Pockets of Peace in Crisis

The Impact of Integrating Conflict Prevention into Humanitarian Resilience Programmes in Fragile Contexts

September 2023

Authors:

Drew Mikhael, Queen's University Belfast

Julie Norman, University College London

Christian Aid exists to create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. We are a global movement of people, churches and local organisations who passionately champion dignity, equality and justice worldwide. We are the change makers, the peacemakers, the mighty of heart.

Christianaid.ie

Contact us

Christian Aid Ireland
19 Denzille Lane
Dublin
D02 WT72
T: +353 (0) 1 496 7040
E: dublin@christian-aid.org
W: christianaid.ie

Christian Aid is a member of

actalliance

Contents

Cover: Women farming in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, South Sudan, David Williams, Christian Aid Ireland

Photograph: Pg.13 Peace Committee meeting in Mwenga, Democratic Republic of Congo, Obed Buhendwa, Christian Aid

Glossary

Agenda for Humanity
An internationally agreed five-point plan that outlines the changes that are needed to alleviate suffering, reduce risk and lessen vulnerability on a global scale

CAP
Community Action Plan, the output of a Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (PVCA)

Charter for Change
An initiative, led by both national and international NGOs, to practically implement changes to the way the humanitarian system operates to enable more locally-led response

Conflict prevention
A range of efforts to pre-empt an outbreak or recurrence of violent conflict, especially where known conditions for conflict exist

Conflict sensitivity
The ability to understand the conflict contexts in which one operates, understand the interaction between interventions and the conflict context, and act on this understanding to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive impacts

DFID
Department for International Development (UK)

GBV
Gender-based violence

HPP
Humanitarian Programme Plan

ICPR
Integrated Conflict Prevention and Resilience

IDP
Internally Displaced Person(s)

Inclusive Programming
Sometimes referred to as 'inclusion'

Localisation
Shorthand for the move towards local actors taking a greater lead in designing, managing and coordinating humanitarian action

Nexus
The overlap between humanitarian and development programming, typically also involving a short-term to long-term shift. Recently the idea of a 'triple nexus' between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding has been raised as part of humanitarian reform debates

PVCA
The Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (PVCA) is the primary tool that Christian Aid uses to design and support resilience building programmes. It empowers poor people to analyse their problems and suggest their own solutions

Resilience
The ability of individuals and communities to anticipate, organise for and adapt to change

WHS   World Humanitarian Summit

Executive summary

The overarching finding of the research is that **conflict analysis is a crucial part of humanitarian work and resilience programmes in fragile states and should be further encouraged and developed**. While wider conflicts are likely to persist without broader national and regional peacebuilding[1] interventions, local conflict analyses can enhance conflict sensitivity and also empower communities with the knowledge to recognise early warning signs of violence, and to plan and adapt programmes that can aid in the mitigation of conflict. Conflict analyses can also inform local processes of conflict resolution, recognising key contextual sensitivities and facilitating cooperation both within and between communities to mediate local[2] low-intensity disputes. These processes can create meaningful interactions between formerly antagonistic communities, help integrate marginalised groups and strengthen social cohesion.

Conflict analysis is key in helping to identify the current conflict cycle[3] and provides a contextual understanding of conflict fragility and violence. The variance in conflict dynamics within the same country or region directly influences how programmes are implemented at the community level. The stage of conflict cycle can determine the impact of resilience activities; in periods of de-escalation, there exist opportunities to extend initiatives into longer-term resolution processes, while in periods of active or escalating conflict, focus may be placed on a range of 'managing'[4] (rather than resolving) the conflict. Additionally, the conflict dynamics will impact different demographics, with groups such as youth, women and girls, or displaced persons disproportionately affected in some conflicts more than others. Finally, conflict dynamics can also affect the relationships between different stakeholders as well as local partners' capacity to respond to conflict, affecting the programme's feasibility and space for adaptation.

Conflict analysis helps to set realistic resilience goals for communities in conflict. The goal of building resilience needs to be married with a realistic understanding of what communities can absorb and adapt to in terms of conflict. Conflict analyses are key in identifying what is necessary and feasible, and importantly can help partners manage the expectations of communities to better support them in engaging constructively with key stakeholders at the local, municipal and regional levels. Likewise, in local settings where projects are implemented, conflict analyses can inform opportunities to create cohesion within and between communities, provided the conflicts remain at a low intensity. However, because communities usually face several overlapping and sustained crises, including cycles of violence that are fuelled outside of their control, there is only so much communities can do to be "resilient". Therefore, programmes should be realistic about the extent that communities can be prepared to absorb and adapt to violence. A focus should be made on catalysing pockets of peace and resilience, despite fragile and volatile conflict dynamics.

The concept of localisation should be extended to conflict analysis. Localisation is not just about programme implementation but should extend to including community members in identifying key conflict dynamics. Local knowledge informs deeper understanding of conflict and communities and is crucial to revealing 'hidden' conflicts that might disrupt even basic humanitarian programming. Conflict analyses should therefore include voices from communities and sub-groups that are particularly marginalised, ensuring that the associated intervention strategies not only address their needs but reflect their lived experience of the conflict and their stories of survival. Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) processes are paramount in the local analysis so that programming does not reinforce systems of inequality driven by gender norms, gerontocratic age-related hierarchies or dominant narratives of majority groups. The process should also include the involvement of community members as primary participants in the conflict analysis to bolster sustainable skills in anticipating and preventing conflict, identifying local capacities and finding new means of cooperation to create cohesion.

Peacebuilding should focus on 'lateral-scaling' rather than scaling-up. Scaling-up local peacebuilding processes -- while laudable and oft-promoted as an end goal in fragile contexts as a means of spreading peace dividends -- is fraught with difficulties. For example, elites who operate at national and regional levels may directly or indirectly benefit from the ongoing conflict, while others might seek to commandeer such initiatives for their own gain. Further, expanding from the local to the national level increases the number of stakeholders, needs and perceptions of peace and conflict drivers, which means identifying common problems becomes more difficult. A more feasible approach would be a 'lateral-scaling' of local peacebuilding processes, with knowledge shared between communities. 'Lateral-scaling' is horizontal peacebuilding, a cascading out from areas where peacebuilding programmes have been carried out successfully, thus replicating programmes through knowledge exchange. 'Lateral-scaling' promotes grassroots peacebuilding by ensuring that stakeholders and the problems they face remain at the forefront, avoiding other actors who might have competing interests.

1. Introduction

1.1 Learning Objectives

This research aims to assess the extent to which conflict prevention has been integrated into Christian Aid's Humanitarian Programme Plan (HPP) via the Integrating Conflict Prevention into Humanitarian Resilience (ICPR) approach, creating small pockets of peace. Specifically, the project looks at how conflict analysis is used and acted on to increase grassroots resilience towards violence in fragile places. Conflict prevention techniques, when holistically integrated into humanitarian programmes can inform practice, strengthen community resilience and facilitate peacebuilding.

The research identifies how conflict analysis and social cohesion strategies are implemented in humanitarian activities (such as livelihood training, agriculture, water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH), etc.) and highlights how a successful intervention continuum can contribute to violence prevention in local settings. Additional objectives include analysing the extent to which the integration of peacebuilding processes impacts the inclusion of marginalised groups, localisation efforts and the dynamics of community-led vulnerability and capacity assessments.

1.2 Background

This report reflects longitudinal learning from a multi-country Christian Aid research project: Integrating Conflict Prevention into Humanitarian Resilience Programmes, according to the ICPR approach (see Infographic 1).[5] The focus on violence prevention and peacebuilding does not traditionally fall within the remit of humanitarian organisations, as peace work was often left to peacebuilding-focused organisations. Today, with data indicating that 80% of humanitarian needs are driven by conflict,[6] humanitarians must understand how their work can be tailored to positively impact peace and how the integration of peacebuilding can foster greater humanitarian dividends. The integration of action-oriented conflict analysis and peacebuilding in humanitarian resilience programmes was identified as a need in Christian Aid's programmes on building resilience in conflict settings. Christian Aid developed the ICPR approach to better support partners and communities in building resilience in violent conflict contexts.

