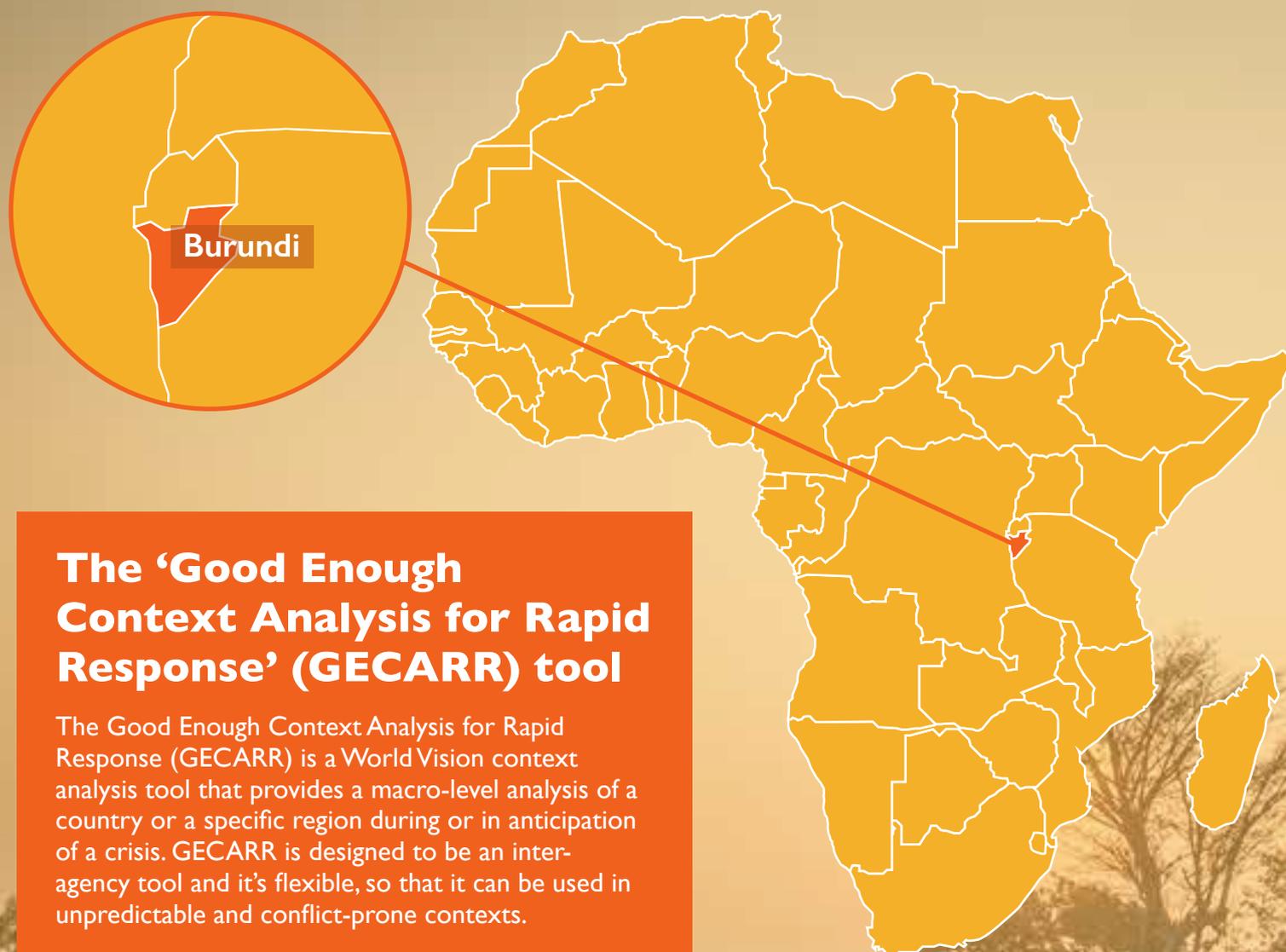


# Use of GECARR in conflict contexts

## Case Study: Burundi



### The 'Good Enough Context Analysis for Rapid Response' (GECARR) tool

The Good Enough Context Analysis for Rapid Response (GECARR) is a World Vision context analysis tool that provides a macro-level analysis of a country or a specific region during or in anticipation of a crisis. GECARR is designed to be an inter-agency tool and it's flexible, so that it can be used in unpredictable and conflict-prone contexts.

GECARR draws together the views of a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders, including local community members and produces a snapshot of the current situation and likely future scenarios. It generates actionable and practical recommendations for INGOs involved in humanitarian responses. Between 2014 and 2016, World Vision conducted eight GECARR analyses: Central African Republic, Syria, Jordan, Kurdish Region of Iraq, Sierra Leone/ Ebola Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Mali.



