Early Warning in Armed Conflict

	Module Descriptor: Early Warning in Armed Conflict
Title:	**Early Warning in Armed Conflict**
Reference	BAIRDS
Description:	Introduction to early warning mechanisms is to introduce you to the concepts and practice of early warning mechanisms identification as a fundamental way of preventing violent conflicts in human society. Some of the focus areas of this course include; complexity of conflicts, anticipation of conflict, role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in intelligence gathering, early warning analysis and how to ensure early response.
Teaching Hours:	50 hours directed study. 100 hours independent study. 150 hours in total
Module aims:	On successful completion of this course, students should be able to: Define and explain the meaning of early warning, Identify indicators of early warning, Distinguish between early warning and everyday noise of conflict, Identify underlying risks, evolving dynamics and posses the skills to accurately describe all the fore-mentioned and Understand and be able to communicate with brevity ; specific contexts, actors and dynamics of volatile actions
Rationale:	This course will empower you to critically scrutinize information and conflict indices in order to enhance the design of early and right responses to prevent violence.

Introduction in early warning in armed conflict

Introduction

Throughout history human beings have sought to warn and be warned of future calamities. From shrill-voiced soothsayers to Cold War military strategists, the objective has been to accurately predict impending dangers, usually in order to avoid them or, at least, to be better prepared for them. In modern peacekeeping and conflict management, early warning is also a vital though underutilized function. Indeed, it is a prerequisite for preventive action, which is considered the ideal type of action because war and death can thus be avoided. Even when prevention fails, early warning serves a later purpose. By being aware of the nature and antecedents of an escalation of violence, peacekeepers can consciously plan, if not to stop it, then to mitigate its effects and to shorten its duration.

Early warning can best be illustrated in relation to a generalized conflict, with its brewing, escalating, and de-escalating phases as shown in Figure 1. Usually, the international community intervenes in a conflict only after it has escalated, and a large number of lives have been lost. In current thinking (if not current efforts) more emphasis is, fortunately, being placed on preventive action and the saving of lives. Early warning takes on greater importance. Early warning is an activity, done formally or informally, that occurs before the conflict has a chance to sharply escalate and before preventive action is taken.

Historical Cases

The record of early warning success in matters of peace is poor. UN history is filled with examples of failures at early warning, even in places where the United Nations was deployed. In 1950, even UN peacekeepers on the border between North and South Korea, whose job it was to do early warning, did not foresee the invasion of South Korea. Similarly, the Chinese entry into the Korean War, later in 1950, came as a surprise at UN headquarters, even after US/UN forces had captured the first Chinese troops. In the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat expressed surprise and delight that Arab preparations for attack during the Jewish holiday were not taken seriously by US, Israeli or UN officials. In 1982, the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands took UN Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar completely by surprise, though he came from Latin America and was familiar with the long-standing dispute. In 1989, guerrillas from SWAPO crossed into Namibia on the first day of the UN-sponsored independence plan, again surprising the Secretary-General, who could only stand by as hundreds were killed by South African forces. The United Nations was caught unaware of the impending Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 even though UN observers in Iraq could observe the substantial preparations for the attack. More recently, the militia rampage in East Timor (September 1999) was not predicted

despite the presence of UN military and police elements in the territory for the whole summer. After each of these catastrophes, politicians, journalists and academics have looked back to try to understand the reasons for failure. They usually find many, which will be reviewed later.

Definition and Approaches to Early Warning

Researchers often dispute if there were early warnings or not in specific cases. This debate occurs because different people demand different standards for early warning. Some accept a vague sense of future conflict while others demand a precise prediction that includes the scale, nature, timing and location of the violence. Some feel that the indicators of violence themselves constituted early warning, while others seek explicit statements about the cumulative effect of all the factors contributing to the violence. Obviously, there is a range of early warning types and each situation requires a different approach. Still, it is possible to develop definitions of early warning that are both practical and rigorous. One such definition is:

"Early warning is the act of alerting a competent authority about the threat of new (or renewed) conflict sufficiently in advance for preventive action to be attempted."

What constitutes "early"? The practical answer follows from the definition: in time for an effort at conflict prevention. If there is not sufficient time to take potentially successful preventive action, then the term "late warning" is appropriate. If the conflict is already rapidly escalating, the term "warning" may not even be applicable at all. For conflict prevention and preparedness, early warning should be done as far in advance as possible. However, it is harder to make accurate predictions over the long range and, unless the threat is both imminent and evident, states are unlikely to respond to a very early warning. The character of an early warning can be measured on the scales of time (how early the warning) and intensity (how strong the warning). A balance point has to be reached in practice between these two, which will depend largely on the nature of the threat. A desirable early warning period for most conflicts would be one to six months.

In spite of the logical link between early warning and preventive action, it is not necessary that a conflict be successfully prevented for early warning to have been achieved. Early warning can take place even if preventive action was not taken or was unsuccessful. To be "early", it is only important that the warning be made early enough that prevention can be *attempted*. Still, a measure of a good early warning is how effective a response it receives.

A "competent authority" could be any body with a mandate to help keep the peace. For more serious threats, more important bodies should be informed. In the field, peacekeeping missions usually have such a mandate. Overall, the body with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security is the UN Security Council. The UN Charter (Article 35) gives nations the right to bring disputes to the attention of the Security Council. Similarly, Article 99 gives the

Secretary-General the power of warning: "The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten international peace and security."

The Secretaries-General have seldom invoked this authority explicitly--only three times, in fact.[1] While they regularly inform the Council of developments in peacekeeping operations, especially of problems in the field, it is rare that they bring a new matter (agenda item) to the Council by invoking a formal, public meeting of the Council. Early warning to the Council, when it is done, is done as a form of quiet, cautious diplomacy. The reasons for this reflect the obstacles to early warning in general.

The Difficulties of Early Warning

There are a host of challenges for those involved in early warning. First, no one can be certain of the future. Fate often makes unexpected turns, for better or worse, and what might appear to be an imminent threat might be fortuitously avoided. Even the plotters of violence are not certain if and when they will implement their plans. A random factor always plays a role in human events.

Uncertainty about the future leads early warners to fear being wrong in their predictions. If the warning of a threat is not borne out, then the warner can be accused of "crying wolf". Alternatively, there is also a fear of being right! Most people and organizations, the UN included, like to focus on success and positive outcomes, and pessimism is discouraged, even counterproductive. By sounding the alarm in advance, a warner risks being labeled an "alarmist." Furthermore, making an early warning suggests that the authorities are not in control and they may take offence. Thus, various Secretaries-General have sought to make their warnings discreet and private, out of the public eye. Otherwise, they fear that bringing a threat to public attention would amount to pointing a finger at one or more disputants, raising the pride and the backs of the protagonists, making mediation and conflict avoidance more difficult. Thus, early warning, if done in an improper manner, can actually be an impediment to quiet diplomacy and discreet preventive action. Also the planners of violence will certainly do their best to discredit the early warning, the warner, and any talk of preventive action.

Other prohibiting factors also relate to response measures. A person or organization sounding the alarm has an added responsibility to come forward with preventive measures, usually involving unwelcome intervention. The earlier the warning, the less apparent will be the desire or justification for intervention. Often those capable of intervention or preventive action (like countries on the Security Council) do not like to be pressed to utilize their capabilities and will resent the early warner for directly or indirectly exerting such pressure. Even after applying such pressure, if no action is taken and the conflict escalates, then the early warner will appear to be ineffective since he or she could not convince the competent body to take appropriate action. Or if preventive action is taken and proves successful, then the dilemma of conflict

prevention works against the early warner: successful prevention erase proof of its success. Critics will simply state that there was no real danger in the first place!

These challenges in early warning make it a difficult but not impossible task. There are, however, important cases of successful UN early warning, which shows that courage can be summoned in the face of daunting challenges. Two early warnings are worth noting: in the Congo in 1960 and in Rwanda in 1994.

Positive Cases of Early Warning

In early 1960 the proactive Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld made a tour of newly emerging African states. After noticing that the Congo was ill-prepared for self-government, he demonstrating his ability to "meet trouble half way," by sending his capable Under-Secretary-General Ralph Bunche to the Congo. Bunche cabled back his first-hand observations, including his comment: "power keg here but full explosion may be avoided." Immediately after receiving an request from Congolese authorities for intervention, Hammarskjöld invoked Article 99 to call an urgent meeting of the Security Council for July 13, 1960. He noted that the danger had broad, global implications since the superpowers supported opposing factions in the Congo and the country could easily have become a flash point for a larger conflict. He also proposed a solution, saying: "I believe the UN may be able to save this situation, chaotic as it is rapidly becoming."[2] At Hammarskjöld's recommendation, the Security Council created a peacekeeping force, called ONUC (Force de l'Organization des Nations Unies au Congo) which played a difficult but stabilizing role over the next four years, though the Secretary-General lost his life in the effort.