The ICPR approach was implemented with local partners in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan and Myanmar from 2017-2022 under the Irish Aid-funded Humanitarian Programme Plan (HPP). The HPP programme is characterised by participatory processes, including the ICPR approach, which is fundamental to Christian Aid's partnership approach of working with and promoting the agency of local actors and their communities. Under this partnership model, Christian Aid country teams work with locally identified partner organisations, who in turn implement programmes in coordination with local community leaders and committees. This localised approach is designed to build the resilience of communities through greater preparedness and adaptability to conflict.

The ICPR starts with a macro conflict analysis to identify the key features of the wider conflict and provide a situational overview of the dynamics that exist nationally. Following this, a conflict analysis is conducted in local settings to inform a participatory process in which communities identify risks that may generate humanitarian needs, including the potential risk of violence and/or conflict. Additionally, this approach ensures a rigorous understanding of how conflict informs intervention strategies and the changing needs of communities to maximise impact in a safe and constructive way. One of the key tools of the participatory process is a Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (PVCA), which puts communities at the centre of change, increasing awareness of risks, uncertainties and their root causes,

building on local capacities and identifying mitigation strategies in an active cycle of analysis, action and advocacy activities. The integration of the conflict analysis component ensures that PVCAs are carried out in a way that, at minimum, is sensitive to conflict, and that activities do not exacerbate conflict or harm. Additionally, the conflict analyses serve to detect less overt tensions and conflicts in communities, and identify the capacities of communities that might help prevent or resolve conflicts.

The first report published in 2019 focused on early learnings from the incorporation of conflict analysis within the resilience programming cycle, particularly in the PVCAs. The second phase of the research emphasises the operationalisation of the ICPR over time to inform programmatic changes and adjustments.

Infographic 1: ICPR
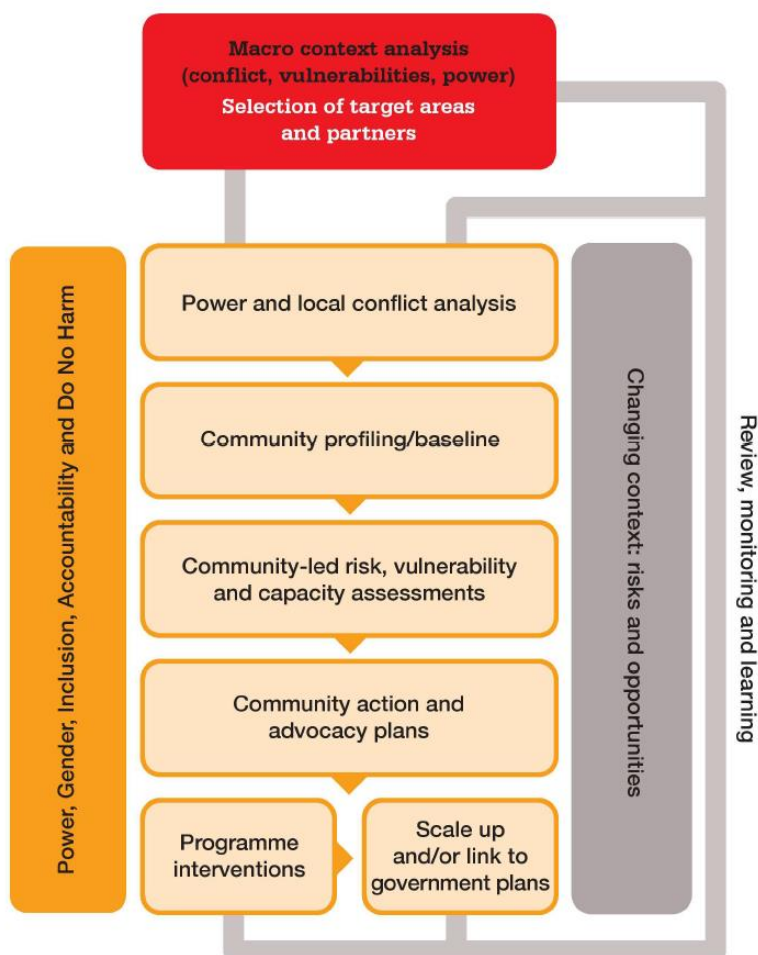
A secondary goal of the research is to inform ongoing humanitarian reform debates: first, the discussion on how to work across a 'triple nexus' of humanitarian work, development and peacebuilding to address the full scope of needs of people affected by crisis holistically;[7] and second, the discussion on localisation, considering how local actors can assume a greater role in humanitarian action. The report's central contribution is to build an empirical understanding of conflict analysis and violence prevention in action: the melding of humanitarian work and peacebuilding programming and how it might best facilitate localisation and inclusion to contribute to resilience in fluid conflict contexts.

1.3 Methodology

The research methodology was qualitative and used a comparative approach, comparing evidence across countries and communities. Researchers undertook initial country visits to Burundi, DRC, Myanmar and South Sudan in 2018 for the first round of fieldwork, with follow-up visits initially scheduled for 2020 that were postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The visits were completed in May 2022 in all countries bar Myanmar, which was not deemed possible due to the political situation in the country, so interviews were conducted remotely with CA staff and their implementing partners. Unlike the other locations, focus groups could not be completed with project participants in Myanmar.

Research methods included focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) with identified stakeholders (see Appendix for full FGDs, interviews and locations list.) The purpose of the FGDs was to understand how local communities perceived and responded to the integration of conflict analysis in humanitarian programmes. A total of 20 FGDs were conducted in the field sites with local committee members, participants and implementing staff, with 425 participants. FGDs often included large numbers of participants and sometimes included members of local authorities such as local chiefs, government officials (including local security agency members), as well as the relevant community committees established by implementing partners. In South Sudan, three FGDs had the majority of the boma (hamlet-sized region), resulting in participants swelling the numbers to over 50, mixing committee members as well as participants of the programmes themselves.[8] In DRC the largest focus group was 27 people while in Burundi the largest FGD was 17.

FGD organisation and sampling was coordinated by local partner organisations, with attention to striving for parity in gender and diversity in age. Also, based on the last round of research, particular emphasis was placed on obtaining people from potentially marginalised backgrounds, including people with disabilities and internally displaced people (IDPs).

21 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Christian Aid country teams, staff members from partner organisations and country conflict specialists. Additional conversations were held with staff of other international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and embassies. Local Christian Aid staff

assisted with identifying key stakeholders in each location. The purpose of the KIIs with Christian Aid and partner organisation staff was to understand the design, implementation and perceived impact of the conflict analysis integration, as well as to assess staff members' perceptions of its effectiveness. KIIs with other organisations were useful for gaining insight into comparative approaches to integrating peacebuilding in humanitarian programmes and for gathering different perspectives on the conflict context in each location.

Notes from the KIIs and FGDs were transcribed and thematically coded by the researchers to identify representative ideas and reflections within each country's context. A thematic comparison was conducted between the four country case studies to identify the most representative elements and anecdotes, as well as exceptions and outliers. The data analysis focused on delineating between the direct humanitarian impacts of the conflict analyses and the more indirect peacebuilding outcomes that emerged in parallel.

