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Economic development and peace

Practice note 2: Integrating conflict analysis into peace-conducive economic development programming

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Introduction

Economic development covers a wide range of processes and interventions that aim to improve the functioning of an economy at a global, regional, national or local level. These interventions have multiple, often interconnecting, goals ranging from increasing economic growth or promoting equity to boosting entrepreneurship or employment, or tackling barriers to doing business.

In fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS), economic development has become part of the 'toolbox' for actors working in development and peacebuilding. Adapting economic development approaches and methodologies to the specificities of FCAS has generated considerable research and raised questions ranging from the role of the private sector in rebuilding the infrastructure of the state to how to increase human capital in post-conflict situations. These questions highlight some of the challenges of promoting economic development where the state is absent or has limited legitimacy, capacity or reach.

Initiating economic interventions and investments into a conflict-affected context can contribute to the processes of building peace as well as risk exacerbating conflict dynamics. Conflict and economic factors interact and impact each other in both positive and negative ways. It is therefore critical for project designers, implementers and donors to understand how this happens in order to design, implement, monitor and evaluate economic development interventions that are relevant, effective and sustainable in their economic outcomes and in their contribution to peace.

What is the purpose of this practice note series?

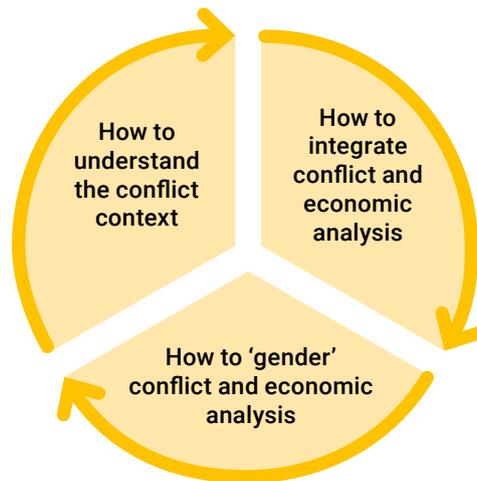
This practice note is part of a resource series to address the design, monitoring, evaluation and learning (DMEL) challenges for peace-conducive economic development interventions in FCAS. These are interventions that are conflict-sensitive and explicitly integrate a peace objective. **These practice notes are intended for project designers and implementers as well as policy-makers working in/on FCAS who wish to see peace impacts from economic development interventions or who want to integrate economic elements into peacebuilding projects.** They are not intended as a step-by-step 'how-to-guide' but rather as a tool to spark greater analysis and critical engagement with the potential for more peace-conducive economic development in FCAS. They consolidate key good practices – 'what works well' – based on emerging evidence and analysis of key gaps and challenges, from a peacebuilding perspective, observed among diverse economic development programmes in FCAS. The practice notes ground the considerations and good practices in case studies and examples from the Horn of Africa region, including Kenya, Somalia and Uganda.

This practice note draws on good practices in designing peacebuilding and economic development programming to explore the analysis tools available for understanding the conditions and prerequisites for 'peace-conducive economic development'. This builds on the conceptual challenges of understanding how economic development can be peace-conducive (**practice note 1**) and underpins the guidance on developing robust theories of change (**practice note 3**) and embedding good practices on monitoring, evaluation and learning in FCAS to promote, measure and assess the impact of programming on both peace and economic factors (**practice note 4**).



What will this note help you with?

This second practice note will help you to understand and address the following:



What are the challenges facing practitioners?

While the discussions of peace-conducive economic development, such as ‘business for peace’ or ‘jobs for peace’ programming, are gaining traction with development practitioners working in FCAS, there is often limited empirical evidence for exactly how different forms of economic development contribute towards peacebuilding.¹ Even as the generation of research grows, programming in FCAS is often based on flawed or limited assumptions about how economic factors serve as conflict drivers or peace factors.²

Those designing economic development programming have multiple tools available to understand different factors within the markets they seek to influence or change (including Market Systems Analysis, livelihoods assessments, growth diagnostics, etc.). However, if practitioners do not understand the dynamics of the conflict context and how changing aspects of the economy will alter incentives, grievances and other factors that drive that conflict, then programming will not be able to demonstrate how their impacts contribute to peace and could exacerbate conflict instead. Furthermore, different groups and identities (gender, age, class, ethnicity, etc.) are impacted by (and participate in) conflict and economic life in very different ways. Understanding these differences and their intersection is critical for identifying effective and achievable peace and economic development objectives.



Understanding the conflict context – Why is this important?