Approximately three decades later, to help implement the 1993 Arusha peace accords for Rwanda, the Security Council established the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). There were many indicators of an oncoming genocide available to the peacekeeping operations in 1993/94. The most stark information was provided by an informant who was responsible for training the militia in Kigali. Three months before the genocide began on April 6, 1994, he told Force Commander Roméo Dallaire that the militia were being trained to kill 1,000 people in 20 minutes and that he had been asked to compile a list of Tutsis in Kigali that he thought was "for their extermination." He showed a UNAMIR officer some weapons caches that were being kept ready for the massacres. He also said that Belgian troops in the mission would be targeted deliberately to "guarantee Belgian withdrawal." Dallaire passed this information on to UN headquarters in his fax of January 11, 1994 (see Annex). He also requested permission to raid the arms caches and to find asylum for the informant. But his request was turned down. Furthermore, UN headquarters did not share this fax with members of the Security Council. Thus, the field commander had issued an important early warning but UN headquarters failed to make its own appeal for assistance. Dallaire's ominous warning was borne out with uncanny accuracy in the genocide of April-July 1994, where some 800,000 Rwandese were killed. At the start, a group of Belgian peacekeepers were murdered and the Belgian government withdrew its peacekeepers, just as the genocidists had sought.

There were other significant early warning signs in Rwanda. The radio station *Radio Mille Collines*, owned and operated by persons high in the government, was spouting hate propaganda to demonize the Tutsi minority. Government ministers advanced a campaign of propaganda and urged mass killings. Weapons were imported, including automatic rifles and vast quantities of machetes that could not be justified for farming purposes. There was a long and bloody history of massacres and other serious human rights violations. Furthermore, a year earlier UN human rights investigators reported rumours of a network of senior officials devoted to killing Tutsis. The combination and collaboration of such information could have provided UN headquarters with the most tell-tale signs of impending doom [see Rwanda paper]. As we shall see, early warners need to proactively seek information on a variety of indicators and perform analyses to try and foresee future threats.

The Fire Analogy

To develop an effective analytical system for early warning, as the UN is now trying to do, it is useful to construct a conceptual model for conflict and its early warning indicators. The "fire of conflict" model is an excellent because it has a range of valuable applications. In it conflict is seen as analogous to a fire. The goal is to identify the potential for the fire before it ignites and rages out of control. What then are the signs of the latent fires?

First, we identify the logs or heavy wood. These are the long-standing grievances that could sustain a fire. For conflicts within nations, these are often appalling socio-economic conditions and the large disparities among different groups, especially those based on ethnic or religious ties, which have replaced ideology are the mainstay of armed conflict. For conflicts between nations, the "logs" may be the unresolved disputes over territory, resources, economic affairs, military rivalries, the treatment of minorities, etc. The logs are sometimes called the "background conditions" or "structural or root causes" of conflict.

The "kindling" is the lighter wood that helps start the logs burning. The kindling is analogous to the "accelerating factors" or "proximate causes" of conflict. These are recent activities that create heightened animosity among the conflicting parties. In internal conflicts, they may be repressive measures taken by governments against target groups like a clamp down on the opposition, increased human rights abuses, intimidation and forced segregation of minorities, etc. They may also be social trends like sharp economic decline, increased unemployment, poverty and crime. In international conflict, the kindling could be in the form of military build-ups, sabre-rattling, cross-border shootings and incursions, as well as verbal attacks and hostile economic measures.

Finally, the match that lights the fire is the incident that motivates one or more parties to resort to armed force. The matches are sometimes called "triggering events" or initiators. For internal conflicts, they would include assassination of leaders or their removal from office, election-rigging, the imposition of new and unjust laws, military

or paramilitary attacks on civilians, or even minor disruptions of the delicate status quo, etc. Even symbolic acts can be ignite conflict. In the recent Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Fall 2000), the visit of a former Israeli Defence Minister Ariel Sharon to the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount complex in Jerusalem was considered, by the Palestinians at least, as a triggering event in the escalation of violence. In international conflict, the match is often provided by military maneouver or attack. Nations might, for instance, fear a surprise attack and mistake military activities as such.

Often in early warning, the logs (ominous socio-economic conditions) will be apparent but is not accompanied with kindling. This gives the international community time to deal with the fundamental problems. On the other hand, the rapid escalation of conflict is usually determined by the match, which can be lit in unpredictable fashion. This highlights the central challenge for early warning: determining the time of initiation. As with volcanoes, people often have lived so long time with the threat of an eruption that they no longer expect it or prepare for it. Often the warners can see the logs and kindling (or the volcano cone) but have no idea when fire will begin. Hence, they tend to be extremely cautious in make any warnings. Furthermore, in human affairs, those who wish to ignite a conflict usually keep their chosen time secret. For this reason, the identification of the triggering events often requires secret intelligence, the use of secret means to gather secret information. Again, this is an area where the UN rightly has trouble operating.

Another case is when there is plenty of kindling and matches but no logs, so the conflict burns itself out quickly. This may occur if the number and strength of the actors are small. But it is of less concern to the international community since the damage is smaller and is self-contained.

The fire analogy allows us to go further. When the fire has just started to burn, the warner, late though he may be, will seek to sound the alarm and alert the fire department. The dilemma faced by an early warner of an outbreak of violence is much like that faced by a person wondering whether to pull a fire alarm. As the indications of fire appear, a number of people are usually in a position to pull the alarm. Member states as well as the various international and non-governmental agencies all have the right and duty to bring threats to the peace to the attention of the UN. To sound the alarm, the warner must either have new and unique information on the danger or, once several actors see the danger, he must be bold enough to choose to be the one to pull the fire alarm. The two main reasons for the dearth of warnings from the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council are pinpointed in this analogy. He rarely has more information than the most powerful members of the UN (or states closest to the conflict) and, when a conflict becomes obvious, he often prefers that Council members take the initiative in sounding the alarm because they will then be more motivated to mount a response. This does not mean that his early warning role is unimportant, but rather it shows that it can be difficult to implement.

Early Warning Process

The early warning process follows the same pattern as the intelligence process: information must be gathered and analysed before a warning is made, which is then hopefully used to undertake preventive action. These steps are illustrated in Figure 2.

There is constant feedback in the cycle: during analysis new information requirements are discovered and new information changes the nature of the analysis. The United Nations already has established an excellent internet site (ReliefWeb) for the sharing of information that is useful for early warning in complex emergencies (see www.reliefweb.int).

The analysis part of early warning involves the synthesis of background and current event information, the careful selection of indicator information, the examination of motivations and behaviours (to predict future directions), the assessment of capabilities (to carry out violence), the development of scenarios (to explore the possibilities for conflict escalation) and the determination of the most probable outcomes. One could turn to the "fires of conflict" analogy to help identify structural, proximate and triggering factors.

Both the analysis and the warning should, ideally, also include suggestions for preventive action. One approach to devising preventive actions is to start by summarizing the accelerators (kindling wood) and triggers (matches). The removal of such factors would be one means of preventive action. In addition the international community could carry out other peace promotion (fire retardant) activities. The study of preventive actions is carried out later in the course.

Conclusion

There is growing interest in the development of international early warning systems. The recent report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi report) has recently recommended that

"a new information-gathering and analysis entity be created to support the informational and analytical needs of the Secretary-General and the members of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS). Without such capacity, the Secretariat will remain a reactive institution, unable to get ahead of daily events .... The proposed ECPS Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat would ... bring budding crises to the attention of the ECPS leadership."[3]

Though the study and conscious practice of UN early warning is in its infancy, with only a few success stories to build on and many failures to learn from, it an area that holds much promise. The United Nations must begin to anticipate crises instead of simply reacting to them, taking preventive action where possible. UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan has asserted that "the UN of the twenty-first century must increasingly become a centre for preventive action." The need for prevention has become all too apparent after the great calamities of the 1990s. To make prevention possible, effective early warning systems are not only necessary but also an idea whose time has come.

