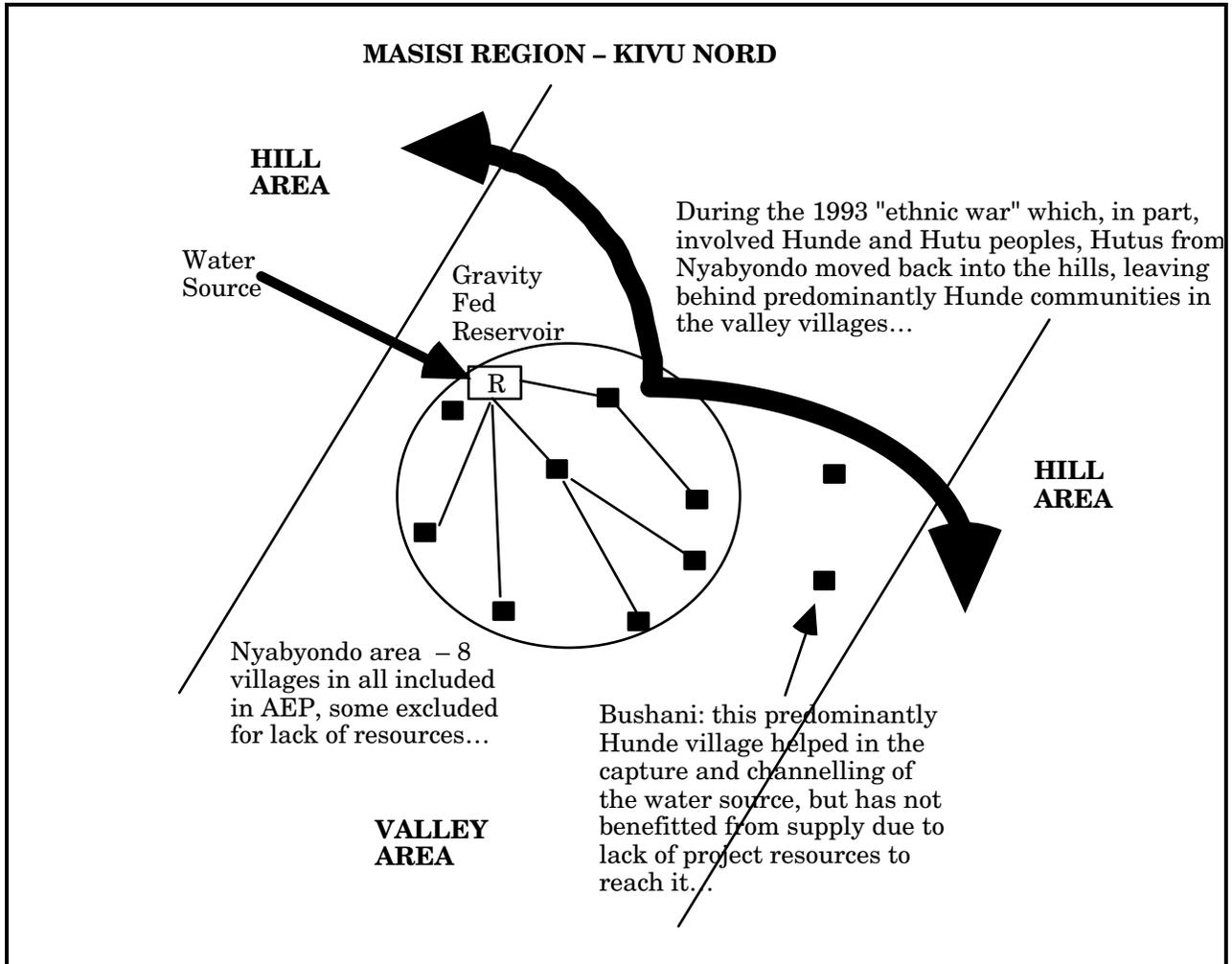
[Answer: the displacement of populations all over the area were also largely the case in Nyabiondo, where during the war, the Hutu population fled to the hills and stayed there after the official end of the fighting. Accordingly, by the time the project was started once again, what seemed like a neutral enough idea – bring water from the hills to a cosmopolitan town in the valley – had changed profile. Instead, it now seemed from the Hutu side as though their water in the hills was being taken to supply the enemy. Meanwhile, some Hunde in the town were concerned at the possibility of being dependent on a water supply from the enemy side which could be cut off or poisoned at any time.

Options: we considered communications and sensitisation campaigns, rebuilding shared structures such as health centres or schools, improving other spring sources which would be used only for the hill populations, and placing standpipes and waterpoints at intervals along the pipeline

as it runs down hill so that Hutu populations in the hills can also benefit from the improved water].

Schematic of Nyabyondo

This schematic illustrates the geography of Nyabyondo and shows how resource constraints and ethnic displacement have produced an uneven, possibly volatile impact of aid in the water component.



APPENDIX V: A PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

Water Program Scenario – Homework

The following program scenario was read in a story type format to the participants, twice. The participants were asked to reflect on the water technician’s dilemma and to consider answers to the following questions individually to share when they meet again.

The Aid Agency water technician has done an assessment of the water situation in Y County and based on this assessment, funds have been secured to drill 5 boreholes with a mechanized drilling rig. Because drought and the influx of population from Z County have seriously affected Village 1, the majority of the holes will be drilled there. That is, three of the five will be drilled in Village 1. It was determined the other two would be drilled in Village 2. After discussions with the local military in Y, it is further decided that one of the boreholes for Village 2 would be drilled in the military compound in Village 2.

