

Planning In Conflict - Experiences With The Conflict

Sensitive Programming Approach 'Do No Harm' in Pastoralist Settings



Institut für Auslands-
beziehungen e. V.



Auswärtiges Amt

Rolf Grafe- Consultant Andreas Jenet - Head of Programme
Eunice Obala - Conflict Sensitive Practitioner

Editors: Evelyn Mathias, Co-editor: Eunice Obala.

Vétérinaires sans Frontières - Germany, Piedmont Plaza, 671 Ngong road, Nairobi, Kenya

Contact:

Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Germany (VSFG)
info@vsfg.org
<http://www.vsfg.org>
P.O. Box 25653 – 00603 Nairobi - Kenya

Disclaimer

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Commission. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Commission.

ISBN 978-9966-754-01-1

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	v
Foreword	vi
Acronyms	vii
1. Background.....	1
2. Detailed description of ‘Do No Harm’ approach.....	3
2.1 ‘Do No Harm’ FRAMEWORK.....	3
2.2 The ‘Do No Harm’ Framework	4
3. VSF’s improved community response to drought project.....	9
3.1 VSF’s project strategy	10
3.2 Project area and communities.....	11
4. Coverage and methods of this documentation.....	16
5. Practical experiences with the integration of ‘Do No Harm’ from northern Kenya.....	17
5.1 Overview of the process.....	17
5.2 Utilization of ‘Do No Harm’ components	24
5.3 Incorporation of other methodological components	28
5.4 Results.....	30
5.5 Lessons and challenges during implementation.....	32
6. Conclusions and recommendations	36
6.1 Planning the intervention	36
6.2 Structures and capacities.....	38
6.3 Approaches.....	40
6.4 Linkages	42
7. References and Resources.....	44

Acknowledgements

This publication would not have been possible without the financial support of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) under the Regional Drought Decision through the three phases of the Improved Community Response Drought – ICRD preparedness project. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude from ifa Zivik (Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations) for their financial support.

We would like to acknowledge support from the VSFs management especially VSF Germany Managing Director, Dr. Willi Duhenen, for recognizing the positive impact of conflict sensitive programming in the first phase of ICRD Project in VSFG Oromiya cluster. This resulted into the institutionalization; mainstreaming and scaling up of conflict sensitive programming in the three VSFs targeted clusters in Karamoja, Oromiya and Somali under Phase two and Phase three of the ICRD project. Special thanks to the **VSF Germany ICRD Project Manager??name, Eunice Obala** (Do No Harm Practitioner), for her critical analysis of the conflict context, original thought process and creativity to integrate an adaptable conflict sensitive process into the first phase of ICRD project as well as the project staffs who contributed immensely to the project success.

We appreciate the contributions and active participation received from the community members, local authorities and peace committees from Dasanach Kenya, Dasanach Ethiopia, Hammer, Gabraa and Turkana Communities during the project implementation and publication documentation process.

We also would like to recognise the support, involvement and contributions from the following relevant government departments and stakeholders who were occupying office in former Marsabit North/North Horr Districts and South Omo Zone between 2009 – 2010; District Commissioners - Marsabit North / Marsabit North, District Officers -(Maikona, Turbi and North Horr), Officers Commanding Stations (OCS) -Ileret, North Horr and Dukana), Officers Commanding Police Divisions (OCPD) - Marsabit North District, Zonal Administrator – South Omo Zone, Woreda Administrators and Security Teams from – Hammers and Dasanach Woredas, and officers from the National Security Intelligence Services (NSIS)- Marsabit for their tireless efforts.

Foreword

Conflict sensitive programming is a cross cutting approach that can be integrated in any intervention (emergency, humanitarian, recovery or development) through the various sectors such as water, natural resource management, animal health, education, health and nutrition that may not necessarily be conflict related. Conflict sensitive programming requires that an organization demonstrates ability to understand its operational context, its interventions and interactions with that context and to ensure that its interventions minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts on conflict.

This book shares VSFs' experiences and lessons learnt in conflict sensitive programming in pastoral settings by integrating the "Do no Harm approach", Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and components of conflict analysis tools. It captures the processes of institutionalization and application of the integrated approach into drought preparedness projects.

We envisage that governments, donors and aid service providers working in emergency, humanitarian, recovery and development interventions will find practical experiences and outcomes of humanitarian assistance using conflict sensitive programming in cross border drought preparedness projects highlighted in this book useful to their work.

We hope that the shared experiences will foster a better understanding of the interactions between aid assistance and conflict and how these interactions may decrease or increase the impacts on the conflict in terms of the peace building or conflict reinforcement even if it was not their intended or expected outcome.

Acronyms

CDA Collaborative for Development Action

DFID Department for International Development

ECHO European Commission Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid

EPARDA Ethiopian Pastoralist Research and Development Agency

ICRD Improved Community Response to Drought

LCPP Local Capacities for Peace Project

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund

VICOBA Village Community Banking

VSF Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (= “Veterinarians without Borders”)

Background

Most pastoralist communities for centuries have for centuries developed mechanisms to enable them survive in fragile environments such as the arid lands in Kenya. However, settings have changed over the last decades, and pastoralists' livelihoods seem to become increasingly vulnerable. Areas previously used during the dry season for grazing are being utilized for dry land farming with national boundaries cutting across them. The growing populations inhibit mobility; and increased conflicts involving modern arms threaten pastoralists in their areas of origin. Competition for scarce resources is on the rise, together with larger and more permanent settlements that exploit water resources. These communities also experience low education and literacy levels and poorly developed infrastructure. The international markets on the other hand, set very high barriers that renders them inaccessible by the pastoralists. (Pantuliano & Wekesa, 2008).

The increasing occurrence of: climatic extremes; human malpractices; and uncoordinated and uncontrolled grazing patterns adds to this overwhelming list of pressures that pastoralists are experiencing, leading to more frequent humanitarian interventions. Currently, in vast areas inhabited by pastoralists, food relief is being distributed continuously throughout the year, making communities dependent on external aid and weakening their ability to respond to changes by themselves. The recognition of this situation and the potential of pastoralism for the sustainable use of drylands led to a paradigm change in development programmes. Many modern approaches now seek to empower communities and authorities to prepare themselves for disasters, set up functional early-warning systems and elaborate preparedness plans, besides providing the necessary food relief. The European Union's Regional Drought Decision and the Drought Management Initiative aim to break this vicious cycle of ever-increasing numbers of aid-dependent communities and find solutions for recurring disasters.

Community development projects that assist communities to prepare for disasters, must follow sustainable conflict-sensitive programming approaches. This would enable them tackle conflict context at the grass root level and feed into district and national levels. 'Do No Harm' is one such approach that helps organisations to analyse the impact of their assistance on the existing conflicts. 'Do No Harm' is introduced in this report as it documents the experiences of an integrated approach through conflict-sensitive programming. This programming integrates 'Do No Harm' with Participatory Rural Appraisal tools, conflict analysis tools and peace building tools that are relevant and interactive to the context of conflict. "Improved Community Response to Drought" project has made with its integration into its activities. Funded under ECHO's Regional Drought Decision, the project is run by a consortium of Vétérinaires sans Frontières (VSF) Belgium, Switzerland and Germany in the cross-border areas of Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed description of the ‘Do No Harm’ approach.

Chapter 3 provides background information on VSF’s activities in northern Kenya, presenting the organization itself, the methodologies used with regard to conflict-sensitive programming, as well as the situation of conflict, in which the drought-stricken communities along the Kenyan-Ethiopian border find themselves.

Chapter 4 outlines the coverage and methods of the documentation process.

Chapter 5 describes and discusses the practical experience gained from the application of ‘Do No Harm’ approach and its integration with other project methods.

Chapter 6 lays out a formal process of integrating conflict-sensitivity into the work with pastoralist communities. It highlights how the process could be formulated, looking particularly at roles and objectives, structures and capacities, and at approaches and linkages.

2. Detailed description of ‘Do No Harm’ approach

Theory of ‘Do No Harm’ approach

The ‘Do No Harm’ approach focuses on “how aid can be provided in conflict settings”. This is by helping local people disengage from violence that surrounds them and begin to develop alternative systems that address the problems underlying the conflict. This approach provides a framework for relief provision and guide development aid workers in ensuring that they do not worsen the conflict. It also helps the local people in finding alternative approaches to conflict resolution. It is important to note that the ‘Do No Harm’ approach does not in any way aim at directing aid agencies to change their aid-provision mandate to becoming peace agencies.

2.1 ‘Do No Harm’ FRAMEWORK

The ‘Do No Harm’ framework is a systematic process involving seven steps that are useful in conflict analysis and programming.

Step 1: Understanding the context of conflict

Step 2: Identifying and analyzing dividers/sources of tension/capacities for war

Step 3: Identifying and analyzing connectors/local capacities for peace

Step 4: Unpacking Aid Assistance

Step 5: Resource Transfers

Step 6: Implicit Eilical Messages

Step 7: Designing programming options and redesigning programs with tested options [test alternative program options]

Any relief or development intervention brought into a situation of violent conflict becomes part and parcel of that context, and all decisions taken on the programming level might have a positive or negative impact on the setting. For example, the development of a new well, as a source of water for one group can provoke jealousy and renewed conflict with the group’s neighbours (Githinji, 2009, pages 29-30). But how can aid, rather than feeding into and exacerbating conflicts, help local people disengage from the violence that surrounds them and begin develop alternative systems for addressing the problems that underlie the conflict?

In such situations, the 'Do No Harm' approach (Anderson, 1997 & 2000; CDA, 2004; LCPP, 2004) offers useful tools for analysing conflict settings and considering the impact that aid can have on the conflict. The approach is not directed towards urging aid agencies to change or add to their mandates and so also become peace agencies. Rather, the focus is on how aid agencies – both those that provide emergency assistance and those that are involved in supporting development – can do what they do best (relief and development). They at the same time ensure that their aid does nothing to worsen conflicts and helps local people find options and alternatives to conflict.