ANNEX: The Rwanda "Genocide Fax"

TO: BARIL/DPKO/UNATIONS
FROM: DALLAIRE/UNAMIR/KIGALI
NEW   YORK
FAX   NO: MOST
IMMEDIATE-CODE
CABLE-212-xxx-xxxx FAX NO: O11-xxx-xxxxx

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROTECTION OF INFORMANT

ATTN: MGEN BARIL ROOM NO: 2052

TOTAL NUMBER OF TRANSMITTED PAGES INCLUDING THIS ONE: 2

1. Force commander put in contact with informant by very very important government politician. Informant is a top level trainer in the cadre of interhamwe-armed militia of MRND.
2. He informed us he was in charge of last Saturdays demonstrations which aims were to target deputies of opposition parties coming to ceremonies and Belgian soldiers. They hoped to provoke the RPF to engage (being fired upon) the demonstrators and provoke a civil war. Deputies were to be assassinated upon entry or exit from Parliament. Belgian troops were to be provoked and if Belgians soldiers restored to force a number of them were to be killed and thus guarantee Belgian withdrawal from Rwanda.
3. Informant confirmed 48 RGF PARA CDO and a few members of the gendarmerie participated in demonstrations in plain clothes. Also at least one Minister of the MRND and the sous-prefect of Kigali were in the demonstration. RGF and Interahamwe provided radio communications.
4. Informant is a former security member of the president. He also stated he is paid RF 150,000 per month by the MRND party to train Interahamwe. Direct link is to chief of staff RGF and president of the MRND for financial and material support.
5. Interahamwe has trained 1700 men in RGF camps outside the capital. The 1700 are scattered in groups of 40 throughout Kigali. Since UNAMIR deployed he has trained 300 personnel in three week training sessions at RGF

camps. Training focus was discipline, weapons, explosives, close combat and tactics.

6. Principal aim of Interahamwe in the past was to protect Kigali from RPF. Since UNAMIR mandate he has been ordered to register all Tutsi in Kigali. He suspects it is for their extermination. Example he gave was that in 20 minutes his personnel could kill up to 1000 Tutsis.

7. Informant states he disagrees with anti-Tutsi extermination. He supports opposition to RPF but cannot support killing of innocent persons. He also stated that he believes the president does not have full control over all elements of his old party/faction.

8. Informant is prepared to provide location of major weapons cache with at least 135 weapons. He already has distributed 110 weapons including 35 with ammunition and can give us details of their location. Type of weapons are G3 and AK47 provided by RGF. He was ready to go to the arms cache tonight-if we gave him the following guarantee. He requests that he and his family (his wife and four children) be placed under our protection.

9. It is our intention to take action within the next 36 hours with a possible H HR of Wednesday at dawn (local). Informant states that hostilities may commence again if political deadlock ends. Violence could take place day of the ceremonies or the day after. Therefore Wednesday will give greatest chance of success and also be most timely to provide significant input to on-going political negotiations.

10. It is recommended that informant be granted protection and evacuated out of Rwanda. This HQ does not have previous UN experience in such matters and urgently requests guidance. No contact has as yet been made to any embassy in order to inquire if they are prepared to protect him for a period of time by granting diplomatic immunity in their embassy in Kigali before moving him and his family out of the country.

11. Force commander will be meeting with the very very important political person tomorrow morning in order to ensure that this individual is conscious of all parameters of his involvement. Force commander does have certain reservations on the suddenness of the change of heart of the informant to come clean with this information. Recce of armed cache and detailed planning of raid to go on late tomorrow. Possibility of a trap not fully excluded, as this may be a set-up against this very very important political person. Force commander to inform SRSG first thing in morning to ensure his support.

12. Peux ce que veux. Allons-y.

Types of Early Warning

As highlighted in the UN-World Bank report *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, the number of violent conflicts has increased since 2010, thus raising the question of how violence and its escalation can be prevented. Conflict prevention mechanisms exist. Let's take a look at Early

Warning and Response Systems (EWRS), but first, what is early warning and early response?

Early warning is defined as "a process that: (a) alerts decision makers to the potential outbreak, escalation and resurgence of violent conflict; and (b) promotes an understanding among decision makers of the nature and impacts of violent conflict." It involves the regular collection and analysis of data on conflicts, by systematically monitoring and reporting conflict indicators. Early warning systems generate a set of products, based on quantitative and qualitative analytical methods. This helps formulate scenarios and response options that are communicated to decision-makers. Early warning systems are linked to response instruments.

Early response refers to "any initiative that occurs as soon as the threat of potential violent conflict is identified and that aims to manage, resolve, or prevent that violent conflict," by using preventive instruments and mechanisms. Different types of response exist, ranging from fact-finding, mediation, peace-making dialogue, negotiations, preventive diplomacy or more robust mechanisms such as sanctions.

Early warning can be an effective tool if strongly linked to responders. However, the link between early warning and early response has not always been effective. Strengthening this link to provide better responses to violent conflicts requires:

- Promoting stronger interactions between warners and responders, and exchanges to discuss strategies for response
- Timely and quick responses to warning
- Monitoring the impact of responses to conflicts to inform decision-making and strategies
- A better understanding of the value-added of EWS among institutions, the proximity and quality of the interface between early warning and response mechanisms

- Designing evidence-based response instruments to adequately respond to warning

- The design of nuanced response actions to take into account changes in the conduct of warfare.

Early Warning and Response: Different Types of Systems

EWRS are designed at different institutional levels. At the governmental level, EWRS were designed in France (*Système d'Alerte Précoce*, located at the General Secretariat for National Defense) and in Germany (BMZ Crisis Early Warning System).

At the intergovernmental level, the African Union has developed a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) to advise the Peace and Security Council on "potential conflict and threats to peace and security" and "recommend best courses of action". The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has designed the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), as an institutional foundation for addressing conflicts in the region. These systems are top-down, state-owned, and not embedded into local dynamics.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has also developed the Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) to engage in data collection and analysis, and the drafting of up-to-date reports on possible emerging crises, ongoing crises and post-crisis transitions. ECOWAS early warning systems have been tested full scale in Ghana and Liberia. Non-governmental organizations have also set up their own early warning systems, such as FEWER-Africa that focused on the Ituri region in the Democratic Republic of Congo or the Early Warning and Early Response Project (EWER) for Timor-Leste. The scope of these bottom-up systems tends to be limited to the local level, with little traction or link to the central level.

A World Bank Initiative: A EWRS Pilot in Guinea

The World Bank, with the Social Development Global Practice, is currently setting up a pilot community-based EWRS in seven communes of the Boke region in Guinea, under the Third Village Community Support Project (PACV3). The pilot is aligned with IDA18 Risk Mitigation Regime (RMR) that provides enhanced support to four countries, including Guinea, to mitigate increasing risks of Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV). The EWRS pilot in Guinea will focus on prevention and local conflict resolution, by supporting locally-owned solutions to conflicts. It will target recurrent conflicts that affect these communes, such as land, mining, pastoral, community, incivility / delinquency, and grievances around access to basic social services. The pilot is strongly embedded in existing eco-systems at the local level to guarantee ownership from the communities.

The early warning component that includes data collection and analysis will draw on information from existing and relevant grievance and redress systems set up by PACV3, and data collected by trained monitors. The early response component, or preventive action, will be rooted at the village-level and will follow accepted good practice of applying the subsidiarity principle, therefore seeking to prevent and manage conflicts at the lowest possible level before they escalate. The system will also foster communities' resilience, by supporting social cohesion activities and exchange activities between communes to create a link of interdependence.

The pilot will run for one year and will closely be monitored to draw lessons learned and allow for timely knowledge exchange.

Moving Forward: New threats and warfare calling for a different approach

As the nature of warfare is changing, with new security threats and the use of increasingly sophisticate technologies, EWRS will need to adapt to stay relevant and address current security challenges.

Early Warning Instruments and Models

Catalogue of Early Warning tools for Anticipating the impact of conflict

The number of Early Warning tools for anticipating the impacts of conflict and violence is growing rapidly. Methods range from qualitative, crowd-sourced data, news scraping, to advanced AI and machine learning models to predict when conflict might be likely to escalate, sometimes compounded by climate hazards. That is why the Climate Centre, together with ACAPS, put together this living catalogue of early warning tools and methodologies to keep track of the various approaches to predictive action developed and utilized by actors across the sector.

Many of these tools were presented at the Early Warning Early Action Workshop hosted by the NYU Center on International Cooperation on May 18 – May 20, 2021. The Humanitarian Data Exchange also hosts a catalogue of predictive models that is regularly updated and complements the list presented here. ACLED's Early Warning Research Hub is another great resource for applied models to predict and prevent violence. A new initiative, called the Complex Risk Analytics Fund (CRAF'd), spearheaded by the UN, and supported by Germany and the United Kingdom, is looking to scale up investments into data and analytics needed to better anticipate, prevent, and respond to complex risks before they become crises.