The complexity inherent in conflict contexts calls for analysis to be informed by multiple factors and this section explores some of the options available to practitioners. Based on good practices in the field of peacebuilding, conducting a strong peace and conflict analysis is critical to **understanding which theories of change are most relevant to supporting peace in a particular context**. Without understanding the specific conflict drivers in a given context, it is not possible to determine, monitor and evaluate whether

International Alert’s study on ‘jobs for peace’ in the Horn of Africa examined 14 employment promotion and livelihoods programmes and found that only four were grounded in some form of conflict or Political Economy Analysis, which undermined the implementers’ ability to demonstrate any impact on peace, despite the inclusion of peace or stability-focused objectives.

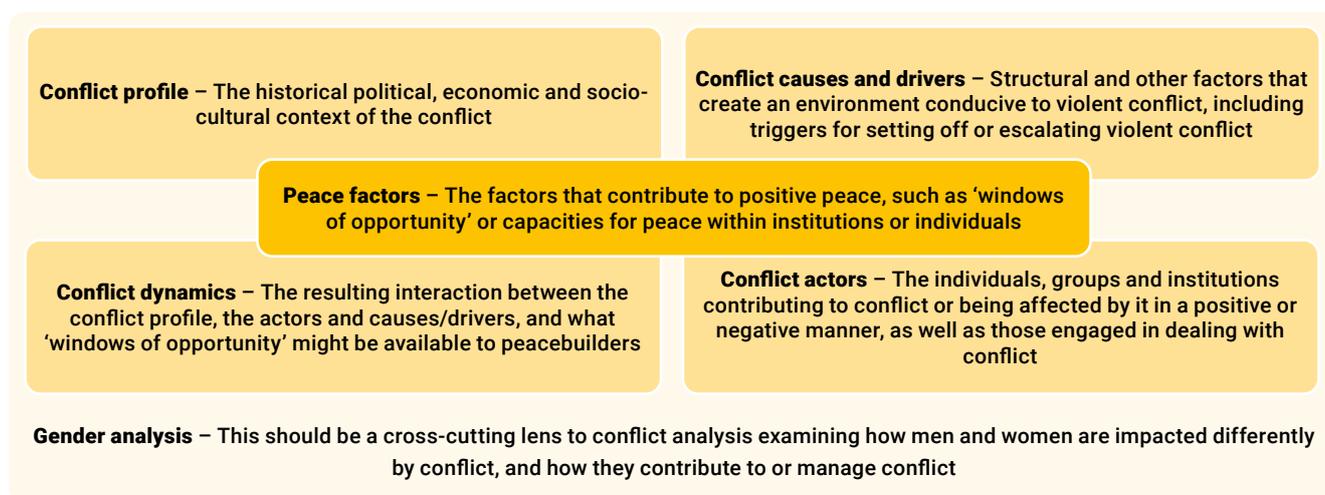
G. Grayson and F. Bertouille, *Can more jobs bring peace? Understanding peace impact in employment programme design in Kenya and Somalia*, International Alert, February 2020

an intervention actually makes a difference for peace. While a peace and conflict analysis alone does not guarantee that an economic development programme 'succeeds' in enhancing peace dynamics and addressing conflict drivers, it is nevertheless a key building block towards an effective strategy.



Understanding the conflict context – How to do it

Multiple toolkits and frameworks have been created by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), donors, governments and academia for the purpose of analysing conflict and identifying practical ways in which the negative dynamics can be mitigated and opportunities for peace leveraged (see 'To go further' resources at the end of this note for links to different toolkits). The following figure outlines the core elements of conflict analysis. Methodologies will use different terms and emphasise different elements depending on the specific purpose of the analysis.³



Regardless of the objective of an economic development programme, any intervention implemented in FCAS must consider and mitigate the risks of impacting negatively on conflict dynamics. A peace and conflict analysis is the first practical step for integrating conflict sensitivity into programming. This analysis can help in identifying factors where an intervention could exacerbate existing conflict dynamics or create a new conflict – for example, could an intervention raise expectations (such as for jobs or business opportunities) that may not be met in the medium or long term? It is also important to identify how the conflict context will impact on the intervention – is there a risk of diversion of support to conflict actors? Could insecurity force resources to be channelled to specific areas or groups? Once the design is complete, regular updating of the analysis or monitoring of the conflict context should be integrated into the implementation, particularly as FCAS contexts are often fluid. This needs to be factored into the design from the outset to ensure resources and time are available for peace and conflict analysis and regular updates. Implementers should consider their needs and what represents a 'good enough' analysis. For example, is there existing analysis available that could be updated or compiled through a desk review?