2.2 The 'Do No Harm' Framework

Step 1: Understanding the context of conflict

This step recognizes that any context of conflict is characterized by two sets of things that is; divisions, tensions and capacities for war, while on the other hand have connectors or local capacities for peace. This step therefore, enables for an in-depth collection of information on how to identify and understand the divisions, tensions and capacities of war.

By understanding the context of conflict, one is able to identify who the divide is, in any conflict area. In all conflict areas there exists inter-group or inter-personal tensions which should be of key concern to different program planners in that particular area. They should focus on past inter-group divisions and tensions; together with potential future divides that would turn into destructive inter-group conflict or violence. The root causes of these tensions should be established, have an analysis of the divisions among them and understand how the divisions are manifested among the conflict groups.

Step 2: Identifying and analyzing dividers/ sources of tension/capacities for war

Very often there are people who have an interest in warfare and who gain from it. There are also structures and systems that represent capacities for dividing people. These are the war capacities that the 'Do No Harm' approach refers to. The following categories are useful for understanding divisions, tensions and war capacities:

- a) **Systems and institutions:** The ways in which actors in a conflict situation are organized. Armed groups might be formed in situations where the central government is weak. Legal systems can discriminate against the rights of one group. For example, wells can be controlled by one side of a conflict.
- b) **Attitudes and actions:** The violent acts that daily maintain the tensions in a society such as raids, village attacks and ambushes; or the acts that explicitly

target one group, such as preventing livestock from passing through a particular area on their way to market.

- c) **Different values and interests:** Religious or cultural values can be used to promote dividers, such as religious laws that are imposed even on people not of that religion.
- d) **Different experiences:** History can be selectively used to highlight the times when groups were fighting one another rather than referring to times when they cooperated.
- e) **Symbols and occasions:** Cattle troughs might be destroyed or boundaries crossed.

Step 3: Identifying Connectors/Local capacities for peace

There are many ways that people manage differences other than through destructive or violent conflict. Non-war is, apparently, more common and more “natural” than war. Every society has both individuals and systems that prevent every disagreement from breaking out into war and that help contain and move away from violence if it begins. These include justice and legal systems, police forces, implicit codes of conduct, elders’ groups, and religious or civic leaders. The roles of conflict prevention and mediation are assigned to some people and institutions in every society. This is what the ‘Do No Harm’ approach calls **capacities or connectors for peace**.

However, in a society where open conflict does erupt. This is because they are either weak or ineffective and hence cannot prevent violence. Nonetheless, they have existed and some still exist; they provide a base on which future non-war or peace can be constructed. Even in the midst of warfare, especially in situations of civil war there continue to remain a whole series of things that connect people who are fighting. These include:

- a) **Systems and institutions:** In all societies where civil war breaks out, markets continue to connect people across the lines of fighting. Communications and radio systems can provide linkages.
- b) **Attitudes and actions:** Groups who continue to express attitudes of tolerance, acceptance, even love or appreciation for people on the “other side” in the midst of a war.
- c) **Shared values and interests:** The common value placed on children’s health has been the basis for UNICEF’s success. Sometimes a common religion can bring people together.
- d) **Common experiences:** War itself can provide linkages among different sides. Citing the experience of war as “common to all sides”, people sometimes create new anti-war alliances across boundaries.

-
- e) **Symbols and occasions:** Stories about the soldiers in war, national art, music, sports, historical anniversaries can bring people together.

Step 4: Unpacking the Aid Program

Experiences from several agencies providing aid in conflict settings has found very clear patterns in the ways through which aid interacts with conflict. These patterns have been seen to provide opportunity to identify patterns of relationship which may be anticipated differently in different settings. The interaction of aid with conflict follows clear patterns that can be grouped into “resource transfers” and “implicit ethical messages”. Understanding these patterns helps programme planners and aid workers to think of ways to avoid the negative, reinforcing impacts and encourage the positive, conflict-reducing impacts.

The programming questions such as why (reason), what (intervention), how (strategies), when (duration), by whom (staff) for whom (beneficiaries) with whom (parties) the needs are going to be assessed in terms of conflict.

Step 5: Resource transfers

All aid programmes involve the transfer of some resources – cash, food, healthcare, training, capacity building etc. These can become a part of the conflict if introduced into a resource-scarce environment where people are in conflict with each other. Conflicting parties will see these resources as representing power and wealth and attempt to control and use the resources to support their side of the conflict and to weaken the other side. There are five patterns by which resources could feed into, prolong and worsen conflict.

- **Allocation effects:** Very often aid goods are stolen by warriors to support the war effort either directly or indirectly.
- **Market effects:** Aid affects prices, wages and profits and can either reinforce the war economy or the peace economy.
- **Distribution effects:** When aid is targeted to some groups and not to others, and these groups overlap with the divisions represented in the conflict, aid can reinforce and exacerbate conflict.
- **Substitution effects:** Aid can substitute for local resources that would have been used to meet civilian needs and, thus, free these up to be used in support of war. There is a political substitution effect that is equally important.
- **Legitimization effects:** Aid legitimizes some people and some actions, and weakens or sidelines others.

Step 6: Implicit Ethical Messages

The way in which aid is offered carries implicit messages that have an effect on the impact of conflict. Some common examples and the messages they signal (marked with “☐”) include.

- **Arms and power:** Hiring armed guards
 - ☐ It is legitimate for arms to determine who gets access to food and medical supplies and that security/safety is derived from weapons.
- **Disrespect, mistrust, competition among aid agencies:** Aid agencies refusing to cooperate with each other
 - ☐ It is unnecessary to cooperate with anyone with whom one does not agree.
- **Aid workers and impunity:** Aid workers (ab)using the goods and support systems provided as aid to people who suffer (as when they take the vehicle for a weekend holiday)
 - ☐ If one has control over resources, it is permissible to use them for personal benefit.
- **Different value for different life:** Aid agency policies allowing the evacuation of expatriate but not local staff
 - ☐ Some lives or goods are more valuable than other lives.
- **Powerlessness:** Field-based aid staff disclaiming responsibility for the impacts of their aid projects
 - ☐ Individuals in complex circumstances cannot have much power and, thus, they do not have to take responsibility for what they do or how they do it.
- **Belligerence, tension, suspicion:** Staff approaching situations with suspicions because they are nervous about conflict and worried for their own safety
 - ☐ Power is the broker of human interactions and it is normal to approach everyone with suspicion and belligerence.
- **Publicity:** NGO headquarter using publicity pictures that emphasize the victimization. Reinforces the demonization of one side in a war and thus the sense that people are evil while those on another side are innocent. This can exacerbate the modes and moods of warfare.

However, aid workers can also transfer positive implicit ethical messages that signal different behaviours and mentalities – non-violence; cooperation; coordination, and use of synergies; accountability and transparency; equal concern, justice, and empathy; responsibility; politeness, confidence, trust and balanced reporting.

Step 7: Framework for Programming Options & Redesigning Programmes

'Do No Harm' is commonly presented through the framework which has seven steps. The steps can also be used singly or in differing combinations depending on the type of participants and the purpose of the approach used. For example, an approach can be used for content analysis, programming decisions, interaction between aid and conflict, or developing options for avoiding negative side-effects.

Here we will concentrate on the **seven 'Do No Harm' steps** that form the components of the "**Framework for considering the impact of aid on conflict**" (Figure 1). The framework illustrates how these components interrelate. To identify all the ways in which an aid programme interacts with the conflict, programme planners have to "unpack" the problem and look at all of the components in the context of the complete aid programme. Once they understand the situation, they can think of options for an improved strategy.

The context of conflict is characterized by two sets of things:

1. Strong divisions and tensions between groups [war interests] or capacities for war that most obviously exist and easily seen and identified in conflict by everyone
2. Weak divisions and tensions between groups that may not be obvious to everyone, but they are found in all contexts of conflict/war setting. Unfortunately, these important peace connectors and capacities are never sought for.

Agencies offering assistance in conflict settings may inadvertently direct the aid in a way that reinforces group divisions and undermines the connectors. Program planners should therefore be vigilant on this by being pro-active in designing aid programs. This would then reduce capacities for war, tensions or dividers and instead, reinforce connectors or capacities for peace.

Program planners and implementers should also continually reflect the program cycle effects on conflict in terms of "elements of aid program". This encompasses aid agencies' mandate, general organization, fundraising approaches, success rates as well as programming questions; why, what, when, where, by whom, with whom, for whom and how. Also to be considered is resource transfers and implicit ethical messages.

In programming there is a clear focus on components of the program that reduces dividers and increases connectors. Thereby, reducing negative impact and increasing positive impact in any context of conflict.