These tools all share a common objective to inform decisions that can reduce the worst impacts of conflict. For more info, join the Anticipatory Action in Conflict working group.

Perspectives on Early Warning Signs

Setting up early warning and response systems to prevent violent conflicts and save

lives

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The World Bank, with the Social Development Global Practice, is currently setting up a pilot community-based EWRS in seven communes of the Boke region in Guinea, under the Third Village Community Support Project (PACV3). The pilot is aligned with IDA18 Risk Mitigation Regime (RMR) that provides enhanced support to four countries, including Guinea, to mitigate increasing risks of Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV). The EWRS pilot in Guinea will focus on prevention and local conflict resolution, by supporting locally-owned solutions to conflicts. It will target recurrent conflicts that affect these communes, such as land, mining, pastoral, community, incivility / delinquency, and grievances around access to basic social services. The pilot is strongly embedded in existing eco-systems at the local level to guarantee ownership from the communities.

The early warning component that includes data collection and analysis will draw on information from existing and relevant grievance and redress systems set up by PACV3, and data collected by trained monitors. The early response component, or preventive action, will be rooted at the village-level and will follow accepted good practice of applying the subsidiarity principle, therefore seeking to prevent and manage conflicts at the lowest possible level before they escalate. The system will also foster communities' resilience, by supporting social cohesion activities and exchange activities between communes to create a link of interdependence.

The pilot will run for one year and will closely be monitored to draw lessons learned and allow for timely knowledge exchange.

Moving Forward: New threats and warfare calling for a different approach

As the nature of warfare is changing, with new security threats and the use of increasingly sophisticate technologies, EWRS will need to adapt to stay relevant and address current security challenges.

Gender Perspectives on Early Warning

Despite increasing awareness of gender issues in most aspects of conflict processes, it remains largely absent in the pre-conflict context, and the limited, speculative research that does exist suggests that the modelling and analysis of conflict early warning practices would be improved if gender-based perspectives were included. In response, this paper from International Alert and Swisspeace presents an initial framework on how to 'engender' conflict early warning.

The paper is divided into two parts: Part one offers a brief overview of definitions, processes and development of conflict early warning. Part two examines links between gender and early warning, and identifies areas where the integration of a gender perspective can improve existing models. By drawing on the experiences of a number of different conflicts throughout the world, a list of gender-sensitive early warning indicators are proposed for the purpose of verification and expansion. The paper concludes with a set of recommendations for future research and action, with particular emphasis on conducting empirical tests on the assumptions put forth.

Early warning and conflict prevention is still largely male dominated, and therefore male biased. However, the heightened visibility of gender-based violence, such as the deliberate use of rape and sexual assault during the conflicts of Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda, has pushed the need to better understand gendered forms of violence into the consciousness of policy makers. In addition:

- Incorporating gender-sensitive indicators into information collection and subsequent analysis allows for previously overlooked signs of instability to be taken into account and concentrates early warning at a grassroots level, anticipating conflict before it spreads to high politics
- Incorporating gender analysis and perspectives into the formulation of response options ensures discriminatory policies are not perpetuated in post- conflict situations, or new found freedoms reversed
- Engendering early warning also ensures that responses at a political and humanitarian level address the vulnerabilities specific to women and men but also has far reaching benefits that go beyond the protection of vulnerable groups.

A process of positive discrimination is necessary in order to speed up gender mainstreaming and to integrate the different perspectives women can bring. However, simply pushing women into politics will not make for better early warning. Meaningful contributions to conflict prevention through gender mainstreaming will only be achieved if convincing evidence of the benefits of equality between the sexes is demonstrated. In view of the male dominance of early warning and conflict prevention there is a need to increase the numbers of women in agencies working in the field, particularly at decision making levels, who would:

- Work on committing the responding institutions to mainstream gender into their operations, to ensure that preventative mechanisms are gender- sensitive and work on achieving gender balance
- Aim to eliminate existing inequalities and build a critical mass of women who could affect and influence structural processes
- Develop working relationships between governments, large intergovernmental organisations and more decentralised organisations such as NGOs and local networks including women's organisations
- Develop effective systems that proactively draw on micro-level, grassroots efforts involving the larger population, rather than top-down approaches that tend to focus solely on high politics.

Early Warning Monitoring Agencies

Human rights violations are a significant indicator of conflict and crisis. Human rights monitoring and analysis can help to identify many of the issues that can lead to conflict and crisis, so measures can be taken to address and prevent them. The human rights normative framework provides a sound basis for addressing issues of serious concern within or between countries that, if left unaddressed, may lead to conflict.

The use of mercenaries poses a rising threat to international peace and security, and like genocide, is a crime against humanity. Its human rights violations go beyond the context of armed conflicts, extending to criminal activities such as people trafficking, weapons, precious stones and drugs.

Weapons initiate, sustain and exacerbate armed conflict and crime, as well as destabilize communities. Armed conflicts are increasingly fought in highly populated areas, so many of those killed and injured by weapons are civilians. When social, commercial, infrastructural, cultural, educational, religious and healthcare facilities are damaged, there is a long-term impact on a wide range of human rights.

Our work

Prevention forms a central part of how UN Human Rights works to protect human rights. Human rights are at the core of creating national protection systems, building resilience, and mitigating the worst impacts of crises and conflicts on those most vulnerable. Our work on the human rights aspects of early warning and prevention is central to the UN's renewed focus on sustaining peace.

The early warning role of human rights mechanisms – from Human Rights Council Special Procedures and the Universal Periodic Review to Treaty Bodies – has been widely recognized. By supporting them, we also contribute to the prevention of crises and conflicts, as well as to sustaining peace through the technical assistance that many of these mechanisms provide.

Prevention is also key to advancing sustainable development goals. We help to sustain both peace and development by showing how applying human rights can address grievances, reduce inequality and build resilience.

We study and identify causes, emerging issues and trends in mercenary-related activities and private military and security companies. A key goal is to strengthen the international legal framework to prevent the recruiting, financing and training of mercenaries. In our work on arms and weapons, UN Human Rights seeks to support Sustainable Development Goal 16, in particular the goals of reducing violence, and significantly reducing illicit financial and arms flows by 2030.

Learn more about our work on arms and human rights

Learn more about our work on prevention and early warning

Who else is involved

The Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination

The Working Group is tasked with studying the human rights violations, in particular to the right of peoples to self-determination, committed by mercenaries and those engaged in mercenary-related activities, as well as private military and security companies. It does this through fact-finding missions, thematic studies and individual allegations.

OBJECTIVES AND VALUES OF EARLY WARNING

The goal of early warning systems may be conceived as avoiding or minimising violence, deprivation or humanitarian crises that threaten the sustainability of human development. Human development implies improving quality of life through expanding human and social capital, as required to adapt to change and better satisfy human needs such as those for security/well-being, identity/valued relationships and effective participation/justice.

Reliable early warnings buy time not only to prepare for short-term containment and relief strategies, but also to design, build support for and implement longer-term proactive strategies and development programs that can reduce the likelihood of future disasters. An early warning system is more than the flow of information and reports from those on the ground regarding highly visible or rapidly escalating crises. It should also provide reliable analyses that identify still-latent or low-level conflicts or instabilities, while there is still time for investing in appropriate structural development and building conflict management capacity.

More than that, early warning systems can generate analyses that identify key factors driving the instability, providing a basis from which to assess likely future scenarios, and recommend appropriate options for local and international policy makers oriented toward preventive action. They also should keep track of what preventive strategies have been used in what contexts in the past, to what effect and at what cost.

Such analyses improve the reliability of conflict early warnings (current model-based warnings have been found accurate close to 80% of the time, and can be used to build political will and coalitions among potential responders for appropriately designed preventive action, at a fraction of the cost of reactive humanitarian and peace-keeping initiatives. In addition, these coalitions should include where possible, domestic as well as international, private as well as public sector partners, thereby significantly adding to the strength of civil societies and democratic institutions, and their capacity to manage their own conflicts in the longer term.

Along with disease (especially AIDS) and so-called "natural" disasters such as drought and floods, ethnic wars and repression within states constitute an enormous threat to human security. Yet much more needs to be done to develop systems for providing early warning of violent civil conflict and of related phenomena, such as mass killings (genocide or politicide), gross human rights violations, regime failure, refugee and IDP flows, environmental degradation and food shortages. (Source: John Davies 2001)

The conventional approach to early warning among operational agencies has involved the preparation of internal, *interpretative reports* for policy makers. These focus on the substance of the assessment and the need to package the report to bring out available policy options within the constraints on the agency's capacity to respond. They are typically based on field monitoring and in-country situation studies supplemented by limited but increasingly systematised sharing of field reports and indicator monitoring. Mechanisms such as UNOCHA's Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS) for UN agencies, or its publicly available, internet-based ReliefWeb and African IRIN reports are examples. UNHCR's Centre for Documentation and Research has begun to make versions of its more structured country situation assessments for UN interagency meetings also publicly accessible via the web.