2. Conflict Analysis

Traditionally, conflict analyses have consisted of macro-level assessments by national offices, external agencies or consultants, and have focused on the broad dynamics of conflict. Often this resulted in analyses that, while interesting and important for providing macro-level background, did not serve to forward the understanding of dynamics on the ground. Recently, however, there has been a shift to local-level conflict analyses that draw from the knowledge, insights and observations of community contact points, committees and local partners. Community-level conflict analyses focus on the root causes and drivers (or triggers) of conflict and violence related to the security, political, environmental, socio-cultural and economic landscape at the local level. Our research in 2018, for example, outlined that while macro analyses were important to set the picture for grander conflicts, it was crucial to have a granular understanding of the hyper-local, intra-community context as well.

Indeed, a valuable development within Christian Aid's ICPR action-oriented approach has been shifting the conflict analysis process away from the external consultant model and situating it at the community level. In each of the countries studied in this research, Christian Aid provided training and capacity strengthening to local partners to equip them with conflict analysis skills to not only identify conflicts but also to analyse the drivers, root causes and triggers, using techniques such as community mapping and problem trees. Implementing partners in Burundi explained the different steps of the conflict analysis as follows:

- The initial analysis outlines the broad range of issues as the different community members see them, identifying the divisions that exist between people.

- The local 'disaster committee,' described as 'the eyes and ears of the project,' decides the best way to bring people together to discuss the main issues.
- Before projects, sessions are conducted to avoid conflict through training, and working with identified local leaders to help prevent any issues.
- With supporting partners, the community holds a PVCA in a safe space and develops a community action plan (CAP), aiming for action-oriented outcomes.

Christian Aid also recently developed a conflict analysis tool to provide a framework for country teams and local partners and is available to all staff. While some country staff and partners indicated that the tool was complex and/or difficult to translate into local languages, most agreed that the conflict analysis process itself was helpful for planning the implementation of humanitarian and development programmes in communities.

It is crucial to note that while local conflict analyses generally shifted towards using local knowledge, each context is different, requiring a different approach. In Burundi for example, there is a lack of willingness to discuss conflict, often requiring locally conducted analyses to use different methods of communication, such as storytelling, when approaching members of the community. The same is true in Myanmar, where community members are often hesitant to vocally criticise the government. This ensures safer parameters for communities to navigate their own complex landscape and avoids an extractive or conflict-insensitive approach to analysis.

Conflict analyses were also useful for identifying less overt or non-political conflicts that still resulted in violence. As one conflict consultant in Burundi explained, it was not enough to look at the broad inter-community conflicts but also intra-family ones, as violence often occurs at the intra-family level over economic issues. In response, the consultant advised that there was a need to include marginalised stakeholders, particularly women and girls, as well as displaced and returnees, in future PVCAs. In South Sudan, the conflict analyses indicated that many community-level conflicts were rooted in disagreements over dowries, prompting the community to discuss the issue to find a resolution (ultimately deciding on a mutually agreed minimum dowry).

Conflict analyses should not be expected to provide all needed details for the programme but may be understood as a first step in developing a consistent conflict-sensitive approach. A staff member from Tearfund in Burundi explained that the conflict analysis is a step to develop a broad understanding of conflict dynamics with the key stakeholder groups, followed by a more in-depth study; without following this sequence, the risk of conflict increases. Indeed, local partners in DRC recalled a time when they conducted a PVCA without a prior conflict analysis, which resulted in them unknowingly bringing together two chiefs who were in conflict with one another, worsening the situation and ultimately undermining

the PVCA process. This example speaks directly to the complex nature of humanitarian action and the need for going beyond traditional needs assessments to further understand local conflict.

Case Study: Mwenga (DRC)

Needs assessments are a foundation for humanitarian work, as they help identify those disproportionately affected by poverty and inequality. However, as the following experience in DRC demonstrates, needs assessments and intervention strategies must be informed by and complemented with a deep understanding of the conflict context. Adaptations *should be* made accordingly in line with peacebuilding approaches and principles to mitigate the risk of harm.

In Mwenga (DRC), the conflict analysis helped identify a long-standing conflict between neighbouring communities that partners were then able to mediate in the PVCA.

The project brought the communities together by a dual process of mediation prior to the PVCA and then addressed common problems in collaboration, solidifying cooperation over the shared interest of rehabilitation of a health centre. This example was first discussed in 2018, and it was clear that relations between the communities have deepened in the subsequent years.

In this example, through the ICPR, Christian Aid and local partners were able to identify the escalation of tensions at an early stage through context analysis and better prepare and engage actors sensitively to effect positive change. This prompted the design of a series of adaptations. Indeed, community engagement in the early stages helped build trust, transforming inter-group dynamics.

The peace committee profiled in the above example has now delivered mediation training to other communities nearby, referencing their experience as an example to other communities. This horizontal knowledge transfer should continue to be monitored closely to explore the possibility of 'lateral scaling' (outlined later) of successful peacebuilding processes, i.e., disseminating the process at the same local levels rather than scaling up. Lateral scaling crucially helps to extend local peacebuilding processes throughout communities. Focusing on local GESI considerations can also provide opportunities to address the historic marginalisation of women and girls, as explained below. Implications for conflict analysis is that lateral-scaling opportunities should be explored in the analysis before engaging in the activities, i.e. discussions with the community committees to identify that activities do not cause unintended harm.

Case Study 2: Burundi

In Burundi, the conflict analysis helped partners identify specific issues faced by women, in particular widows, whose opinions, along with other vulnerable groups, were often not considered in village-level planning. A widow in Burundi explained that the analysis identified those in the community who were excluded, and facilitated their inclusion in subsequent agricultural and vocational activities.

The conflict analysis brought 'their voice to the village,' and their resulting inclusion in activities enabled others in the community to 'see our value and how much we help. And now we have found different ways we can contribute.'

The same women also noted that because they interacted more now with others in the community, they had got to know one another and saw each other as friends, making it easier to prevent and resolve conflicts when they arise.

The conflict analysis helped to identify the depth to which marginalised persons had been left out of decision-making processes and the deleterious impact this had on those people and subsequently allowed for the implementation of a process that would both include and give value to the voice of marginalised persons.

3. The Impact of Conflict Analysis and Peacebuilding in Resilience Programming

This section explores three broad impacts of conflict analysis integration in resilience programmes. They are identified as: 1) Conflict Sensitivity, 2) Conflict Prevention (through social cohesion), and 3) Conflict Resolution. It is important to note that these are not fixed or linear categories, and no single impact is inherently 'better' than the others. Further, the potential for impact varies between different conflict contexts, most notably where relations between communities have developed positively to the point that there is no immediate risk of conflict.

3.1 Conflict Sensitivity

At a minimum, a conflict analysis informs conflict sensitivity, which is an approach that seeks to ensure that *no harm* is caused by the intervention being carried out that could negatively impact the resilience of communities. A conflict-sensitive approach may not directly contribute to peacebuilding, but it may do so indirectly by: a) minimising the risk of conflict caused by aid and development programmes; and b) mitigating obstacles to aid and resilience programmes caused by conflict dynamics.

3.1.a Do No Harm

A key objective of the conflict sensitivity approach is to ensure that the 'do no harm' ethos is applied. This means carefully constructing development projects and resilience programmes so that they do not cause or further exacerbate conflicts. There are three main ways in which tensions can be avoided with this approach that were observed:

1. *Ensuring that planned programmes are in line with religious and cultural norms.* In Burundi, for example, partners explained that they had planned a domestic livestock project in which households would receive pigs to help build a sustainable livelihood. However, in meeting with community members for the conflict analysis, they learned that a number of Muslims in the community could not raise pigs due to Islam forbidding the consumption of pork. The partners thus decided to provide goats instead of pigs to avert a potential conflict and foster a more inclusive approach to programming. A conflict analysis provides an in-depth understanding of the important cultural practices of different groups that could cause conflict or deepen marginalisation.

