

Macro-level conflict analysis:

Addressing the uptake-and-use challenge
in fragile and conflict-affected contexts

Experiences from Somalia,
South Sudan and Kenya



World Vision

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Acronyms

ACT!	Act Change Transform
BRICS	Building Resilient Communities in Somalia
CDA	Collaborative for Development Action
CDI	Conflict Dynamics International
CEWERS	Conflict Early Warning and Early Response System
CEWERU	South Sudan's Conflict Early Warning Early Response Unit
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DFID	Department for International Development
FEWER	Forum on Early Warning and Early Response
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
LPI	Life & Peace Institute
MSTC	Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RPP	Reflecting on Peace Practice
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WV	World Vision

Executive Summary

It is widely acknowledged that context matters and should be well-understood for effective humanitarian and development policy, strategy and practice. Over the years, a lot has been done to improve the way conflict analysis is conducted. Despite this progress, uptake and use of conflict analysis still remains a challenge.

This report aims to contribute towards improving uptake and use of macro-level conflict analysis, especially in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. It is intended for organisations, agencies and institutions that generate and use macro-level conflict analysis to shape policy, strategy and operations. It is based on the experiences of 44 key informants purposefully selected from 31 organisations (NGOs, UN and donor agencies, government institutions and think tanks) operating in Somalia, South Sudan and Kenya. Only one third of the key informants were from World Vision. The study was not designed to determine the degree to which uptake and use were realised; but rather to understand the factors that facilitate and hinder these processes in order to develop suitable recommendations for advancing uptake and use. Below is a summary of findings and general observations.

Facilitating factors: Five common themes emerged from among the factors identified to facilitate uptake and use: (1) Consistent tracking of changes in context, coupled with strong intentionality to mitigate risks and address emerging issues; (2) Ability to nurture strategic partnerships and manage delicate relationships; (3) Having in place the right people with the right capacity; (4) Having a clear peacebuilding niche and/or conflict-sensitivity focus; and (5) Flexible funding arrangements and supportive donor orientation.

Hindering factors: The factors commonly identified by organisations to hinder uptake and use gave rise to several themes. One was the rapidly changing contexts in which these organisations operate. Budget limitations and donor influence on programs was another. Others include emerging governance and restrictive environments, insecurity and related risks as well as the politically sensitive issues raised by conflict analyses. In addition, organisations identified low staff capacity and frequent staff changes, weak follow-up after analysis, and methodology and process issues as factors that hinder uptake and use. Other key themes that emerged include: inadequate packaging of information and recommendations; competition and limited collaboration between organisations; and difficulties with getting buy-in at organisational level.

Key findings: For successful uptake and use of macro-level conflict analysis, it is essential to take into account contextual realities in fragile and conflict-affected situations just as much as factors internal to organisations (e.g., organisational and methodological issues). Noteworthy, the facilitating factors that emerged as major were largely internal to the organisations. These could be leveraged to overcome the external hindrances to uptake and use, as some of the organisations are already doing.

While there are certainly hindrances to uptake and use—whether internal or external to organisations—these should not overshadow the need to conduct context/conflict analysis

necessary to inform effective humanitarian and development policy and practice. The need to undertake effective macro-level conflict analysis and related uptake and use processes remains.

Summary of recommendations

- Develop a simple and focused communication and engagement strategy as part of the pre-, during- and post-analysis processes to guide handling of sensitive reports and information to facilitate wider sharing and use.
- Ensure appropriate analysis methodology and processes are utilised to strengthen uptake and use. This may include: establishing a consistent and robust context monitoring mechanism; broadening and deepening participation; allowing some degree of methodological flexibility while watching out for quality; and prioritising the crafting of implementable recommendations that acknowledge contextual realities.
- Make certain that there are post-analysis processes to facilitate uptake and use through developing systematic but simplified guidance that brings clarity to post-analysis next steps.
- Engage and educate donors to impact their orientation and funding decisions and priorities with a focus on: increased funding for long-term programming in fragile contexts; built-in flexibility in program budgets; and developing multi-year funding strategies that look beyond the immediate conflict crises to ensure long-term conflict prevention, peacebuilding and reconciliation. Other areas of focus should include: emphasising the importance of donors' role in shaping conflict-sensitive interventions; and building credible field-based evidence to impact donor decisions and priorities to support conflict analysis, its uptake and use.
- Strengthen capacity to mainstream conflict-sensitivity and integrate peacebuilding in organisational strategy and other programming sectors, including aiming at recognising conflict-sensitivity as a core competence for leadership teams and staff operating in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.
- Mobilise organisational leadership and operations teams at various levels to buy-in through enhancing understanding of the value add of the analysis to the organisation and committing senior leaders to put their weight behind the analysis.
- Promote collaboration to jointly address factors that hinder uptake and use. This may include: developing off-shoot products that meet specific agency needs, in addition to producing jointly owned reports in cases of multi-agency analyses; creating a multi-agency learning forum with digital platforms for sharing analyses; and collaborating through coalitions, networks and strategic partnerships to overcome contextual factors that hinder uptake and use.

1.0 Introduction

There is increased acknowledgement that understanding of context¹ is imperative for effective humanitarian and development policy and practice. Conflict analysis is a key contributor to understanding context in most fragile and conflict-affected situations. However, uptake and use of conflict analysis have remained challenging despite improvements in analysis methodology. It is hoped that this report will stimulate further discussions among practitioners, policy makers and donors with an aim to promote uptake and use of macro-level conflict analysis², especially in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

This report is a product of a study conducted by World Vision East Africa Regional Office. It focuses on Somalia and South Sudan (most-fragile contexts) and Kenya (medium-fragility context)³. Learnings were drawn from World Vision's own experiences with Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts (MSTC) macro-level conflict analyses in Somalia, South Sudan and Kenya as well as from experiences of other organisations using MSTC and/or other macro-level conflict analysis methodologies.

The study did not aim to determine the degree to which uptake and use were happening; but rather to establish the factors that facilitate and hinder these processes. More specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

- Identify factors that facilitate or hinder the uptake and use of macro-level conflict analyses in fragile contexts; and
- Draw out implications as well as opportunities and recommendations for enhancing the uptake and use of conflict analyses in ways that increase their influence on humanitarian and development policy, strategy and interventions.

Data was gathered in July and August 2015 using qualitative methods. Key informant interviews were conducted with representatives of INGOs, NGOs, UN and donor agencies, government institutions with conflict analysis mandate, think tanks, research institutions, World Vision offices in the target countries and other relevant World Vision entities. Forty-four (44) key informants were interviewed (30% from World Vision and 70% from other organisations). These were selected from a total of 31 organisations. More details on methodology are in Appendix I.

The report draws on the European Commission's definitions of uptake and use. **Uptake** is understood as the process of actively considering conflict analysis findings and

¹ Context in this study is understood to mean a geographic or social environment where conflict exists and is comprised of actors, causes, profile and dynamics and ranges from the micro to macro level (Africa Peace Forum et al. 2004a: 4).

² Macro-level conflict analysis refers to large-scale analysis generally conducted at national level and sometimes conducted to understand conflicts affecting sub-national or cross-border regions (Midgley & Garred, 2013:7).

³ South Sudan and Somalia are in the 'Very High Alert' category with Fragile States Indices (FSI) of 114.5 (ranked 1st out of 178 countries) and 114.0 (ranked 2nd), respectively. Kenya is ranked 21st with its FSI at 97.4 (The Fund for Peace, 2015: 6-7).

recommendations. **Use** is the actual application of conflict analysis findings and recommendations to policy and practice decisions. The uptake of analysis findings and recommendations can only be traced through an evaluation of their use. Determining uptake and use is therefore a challenge since these processes do not happen in a linear fashion. They also take on a variety of forms, some of which are not tangible (European Commission 2014: V & 3). We recognise this limitation.