A complementary approach is the generation of *analytical reports* employing explicit structural or dynamic models of crisis phenomena. Models provide an essential complement to field monitoring and indicator monitoring through specifying the combinations of risk factors and sequence of events that are likely to lead to different types of crises, distinguishing between remote and proximate conditions. This approach has been favoured by academic researchers, and its advantages include being accessible for systematic testing and progressive refinement and adaptation based on cumulative results, and providing a means for identifying the key factors to be addressed for effective prevention.

These model-based analyses may draw on country or group profiles or databases of structural indicators (e.g., Gurr's, 2000c, Minorities at Risk data), coded assessments by country experts (e.g., Scarborough, 1998; Schmid, 1998), and/or coded analyses of multiple filtered, publicly accessible news and information sources (e.g., Harff and Gurr, 1998). Analysis of data from both risk assessment and dynamic early warning models can make use of either simple or more powerful statistical tools for complex pattern recognition, such as neural net analysis or time-series impact assessment analysis, to distinguish where and when escalation and crises are likely.

Another rich information source is to be found in episodic databases which profile past conflicts and crises, including information on crisis development and the effectiveness of attempts at crisis prevention or management (e.g., Wilkenfeld and Brecher, 1988; Bercovitch, 1996; Bloomfield and Moulton, 1997). This can provide an empirical basis for recommending early response options that are likely to be more effective in current potential crises. (Source: John Davies: 2001)

Purpose:
To familiarise participants with the basic framework for understanding the dynamic elements that inform conflict trend.

Objectives:
- To identify the elements of conflict to monitor.
- To discuss their relationships and composite impact on conflict

Time:
1 hr.30 min.

Process:
PowerPoint or slide presentation on the Analytical Framework for Monitoring and Warning. Discuss the elements of conflict that monitors and warners observe (Resources: Handouts 4.2.1-4.2.2)

Root causes or systemic conditions
Proximate factors: accelerators
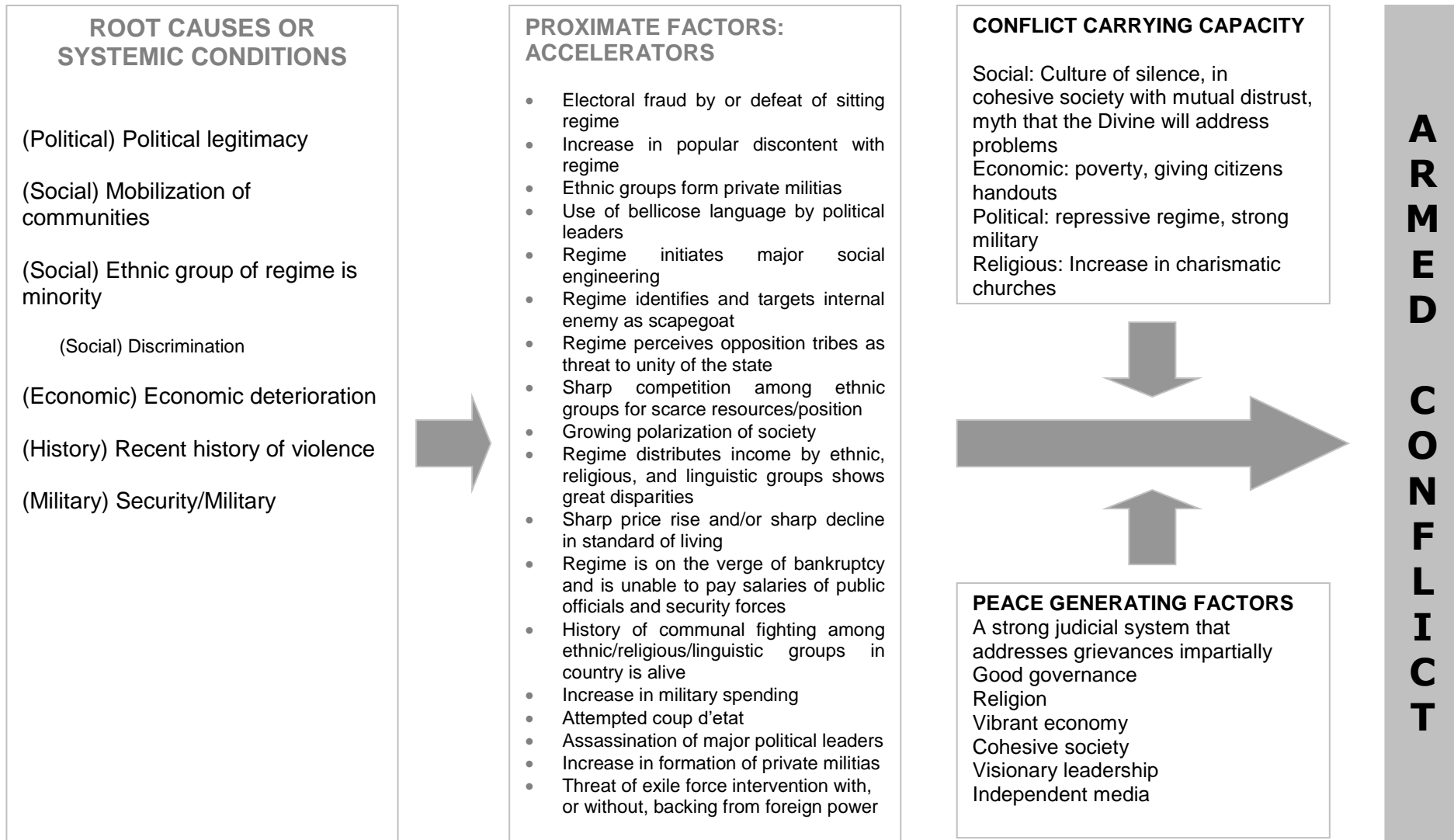Conflict carrying capacity
Peace generating factors
Armed conflict

Using Worksheets 4.2.1-4.2.3, identify indicators that manifest themselves in the conflict they are observing using the elements identified in the presentation.

Participants report their findings.

Review of the framework and clarification of the groups' elements.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING AND WARNING **(Source: Model Adopted from FAST)**

ROOT CAUSES OR SYSTEMIC CONDITIONS

(Political) Political legitimacy

(Social) Mobilization of communities

(Social) Ethnic group of regime is minority

    (Social) Discrimination

(Economic) Economic deterioration

(History) Recent history of violence

(Military) Security/Military

PROXIMATE FACTORS: ACCELERATORS

- Electoral fraud by or defeat of sitting regime
- Increase in popular discontent with regime
- Ethnic groups form private militias
- Use of bellicose language by political leaders
- Regime initiates major social engineering
- Regime identifies and targets internal enemy as scapegoat
- Regime perceives opposition tribes as threat to unity of the state
- Sharp competition among ethnic groups for scarce resources/position
- Growing polarization of society
- Regime distributes income by ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups shows great disparities
- Sharp price rise and/or sharp decline in standard of living
- Regime is on the verge of bankruptcy and is unable to pay salaries of public officials and security forces
- History of communal fighting among ethnic/religious/linguistic groups in country is alive
- Increase in military spending
- Attempted coup d'etat
- Assassination of major political leaders
- Increase in formation of private militias
- Threat of exile force intervention with, or without, backing from foreign power

CONFLICT CARRYING CAPACITY

Social: Culture of silence, in cohesive society with mutual distrust, myth that the Divine will address problems
Economic: poverty, giving citizens handouts
Political: repressive regime, strong military
Religious: Increase in charismatic churches

PEACE GENERATING FACTORS
A strong judicial system that addresses grievances impartially
Good governance
Religion
Vibrant economy
Cohesive society
Visionary leadership
Independent media

ARMED CONFLICT

Root Causes are those conditions or structural factors that feed or nurture conflicts in society. They themselves are not conflict but their presence in any society increases the likelihood that that society will be embroiled in violent conflict if constructive measures are not taken to better the conditions. Examples are poverty, ethnic antagonism, poor governance and/or weak state, political intolerance, etc. Root causes are also referred to as systemic causes, general, underlying, structural, deep-rooted, background pre-conditions.