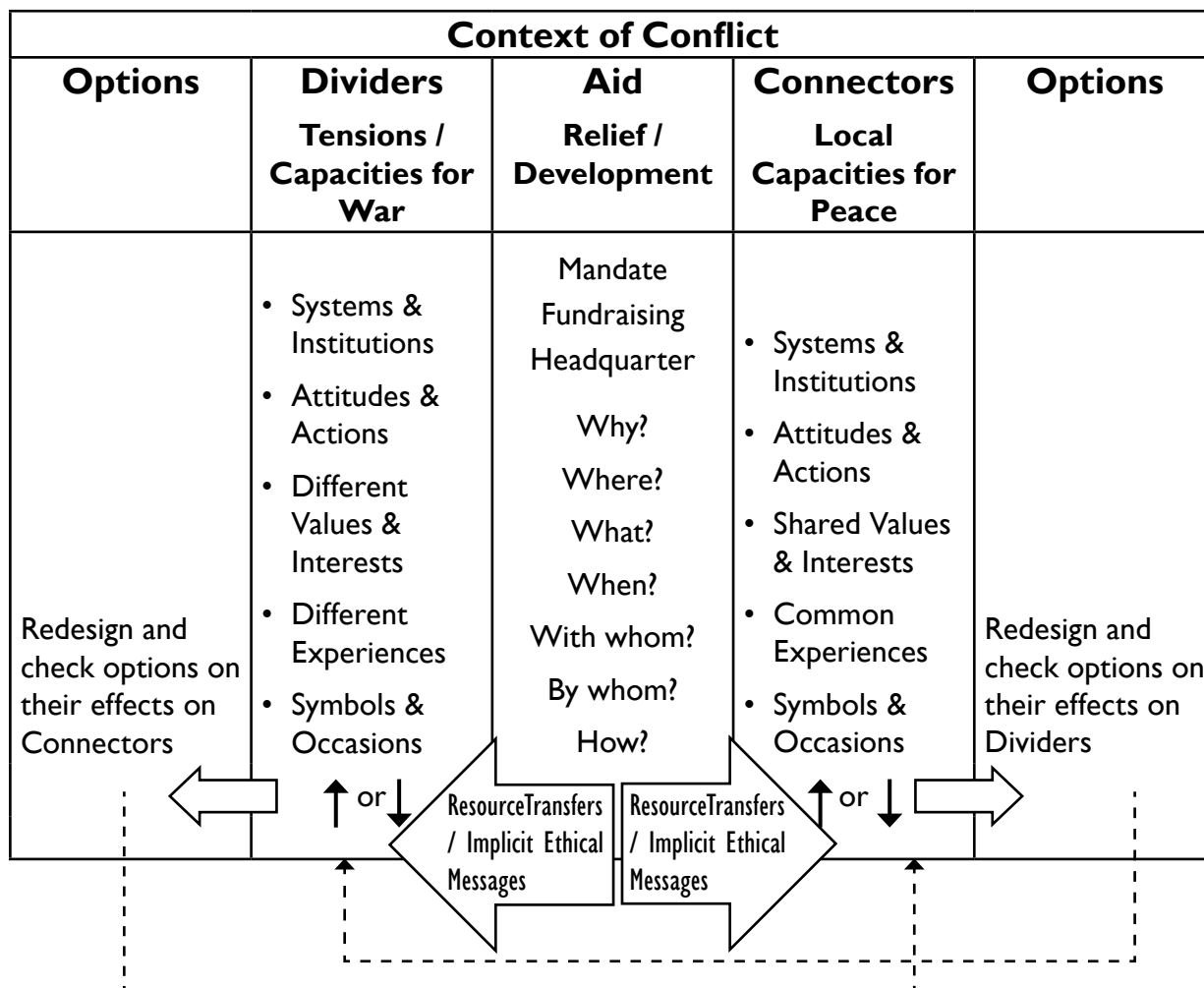


Figure 1. Framework for considering the impact of aid on conflict (adapted from Source?)

3. VSF’s improved community response to drought project

The Improved Community Response to Drought (ICRD) project is a cross-border drought preparedness project. Its overall objective is to contribute to the improved livelihood security of pastoralists in Karamoja, Oromiya and Somali ecosystems of Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. They do this through the development and dissemination of a model to empower communities to pro-actively address their own needs. The model aims to provide the basis for the programming of drought preparedness projects in other pastoralist environments.

3.1 VSF's project strategy

Based on its expertise, VSF selected animal health care and livestock management as its main fields of intervention. But rather than providing significant levels of external support, the project sought to enable pastoralists to build on their own knowledge and more effectively use their existing assets (both social and capital). Box 2 provides examples of the rich knowledge and strategies the area's pastoralists have in risk reduction and management.

Risk reduction and management strategies of pastoralists

In view of their highly vulnerable livelihoods, pastoralist societies have felt the need to reflect on appropriate strategies to reduce their risks and develop various systems of risk management. Two studies analysed and document led these responses on the Ethiopian and on the Kenyan sides of the border, discovering adaptation strategies (PANTULIANO & WEKESA, 2008; AKLILU & WEKESA, 2009).

Strategies among Ethiopian pastoralists:

- Diversification of livelihoods
- Use of informal transfers
- Children's education
- Improving the availability of basic services and resources
- Herd composition and feeding
- Management of gender-related risks
- Adaptation of land ownership patterns.

Responses from Kenyan pastoralists:

- Migration
- Herd management strategies, particularly in terms of male-female relations, livestock species, herd sizes and divisions, breeding patterns
- Adaptations of feeding practices
- Disease management
- Social safety networks.

Project results expected were:

- Increased sustainable access to dry season grazing and water which was to be achieved through community planning meetings, inter-community planning meetings, construction of water structures and rights of access, traditional water transport, survey and training of water management committees.

-
- Establishment of effective early warning networks and endorsement of community-based preparedness plans by area authorities, with the aim of increasing the ability among the communities to respond to drought;
 - Protection of key livelihood assets through the establishment of private support systems and alternative sources of income for direct beneficiaries; and
 - Dissemination of lessons learned to development partners and communities.

The project strategy assumed that by the end of the project, 10% of land previously inaccessible due to insecurity or scarcity of water would be accessed; through established, strategically located dry season water points, and monitored inter-community agreements.

But during the implementation of the first activities, it became obvious that this assumption did not hold and a more conscious approach was needed to systematically address conflict-sensitive programming and conflict management.

One of the staff who was also the Project Manager was a trained 'Do No Harm' practitioner and a Trainer of Trainers [ToT] deployed in the area. This particular staff recognized the need to integrate 'Do No Harm' and other selected participatory, rural appraisal and conflict management tools. This recognition therefore, initiated the conflict sensitive programming approach in the conflict context leading to very successful implementation of the first phase of the ICRD projects.

VSF G recognized the relevance and value addition of conflict sensitive programming approach in any conflict context. The first phase of ICRD was reinforced by DG mid-term evaluation of March to May 2009 by AGEK, who were monitoring ECHO partners. This led to the mainstreaming of conflict sensitive programming by VSF G and other subsequent ICRD phases and other VSF programs.

VSF G has therefore, embraced conflict-sensitive programming mainstreaming at institutional and programming levels, leading to the documentation of the best practice and lessons learnt for over five years now.

3.2 Project area and communities

The VSF's project area stretches along both sides of the Kenyan-Ethiopian border to the east of Lake Turkana, which is home to a number of pastoralist communities (Figure 2). Located between 3° and 5° North and between 36° and 37° East, the area is marked by high temperatures throughout the year and very limited rainfall (approximately 250 mm per year). Its soils are poor and the vegetation consists mainly of thorn shrubs, typical for a semi-desert environment.

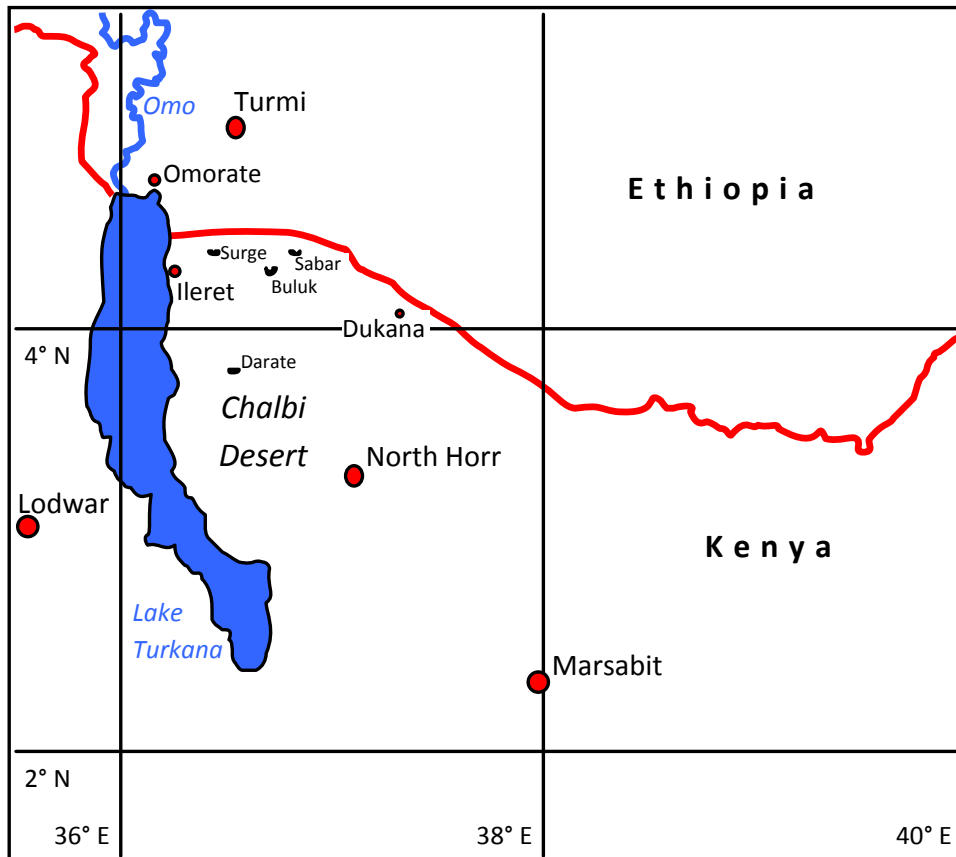


Figure 2. Location map of VSF's project area in northern Kenya

Apart from the flat Chalbi Desert and the areas to its north, the landscape is marked by volcanic mountains, which receive slightly higher amounts of rainfall. This offers grazing land for the animals of the different ethnic communities. The absence of permanent streams and the seasonal rainfall variations force people into a migratory lifestyle. The area does offer, however, water sources under the dry river beds stretching from the mountains, down to the surrounding lowlands. These water sources have been tapped for generations by digging wells, from which people bring up the water by "human ladders"; lifting buckets to the surface in a steady rhythm accompanied by singing praise to the owner of the well. The towns of North Horr and Dukana owe their existence to the permanent availability of water and have developed into settlements of considerable size.