The report reviews existing literature and other relevant studies to discuss why ‘context matters’ (see references section). It subsequently examines the uptake-and-use challenge. Next, the report presents the findings with a focus on factors that facilitate and hinder uptake and use based on the experiences of organisations operating in Somalia, South Sudan and Kenya. The report concludes with general observations on facilitating and hindering factors; and lastly, the recommendations to improve uptake and use of macro-level conflict analyses.

2.0 ‘Context matters’ and should be understood

Many agree that ‘context matters’ and should be understood. This is more so in fragile contexts where fragility varies greatly and is extremely dynamic —requiring a thorough and continuous contextual analysis to inform any decision-making regarding policy, priorities and programming (Dowst, 2009: 11). Principle 1 of the principles¹ for good international engagement in fragile states and situations emphasises that it is essential to “take context as the starting point” before engaging in fragile contexts (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2007:1). For fragile contexts which are conflict-affected, this includes conducting sound conflict and political analysis, in addition to understanding other fragility features.

Even with the above understanding, the application of Principle 1 is varied in most countries. There is also limited evidence to suggest that actual programming is adequately founded in an in-depth understanding of the country context (OECD, 2010: 10). In fact, many of the flaws associated with ineffectiveness in intervention strategies in fragile contexts can be traced to inaccurate and / or partial understanding of the context (OECD, 2010:19).

It is widely recognised that some level of context analysis is needed to inform technical programmes in order to deliver results across a variety of sectors — peacebuilding and statebuilding included. According to the Life & Peace Institute (LPI), “analysis is not only a prerequisite but an indispensable tool[...].” (LPI, 2014: 8). Besides concerns around traditional and conventional aid effectiveness, contextual understanding is central to the success or failure of development and humanitarian strategies as well as interventions in fragile and conflict-affected contexts (Department for International Development (DFID),

¹ These OECD principles aim to complement the commitments set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

2002: 5; Collaborative for Development Action (CDA), 2004:12; World Bank, 2006a: 1&3; Dowst, 2009:3; United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2012: 33). Most practitioners agree that some form of analysis is required to inform identification of priorities, strategic interventions and appropriate areas of program focus (CDA, 2004:12).

Considering macro-level conflict analysis — which is the focus of this study — its general purpose is to inform the development of more strategic approaches to improve the effectiveness of development and humanitarian policy and interventions in ways that promote conflict-sensitivity and contribute to peacebuilding and stability (DFID, 2002: 5; USAID, 2012: 3 & 33). The analysis is conducted to inform planning decisions and approaches across different sectors. This is to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts of any intervention on peace and conflict dynamics (conflict-sensitivity). It also informs planning decisions and approaches aimed at addressing conflict directly, including reducing key drivers of violent conflict and consolidating peaceful relations (peacebuilding).

For USAID, a conflict assessment is meant to improve the effectiveness of USAID development and humanitarian assistance. Such assessments provide missions with guidance to better understand conflict, ensure that programs are sensitive to drivers of conflict as well as prevent, manage, and mitigate deadly conflict (USAID, 2012: 33). The role of conflict analysis in improving effectiveness of violence prevention and peacebuilding programs, for example, is emphasised by a USAID evaluation that compared three different civil society approaches in the Horn of Africa. The evaluation illustrates that effectiveness does not only rest on the approaches employed but also on understanding the context (World Bank, 2006b: 26).

In actual practice, conflict analysis takes on diverse focus, depth, comprehensiveness, approaches and regularity. The analysis is usually conducted at the beginning of a program (front-end) but with limited on-going analysis or updates (CDA, 2004: 12; LPI, 2014: 7 & 26). Whereas some organisations invest in comprehensive analysis, many conduct partial analysis that is limited in scope. On the extreme end are those that depend on their gut-feeling, personal experience and intuition and/or claim intimate knowledge of the conflicts and issues (CDA, 2004: 12; LPI, 2014: 7 & 26).

Given the centrality of conflict analysis to policy, development and humanitarian interventions, a number of tailor-made tools and frameworks have been developed by different organisations. Such frameworks include: the World Bank's Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF); Forum on Early Warning and Early Response's (FEWER) Conflict Analysis and Response Definition; USAID's Conflict Assessment Framework; and World Vision's Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts (MSTC), among others. The specific purposes, level of application, potential users, assumptions and methodology of these and other tools and frameworks may vary (Africa Peace Forum et al., 2004b: 12-40).

3.0 The uptake-and-use challenge

In spite of the quest for robust methodology and quality analysis, uptake and use of conflict analysis remains challenging. It is often weak and uneven. As eloquently expressed by Bigombe,

...**there is frequent failure to implement conflict analysis.**¹ Even when conflict analysis is conducted in a rigorous and inclusive manner, it too often remains nothing more than an interesting intellectual exercise, the proverbial ‘gathers-dust-on-the-shelf’ document that is not put into practice (Bigombe, 2015: v).

Many in the humanitarian and development community acknowledge this conflict analysis uptake-and-use challenge. Despite efforts to ensure implementation of macro-level conflict analysis findings and recommendations within World Vision, the results have been mixed. Implementation remains inconsistent and — as considered by many organisations — the “‘Achilles’ heel”² of the entire conflict analysis field” (Garred et al., 2015: 16-17 & 135). Others have considered converting the analysis into peacebuilding, multi-sectoral and conflict-sensitive programs as the least understood process (Rogers et al., 2010: 24). Similarly, Saferworld and Conciliation Resources have noted that “even well-received analyses sometimes do not appear to translate into any notable changes to policy and practice” and “translating analysis into action tends to be the biggest challenge for any agency” (2012: 2 & 26).

A World Bank study that examined twenty macro-level conflict analysis exercises to provide guidance to improve analyses and application of their findings revealed similar difficulties. Although the analysis findings were used to inform country strategy and operations in several cases, their application in others was weak. This is because there was limited success in translating analysis into actions (World Bank, 2006a: 13).

Similar challenges exist in related fields. In reference to post-conflict statebuilding, Waldman, Barakat and Varisco state that the link between research and policy remains weak, casual and under-analysed (2014: XII). Similarly, despite the significant progress in recognising the need for political economy analyses to inform development practice, their use in shaping design and practice of development operations continues to be problematic and uptake among donors is weak (Wild & Foresti, 2011: 10).

In summary, there is mixed evidence around conflict analysis translating into real change in strategic direction as well as humanitarian and development policy and practice. The transition from analysis to practice remains loose, unclear, informal and under-analysed. Yet, to achieve effectiveness, this area needs to be strengthened, particularly in fragile contexts.

¹ Bold text is as in original.

² Vulnerable or susceptible spot.

One way of contributing to this is to deepen understanding of factors that facilitate and hinder uptake and use. Organisations can then build on this understanding to achieve better uptake and use.

4.0 Findings: uptake and use of macro-level conflict analyses

Findings indicate that organisations' conflict analysis approaches differ — as the literature revealed earlier — from intuition, to quick newspaper scans to robust analysis. Some said they use micro analyses of various locations to inform macro understanding. A few others showed concern around theory driven macro analyses. They worry that such analyses do not paint a nuanced picture that also captures what really happens on the ground. The methodology/approaches used for macro-level conflict analysis by many organisations include Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) approaches (see CDA 2009 for RPP conflict analysis methodology and planning tools) and participatory conflict analysis research, including desk reviews. A few organisations use MSTC.