Good practice – Using conflict analysis to ensure conflict sensitivity

DFID's Sustainable Employment and Economic Development (SEED) Programme in Somalia (2010–2015) used conflict analysis ahead of developing public private partnerships (PPPs) to manage new market infrastructure. This analysis explored the local awareness of PPPs and the strength of community institutions. It was intended to enable the programme to identify those institutions that were able to manage tensions and negotiations within the community.

A. Kessler, Measuring results of private sector development in conflict-affected environments: A case study of the Sustainable Employment and Economic Development (SEED) programme in Somalia, DCED, 2013, https://www.enterprise-development.org/wp-content/uploads/SEEDCaseStudyFinal_2August2013.pdf



Integrating economic and conflict analysis – Why is this important?

The understanding of the conflict context needs to sit alongside an analysis of the economic factors that the intervention seeks to change. There are multiple tools being used in this field that examine different aspects and levels of an economic context to identify entry points or ways to leverage better or more equitable economic outcomes. These include Political Economy Analysis, Market Systems and Value Chain Analyses, growth diagnostics and livelihoods assessments. These tools work at different levels and focus on different aspects of economies, identifying barriers to and opportunities for economic development. They often unpack issues that could be pertinent for a conflict analysis. For example, a Market Systems Analysis could help identify why certain groups may be benefiting more than others within a specific market.⁴ However, in FCAS, it is critical that any analysis tool enables those designing the programme to understand the interaction between the economic changes and the conflict context – for example, will changing economic factors alter the incentives for engaging in violent conflict or create new grievances?



Integrating economic and conflict analysis – How to do it

These tools and methodologies are complementary to conflict analysis but may not necessarily provide the data and insights required to understand the conflict dynamics and how the economy or market interact with the conflict. Tools like Political Economy Analysis, which seek to understand how political and economic power are shared in a context, are useful to understand the potential impacts of a programme on the context.⁵ Other tools, such as Value Chain Analysis, integrate a lens on good governance.

While such tools may highlight tensions between actors over political or economic resources, they do not necessarily enable the project design team to identify how these might result in (or mitigate) violent conflict. Therefore, conducting a peace and conflict analysis alongside an economic assessment enables practitioners to understand how these factors interact. As resources or time may be limited (or as ‘research fatigue’ is observed among the target groups or participants in the analysis), it may be necessary to integrate peace and conflict analysis questions into another economic assessment tool.

This section unpacks two sets of tools used by practitioners to inform economic development programming to see how a conflict lens could be integrated into the methodology:

- **Political Economy Analysis (PEA):** PEA looks at the intersection of political and economic power, i.e. where power over different opportunities and the allocation of resources is held.⁶ Most PEA frameworks converge on four fundamental, interlinked parameters – interests, incentives, ideology and institutions (the four Is).

How can it help you in FCAS? Conflicts are often caused by a complex web of political and economic factors, and therefore a PEA can help practitioners to understand microeconomic issues, though the level of analysis is important to understand specific drivers of conflict.⁷ While a PEA may tell you who has interests in an economy and what political incentives they are pursuing, it may not necessarily capture which actors have the capacity to mobilise towards conflict in the way that conflict analysis often does. For example, there may be several stakeholders (politicians, businesses, community representatives) engaged around a particular issue, such as the major infrastructure development of the Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) corridor in northern Kenya. While all of those stakeholders have interests in relation to the development of infrastructure, not all of them are key actors to the conflict.

- **Market Systems Analysis (MSA) and Value Chain Analysis:** Market analysis and MSA tools (such as the Emergency Market Mapping and Assessment (EMMA)) provide a mechanism for understanding a specific market as a system, i.e. how the interlinked producers, traders and consumers are involved in the production and exchange of a specific product or

service.⁸ These tools focus on identifying the drivers of underperformance in a market, including the exclusion of specific groups.⁹ Value Chain Analysis takes a similar approach looking at the complete picture of the vertical and horizontal linkages between the different actors who engage in bringing a product to market, from the producers through those who add value at different stages (such as traders or manufacturers) to the consumer in the end market.¹⁰ The analysis focuses on the distribution and sharing of benefits between the different links and how this can be improved, for example, through upgrading links.¹¹

How can it help you in FCAS? Market systems (e.g. where they involve natural resources) can be a key driver of conflict and a Market Systems Analysis could unpack why a specific market does not benefit particular groups, which can help highlight sources of grievance. However, the use of a pro-poor lens may miss some political or conflict dynamics. For example, the EMMA toolkit highlights that, during post-election violence in 2008 in western Kenya, “the worst-affected households were (relatively wealthy) small-holders and businesses targeted for ethnic and political reasons”.¹² It is important to ground Market Systems Analysis in conflict analysis to help understand where power lies within markets and how markets interact with and potentially drive conflict.¹³