Proximate Causes are factors closest to the conflagration of conflict. Proximate causes epitomise the conflict in the society. They are the specific situational circumstances (Schmid, 1997:50). There are two categories of proximate indicators: Accelerators and Triggers. Accelerators are predetermined indicators that show changes in the pattern of the conflict. They are observable. Triggers are unexpected events that lead to conflagration. Because they are never expected they are not easily monitored. However, one can draw from history and predict the impact of a trigger in any conflict situation.

Intervening Conditions or Factors:
Mention should be made also of conditions or root factors that reduce the possibility for root causes or proximate factors from leading to conflict. These may include cultural or religious resources, strong dictatorial and yet charismatic leaders, strong external control, and wealth.

Intervening factors are in two categories:
 Conflict Carrying Capacity and *Peace Generating Factors*. Conflict Carrying Capacity refers to the society's ability to live with or cope with conflict conditions or structures of injustice. Example of Conflict Carrying Capacity includes a strong and repressive regime, a culture of silence, the size of the population, etc. Peace Generating Factors are institutions, processes and values of society that promote and sustain healthy social relations, justice and peace. Smooth transitions to democracy or an accountable system of governance, equitable system for the distribution of wealth, etc. are examples of peace generating factors.

CONFLICT CARRYING CAPACITY.

Using your conflicts please identify the conflict carrying capacities in your context. Remember conflict carrying capacities are not necessarily positive. They are the society's ability to live with or carry on with life while the structural conditions that feed conflicts persist. Conflict carrying capacity can affect causal, catalyst and triggering indicators.

	Political (incl. Military and Security) factors	Economic factors	Socio-cultural factors
Causal factors			
Proximate factors: Accelerators			
Proximate Factors: Triggers			

PEACE GENERATING FACTORS.

In order to structure an analysis of peace generating factors, it is useful to consider three elements:

- **Systemic factors.** What is the system that upholds peace? How strong is it? Examples may be rules governing relations between villages and groups, etc.

- **Process factors.** What are processes for dealing with conflict and that sustain peace? Examples may be inter-village meetings, council of elders, etc.

- **Tools.** What are the tools available for dealing with conflict? How are these and the above factors gendered?

- With the above understanding please complete the table below:

	Systemic Factors	**Process Factors**	**Tools**
PEACE GENERATING FACTORS			

PEACE GENERATING FACTORS AND CROSS CUTTING QUESTIONS:

Key questions that need to be factored into our analysis include:

Among the peace generating factors, which ones are perceived ones, as opposed to factual?

Have you identified the main peace generating factors at all levels (local, national, international)?

Are the peace generating factors identified a manifestation of this current phase of the conflict? Are there any ones that have been missed because of too much emphasis on this phase?

Which peace generating factors are rooted in history and which ones are seen as important in the future?

ENGENDERING EARLY WARNING.

Purpose:

To ensure gender-sensitive early warning

Objectives:

- To identify and discuss the role and position of women in early warning
- To identify indicators relevant to engendered early warning

Time:

1hr. 30 min.

Process:

Brainstorm meaning of Gender: Clarify distinctions with sex; emphasise dynamic nature. In small groups, discuss "How do gender roles, conditions and positions impact conflict analysis and the development of effective early warning?" Consider how gender has been mainstreamed and or identified during the course of the training and the participants experiences.

Brainstorm answers onto a flipchart. Categorise roles, conditions and positions and clarify importance of distinctions. Lead debate/discussion. Alternatively, ask for several men and women to volunteer in a fishbowl debate on the importance of engendering Conflict Analysis and Early Warning. The remaining participants should be given the role of observers to note and report on:

  a) references and distinctions to gender roles, conditions and positions of agency
  b) body language, expressions of emotion etc... Process the experience and responses. Follow-up with a presentation / PowerPoint on the evidence for engendering conflict analysis and early warning. (Resource: Handout: 4.3.1; CD ROM)

Bring out key points:

- What is gender and gender mainstreaming?
- Why is gender critical to conflict analysis and prevention?
- Why are gender sensitive systems necessary for comprehensive, earlier and effective warning?
- What are gender-blind, gender sensitive and gender transformative indicators?
- How does gender impact and contribute to better peacekeeping operations?
- How does incorporating gender analysis into response options ensure the prevention of discriminatory policies in post-conflict?

In groups, generate a list of gender sensitive indicators and ideas or examples of gender sensitive systems. Discuss and summarise importance and necessity of a gender analysis at all stages of conflict analysis and prevention. (Alternatively indicators and strategies may be identified and developed by the use of case studies).

EVALUATION AND CLOSING

- Summary of the day's activities.
- Participants list key learnings of the day
- Participants evaluate the process and make suggestions.

(15 min.)

What is Gender?

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men. It includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). These roles and expectations are learned, changeable over time and variable between cultures.

What is Gender mainstreaming?

Mainstreaming is a strategy to support the goal of gender equality. It has two general dimensions: 1) the integration of gender equality concerns into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programs, and projects; and 2) initiatives to enable women as well as men to formulate and express their views and participate in decision making across all development issues

What is gender condition and gender position?

Gender condition refers to women's absolute status in society. It is a tool used to assess women's practical needs in development interventions, for example their needs resulting from multiple workloads, access to basic services or income generation. Gender condition analysis has enabled a greater understanding of women's poverty in context.

Gender position on the other hand, refers to women's position in society vis-à-vis men. Their relative power and status, their access and control over resources including decision making. Gender position analysis has led to a understanding of the institutionalised forms of discrimination against women in areas such as labour, land ownership, education, eradication of violence against women, etc.

Gender and the Status quo

Because of current disparities, equal treatment of women and men is insufficient as a strategy for gender equality. Achieving gender equality will require changes in institutional practices and social relations through disparities are reinforced and sustained. It also requires a strong voice for women in shaping their societies in peace and in conflict.

Gender and Conflict analysis

- *A gender perspective has been absent from conflict analyses, conflict early warning and preventive response systems.*
- *The transition from gender blind indicators to gender sensitive analysis and transformative societies is critical to early warning and response, which is geared towards enhancing positive peace.*

Gender and Conflict prevention

- *Incorporating gender sensitivity into the collection and analysis process of early warning makes existing models more comprehensive and allows for "early" early warning by anticipating macro-level conflicts through micro level events.*

- *An incorporation of micro level changes helps in the formulation of responses at a political and humanitarian level in order to address the vulnerabilities of men and women and assure that certain discriminatory policies are not perpetuated in post conflict situations.*

- *Early warning and preventive activities can be made more effective by utilising the untapped potential of women leaders, women's organisations and women networks as peace-builders.*

Why are gender sensitive systems necessary?

- *The use of terms like "people", "refugees" and "internally displaced persons", downplays the inherent differences between the genders and the specificity of experiences and interests*

- *A gender sensitive focus will increase the understanding of factors that lead to armed conflict and improve early warning analysis and the formulation of response options*

- *Engendering early warning does not only benefit women, but ensures that the concerns of men and women are considered. It also provides an overall improvement to existing approaches of information collection, analysis and formulation of response options.*

- *Gender sensitive systems provide a better understanding of unequal hierarchies, including gender hierarchies, inequality and oppression that exacerbate conflict in communities and societies.*

What are gender sensitive indicators?

- *A gender sensitive indicator can be defined as "an indicator that captures gender related changes in society over time."*

- *Sex – desegregated indicators can offer some of the differential impacts of initiatives on women and men. E.g. asking how many peace negotiators were women, or voting rates of women and men, or the male/female ratio of a group of displaced people can offer insights into gender differences and the varying impact of a project on women and men.*

Guiding indicators
- *Expected results should include a gender equality dimension*
- *Resources must be provided to ensure that the gender equality dimension is delivered during the implementation phase*
- *The implementing organisations must have demonstrated capacity to work with equality issues*

The inclusion of women
- *At the micro level, Women are critical at the grassroots level where women's groups and organisations are active and in tune with what occurs in the community.*
- *An inclusion of communities into early warning exercises increases the likelihood that women are given a voice in effectively bridging the conflict divide by using their own social networks and different approaches to communication, negotiation and mediation.*

Shift in ascribed gender roles

- ***Recent conflicts have illustrated a shift from the ascribed roles given to women. Women are no longer just* victims*; they are now* warriors and combatants*.***
- ***This proposes that a new lens be introduced to view the potential women bring to conflict and peace situations.***

Knowledge of women

- ***Recent conflicts in many parts of the world have shown that women have extensive knowledge of, for example, rebel movement's location, abuses of security forces of population, progress of warring forces, etc. This can be vital to early warning.***
- ***At the micro level, women know when male members of their families are preparing for war or violence.***
- ***The use of women in Peace operations improved access to the local population and the behaviour of the male colleagues. It also increased the range of skills, approaches and perspectives within the peacekeeping mission. (Source: WANEP/Thelma Ekiyor, 2002)***

Sources:

- ***Schmeidl, Susanne and Piza-Lopez, Eugenia "Gender and Early Warning: A Framework for Action, International Alert, Swiss Peace, London 2002.***
- ***WANEP/Thelma Ekiyor, 2002***
- Williams, Suzanne with Seed, Jan and Muau Adelina, The Oxfam Gender Training Manual, Oxfam Publications, Oxford, 1994.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the day, participants will have:

- Working knowledge on the concept and application of response design and mobilisation.
- Reviewed priority response options.
- Developed activities for response mobilisation and political will

CONTENTS

- Overview of Conflict Prevention
- Framework for Response design and mobilisation
- Types of response mobilisation activities.