**GECARR**  
Good Enough  
Context Analysis  
for Rapid Response

## The Process:

World Vision and Action Aid carried out an inter-agency GECARR in Burundi in April 2015. This was at the request of the START network<sup>1</sup> and World Vision Burundi office in the context of upcoming elections (legislative and presidential) in May and July and visibly growing tensions. Over the course of one week a GECARR facilitation team of five, plus other national staff, spoke with 175 people across 5 provinces of Burundi (Bubanza, Bujumbura, Gitega, Makamba and Kirundo). 143 were community members and 32 were representatives of NGOs, religious groups, UN and diplomats. This included 17 focus group discussions and 37 key informant interviews. Findings from the interviews were presented at a scenario-planning workshop in which a further 7 humanitarian agencies convened to identify and outline 3 key scenarios likely to unfold in Burundi. The three scenarios from the workshop all occurred over the following months.

## The Impact:

The Burundi GECARR was seen as useful by the World Vision Burundi office for a number of reasons. The report recommendations around increasing coordination and preparedness were used for the planning process of the response at an interagency level. This enabled a more timely response. The GECARR report also recommended a focus on effective mechanisms to improve communications with affected people and from this a Burundi accountability hotline project was designed.

The National Office activated the crisis management component of their strategy on account of GECARR findings and all new programmes and projects were designed as per GECARR outcomes (including the accountability hotline, two food grants, and a project to prevent malnutrition, projects worth approx \$1.5 million in total). The GECARR report was also used to inform advocacy and communication messages, including a private advocacy briefing paper.

The inter-agency component of the GECARR was also seen to improve the quality of the analysis, provide further validation, enable access to a wider range of geographic areas, ensure a more even/manageable division of labour and open a wider contact book for interviews. The setting of expectations at the start (especially stressing the flexibility of the process and the ability to make it happen in a relatively short period of time) and debriefing at the end was crucial in the inter-agency relationship. The scenario planning, which worked well as a workshop, benefitted from including other NGOs and not just World Vision, as it meant the final output demonstrated a coherent NGO platform of understanding.

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Donor involvement through both involvement in the analysis and sharing of findings is key as it ensures credibility, visibility, enhanced information sharing and stronger relationships for future collaboration. The relationships with other stakeholders were also strengthened (including internally), both because of the wide interactions of the GECARR process itself, and also due to working alongside a peer organisation. As a result of START engagement with GECARR in Burundi the humanitarian directors of the START network felt the GECARR model was useful enough that it is one of the standard components of their preparedness work in the area of inter-agency rapid context analysis, with funding options available on a case by case basis.

It was noted that the GECARR provided mainly a macro analysis of the context and a more in-depth analysis was needed to understand the deeper dynamics between community members affected by the conflict.



## Reflections:

- **Adaptability:**

The Burundi GECARR was at the time the largest to date in terms of people spoken to and showed that the tool can operate on many different spectrums of scale/size due to its adaptability. The choice to adapt it exists but the decision always needs to be made properly at the start due to the risk that it can be extended to become too large and take too much time.

- **Use with donors:**

The report gave the office a good summary that could be shared with donors and other partners during pre-positioning meetings. As a result relationships with new in-country donors were strengthened. In the case of Burundi findings were presented to EU, UK, US, Sweden and were well received.

- **Value for money:**

The Burundi GECARR demonstrated good value for money, costing approximately \$8,000 including air travel and accommodation for facilitators, in-country data collection, and workshop costs.



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## • Facilitators:

There is a need to bring in experienced and skilled facilitators to lead context analysis, especially for the scenario planning. The process works in insecure environments and in these settings is highly valuable. Facilitators need to be able and prepared to handle security incidents and management.

## • Timing:

Timing is essential for GECARR and identifying the right moment is therefore critical. Once tensions escalate significantly the ability to conduct any context analysis can become much more limited. If the Burundi GECARR had been planned a week later security considerations would have meant it would not have been able to take place.



## • Balancing risk:

GECARR practitioners must balance the process's flexibility with predictability. Given the volatility in the contexts there is a need to accept a level of uncertainty in the process. Facilitators need to be able to make rapid changes at short notice throughout the preparation and execution phases of GECARR.

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## • Buy-in:

The context analysis was seen to have more take up and buy-in because it was done around a particular event. There was senior leadership buy-in at the start of the process (as shown by a willingness to fund the process) and all the way through to their participation and active engagement in the debrief at the end, which enabled swift take up of recommendations and further follow up by different SLT members. A similar debrief at the regional level was also helpful in this regard. The involvement of the regional World Vision office helped to ensure clarity across the wider organisation and process, and resulted in better regional coherence as staff used the findings both to advocate with key decision makers and to inform their own support to the Burundi office. The GECARR also strengthened linkages between departments such as advocacy, programmes and communications (at all levels; national, regional and global).