In FCAS, the selection of value chains in itself presents risks related to exacerbating conflict dynamics, for example, by targeting sectors that are divided along conflict lines.¹⁴ However, the analysis of value chains can equally provide useful insights for peace-conducive economic development programming. For example, in assessing the relation between the end market and opportunities for peacebuilding – i.e. is there a market for ‘peace products’ or a desire to avoid products manufactured in conflict zones.¹⁵ Trust is a key part of establishing functional linkage between different parts of the chain,¹⁶ which can be useful for understanding windows of opportunity for peacebuilding. For example, in a value chain programme supporting cotton producers in the IDP camps of northern Uganda, where trust was limited by both the conflict and a history of previous contractual failure with farmer cooperatives and buying agents, the programme was able to be “effective in linking IDPs from multiple kinship groups to similar cotton opportunities, despite the challenges of working across social fault lines”.¹⁷

The following table draws on existing best practices and outlines some additional questions that can be integrated into economic analysis methodologies to draw out conflict dynamics and how they might impact the programme, as well as providing opportunities for peace.

Political Economy Analysis	Market Systems Analysis ¹⁸	Value Chain Analysis ¹⁹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interests – To what extent is economic or political power vested in the hands of specific groups? Has there been a history of conflict between these groups? Incentives – Have there been ways in which financing for this sector has led to or exacerbated conflict? Has the ownership of specific assets (such as land) led to conflict in the past? Is there significant corruption in the sector, which has led to conflict? Ideologies – What are the dominant ideologies and values that shape views around the sector? Do these drive conflict? Institutions – Who are likely to be the ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ from particular reforms to institutions? Are certain ‘losers’ likely to exacerbate conflict dynamics? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any overlaps between main actors in the market and conflict actors in the context? Does the market encourage links between groups separated by conflict, or reinforce divisions? Can specific groups affected by the conflict (such as ex-combatants) participate effectively in this market? How is the market affected by, and how does it affect, the conflict? Does it reinforce existing equalities? Do trends in the market affect the dynamics of the conflict (positively or negatively)? How do changes in the conflict affect this market? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are value chain actors’ relationships with conflict actors? Where are there overlaps? Where do conflict faultlines appear within the value chain? Which groups are excluded from the value chain, and why? Does the value chain strengthen existing collaborative and mutually beneficial links between actors across conflict divides? Are there security risks associated with participation in the chain? Did the value chain in question feature in the war economy?

Case study: Using social impact assessments

Social impact assessment includes the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programmes, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. Its primary purpose is to bring about a more sustainable and equitable biophysical and human environment. These are often done by companies (or on their behalf) but can be useful for donors and implementers, for example, as a requirement of a development investor. Social impact assessments are critical for investments and other interventions in FCAS. Feasibility studies can be extended to cover conflict and gender sensitivity, for example, in relation to employment strategies or land use.

International Alert has developed specific tools for the extractives industry for companies to understand the risks of conflicts in their area of operation.²⁰ These tools provide different approaches for understanding conflict tailored to the stage of the project (pre-investment, operation), as well as practical measures to reduce operational risks, promote stability and improve community relations. While these are designed primarily for companies, International Alert has used them to design peacebuilding interventions in Turkana county to address conflicts driven by oil exploration.²¹



Best practice questions for designing assessments

The following list highlights some key questions that should be considered when designing an assessment or analysis by implementers wanting to understand the context to inform peace-conducive economic development, drawing on examples from the Horn of Africa:

Does the analysis consider how specific demographic segments interact with conflict actors and groups?

- While economic development analysis focuses on the economic vulnerability or marginalisation of different demographic groups, it is important to consider how specific demographic segments interact with conflict actors and groups.

Does the analysis factor in gender dimensions of the market and the conflict context?

- Gender identities can impact how people access jobs and opportunities and how they are affected by (and participate in) conflict.
- For more on gendering the analysis, see page 8.

Does the analysis extend to an examination of how different elements of the private sector might be factors in the conflict?

- To what extent does the analysis examine how economic dynamics are enmeshed with political power? For example, are opportunities distributed through clientelist networks?
- How does the sharing of economic opportunities shape grievances over horizontal inequalities?

Does the analysis adequately consider the dynamics of the informal economy (as well as the formal economy) and how do these interact with conflict dynamics?