2. *Ensuring that resource competition is not created in areas of humanitarian and resilience programming.* A persistent challenge in humanitarian work is determining where to implement programmes when so many communities are in need. Such decisions have serious implications on the ground, particularly at the hyper-local level where communities are most vulnerable, as echoed by participants in all countries included in the research. In South Sudan for example, where water insecurity is acute, the construction of a borehole was welcomed by the community, but also caused tensions with surrounding villages that do not have direct water access. Community members tried to mitigate this by having a 'water major' to regulate the use of the borehole, but they admitted that the only real solution would be to have more water access points throughout the area. The identification of the issue and attempt to mitigate it were instructive of good practice, as the local partners, in consultation with the community, found the cause of the conflict between the communities and sought to address it through mediating a solution. This resolution also had a positive gender component; women and girls most likely go to fetch water, so reducing tensions around the water point helped lessen their fear of potential violence.

3. *Mitigating inter- and intra-community competition for aid interventions.* In Myanmar, Christian Aid and partners have long adapted programmes and employed intervention strategies in efforts to minimise inter-communal conflict in the state of Rakhine, namely by ensuring that programmes reach both IDP and host communities and both Rohingya and Rakhine (Arakanese) ethnic communities. After the start of the first Rohingya genocide in 2016, many development groups understandably focused their attention on the displaced Rohingya communities. But they found that those interventions increased hostility towards the Rohingya IDPs (as well as the NGOs themselves) unless paired with comparable programmes in surrounding communities. Conflict analyses should be able to identify causes of conflicts in previous rounds of programmes to ensure that new interventions avoid mistakes of the past.

In Burundi, partners noted that conflicts can also emerge *within* communities when some members are selected to participate in livelihood programmes or receive assistance while others are left out. As partners explained, they sometimes only have the resources to assist 80 people, when 1,000 need help. They try to mitigate potential conflicts by working with local committees to help identify the most in need of support. They then invite the entire community together at the start of the programme to explain the criteria and why some were selected. Finally, they try to include those who were not initially selected in the next round of programmes.

3.1.b Mitigating and Obstacles

Conflict analyses are also crucial to ensure the conflict sensitivity of humanitarian and resilience initiatives by identifying the conflict dynamics that may affect or impair the delivery of programmes, and guaranteeing that they can be designed to mitigate those effects while being flexible enough to respond to them. The research identified a number of these examples, most prominently in DRC, where the local partner, along with the assigned focal points for the communities, had built up an in-depth understanding of the conflicts between the different communities, and that knowledge directly fed back into the analyses, providing a constantly updating perspective of the conflict to help avoid potential issues.

It is important to note that conflict analysis is also about providing the community with the ability to recognise early warning signs to identify conflicts beyond their control, as much as identifying manageable obstacles. Resilience to conflict depends on the conflict type and intensity, as the cross-border conflict in South Sudan underlines. In that case, Sudanese displaced persons often migrate to Northern Bahr el Ghazal state, a potential trigger point for the South Sudanese who have experienced significant violence from cross-border raids led by Sudanese. The regular migration patterns of Sudanese to Northern Bahr el Ghazal have resulted in a near-constant state of tension between South Sudanese inhabitants and Sudanese migrants, requiring government oversight and state-to-state agreements to

provide security to the citizens who have historical enmity. Identifying and addressing this cross-border conflict helped reduce tension with mediation and government guarantees to provide safety in the event that violence occurred. One member of Christian Aid staff explained that peacebuilding is a 'multi-sector' response. When governments provide security guarantees, the HPP programme should be flexible enough to reinforce these positive developments and help communities adapt from previous conceptions of distrust and begin to foster good relations. In the example of South Sudan, identifying the 'root cause' of the tension, i.e., migration patterns involving distrusting communities, means implementing programmes that can try to tackle food, water and other resource issues that normally arise with migration, while lobbying the government to provide security guarantees can help tackle violence.

3.2 Conflict Prevention: Trying to Do Good

The second broad impact of integrating conflict analysis in humanitarian programmes is finding opportunities to contribute to conflict prevention through resilience initiatives. Resilience programmes can help prevent violence by a) fostering inclusion, b) enhancing social cohesion, and c) providing a positive sense of purpose and identity.

3.2.a Fostering Inclusion

Resilience programmes informed by conflict analyses do not directly solve conflicts. Still, they can help provide other forms of livelihood support through vocational training and Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) that support small business initiatives. Access to a sustainable livelihood decreases resource competition and enhances human security at individual and community levels. As such, there has been more attention to the make-up of VSLA members, particularly people excluded due to social norms, like widows and displaced persons. The VSLA, comprising people from varied backgrounds, meant a sensitivity towards similarly positioned people and helped reduce tension when previously they might have been ignored. These adjustments, while small, are significant in local settings and cannot occur without hyper-local conflict analysis.

Case Study 3: South Sudan

Conflict sensitivity also means understanding the impact projects have across gender lines. In the South Sudanese region of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, the Christian Aid team anticipated a potential risk of doing harm by identifying a very low number of male participants in agriculture livelihood support and VSLA. Although the programme had initially been designed to have a strong focus on women's empowerment, due to their disproportionate exposure to poverty relative to their male counterparts, the team did not anticipate that only 18% of participants would be men.

Although such disparity might not raise any alarms at first sight, previous experience has shown that projects that solely or so disproportionately engage women over men have the potential to drive resentment from male counterparts. Livelihood programmes can lead to changes in traditional social and gender norms, and if not monitored carefully they can risk increasing the incidence of some forms of GBV. For example, domestic violence can increase if partners or family members feel threatened by or resentful of women's new-found economic independence – especially in conflict-affected states where male family members may not be able to meet their traditional responsibilities as "breadwinners" due to the impact of war.

This points to a tenet of conflict-sensitive programming, which is the ability of programme staff to anticipate negative consequences before they even take place through regular monitoring and applying the necessary adaptations. The team in South Sudan commissioned a gender-sensitive context analysis to better understand how the programme could increase male participation. Among other recommendations, the analysis showed males' preference for livestock farming over agriculture livelihood support, which is heavily influenced by traditional gender roles. In a context where the volume of herd is often seen as a marker of wealth and a guarantee for marriage (as well as being the main source of income and food for the majority of the population), males are often socially encouraged to accumulate livestock. The findings were taken on board to ensure a more even participation of men in programme activities.

If gender-blind, humanitarian action has a potential to increase violence against women and girls, regular monitoring of how activities impact gender relations in households, and quick adaptations are key to avoid harm and reduce levels of violence.

3.2.b Social Cohesion

Another indirect benefit of resilience programmes is fostering community cohesion that can help decrease divides, especially in interethnic areas, and prevent a return to violence, mainly when the wider national-level conflict drives a wedge between communities. This was particularly notable in Burundi, where the 2015 crisis resulted in violence between members of different ethnic groups and political parties who live in the same areas. When questioned about the community's resilience towards similar divisive national political events in recent elections, the community members active in the agriculture and VSLA programmes said they would not succumb to such violence in the future after working together around a shared objective.

As one male participant in Burundi (Makamba) stated, '*Here we are working on different projects together. It would be hard for someone to come and tell us that we are different and should be divided.*' Likewise, a female participant commented, '*If people work together on one project, they are more united, even when tensions come.*' The conflict analysis also found that there was a gendered difference in how women and girls experienced conflict compared to men and boys. While the HPP project cannot be expected to deconstruct patriarchy in local settings, the collaboration, and empowerment of women, particularly the

ability to make choices on funds through the VSLA, increased their contribution to communities in a meaningful way.

In this same community, there were clear positive results in terms of undermining harmful stereotypes of IDPs whose return to the village is often considered a likely source of conflict. As one returnee to Makamba described: "*We returnees felt like an imposition, and we were treated as people who start conflict, but now we try to find solutions together for the problems in the village. Now we don't have or bring any conflict to the community.*" The VSLA, along with the farming committee, established economic generating activities that previously marginalised community members were able to participate in, turning around the widely held view that returnees and widows are resource drains and potential sources of instability. In this way, the ICPR-informed VSLAs act as a security net for the community that helps stop intra-community violence, highlighting the broader catalytic impact of the ICPR approach towards sustainable peace.