The current border between Kenya and Ethiopia was established at the end of the 19th century. This divided the pastoralist land into two separate areas of influence; between British East Africa to the south and the Ethiopian Empire to the north. The area has remained marginal for both Kenya and Ethiopia ever since, and it takes far more than three days travel to reach the capitals of both countries. The remote location has led to neglect, with the local population largely cut off from

development. Health and education services, for example, are pathetic. On the Kenyan side, hardly got government representation, apart from a little provision of security services. This meant that the work of VSF had to be taken up almost in isolation (Githinji & Mursal, 2009).

3.2.1 Gabbra and Dasanach - communities in conflict

The two main ethnic groups on the Kenyan side of VSF's area of operation are the Gabbra and the Dasanach. Both live in North Horr County to the East of Lake Turkana, in a harsh environment mostly unsuitable for any land use other than mobile livestock keeping. The traditional areas of the Dasanach, who are sometimes also called Merille or nicknamed "Shangila", are located immediately to the east of the lake. The two borders share the small town of Ileret as their centre. The area of the Gabbra is situated further to the east and to the south, covering the fringes of the Chalbi Desert with the town of North Horr as the economic capital of the district.

Colonial history has put the Dasanach community on both sides of an international border, splitting their traditional areas into two distinct parts. They feel marginalized both by Kenyan and Ethiopian governments. There even seem to be doubts on the Kenyan side that all inhabitants of Ileret are real Kenyans or in fact Ethiopians who have crossed the border in search for "greener pastures". Frequent reports that individual members of the Dasanach communities have been denied identity cards or voters' registration seem to confirm this feeling of marginalization.

As a consequence, the Dasanach community lacks access to most basic services like health and education. Even the few economic activities that exist, such as meat production or fishing in Lake Turkana, are seriously impeded by the difficult accessibility of the area and lack of transport facilities. As a result, the lives of the Dasanach have not been affected much by the spread of modern culture. Even religious outreach has only recently discovered Ileret, with the Benedictine mission being the most prominent. The livelihoods of most members of this ethnic group are determined by the needs of their goats, sheep and cattle which they follow in search for water and pasture.

The neighbouring Gabbra share the pastoralist lifestyle with the Dasanach, but clearly distinguish themselves in terms of language, clothing, culture and religion (about 50% of them being Muslims). The form of animal husbandry among the Gabbra also seems different, with mainly camels and cattle. Compared to the Dasanach, the Gabbra are much better integrated into the Kenyan state. They have always been the superior tribe; since they benefited from education through the Catholic mission in North Horr, which was established more than 40 years ago. They have also made good use of their member of parliament and had local

NGOs lobbying for the development of their community). Consequently, in the eyes of other less fortunate communities, the government is seen as biased in its distribution of resources.

In spite of the spread of modern culture, however, animal husbandry still forms the backbone of the local economy and is at the heart of the ethnic identity of the Gabbra. Some big cattle-owners from the Gabbra centres do not stay with their livestock. They instead entrust them to poor herdsmen, who use weapons to defend the herds of their “cattle-lords”. These herdsmen have few opportunities to develop their own herds, which is important for social recognition within the community. In order to “be a man”, many such herdsmen steal from the neighbouring communities and hide these animals in remote areas, not mixing them with the big herds they are responsible for. There has been enmity between Gabbra and the neighbouring tribes, more so the Dasanach with whom they have become arch-enemies.

Feeling marginalized – by the national government, the local government dominated by the Gabbra, even by the few local NGOs established by the Gabbra – some members of the Dasanach community have resorted to force in order to overcome perceived injustices. This has sparked a sequence of violent confrontations; attacks and counter-attacks, livestock raids, allegations on animal theft and demands for their return, and the question of “pride” and “honour” have long kept tensions high between the communities. Although there are claims that the national government is again biased; and that the media exaggerate the degree of violence; the continuous conflict has affected the reputation of the Dasanach, who are regarded as trouble makers by their neighbours. The national government is accused of distributing arms to the Gabbra, and the media is said to grossly inflate the number of livestock stolen.

3.2.2 Cross-border raids between Kenyan and Ethiopian groups

While the differences between the Dasanach and the Gabbra represent the conflict closest to the VSF project, the situation on the ground is far more complex. A number of other distinct ethnic groups live in the area, whose economies and socio-cultural traditions are equally based on pastoralism. On the Ethiopian side of the border north of the Dasanach and Gabbra areas live the Hamar, the Albore and the Borana. These communities compete over water, grazing land and ubiquitous cattle raids, that have resulted to frequent violence.

Pastoralists communities have little regard for international boundaries hence, the rampant cross-border raids. This then raises questions as to the roles played by the administration and the police forces, in making such incidences a bilateral problem between the governments in Kenya and in Ethiopia.

During the field visits it was clearly observed that, even on the Kenyan side of the border, herdsmen confidently displayed their guns to demonstrate their readiness for defence against any possible aggressor. People in Surge, a town close to Ileret, explained that there were occasional scramble for water and pasture between their own Dasanach community and the neighbouring Hamar.

For the Gabbra in Dukana, the neighbouring community across the border is part of the Borana ethnic group. Despite their kinship and common language, they have had years of violent interactions culminating in a massacre of 75 people, including women and children, at Turbi in 2005. Since then, deeply-rooted mistrust divides Gabbra and Borana, which has led to displacement of people, exchanges of gunfire, banditry and robberies, as well as the closure of many pastures due to insecurity.

3.2.3 Peace-building efforts of other organizations

Before the arrival of VSF, the Catholic Church had engaged in peace-building activities between the Gabbra and Dasanach trying to resolve disputes between them. It had also preached “love” and “forgiveness”, and promoted assistance to victims of the conflict with the aim of bonding the two communities which seemed challenging and unstable before the Catholic Peace and Justice Department.

The admission of children from Ileret into the secondary school in North Horr has opened educational opportunities for the Dasanach community and has also meant that friendships could develop between individuals on both sides. The same effect has been attributed to specific exchange programmes (sports, tournaments, choirs), leading to individual friendly encounters, and to the “peace ambassador teachers” programme. Recently, the provision of loans for women to start bead production has also tried to open up new economic opportunities for the Dasanach community.

Other peace organizations have also undertaken numerous efforts to stop the violence, but people in Dukana complained that “peace is never honoured”. An attempt by the “Pastoralist Communication Initiative” seemed to have overcome the reluctance of both sides to end the hostilities, resulting in a number of local agreements. However, their sustainability and reliability were questioned. The Ethiopian government has been doing its best to deal with border, ethnic conflict. The Kenya government administration through the District Commissioner’s office also tried to carry out some conflict resolution initiatives. This was through peace committees and declarations which were, unfortunately, received with some hesitance due to existing mistrust, hurt feelings, and scores to be settled by the neighbouring communities.

4. Coverage and methods of this documentation

This documentation covers the various aspects of VSF's programme in northern Kenya, analysing them from different perspectives. The main focus was the utilization of the 'Do No Harm' approach, the experiences made with its practical application, and the limitations faced during the process. It also examines how specific 'Do No Harm' questions were incorporated into a participatory planning process, combining the aspects of conflict sensitivity with the promotion of community ownership. Finally, it assesses how the project's efforts directly addressed the conflicts in the area.

Documentation methods included the study and analysis of available project documents; field visits and structured interviews with staff of VSF and with office bearers in Nairobi, Dukana and Ileret; focus-group discussions in Dukana and Ileret; and site visits to Dukana, Sabare, Surge and Koobi Fora.

The extent to which the work of VSF has made a difference on the conflict situation itself was assessed with the help of the "Reflecting on Peace Practices" approach (Anderson & Olson, 2003). The tools of this approach include the Four-Cell-Matrix, the Five Criteria of Effectiveness and the Analysis of Linkages. They proved useful for the analysis of entry points of the programme, its horizontal and vertical development and the strategies behind it, the use of linkages with other national and international actors, and the effectiveness in terms of impact on a wider level.

In common with VSF's approach to project planning and implementation, the documentation emphasized a participatory and transparent methodology. This meant, in particular, presenting findings for further discussion and engaging the staff of VSF to reach shared conclusions about the observed outcomes and opportunities for improvement.

Most of the time during the field visits was devoted to informal meetings with community members, where they testified on the processes observed and the results achieved from the perspective of the local population. Although this process was rather time-consuming, the impressions gained in these meetings were considered very relevant, particularly with regard to the perceptions that the communities in the different locations had developed.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to cross the Ethiopian border and document their responses. Accordingly, the findings are limited to the perceptions of the Gabbra and Dasanach communities in Kenya, the perceptions of the Kenyan local authorities and the experiences of the project staff involved.

5. Practical experiences with the integration of ‘Do No Harm’ from northern Kenya

The following sections describe the experience gained with the integration of the ‘Do No Harm’ approach into the activities of VSF’s ICRD project in Ileret in northern Kenya. As mentioned earlier, the use of this approach had not been planned for from the very beginning. It was rather as a result of careful observations on the developments in the project area. There was also a personal initiative from the project manager, who had undergone a training of trainers on the ‘Do No Harm’ approach. This inconsistent strategy at the initial approach stifled part of the planning process. Nevertheless, the use of selected aspects and tools proved very useful and substantially contributed to the achievements of the project. Moreover, the whole process highlights the importance and value of flexibility during the implementation of development projects.

5.1 Overview of the process

Project planners had been well aware of the conflict environment in all three areas of the Improved Community Response to Drought project. A project document had recognized conflict as one of the root problems to be addressed through inter-community planning and agreements, capacity building and facilitation in resource planning. It was hoped that these measures would facilitate the involvement of communities in the development of solutions (VSF, 2009).