The findings further reveal that uptake and use of macro-level conflict analyses varied from one organisation to another. While some reported divergent degrees of success, others described failure. The general opinion was that translating analysis into tangible recommendations and following through with implementation was a demanding process. Findings are not used often to shape strategy and programming decisions.

4.1 Experiences of organisations operating in Somalia, South Sudan and Kenya

4.1.1 Factors that facilitate uptake and use

This section discusses what emerged as common themes in the factors identified to facilitate uptake and use of macro-level conflict analyses.

Consistent tracking of changes in context, coupled with strong intentionality to mitigate risks and address emerging issues: Macro-level conflict analyses coupled with consistent tracking of changes in context was raised as a key factor that supports translating analysis into action in fragile contexts. This is possible when organisations take deliberate measures to address emerging issues and risks identified by the analysis. Intentional linkages are established between the macro analyses based on analyses conducted at micro level. This implies that regular tracking of the context at micro level is useful for updating macro-level analyses, particularly in rapidly changing contexts.

Regular context analysis/updates—e.g. on a quarterly or bi-monthly basis—help to continually feed into organisational decision-making to make any necessary revisions due to context changes and/or to mitigate risk. Organisations also ensure implementation because they have established feedback mechanisms, monitoring and reporting systems. Learning and flexibility are part of these processes and adjustments are made when things do not work as well as anticipated. This is made possible, for example, through frequent or on-going short

analyses and functional early warning mechanisms that complement more in-depth macro analyses.

For instance, Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) in South Sudan has piggybacked on their Conflict Early Warning and Early Response System (CEWERS) project to establish linkages between conflict analysis conducted at grassroots and macro-levels. This has benefited the whole CRS program in the country. The project requires that bi-monthly peace and conflict analysis reports include reporting on two key conflict drivers and two peacebuilding interventions with most impact at state level. These reports feed into a mechanism aimed at understanding peace and conflict trends and dynamics; and consequently, influence how CRS responds to emerging issues. The aggregated analysis feeds into decision making around the South Sudan program. For example, this analysis was instrumental in shaping the CRS strategic plan developed in April 2015 and, in-part, the decision to expand the program to Jonglei, Lakes and Eastern Equatoria States.

Flexible funding arrangements, donor orientation and availability of budgets: Flexible funding arrangements were considered core to achieving uptake and use in fragile contexts. Flexible funding allowed organisations to take on a flexible approach to programming. They were able to modify approaches and programming based on emerging issues identified through regular analyses. Regular donor engagement — keeping them informed and updated and discussing the need to adjust interventions — was mentioned as essential for smoothing relationships to enable funding flexibility. The donors are also often involved in the analyses and subsequent decision-making.

Other organisations mentioned that, by negotiating with donors, they have funds set aside within their budgets to address emerging issues. One organisation said it has a rapid response fund for such purposes. Another, Act Change Transform (ACT!) operating in Kenya, indicated that it dedicates 10% of its total budget (negotiated with the donor) to “targets of opportunity” —i.e., unexpected issues that need to be addressed. USAID also mentioned that flexibility was important and reflecting this in budgets is necessary to cater for changes in context. This is corroborated by one of the programmes USAID is funding.

The program took on a flexible approach that accommodates new issues without changing the program goal. It is not a straightjacket. It has a conflict early-warning early-response mechanism that enables scanning of the environment and follow-up action. Inbuilt flexibility also allows for flexibility in budget lines. This is negotiated with the donor. Challenges are articulated clearly and transparently in quarterly reports and lessons learnt open up opportunities for dialogue with the donor. There are also sections in our proposals that allow us to communicate what we predict may happen and how we intend to engage in case that scenario unfolds (Global Communities, Kenya).

Such funding arrangements depend on the donor's orientation. This also included the donor's commitment to learning for effective programming in fragile contexts as well as their appreciation of the fact that context matters. Donors with a long-term focus in most

fragile contexts — environments often characterised by short-term projects — were said to support uptake and use. This is because such donors provided opportunities for NGOs to operate in an area for a long time, hire staff and retain them over time as well as facilitate meaningful capacity building and institutional learning.

Building Resilient Communities in Somalia (BRiCS) provides an example of donor influence on uptake and use. BRiCS programme is a four year DFID funded programme currently undergoing implementation in Somalia by a consortium that brings together Norwegian Refugee Council (lead agency), Concern Worldwide, Save the Children, International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Cooperazione e Sviluppo (CESVI).

Based on DFID requirements for the project, context analysis is done to understand the broader conflict issues. In addition, a risk matrix that captures a wide range of risks (including conflict and security related risk) is used to identify risks and mitigation actions. The risk matrix is updated on a quarterly basis. It is then determined whether the risk is increasing, decreasing or stable. Regular risk analysis has enabled BRiCS to translate the risk into ideas for action. If a risk becomes an issue affecting the larger community, it is addressed through a project. For instance, returnees were identified at the beginning of BRiCS as a risk with potential to increase tensions in the community. This was mitigated by including them in the programme. Where returnees have become a bigger issue (emergency), funding for a response was sought from DFID's Internal Relief Facility (IRF).

Context and risk analysis have been able to inform BRiCS' decisions at strategic and operational level. Good collaboration, information exchange and constant interactions with DFID have enabled BRiCS to implement relevant actions and interventions. DFID's interest is to ensure that risks evident in humanitarian contexts are adequately managed to facilitate implementation of long term projects. Learning how to manage risk is at the center of all interventions and establishing a risk management system that works is at the core. There is on-going focus on learning how to work on a long term basis in a humanitarian context. DFID demands that BRiCS monitors the context on a regular basis to identify, understand and report on the risks and consequently take relevant mitigation actions. BRiCS continuously anticipates how the risk will evolve for early-warning and early-action.

Ability to nurture strategic partnerships and manage delicate relationships: Successes in uptake and use of conflict analyses were reported to have been possible where organisations have been able to maintain good relationships with government structures at different levels. This was possible despite seeking to address the complex and sensitive issues highlighted by the conflict analyses. The very sensitive issues highlighted often in conflict analyses in fragile contexts have the potential, if shared, to strain relationships between organisations that conducted the analysis and those in authority and other interested parties. Organisations mentioned that it was necessary to work with government structures —in whatever shape they are— and those in authority in order to address emerging issues and implement some of the recommendations.

The SUDD Institute in South Sudan, for instance, has deliberately involved government in the analyses conducted. The Institute has the ability to manage delicate relationships with different stakeholders. This has given them access to key institutions and actors, facilitated the building of trust, increased buy-in by government and paved the way for opportunities for direct advocacy. Recognising the importance of making their conflict analyses public in order to increase uptake and use, one other organisation out-sourced the analysis role to another institution. With this, the organisation has been able to relegate and share out the risk likely to emanate from the sensitive issues raised by the analysis. The organisation engages and influences key stakeholders using the analysis as evidence.

Similarly, CRS indicated that its strategic partnerships with Juba University Center for Peace and Development, the Catholics Bishops Conference, the South Sudan Council of Churches and the national conflict early-warning and response structures have enabled uptake and use. There is on-going sharing of analyses generated by these different organisations and institutions. This has improved nuance and ownership of the analyses and facilitated joint action on recommendations. Specifically, the analyses conducted at various levels have been used to advise policy and action through the national South Sudan Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit (CEWERU). CEWERU is the national structure of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)'s regional Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism. CRS is part of CEWERU which is hosted by the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission (CRS' institutional partner for the CEWERS project).