Partners described a similar dynamic in the Rakhine state in Myanmar, where previously high tensions between the Rohingya and Rakhine/Arakan ethnic groups have since subsided. This is primarily due to the shift in the macro conflict dynamics, with the 2021 coup reorienting the conflict between the Arakan army and the Myanmar military. But partners also point to better relations at the local level through increased actions between the two communities, such as joint teacher trainings, livelihood initiatives and shared water points. Previously, the Rohingya were mostly isolated, living in IDP camps with little interaction with the Rakhine communities, leading to fear and mistrust. Reflecting a contact hypothesis[9] approach, the joint-community activities encouraged by the ICPR promoted cooperation between the groups on common problems allowing for positive engagement while also more efficiently meeting the needs of both communities.

3.2.c Purpose and Identity

Resilience programmes can also foster an individual and a collective sense of purpose, especially for marginalised groups such as widows, orphans and IDPs. As one female VSLA participant in Burundi (Makamba) stated, '*Before we felt unwanted and undervalued in the community, but now we feel everyone has value.*' As previously explained, resilience initiatives can also foster a sense of shared identity that supersedes ethnic divides. One male participant in Makamba (Burundi) described this as becoming more 'ethical citizens,' stating: '*We used to wonder about other people's ethnicity or political party. Now we all see all others as Burundians and feel the need to contribute to the country's development.*' Of course, some remain set in their ideology, and community leaders acknowledge that changes in mindset can take time. But there was a general consensus that ICPR had enabled communities to bring people together around joint activities and helped make the communities more resilient to external provocations or potential ethnic violence.

3.3 Conflict Resolution (peacebuilding/mediation)

The third broad impact of conflict analysis is on direct peacebuilding initiatives at the community level. In the Christian Aid context, this usually consisted of establishing community-level peace infrastructure called 'peace committees,' with members trained in mediating interpersonal conflicts. The precise roles of the committees varied by context but included efforts to a) mediate disputes before they escalate, b) (re)establish community-based conflict resolution processes lost during wartime, and c) promote a culture of peace.

3.3.a Mediating Conflicts

Members of the peace committees received mediation training from local partners to equip them with skills to resolve conflicts in the community before they escalate. As noted above, typical issues included disputes over land borders and water access, domestic disagreements and interpersonal conflicts such as unpaid debts. Using a mediation-based approach, peace committee members typically first met with the parties separately to hear their grievances, then brought the parties together to find an agreed solution. The goal was to find a 'win-win' solution or compromise that was acceptable to both parties.

Committee members and participants attested that this approach was different and more effective than going to government authorities for two main reasons. First, the 'win-win' approach was more likely to actually *resolve* a conflict, rather than a sometimes-arbitrary ruling declaring one person in the right and one person in the wrong, in which cases conflicts often festered. Second, the peace committee's mediation services were free to all community members, while government authorities typically required fees or bribes.

In 2021, a total of 374 conflicts were reported as coming to the peace committees, with an average of 85% of conflicts resolved through conflict resolution mechanisms in target communities (79% in Burundi, 82% in DRC and 93% in South Sudan). There has been steady improvement in conflict resolution by peace committees over time as well. In 2020, an average of 76% of conflicts presented to peace committees were addressed and resolved, which was a 15% increase from 2019.[10]

In most communities in South Sudan, DRC and Burundi, local authorities also appreciated the mediation programmes for resolving conflicts at the community level and freeing up the judiciary to deal with criminal cases such as rape, murder or serious theft. Community members and authorities also noted that, in conflict contexts characterised by frequent violence and arms proliferation, even seemingly simple conflicts could quickly escalate and become more serious if not resolved through community mediation. As a Christian Aid staff member in South Sudan commented, *'Conflicts can lead to violence or loss of life because of people taking revenge. Instead of seeking redress from the court system, they take the*

law into their hands, so it's a payback cycle. So, the peace committees can help mediate some kind of reconciliation.'

3.3.b Re-establishing Reconciliation

Another aim of the peace committees cited in both DRC and Burundi was to re-establish the traditions of community-based conflict resolution processes lost over years of violence. As one Christian Aid staff member in DRC stated:

'*We have been struggling with over twenty years of war, and the traditional mechanisms have deteriorated. It's a good opportunity to say, let's start again with what we were doing before instead of resorting to violence. So much was lost during the war, we lost the social trust. We have had bad governance and war that destroyed our systems – now the peace committees can help us reintroduce to our communities how to solve conflicts in a peaceful way.'*

This staff member referenced the traditional *gacaca* processes in Rwanda as an example. The system had deteriorated during the war but was reintroduced after the genocide in 1994 to help with transitional justice and restore the community. Similarly, in Burundi, the *bashingantahe* process has been used since pre-colonial times to settle disputes and can serve as a foundation for other locally led conflict resolution efforts. The use of these traditional methods is crucial to the localisation of peacebuilding, but the case of the *bashingantahe* shows the importance of analysis at the local level to ensure that it is the right vehicle for mediation, as the method was sometimes seen as Tutsi-dominated[11] and thus distrusted in some Hutu areas. Additionally, without the support of the local processes from the government or relevant authorities, these processes will fail to get adequate buy-in. In Burundi there has been a clear government directive to establish local mediation groups that lend support to their efforts.

However, Christian Aid staff in Burundi and DRC noted that they were not simply re-booting the previous models but also trying to improve them in several key ways, such as ensuring they were free and accessible, making them more inclusive, and adopting the win-win approach whenever possible. Moreover, the new models prioritised inclusion as a key element. In contrast, many of the traditional models were led by male elders, with little or no space for direct participation from women or members of other marginalised groups, such as IDPs or persons with disabilities.

Some staff expressed hope that drawing on the foundations of the traditional processes would help resolve new conflicts and even foster reconciliation opportunities for community members to heal from and recover what was lost in the war. This was especially true in Burundi, where communities were intermixed with people from different ethnic groups and political parties who found themselves on opposite sides of the violent conflict in 2015 but now have reconciled to live together.

3.3.c Promoting a Culture of Peace

Direct peacebuilding interventions also include awareness raising and sensitisation with community members to foster a culture of peace. For example, participants in Mwenga in DRC noted that the Christian Aid training helped prevent violence in the community by introducing them to dialogue strategies and sensitising them to human rights and the indirect negative impact of violence and arms. Many also noted the positive effects of sensitivity training related to gender and gender-based violence. Others cited the benefits of media campaigns designed to discourage violence and counter misinformation or incitement.

While focused on the local level, Christian Aid staff also noted the potential of 'scaling up' mediation and dialogue processes to regional and national levels. As a staff member in Burundi commented:

'There has been improvement in people being willing to talk about conflict and peace, which they didn't before. For communities to sit and meet and talk about issues – this is half the equation. They used to not talk about conflict, so it would intensify and escalate at all levels – domestic, community, national. Peacebuilding efforts have brought protagonists together to talk about small things, local things – so we hope it can scale up to the meso or national levels.'

Likewise, a staff member in South Sudan stated, *'We need to tie good local level practices to the national level. We need both – the local and national levels. We need to look at good local level processes and try to bring them to the national level.'* To be sure, the positive progress made by local communities indicated that cohesion could be fostered over time. However, particularly in South Sudan, without national politicians being similarly engaged in peace processes, the good work inside communities is at-best difficult to scale up, and at-worst is at risk. For example, the ethnic integration of the South Sudanese army was an example of a national-level process that could aid local peace processes and bring calm, but if that were unable to be completed, it would likely bring an escalation of local tension.