This shows that the understanding of the context of conflict was of high importance right from the onset of the project. Therefore, first activities that were meant to address a wide range of inter-dependent issues were:

- To identify key areas of resource based conflict
- To develop a resource utilisation plan to allow for reciprocal grazing agreements within and between communities as well as across borders.

The underlying strategy was to achieve increased livelihood security through decreased conflict and increased sustainable access to dry-season grazing and water. This was stated as result no. 1 in the project’s logical framework. This was based on the precondition that communities must be willing to resolve past conflicts and jointly access greater areas of prime grazing land (ICRD Project Proposal, pp. 13-15).

At this stage there was no mention of using the 'Do No Harm' methodology, and there was no clarity about how to use the information gained from the identification of "key areas of resource based conflict". No specific activities were planned with regard to the objective of conflict reduction; instead it was expected that peace-building would be a quasi-automatic outcome of the planning meetings at community level (ICRD Project Proposal, p. 16).

At a later stage, the sequence in the logical framework was changed, and the issue of conflict reduction was taken out of result no. 1. This laid emphasis on "increased sustainable access to dry season grazing and water" alone (VSF, 2009q, p. 18). Along with gender sensitivity, consideration for HIV/AIDS and the understanding of a relief-rehabilitation-development continuum, resource-based conflict mitigation became a cross-cutting issue instead.

5.1.1 Starting the implementation: conflict-sensitive mapping and baseline survey

As suggested in the initial proposal, the project of VSF on the Kenyan-Ethiopian border started with participatory resource mapping. During this first step, the existing pastures, settlements, wells, markets and administration centres were mapped.

- The resulting maps provided the basis for the following interventions:
- Pastoralist field schools were established in Ileret (Kenya) and Naikaiya (Ethiopia);
- An early warning committee was formed in Ileret, responsible for drought contingency planning;
- Village community banking was started in Ileret, with members from women groups;
- Water points to enable pastoralists to access good grazing areas – which were formerly unexploited – were identified and construction work began and;
- Peace working groups were supported with representatives of the communities through opinion leaders, women leaders, churches and the local administrations in Kenya and Ethiopia.

The maps also highlighted conflict areas. For the areas inhabited by the Dasanach and the Gabbra, these were Buluk, Sabare and Darate. In the case of the stretch along the Ethiopian border between Buluk and Sabare, fertile pastures were considered inaccessible by both ethnic groups due to unclear territorial claims. The case of Darate is more complicated, as the restrictions in connection with the establishment of the Sibiloi National Park had prevented both the Dasanach and the Gabbra from entering the area and reaching the shore of Lake Turkana. Trespassing by herders has antagonized the local population and the Kenya

Wildlife Service, and both ethnic groups have been affected by the loss of dry-season grazing areas for wildlife conservation purposes.

Immediately after the resource mapping exercise at the community level, a baseline survey was conducted, covering various issues that the project was going to address. These were the nutritional status of the population, the effectiveness of existing animal health care services, levels and patterns of trade, the existence of emergency plans, the functioning of social support structures, the status of livestock and the vulnerability of local community members. The collection of data in the baseline survey revealed additional information on the level of conflict, the causes for the differences among the various ethnic groups and the impact this had on the availability of water and forage resources.

According to the original plan, the next step should have been the organization of inter-community meetings for purposes of achieving agreements on the utilization of resources. At this stage, the programme staff had realized that the issue of violent conflict might become an obstacle for the implementation of activities than anticipated (Box 3). This was evident in the animosity between the Dasanach and Gabbra. Therefore effective implementation of any subsequent activities was adversely affected and it was at this stage that the 'Do No Harm' approach was introduced into the process. The approach aimed at an attitude change among the population involved. The purpose of the planned inter-community meetings was changed and they were instead used to introduce 'Do No Harm' tools.

C. The impact of conflict on project implementation

It had been clear from the onset of the project that the various local conflicts would affect the opportunities for the implementation of activities. But this had been regarded as a security problem for staff operating in the conflict area (VSF, 2009). The impact of violent conflict on the eventual success of the project did not, however, only relate to security considerations.

On the contrary, chances for the implementation of some of the various activities in these volatile areas demanded a cessation of hostilities. Since the improvement of drought preparedness included the access to additional water resources and grazing areas, the conclusion of agreements was a prerequisite for the community-based development of coping mechanisms against droughts, and so peace-building became one of the aspects of the Improved Community Response to Drought project. Only the acceptance of reciprocal grazing agreements would allow VSF to promote the improvement of feeding mechanisms for the animals of the affected population and to invest in the rehabilitation of wells. Even the provision of veterinary services would be affected by opportunities for the movement of animals, as experience has shown that diseases could spread much quicker when animals are kept in confinement.

Violent conflict has indeed affected all areas in which VSF has worked, preventing access to grazing resources and leading to the delay of vaccination campaigns and many other activities. (GITHINJI & MURSAL, 2009, p 14). The situation became more complex due to the cross border project area which faces accessibility related issues due to resource based/ethnic conflicts and national administrative boundaries and policies.

5.1.2 Incorporating the ‘Do No Harm’ approach into the project

1. ‘Do No Harm’ was first introduced at individual community levels for conflict analysis, attitude change and self reflection and discovery, and planning tool.
2. ‘Do No Harm’ approach therefore, prepared for and created a framework for inter-community engagements and planning process.
3. The **first ‘Do No Harm’ workshop** was conducted in **Buluk**, one of the disputed locations between the two communities. During the two-day meeting, the approach was presented to a small group of selected participants from the Gabbra and the Dasanach communities and the local programme staff, for whom the concept was also new. During the first session, the facilitator referred to a successful example of the application of the approach between 2002 and 2003 among the Nandi and Luo communities of Western Kenya. The two communities had started common border activities after long years of fighting, which then served as a model for the participants. These participants came from various sub-groups within the society, such as peace committee representatives, chiefs, councillors, herders and elders, accompanied by youth representatives who might in fact have doubled as local security focal points.

During the Buluk workshop participants were facilitated to apply and reflect on the ‘Do No Harm’ approach to their own local situation. As a result the representatives of the Gabbra and Dasanach communities discovered potential opportunities of working together and identified the need for peace-building initiatives currently opposed to current conflict. The participants requested the neighbouring Hammer, Abbo and Borana in the next workshop since they were also involved in conflict in the area.

A month later, the **second ‘Do No Harm’ workshop** brought together more than 60 people for three days in **Sabare**, strategically located at the Kenyan-Ethiopian border between the Dasanach and the Gabbra on the Kenyan side, and at the same time within easy reach for Hamar, Albore and Borana communities on the Ethiopian side. The security of the representatives from the various ethnic groups was guaranteed by the presence of a unit of the Kenyan police, who man a training camp at Sabare. Participants comprised of community leaders and church representatives from all ethnic groups, government officials from Marsabit North in Kenya, and three Ethiopian woredas that is, the Dilo, Hammer and Dasanach as well as three staff members of VSF. The ‘Do No Harm’ approach was used to analyse the local conflict situation and the options for cooperation. Additionally, people were invited to develop a visioning matrix, in which alternative ways for the development of the region were drafted. The governments endorsed the joint plans and reciprocal agreements and enforcement.

The feedback from the two workshops was immensely positive, and the impact on the relationship between the various groups was astonishing leading to action plan development and implementation follow-up. As a result, reciprocal grazing agreements were reached, cross-border committees were established and water-users associations set up the first structures for project implementation at community level. It was agreed that technical training of members should always be combined with peace-building initiatives, as it was realized that peace and development go hand in hand. It was quite encouraging to see former arch-enemies from the Gabbra and Dasanach communities set up joint construction of water structures in Buluk, courtesy of the two 'Do No Harm' workshops. The unused well in Buluk was rehabilitated by artisans from both communities, who also initiated the search for indigenous solutions in the event of conflict.

Several meetings were conducted at individual community and inter-community levels to negotiate further and endorse the joint projects, reciprocal agreements and action plans between Gabbra and Dasanach involved a meeting of **Water Users Associations** from both communities and was held in **North Horr**. This meeting analysed the existing attitudes and decided on the institutionalization of communication between the two associations (in Kiswahili). Additionally, plans were developed for awareness campaigns among the youths in order to spread the message of peace throughout the vast areas of the two ethnic groups. According to the commanding police officer in Ileret, the sequence of meetings from Buluk through Sabare to North Horr was a real "breakthrough" in the relationship between the Gabbra and the Dasanach.