The right people with the right capacity: Organisations said that uptake and use were successful when they had the right people with the right competencies in the right places to provide leadership as well as manage and implement projects in fragile contexts. People who are context and politically savvy, on top of having the right technical skills, are helpful in such contexts. Conflict Dynamics International (CDI), for instance, mentioned that having the right mix of people that bring theoretical and context experience with the ability to see the patterns in the Somalia context has been helpful for uptake and use of analyses. This has embedded context in the organisation and provided deeper insights to inform decisions on what the appropriate actions and right approaches are.

Other organisations mentioned the importance of staff with ability to design relevant interventions based on the conflict analyses, influence internal decision-making to translate analysis into actions and articulate results. Another supportive factor that has boosted organisational capacity for uptake and use, specifically for CRS, is its recognition of peacebuilding as one of the core competencies that all staff must have and demonstrate tangible actions. Staff therefore make effort to use the conflict analyses to shape peacebuilding interventions and to integrate peacebuilding into broader programming aspects in different sectors.

Clear peacebuilding niche and/or conflict-sensitivity focus: It was mentioned that organisations with highly defined areas of focus within the peacebuilding mandate may have less difficulty in translating analyses into strategy and programmes. This was explained in

comparison with multi-mandate organisations that have to apply the conflict analyses to broader programming aspects in different sectors to achieve conflict-sensitivity. Organisations that pitched conflict analyses to deeper understanding of their focus areas have found the uptake and use process more manageable —making the analyses more and directly relevant to their niche. Associated with this is that the ensuing recommendations are more specific and focused. This makes uptake and use by these organisations easier.

Below is how one of the organisations explained this:

We are a peacebuilding and security focused organisation working on small arms security, peacebuilding and governance. We domesticate existing analysis tools and frameworks to fit our macro analysis needs and to shape our interventions. Because we work in high tension and conflict areas where context evolves rapidly, we make sure analysis is built-in throughout and conflict-sensitivity is an underlying model for all projects. Community Safety Groups help in on-going identification of new and emerging issues which we then find ways of addressing (Saferworld, Kenya).

Likewise, organisations that have a clear conflict-sensitivity focus were more likely to put extra effort in utilising the analyses. This was because their policies as well as planning and programming guidance demand that analyses are conducted and used to inform strategy and programming decisions.

Other factors: The facilitating factors not mentioned frequently but worth pointing out are highlighted below.

- Appropriate advocacy approaches — including low key approaches, engaging to find alternative solutions and strategic communication — help mitigate risk while addressing issues raised in the conflict analyses.
- Ability to tailor conflict analysis tools to context and organisational needs. Saferworld Somalia indicated that they make choices around conflict analysis methodology with the aim of achieving the level of nuance that the organisation requires. This includes considering the ability of the approaches to handle the magnitude of complexity of the context.
- Timing of analysis vis-à-vis the organisations planning cycle. World Vision indicated that where the macro analyses have been aligned with the strategy cycle or a major event that has captured the organisation's attention, uptake and use were more likely to be successful.
- Macro-level conflict analysis facilitators available within the organisation offer technical support in post-analysis uptake and implementation. They are able to craft applicable recommendations given their knowledge of the organisation and technical skills.
- Post -analysis follow-up support offered by the senior leadership in the organisation has increased buy-in. Such support has included highlighting the importance of the

analysis to staff teams on a regular basis and encouraging accountability around implementation of recommendations.

- Validation of findings of a conflict analysis by various external stakeholders. American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) mentioned that they had their macro analysis validated by a large group of stakeholders who also did a comparative analysis with two other analyses, helping to validate each other. This not only facilitated identification of themes, but also informed their theory of change and programs.
- Participatory analysis with different actors is likely to increase ownership of findings and recommendations. World Vision stated that in cases where analyses took on a multi-agency format — and participating organisations were already organised in a network or consortium — organisations were able to take better post-analysis action. Similarly, it was noted that relationships created because of collaborative analyses have the potential to facilitate uptake and use across the participating organisations.
- Organisations were able to implement recommendations of the conflict analyses in cases where they were practicable.

Below is a discussion on factors that organisations identified to hinder uptake and use in fragile contexts.

4.12 Factors that hinder uptake and use

The following are factors that hinder uptake and use of macro-level conflict analyses as highlighted by organisations.

Rapidly changing context: Most organisations — particularly those operating in most fragile contexts — mentioned that because the context changed so fast, the analyses quickly got out of date and were in many cases no longer relevant. This makes planning difficult. An organisation operating in South Sudan revealed that “working in a constantly changing environment sometimes makes findings of an analysis almost immediately irrelevant”. Yet, organisations are often not pragmatic and agile enough to adequately respond to these changes. Many do not update existing analyses regularly enough to track the changing trends and dynamics in order to increase their ability to predict and take early action. One organisation operating in Somalia observed that “when context changes, needs change and plans no longer hold. But organisations remain inflexible with limited responsiveness to the context”.

Budget limitations and donor influence on programs: Many organisations revealed that oftentimes budget limitations hamper uptake and use since they are unable to follow through on what was recommended. They often do not have funds which can be reallocated to proposed actions and/or address emerging issues outside those originally planned since their funds are tied to specific projects. Modifications or introduction of new interventions

may require engagement and a go-ahead from donors which in some cases is not forthcoming due to donor restrictions. Organisations indicated that funding is related to donor orientation and what they perceive as priorities. Some reported that what comes out of their analyses as priorities is not necessarily what the donors consider to be priorities.

In Somalia, for instance, organisations are finding it difficult to raise funds for projects to address needs in the North. The donors' focus on the South — with improved security and access to communities in need — has influenced the geographic focus, priorities and program content of organisations, even when the context analyses may suggest otherwise. Another concern raised was interferences from donors on what should or should not be done as donors push for their own particular interests in the changing context. One of the organisations affected by this shared their experience:

We conducted a macro conflict analysis in 2011 bringing together government, local government, tribal leaders and the local community. As a result, we were able to further refine our 2011-2015 program which focused on peacebuilding, access to justice, capacity building... At community level, we were able to use early warning to feed into state level analyses. The analysis on migratory routes was particularly important in shaping the interventions focused on addressing cattle raids and building peace between communities. The macro analysis had identified the need to support people to access justice using traditional courts. After the conflict broke out in 2013, donor restrictions made it difficult to continue work with government. The peacebuilding program was impacted most because the organisation was not able to engage with critical government actors. (Staff from an organisation operating in South Sudan)

With peacebuilding, the analyses will often recommend the need to address structural root causes that require long-term interventions; yet donors are not always willing to commit to such programs. Some organisations also noted that not all donors believe that it is important to conduct conflict analysis to inform strategic and operational direction. Such donors are unlikely to fund analyses and/or cater for budget flexibility.

Emerging governance and restrictive environments: Many organisations operating in most fragile contexts said that the context determined the extent to which they were able to use macro-level analyses findings and recommendations. Budding and unstable government institutions in an environment of emerging governance make decision-making complicated and loaded with competing interests. Examples were given of frequent change of government officials which makes it difficult to build and maintain relationships. Equally, operating in a context of impunity, limited/no rule of law and contradicting justice systems (customary vis-à-vis formal) add to the complication. There are also unstable relationships between governments and authorities at different levels and NGOs, sometimes characterised by increasing tensions.