Questions

1. What are some of the possible consequences of implementing this plan? In what ways will this plan reinforce or increase already existing tensions between groups or support connectors?
2. Given these possible consequences, what are some decisions that we can make as Aid Agency staff that would have better outcomes? What connectors can be supported? Share 3 possible program options that would have better outcomes and explain why.

***Note:** We have a full range of options we can consider, from accepting the plan the way it is, to not accepting it, to everything in between.*

APPENDIX VI: A TOOL FOR ASSESSING AND RANKING PROJECT PROPOSALS FROM PARTNERS, VILLAGES, ETC.

Impacts on Conflict	A	B	C	D
<p>Impacts on Other communities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Has considered preferences/priorities of neighboring communities. Has considered negative impacts on neighboring communities Will avoid making tensions worse, or supports connections between communities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Has considered negative impacts on neighboring communities. Will avoid making tensions worse, or supports connections between communities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Will avoid making tensions worse, or supports connections between communities. 	<p>Will increase tensions with other communities.</p>
<p>Effects of Resources on Perceptions and Relationships</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Has considered harmful competition/suspicion / biases within and between communities. Will avoid creating or worsening harmful competition/suspicion / biases. Will reduce harmful competition / suspicion / biases. Resources not at undue risk of diversion.* 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Will avoid creating or worsening harmful competition / suspicion / biases. Will reduce harmful competition / suspicion / biases. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Will avoid creating or worsening harmful competition / suspicion / biases 	<p>Will increase harmful competition / suspicion/ biases within or between communities</p>
<p>Ethical Aspects</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Has anticipated ethical problems and opportunities. Models and promotes constructive values.** Avoids provocations, harmful behavior, relationships, and messages. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Models and promotes constructive values.** Avoids provocations, harmful behavior, relationships, and messages. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids provocations, harmful behavior, relationships, and messages. 	<p>Would lead to provocations, harmful behavior, relationships, or messages.</p>
<p>Risk of Violence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Has assessed risks of violence in Project and surrounding areas. Avoids placing people and communities at (more) risk from violence. Reduces the vulnerability of people and communities to violence. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids placing people and communities at (more) risk from violence. Reduces the vulnerability of people and communities to violence. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids placing people and communities at (more) risk from violence. 	<p>Places people and communities at (more) risk from violence</p>

* Including theft, arbitrary taxation, corruption, or employment of MicroProject resources for military purposes.

** Constructive values might include: Tolerance, acceptance of differences, inclusiveness, etc.

APPENDIX VIII: WHEN IS A DIVIDER A CONNECTOR?

From a Do No Harm workshop:

1. An international NGO has been intervening for some time in the area of The River where there have been ongoing conflicts or “tribal clashes” between several different groups with a rough division between agriculturalist and pastoralist lifestyles. The pastoralist peoples herd cattle and other livestock and range widely through the area without great regard for the settlement of land. The agriculturalist peoples raise cereals and vegetables, and some have also taken to rearing livestock in a small way. The agricultural communities live in mono-ethnic clusters close to the river while the pastoralists live further in the hinterland. The normal migration pattern for the pastoral population means moving towards the river during dry season and back to the hinterland during the rainy season.
2. In keeping with the pastoralist mentality which does not readily accept ownership of land (land is seen as common property for grazing), the pastoralists often allow their cattle to graze on the crops of the agriculturalists. This, clearly, has been a flashpoint. In addition, various types of raiding are prevalent: inter-pastoralist raids for cattle, pastoralist against agriculturalist, and particularly pastoralist against members of the agriculturalist community who have recently taken to rearing cattle “against type”. The area is drought-prone, and clashes between the two groups become more severe when water is scarce. Curiously, however, in the workshop The River was identified as both a divider and a connector in this context. How?
3. The answer becomes clear with analysis. It turns out that in times of plenty, but even on occasion when things are difficult, casual encounters on the banks of the river between members of different communities seeking water for their different needs have been a significant factor for cohesion in the area for a long time. Such encounters give people the chance to exchange pleasantries, indulge in gossip or even petty trade. Even during drought there is usually enough water in the river for everyone, so resource scarcity is not a significant flashpoint in this instance.
4. However, access to water can be a significant source of tension. Much of the river bank areas consist of small agricultural plots used by the various farming communities. Access to the river for livestock to drink, therefore, often involves pastoralists and their herds traversing land which the agriculturalists consider theirs (and to which they may at times even hold legal title). Moreover, as might be expected, the cattle trample and graze on the crops as they pass, further enflaming resentments by the farmers.

5. This example demonstrates two connected points: first, that whereas it may seem that “the river” represents both a connector and a divider, careful further analysis reveals that different aspects of the same larger phenomenon are individually a connector (meetings by the river) and a divider (access to the river). Second, by using such analysis to carefully distinguish between the two aspects of “the river”—one positive and one negative—we open up the possibility that aid agencies could more carefully orient their actions to reinforce the connector and diminish the source of division. Programme options discussed included the idea that the agency might develop cattle troughs or water points near pastoral communities in the hinterland, at a distance from the agricultural plots, thus reducing livestock migrating to the river for water and correspondingly reducing conflict. But though this would lessen the tension side of the river issue (avoiding cattle trampling and grazing crops) it would weaken the connector side (casual encounters at the river’s edge would lessen). A better option from a Do No Harm perspective, therefore, was the suggestion to negotiate specific and agreed access corridors to the river that would be acceptable to both sides.

"Do No Harm" Framework for Considering the Impacts of Aid on Conflict

Context of Conflict