Overview of the major steps of VSF conflict sensitive approach

1. Baseline survey and stakeholders mapping; understanding humanitarian context
2. Resource-use mapping and conflict mapping; realization of critical importance of addressing conflicts
3. Community sensitization and planning meetings ['Do No Harm' and participatory rural appraisal]
 - Understanding community perceptions, stereotypes, position, interests, needs
 - Resource use and Conflict Action Plans
 - Attitude change, self reflection and and discovery towards enemy, neighboring communities or conflict situation
 - Critically analyse and understand conflict context
 - Identify and develop conflict mitigation and management action plans at community level

-
- Develop options and alternatives to be discussed and harmonized by neighboring communities
 - Questioning own stereotypes
4. Inter-community meetings [Gabraa and Dasanach] and integration of 'Do No Harm'
 - Joint analysis of the conflict using 'Do No Harm' reflection
 - Identifying stereotypes and strategic measures (due to change of attitude)
 - Trust building
 - Identification of gaps and proposal of options or alternatives that promote connectors and reduce dividers
 - Suggestion for joint activities and Action plans
 - Disseminate workshop output to the two community members for validation and endorsements.
 - Develop approved action plans and joint activities.
 5. Inter-community meetings (Involving both Kenya and Ethiopia community) (Combining Do No Harm and Participatory Rural Appraisal Tools)
 - Conflict sensitive analysis of conflict context
 - Identify perceptions and stereotypes
 - Self reflection, discovery and attitude change
 - Trust building
 - Establishment of inter-community structures
 - Proposal of reciprocal agreements by workshop participants.
 6. Dissemination of reciprocal agreements and action plans to community members for validation and endorsements.
 - Develop harmonized reciprocal agreements and action plans at community and cross border level.
 - Government endorsement and reinforcement
 7. Joint activities - Identification and implementation.
 8. Training of committees. Inter community committees.
 9. Establishing and Strengthening of existing structures at community, district/ woreda levels.
 10. Institutionalization of conflict-sensitive programming.
 - Staff training on 'Do No Harm'
 - Programming with 'Do No Harm'

-
- Financial investment
 - Monitoring systems
 - Focal point identification-Training and mentoring

11. Linkage and partnership with Government of Kenya and other relevant stakeholders/agencies/partners.

5.1.3 Activities after the workshops

The final evaluation at the end of the first year of the ICRD project found that the communities had used the momentum of the two meetings to start real activities on the ground with the support of the VSF staff (Githinji & Mursal, 2009):

- “Five shallow wells were rehabilitated (deepened, lined and capped), five troughs were also constructed in Kadite and Buluk grazing areas to ease tension between Dasanach and the Gabbra.
- Livestock and human population are getting water from rehabilitated wells and pumps. Most water points visited served 3000 to 5000 cattle, with 2000 sheep and goats daily.
- Eight artisans were trained in well capping, lining and trough making. Exchange visits exposed the water artisans from Dasanach community on how other communities deal with water related problems.
- Water utilization committees were established and trained to manage pasture and water resources. They worked in collaboration with peace committees in resource-based conflict resource.

The evaluators also remarked on the unusually short time on the activities, given the long history of violence and conflict in the area.

At the time of the final evaluation, **three months of peace** had been secured between the communities, during which pasture and water were shared, with a significant reduction in the loss of livestock. It also emerged that members of different ethnic groups were promoting peaceful relations by collaborating in preventing raids, even at the risk of being perceived as acting against their own community.

The success story of the Buluk experience had apparently spread quickly. Herders in Surge reported to have received the Hamar group who intended to reach a similar agreement and jointly use the water near the Kenyan-Ethiopian border. Peace committee members in Ileret confirmed this story, and according to the commanding police officer, the neighbouring community had even shown willingness to contribute their own resources.

The sustainability of the agreement between the Gabbra and the Dasanach was put to test when members of the Dasanach community from Ethiopia raided the Gabbra community in Kenya and previously stole goats. Retaliation would have been an automatic response, but this time around, the communities initiated and chose to negotiate. In fact, members of the Dasanach community in Kenya mounted pressure on their Ethiopian counterparts to recover the stolen animals and return them to their rightful owners. This clearly shows the commitment of the population to the peace process.

5.2 Utilization of ‘Do No Harm’ components

The following sections explain in more detail how the different ‘Do No Harm’ components were integrated into the project. It highlights which particular elements of this approach caught the attention of the local people in the project area and contributed to the remarkable effects of this approach. The chapter structure follows the seven ‘Do No Harm’ steps described in the section **Framework for considering the impact of aid on conflict**.

Step I: Understanding the context

The first step is the analysis of the context of conflict. Questions raised in the two workshops at Buluk and at Sabare were:

- What is the state conflict state / fear / tension?
- Who is involved?
- Where?
- What is the interest of the group?
- What type of conflict is it?

In some settings, several lines of conflict would exist parallel to each other. thus, such sessions required proper understanding of the context so as to help programme planners define what is relevant in a particular location and relate subsequent analysis to a specific context. A visual aid providing an overview of an area’s conflict situation can prove very useful in such discussions like the sketch map in Figure 3. The participatory peace-building process leading to such maps is called “conflict mapping”.

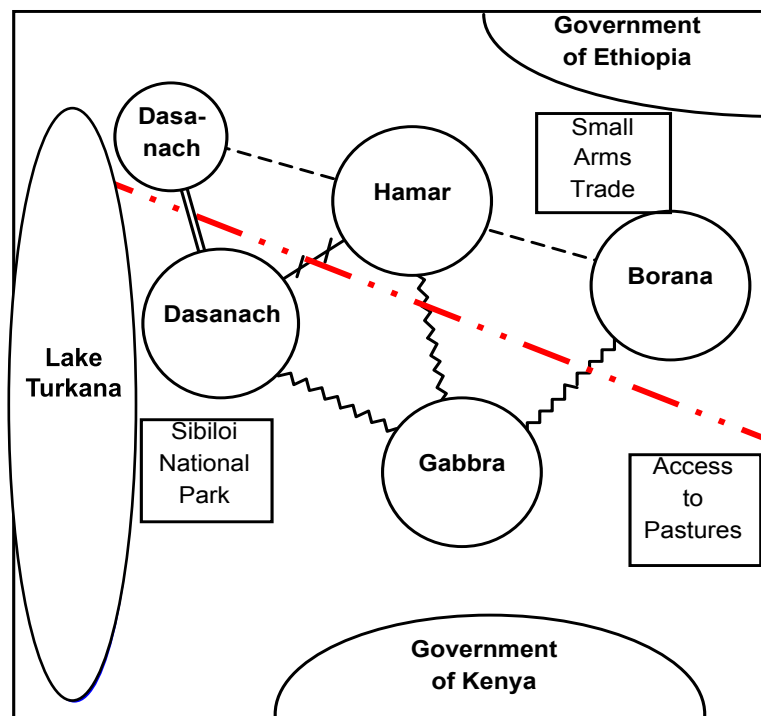


Figure 3. Conflict map of VSF's project area at the beginning of 2009

Responses from group work sessions, provided proof on positive impact of conflict discussions. The sessions served as an eye-opener as members from various communities got the opportunity to learn from each other, understand causes and actions, and recognize existing mechanisms for conflict resolution. The discovery of different perceptions led to the willingness to change, and the focus on different situations in particular locations added a practical aspect to the discussions.

On the other hand, the differences in education levels and exposure affected the quality of the responses from the group work, so that some important actors in the conflict were overlooked. Another potential danger can be seen in the fact that, in Sabare, one particular ethnic group (the Gabbra) ended up being in the spotlight of everybody else.

Step 2 & 3 Analysing connectors and dividers (relationships)

Steps 2 and 3 analyse the dividers and connectors. In many workshops using the 'Do No Harm' approach, this is first done on a case study from a distant setting. This is advantageous in that, workshop participants can look at the methodology without being personally involved in the underlying context of conflict. In Buluk and in Sabare. The analysis was based on the cases study of ethnic/tribal conflict between Luos and Kalenjin communities living in Songhor- across Nyanza and Rift Valley Provinces in Western Kenya. The setting up of Songhor presented

as a model on how other ethnic groups in Kenya have managed to successfully overcome their differences unfortunately this case was not used for the analytical exercise.

The participants in the first workshop held in Buluk analysed context of conflict between context of conflict and the various categories of dividers and connectors between the Gabbra and the Dasanach. On the other hand, the second workshop in Sabare allowed participants to list down all kinds of conflict contexts around the Kenyan-Ethiopian border. Surge, Buluk and Sabare areas require proper facilitation to avoid mixing of different types of conflict.

Facilitators need to carefully direct participants to realize that there may be certain aspects related to an institution that divide and others that connect. These specifications can be brought out through the application of the categories of dividers and connectors (see the sections Dividers / Sources of tension and Connectors / Local capacities for peace. The experience from the Buluk and the Sabare workshops showed that disaggregation helps in planning ahead and furthers mutual understanding (“in the end, the boundary is not important”).

The working groups on connectors yielded many unexpected facts for the workshop participants, both in Buluk and in Sabare, particularly when the representatives of the various communities noticed that they had much more in common than what they expected. Many shared values and interests were listed, the creation of social services was appreciated by all sides, and the existence of shared resources brought everyone to the realization that development needs cooperation. People also noticed that, while community members on both sides – such as the livestock herders – are in fact all victims of the on-going violence, there are also common traditions promoting conflict. So, how can these traditions be transformed into something positive?

From the perspective of one of the VSF staff members among the participants, the introduction of a new terminology was a decisive innovation that made people look at their situation with a different lens. During the field visits for this documentation, this impression was confirmed in the meetings with community members in Ileret, who could not only refer to the categories of dividers and connectors easily, but were even able to cite examples from the workshops over two years earlier. As in many other occasions, this new terminology has left a lasting impression on the workshop participants.

Step 4: Unpacking the programme components

The fourth step looks at the different programme components. Only the workshop in Buluk went through all aspects of the ‘Do No Harm’ approach including the process of unpacking. But the use of this tool did not leave a lasting impression. The most probable reason for this might be the fact that the workshop participants had

no previous experience with project planning. The session forecast in localizing thinking to the different aid services provided within the two communities without looking at specific aid agency e.g. relief food, Government Administration, services, local committees/authority services. Hence the various questions that are usually asked in the process of developing a project proposal or during the implementation of activities were rather unfamiliar.

Step 5: Interaction between aid and conflict

The fifth step of the Framework for Considering the Impact of Assistance on Conflict looks at the interaction between aid and conflict through resource transfers or implicit ethical messages. Both mechanisms were explained and discussed in plenary in the workshop in Buluk only.

The discussion about the effects of resource transfers brought out several examples of how the provision of aid had resulted in certain reactions from the side of the affected communities. While not all of these examples referred to a particular conflict setting, the essential logic behind these effects seems to have been well understood by the participants. This is because they cited local examples from Ileret about influences of food aid on market prices, the consequences of targeting particular groups or involving specific individuals, the diversion of resources, or about undermining self-help capacities.

