

Guidelines Conflict Analysis

Conflict, of course, can be defined in a variety of ways, but today most people would agree that conflicts are an inherent, in fact necessary aspect of development and can be solved, or at least managed, in a way that guarantees human rights. In poor countries, conflicts generally aggravate already bad living conditions; existing infrastructures are destroyed or damaged, lives are endangered, crime increases, public services function precariously, the right to organise and gather in groups is restricted, violence and harassment of women becomes more common, disease may become widespread, education is disrupted and environmental pollution levels rise. All of which obviously impedes the effective implementation of trade union projects.

Trade unions, to a certain extent, were organised with conflict in mind and frequently contribute to conflict and violence when they intervene to establish certain democratic aims, denounce social injustices and demand respect for human rights. Corrupt regimes often see trade unions as a more serious threat than other organisations in civil society. Unions were created to be able to deal with conflict in a structured way, that is, by negotiation and we might point out, for example, how unions (and employers) can help to mediate in countries where there is armed conflict.

The degree to which a conflict is relevant in a sector or a project differs, but taking the conflict into consideration when planning and implementing a project will enable you to maximize the relevance and effectiveness of the project and of your organisation. Activities such as education, organizing, recruiting, campaigning and rights protection could have an impact, big or small, positive or negative on the conflict. When analysing the proposed project you may also find that addressing the conflict can strengthen your proposed strategies and create added value to your desired results.

A conflict analysis can be made by answering the following questions:

Briefly describe the main conflicts, problems and their impact in the sector and/or geographical location of the project/program.

Has the conflict context described under question one been taken into account when deciding on the strategies and activities of the project/program? If yes, how?

If no, why not?

Regardless of whether the conflict situation directly has influenced the design of the project/program or not it is important to consider what impact the project/program will have on the conflict and what impact the conflict will have on the project/program.

How will the project/program impact on the conflict? Describe positive and negative impact(s). (Will the project and its expected results influence the political stability in the country or region? Etc.)

How will the conflict impact on the project/program? Describe positive and negative impact(s). (To what extent is the project implementation threatened by on-going or recent conflict? Etc.)

How will the project/program work to reduce the negative impact(s) and strengthen the positive impact(s)? (Is the Trade Union aware of its position and possible influence on on-going, imminent or recent conflicts? Etc.)

If several projects are included in a broader program at regional or global level you may submit an aggregated analysis at program level. However, a conflict analysis can vary between countries, regions and sectors. It is the context in which the projects will be implemented that needs to be the point of departure for the analysis. Therefore the local/national/regional context must feed into the aggregated conflict analysis. The aggregated analysis should show that this is the case by accounting for relevant differences at sub-program level.

When you have identified the positive and negative impacts of the project on the conflict and vice versa you can make adjustments in order to strengthen the positive impact and reduce the negative impact.