- In FCAS, informal economies are a key part of the political economy. This applies in settings where the state capacity to regulate is limited, such as Somalia, or where governance may be absent, such as informal settlements in Kenya.
- It is critical to analyse how jobs and other economic opportunities are created within the informal sector and how this interacts with conflict contexts.

Does the analysis allow for the understanding of transboundary dynamics?

- Conflicts are often transboundary and can be linked to cross-border economic dynamics, such as the livestock trade in the Karamoja Cluster, which can be a source of resilience as well as a contributor to conflict, through illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.
- This can also apply to internal boundaries – for example, between counties in Kenya, federal member states in Somalia or regions in Ethiopia where boundaries are frequently sources of conflict.



Gendering the analysis – Why is this important?

Understanding gender dimensions of both the economy and the conflict is critical to effective programming. Integrating gender into conflict or market analysis can increase the inclusivity and effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions.²² For example, understanding how women and men, and people with other gender identities, access job opportunities or how they face specific barriers can help avoid economic development programming perpetuating patterns of gender exclusion. Equally, women and men are impacted by (and participate in) conflict in very different ways.

It is therefore critical for analysis tools to capture these dynamics at different levels. A gender-sensitive approach to economic development programming entails an understanding of the different skill sets, needs, vulnerabilities and responsibilities of affected women and men and adolescent girls and boys (and other gender identities). At the same time, a gender-sensitive approach also creates spaces to challenge gender norms and inequality in access to and control of resources.

Integrating gender analysis can support a programme by:

- Enabling the practitioner to understand underlying gender and power relations and how these influence, and are affected by, conflict and peacebuilding interventions or economic development processes.
- Clarifying the gendered drivers of conflict, opportunities for peace, as well as practices, processes and institutions fuelling discrimination and exclusion. For example, questions on gender could be integrated into a Political Economy Analysis to understand where and how gender relations reinforce power dynamics and drive conflict-related or supporting behaviours or attitudes (though this lens is often absent).²³
- Understanding gender as a system of power. It is a key factor that determines who has access to power and resources, as well as who is engaged in peace and conflict. It also interacts with other systems of power, such as class, ethnicity or age, necessitating an intersectional lens.



Gendering the analysis – How to do it

Multiple specific gender analysis tools and examples are available, such as the Rapid Gender Analysis Tool published and updated annually by the Interagency Standing Committee in their Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action.²⁴ Analysis can be carried out at different levels (from individual to household to community, etc.), depending on what is relevant for the intervention. Updated gender-related information will be needed throughout the project cycle so adjustments can be made in order to respond appropriately to gender dynamics, as conflict dynamics change.



Sample questions on gender for peace and conflict, market or political economy analyses

Gender roles and norms

- How do gender roles and norms (particularly around masculinity and femininity) affect how women and men, and people with other gender identities, engage in different economic roles and sectors?
- How do these norms affect how women and men, and people with other gender identities, participate in conflict and are affected by it?

Security

- What are the security-related risks that face women and men, and people with other gender identities, in participating in different livelihoods or jobs? For example, does a job create specific security risks for women and people with other gender identities?

Economic empowerment

- What are the barriers to women and girls' and gender minorities' economic empowerment? (How is this linked to social empowerment?)
- What are the non-formal education needs of women, girls, boys and men, and people with other gender identities?
- Does this affect patterns of violence against women and girls? For example, women's economic empowerment programming can increase (and decrease) patterns of domestic violence.

Household dynamics

- How are household assets controlled and their use determined? What are the gendered responsibilities and coping strategies?
- How does the conflict context affect this, i.e. how has it changed 'normal' cultural and social roles and practices of women and men that existed before the onset of the crisis?

Access to livelihoods

- How are norms of masculinity and femininity shaped by access to livelihoods or employment and how does this impact on propensity to engage in conflict or join armed groups? How has the conflict changed the gendered nature of work?
- How does gender play a role in determining who can access or progress in different livelihoods?
- What are the livelihood issues, opportunities, barriers, strategies and aspirations of women, men, boys and girls, and people with other gender identities? How do they experience and cope with the crisis or post-crisis situation?

To go further

Conflict analysis

- DFID, Conducting conflict assessments: Guidance notes, 2002 <https://gsdrc.org/document-library/conducting-conflict-assessments-guidance-notes/>
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About the Peace Research Partnership

Saferworld, Conciliation Resources and International Alert are collaborating on a research programme that generates evidence and lessons for policy-makers and practitioners on how to support peaceful, inclusive change in conflict-affected areas. Funded by UK aid from the UK government, the research focuses on economic development, peace processes, institutions and gender drivers of conflict. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies.

Endnotes

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