Workshop participants looked at the potential impact of VSF programme decisions, with reference to the Buluk workshop. The discussion at the workshop on implicit ethical messages during the workshop were said to be unsatisfactory. Examples referred to were services of relief committees which they understood better. It is important to note that this part of the 'Do No Harm' approach is originally meant to check on the messages that the staff of organizations intentionally or unintentionally transfer through their actions.

Steps 6 & 7: Developing options

The last two steps of the framework are the redesign of the programme. They also test options to avoid unintentional reinforcement of dividers or weakening of connectors.

Based on the fact that VSF had only recently started to work in Ileret, there was no opportunity yet for the workshop participants in Buluk and in Sabare to reflect on negative side-effects of programming decisions. They were unable to suggest possible adaptations. Instead, the methodology was used as a brainstorming exercise. Therefore, possible actions that the programme could adopt in order to promote the linkages between the various communities were proposed. Some of the suggestions from the workshop in Buluk included:

-
- Agreement on reciprocal use of pastures areas;
 - Joint rehabilitation / construction of wells to be built by artisans from both communities;
 - Construction of shared markets;
 - Establishment of a joint training centre;
 - Building of shared churches and mosques;
 - Start of sport activities and exchange programmes;
 - Joint development and peace building projects and plans; and
 - Capacity building of peace and water usage committees.

These suggestions show the interplay of different 'Do No Harm' steps. The analysis of the context and the categorization of dividers and connectors resulted in a mutual understanding of each other's perceptions and needs. The development of programming options took this understanding further to a highly practical purpose. Since VSF did not hesitate to support some of the suggested activities, which were relevant to project activities. This then made people feel appreciated, which explains the positive feedback the whole process received. Most probably, it was this obvious link between peace and development that was attractive for the local population.

5.3 Incorporation of other methodological components

As a planning and awareness-raising tool, the 'Do No Harm' approach cannot stand alone, but has to be combined with and integrated into other planning tools.

5.3.1 Participatory planning

Thanks to the creativity of the programme manager, the 'Do No Harm' approach was successfully combined with other participatory planning methods into a concept that may serve as a model for future replication. The following list describes how the different participatory components contributed to the understanding of the area's conflict situation:

- a) The **Resource-Use maps** drawn during the initial stages of the project allowed the local communities to analyse existing resources, boundaries and conflict zones. During the drawing of the maps and its subsequent presentation, VSF staff were able to extract information about temporary and permanent water sources, about grazing patterns and migratory routes to markets and pasture areas, and about settlements and boundaries. The resource mapping finally created entry points for conflict analysis and for further mapping exercises.

-
- b) **Proportionate scoring matrices and pair-wise ranking** were used as analytical instruments to determine which problems were considered the most serious. The scoring techniques were applied during the planning on the individual village level. Combined with the questionnaires used during baseline data collection, this helped to understand the dynamics in the area.
 - c) **Project zoning** helped arrive at decisions about the specific locations of high risk areas. This is where a specific need for the application of the 'Do No Harm' approach existed and where perhaps additional peace-building interventions would be necessary.
 - d) **Listening, negotiation, bargaining and self-actualization / discovery skills** were applied at community meetings held in preparation for the inter-community meetings, during which participants would have to present their causes to representatives of the neighbouring ethnic groups.
 - e) **A seasonal calendar** was helpful in understanding the seasonal fluctuations that affect the communities in the area through differences in work load, scarcity of food and water, availability of income opportunities, or the occurrence of diseases. This overview also showed at which times of the year the local population would actually be able to actively participate in programme activities. The seasonal calendar was used during the planning of activities and in conflict analysis, since it was found that violent raids were more common after the rains when communities were less involved in other activities.
 - f) **Wealth ranking** gave an insight into the social stratification within the pastoralist communities in the area. This helped understand community perceptions of wealth, potential sources of investment and local definitions of "poverty". Additionally, the internal relationships between the rich and the poor were found to have a marked impact on conflict.
 - g) **Community action plans** were developed during community planning meetings to allow members of the local pastoralist population to take ownership of the development process. Following the identification of problems and prioritization of possible solutions, strategic interventions were outlined and put into a plan of action. Both the Buluk and the Sabare workshops, which were mainly dealing with the questions arising from the 'Do No Harm' approach, eventually arrived at community action plans.
 - h) **Visioning matrix:** during the community planning meetings and inter-community conflict analysis workshops. They were facilitated to look at past 20 years, present, probable future and preferred future. Visioning was developed to show how they will move from current to a preferred future.

-
- i) **Stakeholders' mapping:** the communities selected a core working group who helped to draw the map of all key stakeholders (agencies, governments, CBOs, faith institutions who were working in the area according to importance and accessibility. This exercise helped those who would be responsible for whatever activities or service provision for resource mobilization and coordination of planned activities.
 - j) **Resource bag:** community members were facilitated to list all resources (human, capital and natural) in order for them to utilise their utility maximization.
 - k) **Problem bag:** communities were also facilitated to list all their problems and assess what capacities they had to address them, capacity gaps and how they would use available resources to minimize problems.
 - l) **Historical profile:** participants analysed the conflict trends and resource use trends which was very helpful to build on self reflection and discoveries, creating a benchmark for planning.

5.3.2 Conflict resolution and peace-building

While the 'Do No Harm' approach is meant to help organizations working "in conflict", it has its limitations in situations where the particular conflict setting has a direct impact on the development perspectives themselves. Accordingly, the project's technical inputs and conflict-sensitive planning tools had to be complemented by other approaches dealing with the conflict situation directly. The main component of this aspect was the "reciprocal grazing agreements", which were originally expected to result from the inter-community meetings and were eventually achieved with the help of the two 'Do No Harm' workshops.

As one VSF staff member described it, "peace" has in the meantime become the major objective in the minds of the people involved, and there is a clear need for an institution to facilitate and monitor the process. Based on the lack of experience, however, the responsible persons within VSF feel reluctant to focus too much on peace-building and conflict management. So far, peace-building activities have been implemented informally and haphazardly based on situations.

5.4 Results

The immediate results of VSF's field activities have already been reported in Chapter 5. What have been their effects and what were the lessons from the VSF's work in northern Kenya?

5.4.1 Change of community perceptions

'Do No Harm' served as an awareness-raising tool that helped change the negative attitudes of the different warring communities towards each other. The analysis

of context “dividers” and “connectors” from the ‘Do No Harm’ approach made people aware of the many commonalities their communities share. The personal encounters enabled participants to replace the abstract notion of the “enemy” with known faces and friendships. Getting up to each other face to face and being able to learn about differences and stereotypes led to discussions about finding ways of working and living together. As a consequence, people started questioning their own stereotypes.

The positive atmosphere of the meetings with the sharing of tools, food and accommodation, further contributed to this change of perceptions. This was later further strengthened through the experience of working together on well construction. Respondents said that the personal interactions had decreased the acceptability of raids against “people we know”.

It was further noted that the issue of cattle theft could be more easily discussed with peace communities so that any pin-pointing could be avoided. Participants of the meeting in Sabare reached an agreement.

Returning of animals -recovery of lost livestock and returning them to the owners was left as a sole responsibility of peace and grazing committees with support from governments with an agreed action plan. About three returning of livestock events were conducted between Gabbra, Dasanach and Hammers’ communities.

5.4.2 Effectiveness of the peace-building activities

Screening the project’s activities and results against the Five Criteria of Effectiveness from the “Reflecting on Peace Practices” approach helps in assessing whether and how VSF has made a difference on the peace situation in the area:

- 1. Did the programme contribute to stopping a key driving factor of the conflict?** One of the key driving factors of the various conflicts in the area was the competition over scarce resources. This was addressed by the reciprocal grazing agreements. Another driving factor, the availability of small arms, is yet to be worked on.
- 2. Did the programme cause communities to develop their own peace initiatives?** The action of the Dasanach community from the Kenyan side to talk to their kinsmen across the border and to convince them to return their loot can surely be seen as an independent peace initiative. Another example is the request from the Hamar for the joint use of water resources at Surge.
- 3. Did the programme result in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances?** For this purpose, the project helped in establishing joint peace committees. This consisted of early warning, customary institutions, youth, elders, women and conventional peace committee representatives.

-
4. **Did the programme prompt people to resist violence and provocations to violence?** The Gabbra community waited for a negotiated solution instead of immediately retaliating after the recent raid.
 5. **Did the programme result in an increase in people's security or in their sense of security?** The surprising incident of people from the Dasanach community spending a night at Buluk together with their Gabbra counterparts in spite of the unsettled issue over the recent raid confirms the feeling of trust and security.

5.4.3 Effects on VSF

The inclusion of 'Do No Harm' and other conflict-sensitive activities considerably contributed to the reputation of VSF despite its short presence in the area. Representatives of the government praised the organization for "really going to the communities" and for building harmonious relations with the authorities and with local leaders at the same time. All improvements in Ileret and surroundings were attributed to the work of VSF and to its Ethiopian partner EPARDA.

The government seems to be interested in stronger cooperation with VSF due to the greater capacities which the international organization can dispose off. VSF may need to be careful, though, since the capacities of the government are weak. This poses a risk that the international NGO can take over the responsibility for certain social services and thus replace the role of the authorities which 'Do No Harm' principle would address. Reportedly, there are more data collectors and animal health workers in VSF than in the government.

Not all VSF members involved in the process saw **the connection between peace and development** and understood the importance of 'Do No Harm' concept, and other conflict-sensitive approaches for the overall outcome of the project. And even when staff did understand the importance, they might still not integrate the approach systematically.

In the eyes of the people in Dukana and in Ileret, on the other hand, VSF is mainly seen as a peace organization which is not their mandate overriding technical competence of VSF in the field of livestock production. VSF may have to invest more in sharing information about the project's justification, strategies and objectives. The expectations raised in terms of peace-building may otherwise overwhelm an organization which does not really have adequate capacity in terms of experience and the skills in this field.