Organisations observed that their uptake and use of analyses was in certain cases limited by increasing government restrictions. Often times, organisations exercise self-censorship and avoid politically sensitive interventions and approaches that could have brought about sustainable change. Increasingly, emerging restrictive NGO legislations aimed at giving

governments more control were identified as a hindrance. Governments were increasingly asserting themselves, but they have limited resources. They accordingly seek to influence and control NGO programming decisions (where NGOs work, who benefits, and how things are done, etc.) in order to promote their interests. In many instances, the lack of government will to change the status quo — coupled with the existence of actors with an interest to sustain the conflict and instability — was reported as a hindrance to implementing recommendations.

Insecurity and related risks: Many organisations operating in most fragile contexts said that rampant insecurity upsets plans and makes the issues highlighted above even more complex. This is in addition to restricting access to areas that most need interventions as recommended by conflict analyses. Ability to predict and manage risk was identified to be a paramount competence for organisations operating in such contexts. However, many organisations indicated that it was difficult to anticipate risk, predict how it was going to evolve and program based on this.

For instance, due to security risks in Somalia, international NGOs have adopted a remote programming approach —i.e., working through local partners to implement programs— to enable them access insecure areas. Despite the advantages accruing from this approach, organisations observed that it had limitations for uptake and use of analyses. This approach came with limited control over what actually happens on the ground, making programming related risks difficult to manage. This is amidst an environment of low staff capacity within partners as discussed below.

Low staff capacity and frequent staff changes: Many organisations mentioned that there was limited staff capacity and awareness to support translation of analyses into practicable actions as well as to implement recommendations. This was also associated with limited or narrow understanding of conflict, peacebuilding and conflict-sensitivity; and how these relate to humanitarian and development programming. Oftentimes, staff do not realise the role that failed politics plays in hindering the complex non-linear cycle back and forth between relief, rehabilitation and development. Hence, they miss the opportunity to use technical programs to improve levels of fragility and conflict. There is low capacity to facilitate integration of relevant context issues and other sectors such as livelihoods, education, water and sanitation and health. With limited awareness and capacity, existing staff perceive these required alterations in programming as a burden, extra work or someone else's tasks.

It was also generally observed that there are inadequate technical competencies in designing, monitoring and evaluating conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding related programmes. For international NGOs that work through local partners, these face even larger capacity challenges. One of the organisations explained that “Staff of local partners have limited conceptualisation of humanitarian work. There is often a gap between what is conceptualised in program designs and at management level and how staff in the field understand and implement it”.

Coupled with the above are frequent staff changes that occur in fragile contexts. Participants in the analysis often change positions or leave the organisation. Generally staff turnover is high and institutional memory and skills are lost. It therefore becomes difficult to reconnect new staff to the analysis process and its results. When staff leave, there are often long delays before new staff are recruited. The fact that new people need to invest in building relationships and understanding the context — often from scratch — presents constraints for uptake and use of conflict analysis.

Politically sensitive issues raised by conflict analyses: Conflict analyses often raise issues which are politically sensitive in an already charged complex context. Thus, recommendations to address such issues present challenges when it comes to their implementation. It was mentioned that when sensitive issues are highlighted in the report, the organisations often put restrictions on sharing the analyses. The reports are therefore not shared externally and sometimes not even with critical staff within the organisation itself. Trust issues therefore hamper sharing of reports and information; and as such, this hinders more nuanced discussions on implications and how to intervene. Potential users therefore remain unaware of the analyses — hence, limiting uptake and use.

Organisations are also bound to exercise self-censorship because of the anticipated risk; and could therefore decide not to implement the recommendations. There is widespread fear of being branded as biased and serving other interests. This is often the case where responses to the issues raised require an advocacy approach, e.g. those related to poor governance and democratic practices, corruption and misuse of resources, politics, human rights, insecurity, etc. As one staff from an organisation operating in Somalia stated “Advocacy is limited due to pressure from government on NGOs that raise sensitive issues. This pushes NGOs to be extra sensitive. To what extent can one be sensitive and objective at the same time?”

Weak follow-up after analysis: This was identified as a critical factor by several organisations. It was said that even when the analysis is accurate and of good quality, there is often weak follow through on recommendations largely due to either not having mechanisms and guidance in place. Where they exist, they are weak. Some associated this weakness to not having a focal point / champion to follow through and ensure that recommendations remain on the agenda of management. Others blamed it on the lack of technical support to help in further interpretation of analysis and broad recommendations. In some cases, teams may not have the support and guidance to work through the implications to translate them into programming options and tangible actions.

It was also observed that organisations that use consultants to facilitate macro analyses often face gaps in post-analysis assistance. Once the consultants leave, organisations struggle to proceed with post-analysis processes due to lack of relevant capacity. The analysis is often not updated because of limited or no context monitoring. The example below illustrates lack of a structured way to facilitate follow-up after the analysis.

I have participated in several macro context analyses in South Sudan. I have found them to be a real mirror of the context. But something has to be done to ensure use after the analysis is done. It's like a nice movie which just ends. It builds momentum but offers no way to smoothly transition from analyses to the next steps of implementation of recommendations. The analysis needs to be brought down to what staff can do about it (Staff from an organisation operating in South Sudan).

Methodology and process issues: The conflict analysis methodology is sometimes not appropriate for use in fragile contexts. There was an indication that macro-level analyses aimed at influencing long-term strategies may not work well in fragile contexts due to rapid changes in context. There is also a high likelihood that the analyses may be overtaken by events. Conventional macro-level analyses frameworks at times face challenges when it comes to analysis of country contexts characterised with dissimilar sub-national and regional contexts — as in the case of Somalia and South Sudan. In some cases, organisations promote rigid analysis frameworks that do not give room for change or flexibility, even when the context calls for that.

Many existing tools and approaches were regarded as either too generic or technical and theoretical; and therefore not appropriate to deliver products needed by different organisations. Uptake and use of findings and recommendations emerging from such processes becomes difficult since the products are inapplicable. One staff mentioned that, “Some tools are too technical and detached from the ground, yet the field presents a different atmosphere.” This was said in comparison to the inductive process that was used to generate Do No Harm, which makes it resonate with field practice. Another organisation indicated that many of the modern macro-level analysis frameworks have limited capacity to deliver what they want adding that “theory locks you into a certain way of thinking”. One staff explained the challenges of some frameworks as follows:

The analysis remains at a broad level and not narrowed down to contribute meaningfully to strategy and programming. There is inability to discern what tools and methodology are best for certain contexts. Tools and methodology do not sometimes put into consideration the complexity of the context undergoing analysis (Staff of an organisation operating in Somalia).

There was concern that some processes are too cautious on who participates; thus, leaving out critical perspectives. Also, in environments of widespread mistrust — as is the case with most fragile contexts — it was imputed that participatory processes that bring together different people to jointly analyse the context may not be appropriate since they affect objective discussions. The process may consequently result in inaccurate analysis. Similarly, there is often not a good balance between practitioners and high-level leadership participating in the analyses. Either “big-picture” people or operations teams are not directly involved or adequately represented.

Yet, both are instrumental for uptake and use since the former are important in shaping strategic direction and the latter in formulating detailed and realistic recommendations. As a result, ownership is limited to a few and the usefulness of the analysis is restricted. Related

to issues discussed under weak follow-up, not enough time is devoted to understanding implications and coming up with an action plan to guide implementation of recommendations. This negatively impacts uptake and use.

Inadequate packaging of information and recommendations: There is a poor reading culture within organisations and the target audiences. In many cases, creative ways of disseminating information are not put into consideration to increase access and readability. Often, the information is not packaged adequately for the various audiences it intends to target. In addition, there is sometimes over circulation of information and analyses. As a result, even when there is something new, people do not read. Consequently, when people do not read for various reasons there cannot be appreciation of the analysis and its relevance. Similarly, analyses reports carry many broad recommendations targeting lots of stakeholders. There was concern that recommendations are repeatedly not prioritised and there is no guidance on how to go about them as discussed earlier. More so, the recommendations are not contextualised and not always actionable. Also, they are often over ambitious given the realities in fragile contexts.