DAY 5: AGENDA

TIME	TOPIC
9:00-10:30	Review of Previous day Overview of Response Design and Mobilisation *Objectives: Participants will:* • Understand the concept of response in the context of conflict • Appreciate the need for response mobilisation • Identify the most appropriate strategies. • Develop an outline response
10:30-11:00	BREAK
11:00-12:45	Framework for Response Design and Mobilisation
12:30-2:00	LUNCH BREAK
2:00-4:15	Developing Responses. *Objectives: Participants will:* • Identify and discuss the appropriate response mechanisms. • Identify and discuss the challenges and opportunities for implementation.

CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND EARLY WARNING

Purpose:

To develop strategies for responses to early warning.

Objectives:

- To define early response and conflict prevention.
- To identify entry points for response
- To define priority response options for key targets

Time:

1 hr 30 min.

Process:

Brainstorm on "Conflict Prevention" and "Early Response" Provide example of

definition from international sources: e.g. UN General Assembly:

- Early response is the process of using information gathered from early warning systems to design action aimed at preventing violent conflict. The action could be the development of a policy or programmes….It involves the developing of strategies to prevent conflict at different levels using specific entry points

Divide into groups. Identify range of responses to prevent the emergence/re-

emergence of violence In plenary, build typology of response for prevention

and re-emergence of violence.

(Resource: Handout 5.1.1 – 5.1.4)

Prevention mechanisms seek to avert danger or conflict. The danger can be prevented at:

1. Pre-conflict stage-early early warning for early early response
2. Crisis stage- early warning for early response
3. Post-crisis stage- early early warning for early early response

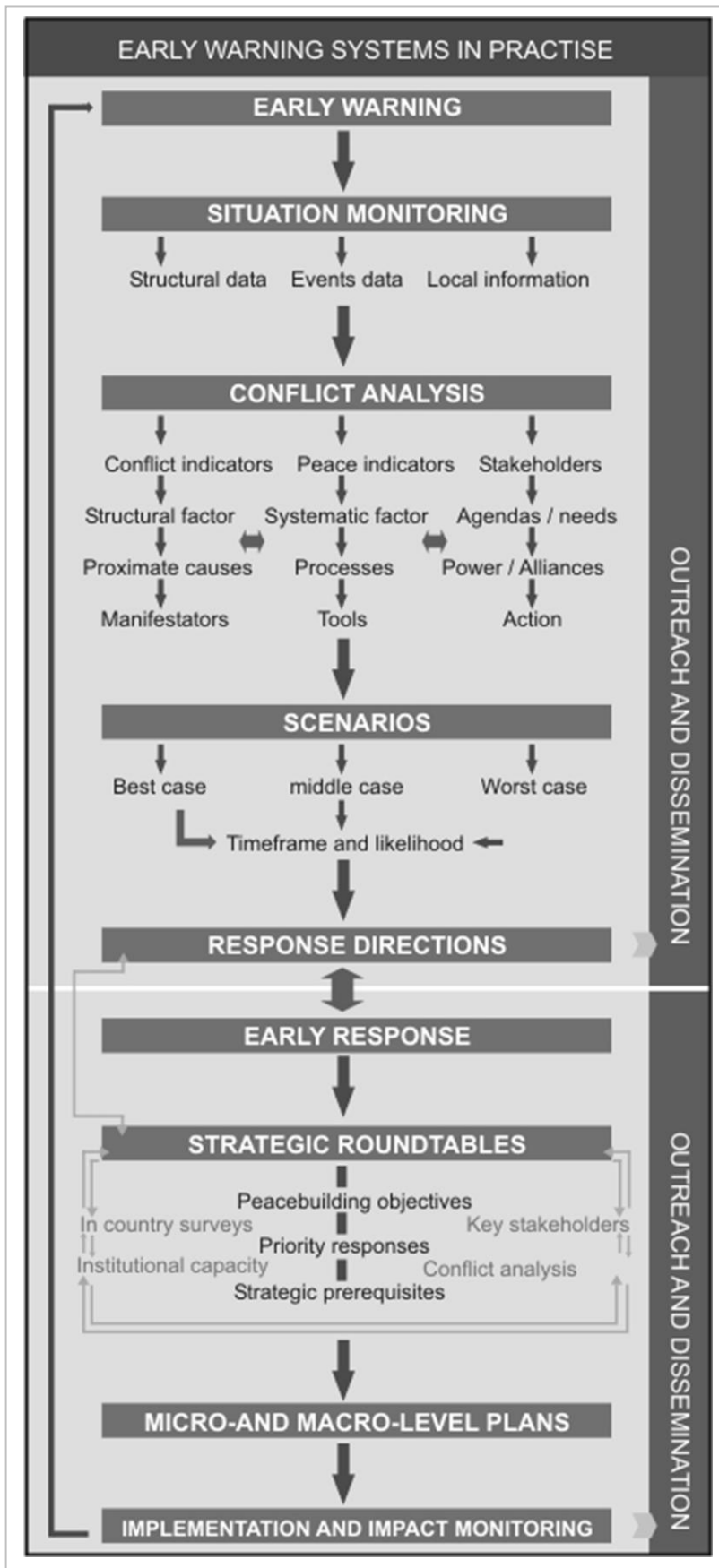Strategically there are different measures of intervention for prevention at different levels:

The primary level has two measures:

  (a) Proactive measure-building on the values and strengths of a community i.e. the opportunities so that threats are diminished (strategic risk and prevention assessment)
  (b) Prophylactic measure-preventive medicine to deal with a specific problem in the society. It is more strategic than (a) above. It requires in depth analysis to get the right measure to prevent the problem

The secondary level is needed when conflict has happened with 3 measures:

  (a) Active measure to tackle key actors, weapons, mercenaries, soldiers, reducing women and children's death
  (b) Reactive strategy to put buffer zones to reduce the scope and spread of conflict but not to stop it
  (c) Palliative measure is used to reduce the impact of human suffering through humanitarian activities and other strategies to deal with impending conflict.

BRIDGING WARNING AND RESPONSE

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS IN PRACTISE

EARLY WARNING

SITUATION MONITORING

Structural data　　Events data　　Local information

CONFLICT ANALYSIS

Conflict indicators	Peace indicators	Stakeholders
Structural factor	Systematic factor	Agendas / needs
Proximate causes	Processes	Power / Alliances
Manifestators	Tools	Action

SCENARIOS

Best case　　　middle case　　　Worst case

Timeframe and likelihood

RESPONSE DIRECTIONS

EARLY RESPONSE

STRATEGIC ROUNDTABLES

Peacebuilding objectives

In country surveys　　　　　　Key stakeholders

Priority responses

Institutional capacity　　　　Conflict analysis

Strategic prerequisites

MICRO-AND MACRO-LEVEL PLANS

IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT MONITORING

OUTREACH AND DISSEMINATION

OUTREACH AND DISSEMINATION

38

This framework has 9 tracks or strategies that have been put into 3 main tracks:

Track 1: Formal Intervention
- Diplomacy for reconciliation through inducements and conciliation or military engagements through peacekeeping, observation missions and peace enforcement.
- Development Aid
- Direct/active peace building through mediation and negotiation leading to accords and agreements

Track 2: Informal intervention in conflict achieved through strategic planning processes
- Provides deeper understanding of a situation through workshops, assemblies and conferences to learn basic skills in negotiation so that all can work towards peace.
- Share vision-envisioning peace in the future for conflicting parties.
- Psycho-social recovery process to conflict trauma

Track 3: Community participation of stakeholders
- Re-building of community infrastructure where conflict took place.
- Trauma healing
- Tolerance reduction programme.