As national peacebuilding processes are hard to predict and volatile, it is difficult to plan how local programming can take advantage of positive developments to impact macro contexts. In the next cycle of programming, it would be worthwhile to earmark a small portion of agile funds to be geared towards creating supplementary programmes that can take advantage of positive national developments. Significant evidence points to the positive impact of local processes supplementing national peacebuilding processes, taking advantage of timing with politicians who might have the political will.

Staff members were realistic that influencing national-level mediation would be difficult. However, staff agreed that conflict analysis and facilitation skills are important to cascade at the local level. Indeed, even though the peacebuilding approaches we have outlined here may not change the macro-level dynamics of chronic conflicts, they still have value in the day-to-day lives of people living in communities within

those broader conflict contexts. In other words, integrating conflict analysis into programmes as a dynamic, ongoing process and using it to inform intervention strategies and approaches will not solve the broader conflicts, but can improve the resilience of communities by enhancing conflict sensitivity, fostering social cohesion and informing the mediation of local disputes. However, these positive outcomes are not automatic and are subject to several caveats, as discussed in the following section.

Infographic 2: Summary of Conflict Analysis Impact
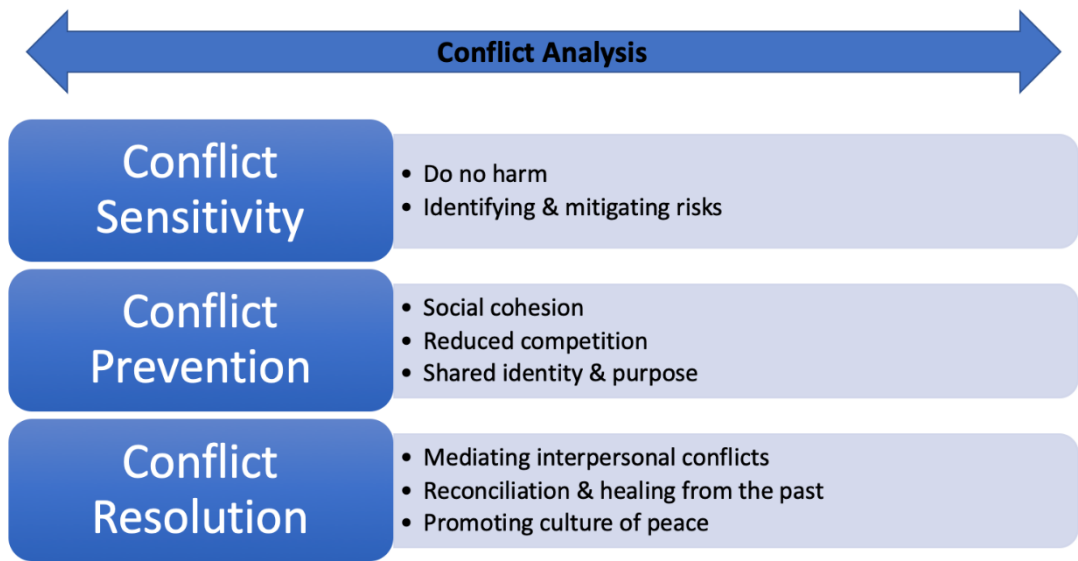
4. Cautions and Caveats

As discussed above, integrating conflict analysis is a key pillar in humanitarian and resilience programmes, regardless of the approach. However, there are several key caveats that need to be considered, including: 1) context, 2) institutional support, and 3) realistic resilience objectives based on a clear theory of change.

4.1 Context Matters

The feasibility of increasing community resilience to conflict will depend on ensuring the project is tailored appropriately for the context based on the analysis. As expected, the model of conflict resolution through direct peacebuilding was most effective in low-intensity conflicts and/or conflicts at relatively calmer points in the conflict continuum. For example, the peace committees were most active in Burundi, where direct violence has decreased since the election years of 2020 and particularly 2015, and in parts of DRC with relative calm. It is also critical to note that the DRC, South Sudan, Burundi and Myanmar are all classified as spaces of medium-intensity conflict and are on the World Bank fragile states list 2022.[12]

These classifications demonstrate the challenging context in which this research is being conducted and highlight the urgency of further and continued studies during such a significant moment of emerging political change.

In contrast, peacebuilding initiatives were most difficult to implement in areas with active armed conflict or severe government repression. For example, direct peacebuilding programmes are nearly impossible to implement in Myanmar, where the state prohibits discussion of conflict and where movement is highly restricted. However, partners still engage in meaningful conflict sensitivity reflections and encourage social cohesion benefits through programmes.

Importantly, levels of poverty did not necessarily decrease the feasibility of peacebuilding programmes. In South Sudan for example, even communities facing severe poverty were still willing and effectively engaged in conflict resolution processes. While there is a case to be made for allotting resources first to humanitarian needs, most partners saw the humanitarian work and peacebuilding as mutually reinforcing.

It should be noted that conflict dynamics can vary considerably even within localities. For example, within the territory of Kalehe in the DRC, the specific areas where the programmes were implemented were considered relatively peaceful by participants. However, they pointed out that armed conflict was still common in the nearby mountainous areas. Likewise, in South Sudan, Northern Bahr el Ghazal's project area was relatively calm during the fieldwork. Still, violent conflict was escalating in other parts of the country.

These examples underscore the importance of conducting locally based conflict analyses in addition to macro analyses when planning and implementing programmes. Some regions may benefit more from one approach than another in the same country, and even some communities may need approaches different from others within the same region. A flexible and agile implementation framework can also help adjust to changing conflict dynamics.

4.2 Institutional Backstops

Nearly all communities engaged in mediation and conflict resolution had 'backstop' support from at least one semi-trusted governmental authority or institution. There was little trust in the national government in most countries visited. Still, nearly all the peace committees relied on local authorities to assist them with handling serious conflicts such as violent crime. Authorities included the local courts in South Sudan, the local police in DRC and the local administration in Burundi. This kind of institutional backstop can be crucial for giving local committees legitimacy and ensuring a process for accountability for conflicts beyond their capacity.

However, authorities are often the source of conflict, and it can often be difficult, if not impossible, to create an effective working relationship with governments in fragile contexts. In Myanmar, for example, following the 2021 coup, neither communities nor NGOs wanted to engage with government institutions that they see as illegitimate. The NGO partners found it difficult to navigate this problem considering the significant suppression of conflict-related work, which resulted in trade-offs in the types of programmes that could be implemented. For example, partners shifted programming to development-based activities requiring fewer government permits, and tried to become less reliant on government support by seeking funding from international actors.

In other situations, it is difficult to work with authorities when they are seen as driving the conflict through active stoking of tensions or through incompetence or neglect. In DRC for example, many view political elites as partly responsible for the conflict through their opportunistic support of competing armed groups. And in Burundi, the previous government's crackdown on the opposition was seen as a central instigator of the violence. Perceptions of authorities can also change quickly; in South Sudan, the current central government generally supports the Northern Bahr el Ghazal state, but if the party in power shifts in the next election, the local administration could change and cause more tensions in the region.

It is neither feasible nor desirable to avoid working with authorities completely. Indeed, many communities reported positive interactions with certain state institutions, especially at the local level, and such engagement can enhance those specific institutions and the broader rule of law. Yet it can be challenging to thread the needle between necessary and effective engagement on the one hand and legitimising autocratic regimes on the other. These challenges again underscore the need for micro and macro conflict analyses and flexible programme implementation.

4.3 Being Realistic and Resilience

One of the goals of the ICPR approach is to enhance community resilience to conflict through a capacity-building process to strengthen the ability of individuals and communities to *'anticipate, organise for and adapt to change'*. This is a laudable goal, but it is evident that the concept of resilience as applied to community responses to natural disasters differs from that of responses to sustained violence or armed conflict. As such, the broad concept of resilience may benefit from locally informed definitions to ensure that programming is designed with realistic aims and objectives for specific communities.