Competition and limited collaboration between organisations: Organisations raised concerns that the competing interests of different organisations were chocking opportunities for collaboration. This affects collaboration on joint macro analyses as well as combined and harmonised efforts to implement analyses findings and recommendations. This they said has led to uncoordinated interventions, a waste of much limited resources and patchy impact. Suspicion and mistrust among organisations were reported to be factors underlying limited collaboration. Some organisations think that others are “interested in getting into their area and pursuing their agenda”, and thus presenting a competition for already scarce resources.

It was said that “Organisations in Kenya are territorial and do not want to share information”. Smaller organisations reported that they found working with large organisations difficult and challenging. One of them reported that “We have partnered with two large organisations that gave us challenges. They come with resources but are not open to learning”. One large organisation admitted that it was hesitant to work with others and even when it does it is distrustful and does not want to take risks.

Difficulties with getting buy-in at organisational level: Another challenge that was observed is the difficulty to influence decision-makers in organisations to buy-in. Besides this, competing interests and demands within an organisation present roadblocks to even considering the conflict analyses findings and recommendations. It was reported that not enough conceptual clarity exists among decision-makers in organisations on the usefulness of conflict analyses and what these contribute to achievement of humanitarian and development objectives. Coupled with this is the unwillingness of organisation to change the way they have done things in the past due to inflexibility.

Weak buy-in was partly related to monitoring and evaluation issues. Many organisations mentioned that weaknesses in measuring impact as a result of conflict-sensitivity and peacebuilding related interventions affect the extent to which organisations uptake and use conflict analysis findings and recommendations. Oftentimes, deliverables and indicators are not well defined especially when the above themes are mainstreamed or considered cross cutting. Besides this, organisations indicated that many traditional monitoring and evaluation processes do not consider the non-linear complex nature and context of peacebuilding and conflict-sensitivity related interventions. This is compounded by donors' demands for results projected in a linear format.

Also, many design, monitoring and evaluation approaches do not consider the fact that peacebuilding — if recommended by the conflict analysis — is a long-term process and demands for quick results are unrealistic. All the above were said to influence donors' funding decisions and organisations' choices and priorities when it comes to uptake and use of conflict analyses. One staff from an organisation that takes an integrated approach to peacebuilding and conflict-sensitivity observed that, "Management and leadership are always asking: How do we measure it? Why should we invest in it if we can't measure it?"

Other factors: Other hindrances to uptake and use raised by one or two organisations include:

- An institutional culture of doing a lot of planning without follow-up and implementation.
- Timing of analyses where they have been out of sync with organisational planning cycles, leaving no or limited room or appetite to consider the findings.
- Operating in silos and failing to grasp that the analysis has implications for all the organisation's work and not just peacebuilding.
- Organisations doing analyses as a requirement and not because they believe they need it or believe it adds value. In such cases, there is limited or no buy-in and incentive to translate recommendations into action. There is therefore lack of general commitment around follow through and decision-making.
- The "experts" view that sometimes dominates conflict analyses processes yet is often disconnected from the real issues that matter to people.
- Existence of unsupportive policies or lack of policies that facilitate uptake and use at organisational level.

5.0 General observations on facilitating and hindering factors

The factors that facilitate and hinder uptake and use are not mutually exclusive. They are interlinked and reinforce or undermine each other depending on the elements under consideration. For successful uptake and use of macro-level conflict analysis, it is essential to

take into account contextual realities in fragile and conflict-affected situations just as much as factors internal to organisations (e.g., organisational and methodological issues). This should be a central consideration particularly in the most-fragile contexts of Somalia and South Sudan. Among the major concerns hindering uptake and use, six were internal to the organisations and five were external factors largely related to contextual realities (see Diagram 1).

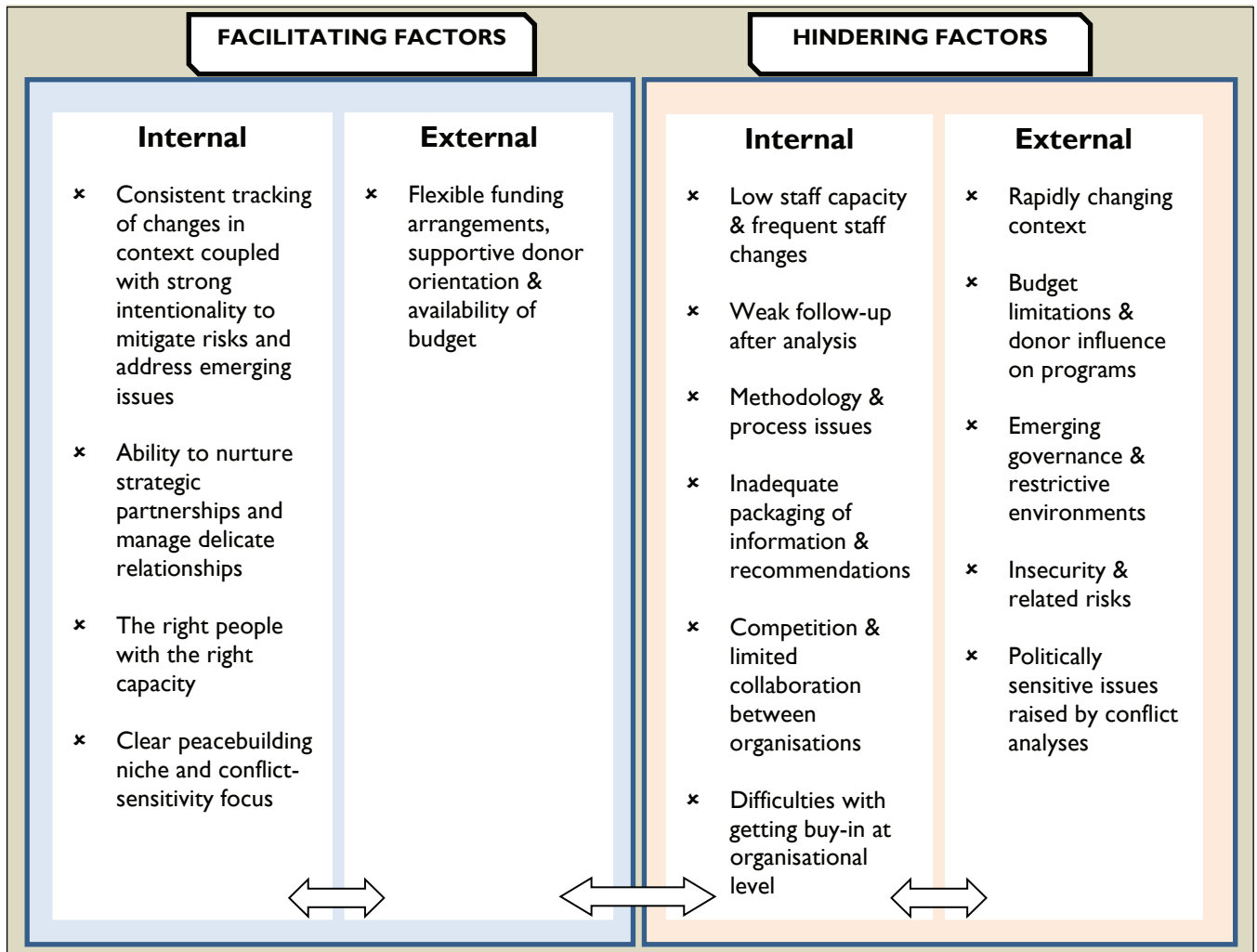
Other studies that acknowledge the influence of contextual factors on uptake and use include a World Bank study on effective conflict analysis exercises (2006: 17). This study indicated that implementation of some of the conflict analyses was made even more challenging because of the already difficult environments characterised by political sensitivities and insecurity. Similarly, the country contexts within which the analysis is conducted including wider political aspects was among the four critical factors identified to influence uptake and use (European Commission, 2014:6). The other three factors included the analysis process, organisational characteristics and institutional incentives. Although these factors related to uptake and use of strategic evaluations, they are applicable to the uptake and use of conflict analysis.