ROLE OF OUTSIDE POLICY MAKERS IN RESPONDING TO CONFLICT

Operational	Structural
Top–down, donor to grassroots (hands-on), to help modify behaviour through incentives, sanctions, amnesties, peacekeeping and peace enforcement responses.	(Giving avenues of responding) through alliances, economic organisations, World Bank, ICC (International Criminal Court)
Mediation	Elemental aid
Bottom-up, grassroots to donor, blue-prints (hands-off) to help in mediation and preventive diplomacy	(Giving assistance) through Bilateral, multi-linear, Early warning networks, ODA (Overseas Development Agency)

Emphasis is on indirect structural responses to conflict. This approach requires resources, co-ordination and agreement between stakeholders and there is a consequent need for the structural elemental assistance to developing countries.

How policy makers apply conflict prevention

Conflict Prevention Regional Networking (CPRN)-World Bank Project

The policy makers have mainstreamed their networks to improve collaboration by forming Conflict Prevention Funds to pool their resources. Canada has a peace-building fund that targets NGOs. There are also secretariats, foreign ministries and regional organisations that run these Conflict Prevention units e.g. the European Union, UK, Sweden.

Issues specific to the international community:
Security factors associated with the conflict include; child soldiers, land mines, and small arms. The problem is that these issues are only symptoms of the bigger problem.

Crucial points to influence policy makers:

(a) Operationally relevant
All information should generate response:
- Tools and instruments to accomplish the response
- Do they have anything to generate response
- What is their hierarchy on structure of response

(b) Consistent with flow of information
The source of information should be realistic and consistent with other organisations and contacts of reputable secondary sources so as to fit the analysis of other groups.

(c) Decision support tools
Graphic interpretation should be used together with a narrative policy brief, e.g. graphical points of information, as most policy makers do not have time to read long narratives. The Internet can be used to get other options and data to support the information.

DEVELOPING RESPONSES

Purpose:

To promote effective policy responses.

Objectives:

- To define priority response options for key targets
- To develop a multi-stakeholder response strategy

Process:

Brainstorm on types of response. Present the range of approaches,

stakeholders and the importance of identifying the key players, spoilers and levers.

(15 min.)

Enact a simulation of a Strategic Roundtable, dividing the group into members of the roundtable and observers of the process.

Discuss the process as a structured experiential process. Emphasise the key principles and outcomes from this response approach

(45 min.)

In groups, develop comprehensive response strategies around a specific conflict. Present and offer critical feedback in plenary.

(1 hr 30 min.)

(Resource: Handout 5.2.1 – 5.2.2)

WORKSHOP EVALUATION AND CLOSING

- Summary of the workshop.

- Participants evaluate key learnings of the workshop.
- Participants evaluate the process and make suggestions for improvement.
- Closing Ceremony

(30 min.)

On both a conceptual and practical level, the processes of early warning and early response occur independent of but interdependent with each other. In order to bridge the divide between the two processes, this framework outlines the actual methodology developed for defining integrated responses to early warning. Early Response is the development of strategic responses to anticipated escalation of violent conflict and the presentation of options to critical actors (national, regional, and international) for the purposes of decision-making and preventive action.

Response Planning

Planning integrated responses to early warning needs to be an inclusive and strategic process. A sustainable and implementable plan is one that is owned by different groups and that addresses the agendas/mandates of organisations operating in a given region.

AGENDA

Stakeholders are those individuals or entities that have an interest in the outcome of a project or programme. Stakeholders can be further categorised according to their degree of *participation* in policy planning, which is often determined by whether a stakeholder is an external or internal actor; their *influence* over the implementation of policies; and their *importance* to the overall success of the programme. Primary stakeholders are those groups that are directly impacted by a project. They may not have access to decision-makers nor are able to influence policies, but their participation in the project is crucial. Secondary stakeholders are those groups that participate in policy planning and implementation. They are not protagonists in the conflict but are crucial to successfully effecting early responses. Key stakeholders are those actors that exercise significant influence over the progress of a project. This influence may derive from control of strategic resources, social status or political weight vis-à-vis collaboration with other stakeholders. Finally, spoilers are those key stakeholders that have the ability to either hinder or de-rail an early response project.

The sequencing provides for the initial elaboration of a response plan by a coalition of the willing, which is subsequently validated and further elaborated by international and local stakeholders/protagonists.

The coalition should be broadly representative, and include local organisations, both men and women's groups, government agencies, inter-governmental organisations, and external NGOs and governments with a peace agenda for the region. Roundtable discussions cover the issues raised in the Agenda and lead to the development of a broad response plan.

The planning agenda for the roundtables should include the nine items described below. These items can be covered with a small group (15-20 people) over two or three days.

1. Problem definition: There has to be an agreement on the causes of the conflict. Stakeholders must also share a common understanding of the dynamics of the conflict.

2. Stabilising factors. In order to qualify the depth of problems, stabilising factors need to be identified. These will be factors that mitigate problems, or are positive developments in the region studied.

3. Spoilers. The identification of groups that may benefit from violence is important. The identification of these groups, and their motives provides the basis for neutralising or checking them.

4. Shared vision: Stakeholders must be able to agree on what constitutes "peace" for the conflict in question. Some may believe that peace simply means the cessation of hostilities, whereas others may think that it is a longer process of development.

5. Capacity assessment: A full inventory of the possible resources that can be brought to bear on participating stakeholders must also be taken. This is done in order to assess the breadth that early response efforts can have.

6. Response selection: With a refined perspective on the conflict and the various interests that will intermingle with the stakeholders, specific policies can then be designed to address the conflict. Initially broad response directions may be identified. These, however, should be concretised into feasible actions.

7. Response implementation: Once a comprehensive set of responses has been determined, they must then be implemented by an agreed-upon set of actors. These policies must be enacted at the most effective entry point (timing) and reinforce other efforts towards preventing conflict (co-ordination).

8. Monitoring/co-ordination: The plan of action needs to be disseminated broadly to groups implementing and funding preventive activities. An organisation needs to be tasked with systematically collecting information about on-going and new projects. Regular co-ordination (or information sharing) meetings of implementing agencies and donors should be held.

9. Evaluation/exit: As these projects are established, it is necessary to assess the contributions that they are making towards the vision of peace articulated by the stakeholders. There should be a set of criteria that delineates the conditions for the withdrawal of external support from the response process. Criteria for effective strategies should include the following: (1) the response is technically feasible; (2) the response is politically acceptable by all the stakeholders; (3) the response is congruent with the vision of peace articulated by the stakeholders; and (4) the response deals with overall strategic issues, i.e. the causes of conflict identified earlier.[1] There should also be a good understanding of the entry points for refining policies.

A *strategic round table* is a conference convened with key middle level actors, mostly "coalition of the willing" for the purpose of macro-level multi-sectoral planning. These are policies that work together for the good of conflict prevention but it is not a mediation process.

Strategic refers to direction, future, analysis of self-potential and power /weakness, mapping of resources and futuristic planning. *Round table* means that the actors invited are equal, have openness, dialogue are expected to be inclusive. A *strategic round table* is a forum for equals who are thinkers and capable to rationally plan and contribute rationally to broad issues affecting all in the society.

The dilemma and challenge is the presence of spoilers who are also opinion leaders and are capable of dragging, sabotaging or undermining the process.

Who comes to a strategic round table

These middle actors are representative and should not be more than 20 men and women:

- Religious leaders
- Media-influential editors
- Government ministers from the foreign affairs and internal security
- Leaders of civil society organisations
- Ambassadors
- IMF representative
- UN Agencies e.g. UNDP
- Peace organisations
- Development organisations

Steps of a roundtable conference

1. Discuss conflict factors, their interconnections and relative importance after research and analysis.
2. Define and agree on long-term peace objectives for the region
3. Identify key potential spoilers and reconcilers using stakeholder analysis of their interests at 3 levels:

- Stakeholder aware of dividends of the conflict, the size, how much e.g. politicians
- Stakeholders whose dividend is in resolving militarisation e.g. business people, robbers,
- Stakeholders unaware of their gains either positively or negatively who need to be informed to cross over to either side.

4. Identify key preventive instruments (developmental, diplomatic, security, economic etc) that can address these issues to improve economy and strengthen the police.
5. Divide roles and responsibilities among the key actors (local, regional and international according to comparative advantages to other actors).
6. Decide on the time frame for activities and identify possible donors.
7. Design follow-up, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and make a commitment to one another.

Outcome of a roundtable

- A verified conflict report that is more authentic
- A strategic plan
- Mobilise actors so that they can be invigorated to do something and sustain the momentum and therefore the process has to be short.
- Proposals for donor actions
- Framework for monitoring and evaluation of the commitments, learning the process and greater leverage that increases networking and credibility for future

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