In the focus groups, community members were asked to what degree they felt they could anticipate/prevent violent conflict, absorb/cope with it, and adapt to or recover from it. Most communities reported that the ICPR components like the conflict analyses and PVCAs had improved their capacities to *anticipate* and prevent violent conflicts through sensitivity raising and mediation. But most were realistic about the fact that they did not have the means to *adapt* to larger-scale violent conflict. For

example, in South Sudan, participants outlined that they had the confidence to deal with local conflicts between villages or intra-ethnic groups. Still, for cross-border violence, they relied on the government to guarantee security. When conflict reached the point where it could not be controlled, the community outlined that their only response would be to flee and seek shelter in another community. In DRC, the response was the same. Burundi was an outlier, where, as noted above, community members felt their social cohesion had developed enough that they could withstand national-level divisions and provocations.

The variance in response may point to the perception that certain types of violence across the case studies are more controllable than others and underlines the importance of being aware of conflict continuums. In Burundi, since 2015, there has been explicit use of violence by the government and the ruling party's youth wing, the *Imbonerakure,* and the 'rules of the game' mean that communities can avoid most violence by keeping critiques of the government low. In DRC and South Sudan, the current cycles of violence involve regional states supporting militias across borders (DRC) and national elites inciting violence in their constitutional strongholds (South Sudan). The result is that the future of conflict is currently more precarious in South Sudan and DRC, which are faced with multiple threats that are harder to predict, robbing the community of the ability to forward plan and take possible steps to overcome potential violence. Similarly, the tumultuous political context in Myanmar, including the seismic military coup in 2021, have made it difficult for communities and partners to plan for or adapt to the government's repression, even while continuing with programmes where possible.

The reality is that fleeing or actively avoiding violence in these circumstances is a form of resilience employed by the community absent any external interventions. This response is perfectly understandable to prioritise survival, which begs the question of what would 'adapting to,' or even 'absorbing' a violent attack look like? Most communities rightly assume that they can fight or flee. It is thus unclear how communities might be expected to demonstrate resilience, as it is currently defined in the sector, in the face of armed conflict that is beyond their capacity to defuse locally.

It would be unethical to expect communities to "get used to" conflict,[6] or to view them as less than resilient for their inability to do so, especially in the face of macro conflict dynamics beyond their control. However, developing responses to different levels of conflict may provide, in the worst-case scenarios, effective responses for the communities. For example, while it might be a less-than-ideal scenario, the ICPR approach, as outlined, helps communities to develop early warning signs of conflict and identify when the conflict has moved beyond their control. As such, when thinking about resilience-related theories of change in conflict contexts, it may be most feasible to focus on the *anticipatory* part of the resilience definition rather than the absorption or adaptation elements.

5. Conclusion

We have seen that Christian Aid's ICPR approach can create small pockets of peace by making key contributions to community resilience in fragile places. Provided there is an integrated approach that includes local conflict analyses, as well as community-driven PVCAs and community action plans, humanitarian programmes increase their conflict sensitivity and opportunities for peacebuilding. The specific effects of the ICPR look different in different communities depending on the conflict context, and can range from ensuring programmes do not exacerbate conflicts, to fostering social cohesion, to providing direct peace infrastructure within and between communities. As such, the ICPR approach not only contributes to resilience, but also to conflict prevention and resolution, and to better inclusion of marginalised groups in community activities.

As discussed, the success of the approach is not automatic, and can depend on the context, institutional backstops and realistic goal-setting. Further, while it may be difficult to scale up some of the successes of the approach, it may be possible to support communities in exchanging skills and knowledge horizontally with other communities. This cascade model could contribute to a growing network of communities with resilience to violence, and help in stemming future conflict. Additional recommendations below draw these conclusions into actionable steps.

6. Recommendations

The research has informed several important takeaways for differently positioned stakeholders who are interested in implementing an integrated ICPR approach.

For Christian Aid and Programme Implementers:

Focus on localised peacebuilding: Peacebuilding is most effective at the community level (micro) and broader regional/municipal (meso) levels, ideally when supported to some degree by a trusted local authority. It is important to be clear-eyed about what is and is not within a community's control regarding conflict prevention and resilience. Even if the broader conflict persists, local-level peacebuilding still has value for communities, catalysing pockets of peace and resilience within fragile and volatile conflict contexts, and ensuring existing structures are more inclusive and responsive to the most vulnerable groups.

Programming for the ICPR should be context specific: ICPR programming should look different between communities. There is an attraction to treating case study countries as uniform, but issues that cause conflict in one area can be significantly different in others. Analyses should capture the lived experience of people in communities, integrating insights of existing local power structures, while

providing safe spaces for the most marginalised to mitigate unequal power dynamics and implement actions that navigate the complex environment of crisis contexts. Macro-level conflict analyses, which normally consider large national issues, should also consider the impact on different regions. For example, if the South Sudanese peace process fails, what impact will that have in Unity State versus Northern Bahr el Ghazal? In other words, what factors might contribute to peace or conflict in the areas in which programmes are being implemented.

ICPR programming should remain flexible and agile: Conflict dynamics constantly change, affecting peacebuilding activities and humanitarian and resilience programmes. As such, programmes should allow for flexibility in implementation as much as possible to accommodate shifting priorities. Theories of change should also be revisited throughout programme cycles to ensure that aims remain relevant and feasible, with room for strategies to adapt to changing contexts. A rigid approach to conflict work fails to take into account temporal shifts in conflict dynamics and as a result might cause harm.

Complement 'scaling-up' aspirations with 'lateral scaling' opportunities: There is a tendency to think about how we can scale up successful peacebuilding processes exercised in local contexts to national contexts. The research has demonstrated that there has been some development of peace infrastructure between the micro and meso (municipal) levels, with some positive engagement between communities and authorities with the shared purpose of fostering sustainable peace. However, the further removed from the local contexts, the more there are variables that make it harder to scale up. A sustainable goal that is in line with localisation efforts is to identify surrounding neighbourhoods for programming in which some of the skills and capacities can be transferred from community to community. The success of the peace committee in DRC underlined that this is possible and achievable. CA staff and partners might consider a partner-community mapping exercise at the end of the project to identify surrounding communities in which knowledge transfer is possible.

Balance peacebuilding with pragmatism: 'Fragile contexts' can create difficult working environments for NGOs, especially those attempting to integrate peacebuilding with development and humanitarian work. In states with "chronic conflicts," especially those in which the government or political elites are key actors, NGOs may face pressure to avoid discussion or programming related to security, conflict or human rights. As such, it may be difficult to balance between legitimising the regime and delivering services effectively. In these situations, the answer is not to avoid the ICPR approach entirely, but to be realistic about the extent to which conflict issues can be addressed, such as focusing on conflict sensitivity, discussing the "context" rather than the "conflict" in sensitive settings, and emphasising local-level dispute resolution.

For Donors:

Flexible funding that allows for conflict-related work across various mechanisms benefits the peacebuilding aspects of humanitarian and development programming: The impact of soft skills development and better relations can be harder to evidence than quantifying boreholes and other development structures that are easy to measure and will naturally be attractive to governments. At a minimum, protecting funding for conflict analysis activities is paramount to avoid potential conflicts and ensure that longer-term benefits are produced in all humanitarian, development, peacebuilding programmes.[13] Currently, only 12% of overseas development aid (ODA) from OECD countries to fragile contexts is allocated to peacebuilding and conflict prevention (OECD 2022). Yet, with the majority of humanitarian need driven by conflict, it is crucial to invest in peace, conflict prevention and tackling root causes, and adopt a more holistic approach to funding.