Therefore, uptake and use will to some degree depend on the extent to which the realities in most-fragile contexts are factored into the analysis methodology and considered in post-analysis processes. The realities in fragile contexts were found to shape organisations' decisions around uptake and use. Contextual, organisational and methodological issues should be given ample consideration in order to determine appropriate methodology, craft tangible and applicable recommendations and institute systematic but simple post-analysis uptake and use processes.

Findings also imply that organisations operating in medium-fragility contexts such as Kenya may have considerable latitude—scope of freedom of action and thought—to realise substantial successes in uptake and use of macro-level conflict analysis findings and recommendations. This is in comparison to those operating in most-fragile contexts such as Somalia and South Sudan. This is likely to be the case since the external factors identified to hinder uptake and use are more prevalent in most-fragile contexts. Contrary, those facilitating factors that emerged as major were largely internal to the organisations (see Diagram 1). These could be leveraged to overcome the external hindrances to uptake and use as some of the organisations are already doing.

While there are certainly hindrances to uptake and use—whether internal or external to organisations—these should not overshadow the need to conduct context / conflict analysis necessary to inform effective humanitarian and development policy and practice. The need to undertake effective macro-level conflict analysis and related uptake and use processes remains.

Diagram I : Factors that facilitate and hinder uptake and use of macro-level conflict analysis (common themes identified by many organisations)



6.0 Recommendations

These recommendations are crafted from what organisations thought could be done to improve uptake and use of macro-level conflict analyses.

On handling sensitive reports and information to facilitate wider sharing and use

- Be cautious with the language used, content and packaging of analysis findings and recommendations. **Develop a communication and engagement strategy** as part of the pre-, during- and post-analysis processes. Keep this simple and focused. This may include considering: what information will be generated (including sensitive and contentious issues); who the potential audiences and users (internal and external) are; what they need to know—what must be communicated to them; how information will be packaged for different audiences; who will be responsible for communicating what to who and how (methods); what the possible risks and mitigation measures are; etc. The aim should be to share as much as possible the analysis findings and recommendations to reach a wide range of potential users in friendly formats while mitigating risks and lessening restrictions to accessing the generated analysis.

On ensuring appropriate analysis methodology and processes are utilised to strengthen uptake and use

- Establish a **consistent and robust context monitoring mechanism** to complement macro-level analysis with context monitoring conducted regularly to track rapidly evolving contexts and to feed this into analysis updates. Owing to how fast-paced the context may be changing, determine regularity of updates—quarterly, every six months or annually. For most-fragile contexts, it is important to keep it lean, trigger-based and focused on trends rather than the details—“the more heavy the less useful it becomes.” Where feasible, an integrated context monitoring system is an option. In cases where security monitoring systems already exist and function well across geographical areas of operation, explore how these could be strengthened and enabled to report on conflict dynamics, trigger events, indicators of change and other risks beyond focusing on only security incidents.
- **Broaden and deepen participation** through balancing expert perspective with more local voices representative of various strata of society. Also balance participation of “big picture” leadership to help shape strategic direction and operational teams to craft practicable recommendations. Participatory processes that allay widespread mistrust and allow people the safe space to express their opinions without fear are seen to be more ideal particularly in most-fragile contexts.

However, participation is not a panacea for either ownership of the findings and recommendations or for uptake and use. More effort is needed to further ensure uptake and use—as elaborated in the previous and subsequent recommendations. This is because of the non-linear and interactive processes between people

of different experiences, capacity, interests and world views that shape decisions around uptake and use.

- Allow some degree of **methodological flexibility while watching out for quality**. This will contribute to addressing issues related to rigid structured methodologies in order to enhance their appropriateness in meeting organisations' analysis needs and suitability for various context intricacies and dissimilarities. There is need to make effort to understand which frameworks and processes meet the analysis needs of organisations. For peacebuilding organisations, for instance, the bar for quality and depth of the analysis should be higher than for multi-mandate organisations aiming at only conflict-sensitising their programming across various sectors. It is also important to balance country level analysis with multi-layer and/or multi-regional analysis that includes perspectives from a broad range of local participants and regional peculiarities.
- **Prioritise the crafting of implementable recommendations that acknowledge contextual realities** and dedicate ample time during the analysis process to achieve this. Aim at increasing the direct relevance and applicability of recommendations that are within the power of operational teams to effect. This depends, to some extent, on the conflict-sensitivity and/or peacebuilding technical expertise of the analysis facilitators/researchers. This is in addition to the extent to which other methodological issues are addressed as already proposed above. The technical expertise of analysis facilitators/researchers is also emphasised in some Overseas Development Institute (ODI) reports as important in coming up with actionable recommendations (Harris & Booth, 2013: 3-4).

Recommendations could be prioritised in terms of what should be implemented in the short, medium and long-term. Specific guidance should be provided on how to take them forward. Actionable recommendations should be linked to specific people who can then be held accountable. For multi-mandate organisations, recommendations — in addition to the above — should be coupled with efforts to work through options for various sectors that the organisation focuses on.

On making certain that there are post-analysis processes to facilitate uptake and use

- Develop **systematic but simplified guidance that brings clarity to post-analysis next steps** and strengthens the often loose, weak and casual link between analysis and its uptake and use. The guidance should be founded in the understanding of how each organisation functions, its decision-making dynamics and the various interests at play. There is need to understand organisational context and culture as well as existing pre- and post-analysis interests and dynamics in order to translate analysis into action (Kamatsiko, 2014: 37 & 40). It should also consider the

organisation's strategy and programming cycle as well as the formal and informal knowledge transfer and learning opportunities that exist. The guidance should be crafted with consideration of the contextual realities.

Key aspects to consider while developing the guidance may include:

- (1) How to further go about reflecting on implications of the analysis and translating analysis findings and recommendations into tangible actions that fit into existing or new operations and are realistic based on contextual realities.
- (2) Building ownership at organisational level and among other stakeholders and enabling uptake and use.
- (3) How and where to access relevant technical support to assist post-analysis processes and implementation in cases where in-house capacity is non-existent or weak.
- (4) Regular mentorship for leadership and /or operational teams for effective rollout of post-analysis processes.
- (5) How leadership will ensure accountability through monitoring and reporting with emphasis on demonstrating the extent to which agreed action plans were implemented. For instance, World Vision is currently experimenting with the '50-day check' where leadership and management of the respective national office are expected to assess progress made towards implementing MSTC recommendations approximately 50 days after the analysis. As part of ensuring accountability, leadership should also identify and designate a focal person / champion with relevant experience and skills to spearhead the processes.
- (6) Periodic reflections on lessons learnt and promising practice. Outcomes of these reflection exercises should feed back into the system to further improve uptake and use.

