Building Conflict Sensitive Interventions

Participant Guide

Management and Support Staff

MERCY CORPS

CDA PRACTICAL LEARNING *for* INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Building Conflict Sensitive Interventions

Participant Guide - Management and Support Staff

Table of Contents

Notes

Course Overview

This course is designed to explain principles and application of **conflict sensitivity** to staff who participate in planning and managing humanitarian and development aid programs.

The course consists of four topics:
- Analyzing the Conflict
- Listening to the Community
- Assessing the Impact
- Applying Principles of Conflict Sensitivity

Course materials include:
- An **online e-learning course** with modules for each topic
- A **toolkit** with resources that are referenced throughout the course
- **Participant guide** (this document)

Course Level Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of applying conflict sensitive strategies to aid work
- Conduct a conflict analysis
- Outline a process for community member interviews
- Assess the relationship between conflict and aid interventions
- Apply conflict sensitivity principles when implementing aid programs
- Minimize the negative effects and maximize the positive effects of aid programs on conflict

Analyzing the Conflict

Section Objectives

By the end of this section, you should be able to:
- List the activities involved in conflict analysis
- Describe what causes conflict
- Identify dividers and connectors
- Outline an action plan for conducting a conflict analysis for your program
- Utilize conflict analysis tools

Action Items

You should complete the following action items by the beginning of the instructor-led session:
- Complete the conflict analysis template in the toolkit
- Determine the time and resources that can be allocated towards conducting a conflict analysis
- Start a conversation about integrating conflict analysis into the program with any relevant partners or donors
- Make a list of a diverse range of sources to talk to for analysis

Key Points

- All communities experience conflict
- All programs can benefit from formal conflict analysis conducted in tandem with program's needs assessment
- Benefits of conflict analysis:
  - Reduce the possibility of escalating existing tensions
  - Reinforce program's credibility in the eyes of the communities
  - Foster a safer environment for implementation staff and the communities they serve
- Conflict analysis leverages the same tools and sources as any needs assessment
- We have a responsibility to demonstrate "RAFT" principles
  - Respect
  - Accountability
  - Fairness
  - Transparency

Toolkit Resources

- *Do Not Harm Worksheet*
- *Sample Terms of Reference & Guidelines for a Conflict Analysis*
- *Conflict Analysis Template*
- *Conflict Analysis Tools*
  - *Conflict Tree*
  - *Conflict Onion*
  - *Actor Map*
- *Root Causes of Conflict*

- *Applying a Gender Lens to Dividers and Connectors*
- *Mitigating Bias*
- *Rapid Conflict Analysis Template*
- *Rapid Connectors and Dividers Analysis*

Notes

Listening to the Community

Section Objectives

By the end of this section, you should be able to:
- Outline a process for conducting interviews and focus groups with community members
- Develop a list of groups and individuals to speak with
- Develop a set of questions for the community in your area of operations
- Identify ways to demonstrate active listening

Action Items

You should complete the following action items by the beginning of the instructor-led session:
- Determine an objective for an interview or focus group
- Develop a list of who to talk to
- Develop a set of questions
- Identify who you could practice the interview with
- Set up interview session (if applicable to current phase of the intervention)

Key Points

- No conflict analysis is complete without direct input from the communities
- Community interviews and focus groups should be conducted for all interventions
- Ask the right questions and show respect by *how* we ask those questions
- Demonstrate active listening during conversations
- Having a process in place for interviews and focus groups will make the best use of time and yield richer information

Toolkit Resources

- *Developing Questions*
- *Gender Sensitivity for Trainers and Facilitators*
- *Possible Interviewee Groups*
- *Field Notes Template for Data Collection*
- *Active Listening Techniques*

Notes

Assessing the Impact

Section Objectives

By the end of this section, you should be able to:
- Assess the interaction between your intervention and the local context
- Identify risks associated with the intervention
- Propose conflict sensitive adaptations for your intervention

Action Items

You should complete the following action items by the beginning of the instructor-led session:
- Begin filling out the *Assessment Template* for your intervention
- Fill out a *Risk Matrix* for your intervention
- Generate as many adaptations as possible
- Identify three realistic adaptations you could make based on your assessment
- Set a date to begin implementing these changes
- Determine if adaptations require budget changes or conversations with donors

Key Points

- Aid and how it is distributed can either increase tensions and reinforce dividers in a community or ease tensions and strengthen connectors
- Understanding how conflict impacts programs - and how programs impact conflicts - can help us make better decisions
- We need to consider the role resource transfers and implicit ethical messages play in our work
- Conducting a risk analysis is an essential part of assessing the impact of your interventions
- Adaptations should be made to your intervention based on your assessment and risk analysis

Toolkit Resources

- *Impact Assessment Template*
- *Program Impact Gender Analysis*
- *Gender Dimensions to Impacts*
- *Risk Matrix*
- *Conflict Sensitivity in the Program Cycle*

Notes

Applying Principles of Conflict Sensitivity

Section Objectives

By the end of this section, you should be able to:
- Describe conflict-sensitive approaches to:
  - Hiring and training staff
  - Working with partners
  - Ongoing program management

Action Items

You should complete the following action items by the beginning of the instructor-led session:
- If you have a **senior management role**, or **supervise colleagues** working in a program, you should:
  - Develop a conflict sensitivity reporting system if you don't have one
  - Include:
    - Who to report successes/challenges to
    - When to report them
    - How to follow up
- If you have a **Director's role**, you should:
  - Complete the *Conflict Sensitivity Capacity Assessment* for your organization

- If you **assess impact**, or **conduct research and analysis**, you should:
    - Identify one M&E indicator for conflict sensitivity for conflict sensitivity in each program you support
    - Create a one-page summary from an existing conflict analysis
- If you **engage with the community**, or **interact with partners**, you should:
    - Start a conversation about conflict sensitive strategies with partners
    - List out existing channels of communication with communities for your current intervention

Key Points

- Hire a diverse team with an equally diverse skill set
- Provide training on conflict sensitivity and personal bias to staff and partners
- Strong partnerships with local organizations can increase the impact of interventions and improve efficiency
- Partner organizations are also part of the local context
- Make sure you have a clear process for staff to report challenges and concerns to you
- Strong communication between your organization and the community will increase transparency
- Use conflict sensitive indicators to track progress during the intervention

- Make sure to consider the risks associated with exiting an intervention to the local community, the partner organization and the intervention itself

Toolkit Resources

- *Detailed Conflict Sensitivity Checklist*
- *Program Participant Identification and Selection Questions*
- *Dealing with Trauma and its Aftermath*
- *Vicarious Trauma*
- *When to Work in Partnerships*
- *Ten Principles of Partnership*
- *Conflict Sensitivity Capacity Assessment Tool*