Funding cycles should recognise that conflict-related change takes time to develop: Creating better relations between communities impacted by cycles of conflict, violence and mistrust is impossible over short-term programme cycles, and benefits are likely to be most visible after several years of capacity strengthening. Longer funding cycles, such as three to five years, help the approach to take root and can facilitate more effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Appendix: Sources

	South Sudan	**DRC**	**Burundi**	**Myanmar**
Locations	Juba/Northern Bahr el Ghazal state: Aweil, Akenakngap, Nymiel, Mariaalbaie, Gomjuer, Landic	North Kivu: Goma South Kivu Province: Bukavu, Mwenga: Kasika, Ignaza, Iganda, Tchofi, Kalehe	Bujumbura Rumonge: Magara Giteta, Magara, Mukungu Makambe: Nanza Lac, Nyange	Online
FGD	5/5/22: Nymiel, commissioner and focal points for different NGOs and their particular work including WaSH, protection, peacebuilding and COVID) 6/5/22: Mariaalbaie, Aweil West_Community members (11 males, 4 females) 6/5/22: Mariaalbaie centre, community including members of the Village Sustainability Association (44 females, 11 males, 6 elders) 6/5/22: Nymiel SPEDP staff (4 males, 3 females) 7/5/22: Gomjuer, Aweil West community (estimated 90 people) 8/5/22: Akuaknga, beneficiaries (8 males, 7 females, 50 more persons participated, vast majority women)	13/5/22: Kalehe, local authorities in municipal government, education, police and planning (8 males, 3 females) 14/5/22: Tchofi peace committee, youth, water point managers (13 males, 5 females) 16/5/22: Mwenga-Municipal government (5 males, 4 females) 17/5/22: Kasika, Mwenga mixed group of local stakeholders, peace committee, pastor, Muslim rep (15 males, 10 females) 17/5/22: Iganza and Iganda peace committee members (14 males, 13 females)	23/5/22: Magra Rumonge peace committee (10 males, 4 females) 24/5/22 Nanza Lac, Makambe: (10 males, 5 females) 24/5/22: Giteta, Rumonge community members (8 females, 7 males) 24/5/22: Mukungu, Rumonge, VCLA committee (12 females) 25/5/22: Nyange, Makamba VCLA & agriculture committee (15 females, 2 males) 25/5/22: Nyange, Makamba, community members (6 females, 8 males)	16/6/22: Online FGD with LWF: 2 participants. 20/6/22 Online FGD with CA: 2 participants
Total	238	90	93	4
Interviews	4/5/22: Gabriel Moy and Mike Sorrow SPEDP central office. 5/5/22: Bul Ayieny CA 10/5/22: Fred Bully, CA 18/6/22 Peter Martell, former BBC	12/5/22: Obed Buhendwa CA 13/5/22: Kalehe governor. 16/5/22: Obed Buhendwa CA and Nono Mwavita and Paul	23/5/22: Chantal Kanyange Christian Aid 23/5/22 Archbishop for Rumonge 24/5/22 Chief Advisor to Rumonge governor	

correspondent South Sudan	Balolebwami Kabiona, *Service d'Accompagnement et de Renforcement des capacités d'Auto promotion de la Femme* (SARCAF)	24/5/22 Implementing partners: *Conseil national des Eglises du Burundi* (CNEB), *Province de L'Eglise Anglicane du Burundi* (PEAB), RCPF (4 representatives)	
	19/5/22: LUHCA representative	25/5/22: Priest Rumonge	
	20/5/22 Former Medicins Sans Frontieres	25/5/22: Governor Makambe	
		25/5/22: Local police Makambe	
		27/5/22: Leonidas Ndayisaba, Academic Consultant	
		27/5/22 Head of Mission British Embassy	
		27/5/22: Jean Claude Nkundwa, Tear Fund	
		28/5/22 Programme mission with Swiss embassy	
		28/5/22 Philip Galgallo, CA	
Total	5	7	15	0

Endnotes

[1] The term peacebuilding encompasses various methods of preventing and addressing violence. For the purposes of the research, we will delineate between these concepts to make a concise point regarding how 'conflict resolution' differs from 'peacebuilding' processes.

[2] Different case study countries define their borders administratively. We use 'local' to denote the cluster of villages that directly benefit from programmes which includes peace committees.

[3] 'Conflict cycle' or 'conflict phases' is a term from scholarly work on conflict and was developed to underline the different dynamics and impacts on human populations at identifiable points of the cycle: escalation, intensification, armed conflict, de-escalation and post-conflict. For more see: Wohlfeld, M. (2010).

[4] During escalation or active conflict periods, emergency processes like peacekeeping missions and emergency aid for displaced take priority.

[5] Norman, J., & Mikhael, D. (2019). Integrated Conflict Prevention and Humanitarian Resilience. Christian Aid. https://www. alnap. org/system/files/content/resour ce/files/main/Integrated% 20Conflict% 20Preventi on% 20and% 20Humanitarian% 20Resilience% 20May, 202019

[6] World Bank – Fragility, Conflict and Violence, 30 September 2022 (online). Available at: https://www.worldbank.org/en/t opic/fragilityconflictviolence/ove rview. Accessed 17 February 2023.

[7] Since 2017, the 'triple-nexus' has gained traction among international development organisations as a means to think about how peacebuilding processes can be woven into development and humanitarian programmes. Development practitioners have long recognised the need to address complex problems that exist in places experiencing multiple crises, but the programme design, funding arrangements and institutional culture of actors has historically differed between the peacebuilding, development and humanitarian aid sectors. The triple-nexus approach intentionally recognises the uniqueness of each pillar (humanitarian aid, development and peacebuilding), while also calling for more integration between pillars that previously operated in isolation. The approach in theory retains an intuitive appeal: that development programmes are less effective if conflict is not addressed, and at the same time, peacebuilding is not effective if basic needs are not met. It should be noted that Christian Aid is in the process of developing its specific approach to the triple-nexus, so reference to the triple-nexus within this

report refers to broader sectoral thinking on the approach.

[8] Three FGDs in South Sudan totalled 208 participants, nearly two-thirds of the total participants.

[9] Contact hypothesis posits that if intergroup division is created by lack of closeness, contact and inter-relations, then that those cleavages can be mitigated through the fostering of contact, through meetings and cooperation between groups. For more detailed reading see: Nagle, John. "'Unity in Diversity': Non-sectarian Social Movement Challenges to the Politics of Ethnic Antagonism in Violently Divided Cities." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37.1 (2013): 78-92 and Kim, Y.-C. and Ball-Rokeach, S.J. (2006). Civic Engagement From a Communication Infrastructure Perspective. Communication Theory, 16(2), pp.173–197

[10] Irish Aid HPP 2020 Annual Report, Christian Aid Ireland, 31 March 2021

[11] There are also inclusion considerations with government-selected committees, in that more marginalised ethnic groups (such as the Twa), as well as women and girls, are often not included. Although the 30% quota for women's participation is respected in the National Assembly in Burundi, at the

regional level, in Ruyigi for example, only 9% of chefs de colline are women, and women represent only 20% of the conseils collinaire. Similarly, in Rutana, just 8% of chefs de colline are women, and women represent only 24% of conseils collinaires (CENI, 2022). At the Conseil communal, both Ruyigi and Rutana have a representation of 32% female leaders. However, their participation lacks meaningful engagement as male voices traditionally carry more weight.

Young returnee Hutu and Twa women head of households face increased risk of political marginalisation due to discriminatory intersectional factors as leadership structures compound political isolationism.

[12] World Bank (2022). FY22 List of Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations [online]. Available at: https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/bb52765f38156924d68248 6726f422d4-0090082021/original/FCSList-FY22.pdf Accessed 9 Dec. 2022

[1313] Veron, Pauline, Sherrif, Andrew, "International Peacebuilding Financing and Changing Politics in Europe", *Center on International Cooperation*, 2022, p4