On promoting flexible funding and donor support for uptake and use

- **Engage and educate donors to impact their orientation, funding decisions and priorities.** Regular communication and information sharing in a transparent manner is important for nurturing trusting relationships. Donor engagement, education and influence could focus on these and other factors:
 - (1) The need for **increased funding for long-term programming in most-fragile contexts** with flexibility to cater for changes in programs as context changes.

(2) The need for **built-in flexibility in program budgets** particularly for programs to be implemented in rapidly changing fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

(3) The need for organisations to **set aside funds to allow for modification of programs and/or new interventions** when changes in the context of conflict call for this. This could take the format of a rapid response fund, a percentage of an organisation's total budget allocated for such purposes or other funding arrangements.

- Influence donors to develop **multi-year funding strategies for fragile and conflict-affected contexts that look beyond the immediate conflict crises to ensure long-term violence/conflict prevention, peacebuilding and reconciliation**. Availing funds to address critical peace and conflict issues that require long-term interventions would contribute greatly to removing hindrances to effective uptake and use.
- Continue advocacy targeting donors to emphasise the importance of **donors' role in shaping conflict-sensitive interventions through setting funding standards for fragile and conflict-affected contexts in all sectors**, whether humanitarian, peacebuilding, or long-term development. Donors should be influenced to require funding applicants to demonstrate considerations for conflict analysis and how the analysis has been factored into shaping proposed interventions. In addition, donors should demand that organisations reflect these considerations in reporting, monitoring and evaluations while ensuring that the "Do No Harm" principles are applied. Where such funding standards already exist, respective donors should ensure they are enforced.
- **Build credible field-based evidence of the impact of conflict analysis and use it to impact donor decisions and priorities** to support context / conflict analysis, its uptake and use. Concrete evidence is required, beyond anecdotal evidence, on how better understanding of context / conflict increases effectiveness in programming in fragile and conflict-affected contexts across different sectors.

On strengthening capacity to mainstream conflict-sensitivity and integrate peacebuilding in organisational strategy and other sector programming

- **Enhance organisational capacity, including that of local partner organisations**, to support conflict analysis uptake and use. There is need for capacity enhancement to support translation of analysis into tangible actions. Organisations specifically highlighted the following areas: mainstreaming conflict-sensitivity at strategy level and across programming processes in different sectors; integrating peacebuilding in strategy and other sector programming processes; monitoring and evaluation for peacebuilding programmes and for other sector

programmes that integrate conflict-sensitivity and/or peacebuilding; and advocacy in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

Organisations generally require better understanding of the nexus between conflict, peace, security, politics and governance. They also need to appreciate how these variables interplay and influence the humanitarian and development priorities and decisions taken by donors, implementing organisations and key decision-makers in beneficiary countries at different levels.

- Aim at **recognising conflict-sensitivity as a core competence** for leadership teams and staff operating in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. This may require looking out for these unique skills during recruitment processes as well as investing in building internal capacity and continued learning. In addition, conflict-sensitivity may be included as a core component during orientation of new staff. It may also require establishing accountability mechanisms through setting performance indicators for staff and leadership as well as ensuring monitoring and reporting.

On getting the buy-in necessary for uptake and use at organisational level

- **Mobilise organisational leadership and operations teams at various levels to buy-in.** While many of the above recommendations will contribute to increasing buy-in at different levels in the organisation, the following should also be given attention:

(1) Conduct a series of pre- and post-analysis meetings with leadership to enhance understanding of the value add of the analysis to the organisation. These meetings should enhance understanding that macro conflict analysis is not just an event but is part of a series of processes aimed at improving programming effectiveness. The meetings should also be avenues to secure their commitment to the analysis, agree on the purpose of the analysis, decide on the appropriate timing vis-à-vis its purpose and agree on general principles for roll-out, follow through and accountability.

(2) Commit senior leaders to put their weight behind the analysis and to continuously communicate to teams in the organisation about the importance of context/conflict analysis. They should demonstrate tangible support for post-analysis processes that facilitate uptake and use — including efforts to secure funding and to enhance organisational capacity.

(3) Engage senior leaders to consider the setup of the organisation and determine where to place responsibility for context/conflict analysis and its related post analysis processes, if effective uptake and use are to be achieved.

(4) Support efforts aimed at undermining silos while promoting integrated programming that builds synergies between sectors.

(5) Intentionally instil a culture of learning and flexibility in the organisation to improve programming effectiveness.

On promoting collaboration to jointly address factors that hinder uptake and use

- In addition to producing joint analysis reports, **develop off-shoot products that meet specific agency needs** to facilitate uptake and use by participating organisations, especially in situations where the conflict analysis takes on a multi-agency format. A similar recommendation features in a World Bank report on effective conflict analysis exercises (2006a: iii). Build on platforms presented by existing multi-agency collaboration to conduct joint analysis. These promise better uptake and use when recommended actions are linked to what organisations are already doing together.
- **Create a multi-agency learning forum** (or use existing ones) to facilitate on-going sharing of experiences and learning on conflict analysis practice, uptake and use as a means of improving uptake and use across the industry. This could be coupled with digital platforms for sharing analyses.
- **Collaborate through coalitions, networks, strategic partnerships or other arrangements to overcome contextual factors that hinder uptake and use** of conflict analysis. Consider to:
 - (1) Work with other organisations to engage governments and other power holders on sensitive issues, advocate for conducive operating environments and increased access to affected communities, etc. Concerted efforts have proven to be more effective and less risky compared to approaches where an organisation undertakes such activities single-handedly.
 - (2) Avoid setting high expectation and unrealistic approaches for advocacy in fragile contexts given that contextual challenges in many fragile contexts limit meaningful advocacy activities.
 - (3) Build strategic partnerships around context/conflict analysis to help in mitigating risks associated with sensitive analysis reports and the issues raised therein.

Appendix I: Methodology

Data was gathered in July and August 2015 using qualitative methods. Purposeful sampling was used to identify relevant organisations / institutions / agencies with an interest in those that generate and/or use macro-level conflict analysis to learn about their experiences with uptake and use processes. Key informant interviews were conducted with representatives of INGOs, NGOs, UN and donor agencies, government institutions with conflict analysis mandate, think tanks, research institutions, World Vision Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan as well as consultants and World Vision units at the Global Centre and Support Offices that have been involved in conducting and/or use of macro-level conflict analysis.

Thirty-one (31) organisations participated in the study. Drawing from these, 44 key informants were interviewed using a semi-structured in-depth interview format as follows: Somalia (10), South Sudan (8), Kenya (19), World Vision staff from the Global Centre and Support Offices (6) and MSTC lead facilitators / consultants (1). The detailed list of participants and organisations targeted is not presented for confidentiality reasons.

In addition, macro-level context / conflict analysis related reports from various organisations and relevant academic literature on conflict analysis, methodologies, uptake and use were reviewed (see References below for details).

The study approach was mindful of the dilemma and challenges around determining conflict analysis uptake and use and this was factored into the methodology and analysis of the gathered data. Triangulation of data and information was made possible through involving a wide range of individuals and organisations with varied experience in macro-level conflict analysis, its uptake and use as well as through literature and document review. Triangulation was instrumental in facilitating the verification and increasing the reliability of findings and the conclusions reached.

An inductive approach was aided by learning from many individuals' and organisations' experiences, comparing them, identifying patterns and themes and drawing conclusions. All interview notes from each interviewee were carefully studied and thereafter data was organised in common themes / categories. This sometimes called for re-categorisation, collapsing of others or adding another category. Themes were arranged from those with the largest number of mentions to those with the smallest. Findings were then organised in a synthesised format.

The different drafts of the report, at several stages, were reviewed by different categories of individuals, including a review team that was carefully selected to enable a more nuanced report.

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