5.5 Lessons and challenges during implementation

This section concentrates mostly on issues not discussed in detail elsewhere.

5.5.1 Project and workshop logistics

A lot of preparation is necessary to start a 'Do No Harm' process where there is still on-going fighting. A close understanding of socio-cultural and economic conditions is equally needed, like knowledge of the topography of the area and skills in trust-building and negotiation.

Workshop facilitation has to ensure that there is no finger-pointing at particular groups or individual persons. Facilitators' competency in 'Do No Harm' and participatory planning process is crucial in order to effectively produce

In a pastoralist environment, it can be **difficult to include gender perspectives** into the discussions, since most peace meetings are dominated by men. But the inclusion of women is crucial because (according to the men) women had played a big role in promoting the hostilities, although they were not involved in the actual fighting. The village community banks, the pastoral field schools and women meetings might offer better opportunities in this regard.

From a **logistic point** of view, the two 'Do No Harm' workshops in Buluk put particular challenges to the programme management to build in **sufficient funding and time** for these activities. Three days proved too short to achieve a deep understanding of the subject. The low level of education, the sensitivity of the subject, and the fact that every contribution had to be translated (sometimes into several other languages) required a slower pace, adapted to the needs of the audience. Choice of venue agreeable by target participants also very critical to create conducive environment. The Buluk and Sabare meetings were conducted in "fora" (grazing zones), recommended by the communities.

5.5.2 Remoteness and lack of (infra)structure

The most serious obstacle for the project staff was the **remote location** of the place and the **lack of infrastructure** and services in the area. Even for an international NGO like VSF, it is hard to recruit and retain qualified staff under such conditions. Under such circumstances a coordinated strategy to introduce 'Do No Harm' is important. Otherwise it cannot be taken for granted that all staff members spread the same messages of participatory development and conflict sensitivity.

5.5.3 Partnerships and cooperation

In the spirit of the 'Do No Harm' approach, **partnerships with other organizations** reaffirm the implicit ethical message of "cooperation, coordination, use of synergies". In northern Kenya, the Catholic Church is a close partner of VSF: In fact, VSF's Ileret office is located within the Catholic mission. Unfortunately, the Church's department that is responsible for the development, peace and justice advocacy is located in Marsabit, about 450kilometres away, reducing its impact in Ileret.

-VSF conducts 'Do No Harm' training to stakeholders (INGOs, LNGOs, faith-based institutions and government to scale up and harmonize approach.

VSF's staff members have also established cordial **relationships with the few existing government institutions** in the area. The commanding police officer, has taken advantage of this relationships and personally identified people from the neighbouring communities to help in keeping law and order. VSF has also benefitted in that, the police administration maintains radio communication across the area. It uses this network to transmit messages to outlying project locations. From a 'Do No Harm' perspective, the cooperation with the Kenyan police has a legitimization effect within the context of a violent conflict between the Gabbra and the Dasanach. Since they all view profile as a connector.

5.6 Sustainability

How reliable can such sudden changes be following long years of animosity? This remains a critical issue since there are still some few coincidences of killing and raid. However, continuous training of peace/water usage committees and local authority on 'Do No Harm', conflict resolution and participatory planning, review and strengthening of reciprocal agreements, peace initiatives, support community and inter-communities, structures and linking and coordination with what the government provides.

5.6.1 Durability of agreements

The long-term success of the peace-building activities will depend on the durability of the agreements reached, and the willingness of all ethnic groups to keep peace even under adverse climatic conditions. This depends on ability of the communities themselves to maintain or take up dialogue and replicate exercises done together, particularly after raids.

It will be crucial to have a continuous review of reciprocal agreements to determine gaps and build on them.

Critics of such agreements argue that "actual signing of peace agreements is counter productive. It works better when agreements are verbal. Written agreements cause jitters due to the permanency of the deal in circumstances that demand opportunistic behaviours in order for survival" (Githinji & Mursal, 2009). However, the project beneficiaries feel more comfortable with signing tested agreements over a period of two years before signing declarations.

On the other hand, the establishment of personal linkages has probably left a strong mark on the perceptions of each other. Since these encounters have not been

limited to the actual workshop situation, but have been further developed through planning and implementation of common activities, the change of attitudes may have a chance to continue. This has been shown by the communities own initiatives following the agreements reached in Buluk and in Sabare, best represented by the proposal to reopen a second well. Participants in the community meeting at Dukana seemed to be very hopeful about replicating this in a place called Shull Bath, which translates as “lost beauty”, another disputed area between the Gabbra and the Dasanach.

Various new ideas have been floated, such as the establishment of a common market in Darate (which might eventually also lead to de-stocking and to less environmental degradation) and the introduction of fish trade. Combined with a participatory process of facilitating the development of the communities’ own action plans, the emergence of new opportunities could stabilize the current peaceful situation. As the Ileret councillor put it, “if other opportunities exist e.g. alternative livelihood (fish, trade, farm employment) people lose interest in such exhausting things like raids”.

5.6.2 Wider context

The experience of war has made local populations along the Kenyan-Ethiopian border very suspicious of each other and they are still too many weapons around. However, the disarming and in Kenya and registration of guns in Ethiopia will reduce their impact. Confidence on the growing peace reduces pastoralists’ need for guns for their security.

Another issue is **justice**. There has been a tendency in conflict resolution processes everywhere in Africa to focus on the cessation of hostilities: to forget about the past and to start afresh. Such approaches fail to address the underlying causes of violent confrontations and should be viewed with scepticism. In contrast to this, an Ileret councillor demanded that “peace should not be separated from justice”, but rather be seen as an opportunity for talking about the issues at stake. The ‘Do No Harm’ approach may be further used to develop options for the implementation of activities that bring communities together.

But this would not solve the **problem of impunity**. Working in a pastoralist environment puts the specific challenge of a different notion of “guilt”, where a whole group is seen as responsible for the actions of each of its individual members. This relieves the individual person of certain responsibilities, which can be positive (“our elders are advisers – the warriors respect the elders, so that the peace messages are followed”) as well as negative (“we obey, even if it means attacking our friends”). According to the commanding police officer in Ileret, some change of attitude also seems to have taken place in this regard; with community members, admitting the failures of their own members, and punishing individual culprits for actions committed elsewhere.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

Triggered by the positive feedback from all sides, the original objective of this study was the documentation of experiences from the application of the 'Do No Harm' approach in VSF's Improved Community Response to Drought project. Our field visit to North Horr, Dukana and Ileret for this documentation did indeed confirm many positive and encouraging results. But our document review and the interviews with staff and local community representatives also revealed the spontaneity of the whole process. Accordingly, the way through which 'Do No Harm' was introduced to VSF's project cannot be used as a model in the true sense of the word. Nonetheless, the experience can well serve as an example for the benefits of the approach, the opportunities resulting from its application, and the challenges faced. These conclusions are in line with other experiences from the Local Capacities for Peace Project in the Horn of Africa.

The following sections lay out a process that would lead to an effective integration of conflict sensitivity into both the programming of individual projects and the organizational development of institutions working in pastoralist environments.

The recommendations focus on four particular aspects: 1. Planning the Intervention, 2. Structures and capacities, 3. Approaches, and 4. Linkages. For each of these aspects, some guiding questions are presented followed by concrete recommendations backed up through the lessons and experiences from the ICRD project and the literature.

6.1 Planning the intervention

- Which aspects and concerns need to be addressed when planning a project or intervention for an area with (inter-ethnic) conflicts?

Working in pastoralist environments very often means working in situations with difficult environmental and climatic conditions, where people are struggling for survival upon limited natural resources. The particular pattern of pastoralist livelihoods requires a high degree of mobility in order to make optimal use of scarce resources. At the same time it makes it difficult for government institutions to provide an uninterrupted supply of social services. As a result, such communities very often feel marginalized and dependent on finding own solutions for their various social and economic challenges. Environmental changes directly affect the livelihood of pastoralist communities. As such, they are highly vulnerable to climatic events like droughts and floods, which then lead to further competition over scarce resources. As a result, most pastoralist environments are also marked by a high degree of inter-ethnic conflict, in which access to water and pastures becomes a continuous object of tension. Relief and development projects

working in such situations have to be aware of these aspects and assure that their interventions, whether in form of social services, economic assistance or infrastructure, are implemented in a conflict-sensitive way. This requires the following considerations:

- a) **Take an explicit decision to integrate conflict-sensitivity into programming.** In most cases, project activities in pastoralist communities cannot be implemented without due consideration for the context of conflict in which they are taking place. The interrelation between conflict and development which is well known to the local people and that which strongly affects the sustainability of any improvements, should be reflected in the project documents. Instead of retreating from areas of insecurity or neglecting the impact of conflict on a particular project, relief and development organizations are required to take a pro-active step and consider the conflict environment in their programming decisions. Confining the focus to sectoral competence or shelving violent conflict under “risks and assumptions” is intolerable.
- b) **Determine the steps of an accompanying support process for the staff from training to practical application.** Working in situations of violent conflict, demands for additional considerations and requires specific knowledge and skills of the staff. Conflict-sensitive approaches like ‘Do No Harm’ may be easily understood after attendance of an introductory workshop, but experience has shown that many people struggle with implementation in the field. For this reason, a follow-up process should be planned right from the beginning, offering a kind of mentoring for staff members.
- c) **Develop conflict-sensitive indicators for measuring the success of a project.** The process of objective-oriented project planning usually results in a logical framework matrix with specific indicators measuring the achievements of an intervention. In most cases, particularly in projects with a high degree of technical inputs, the resulting indicators are of a quantitative nature, while peace-building is per definition more of a qualitative process. It is important, however, that the conflict-sensitive aspects of programming are also reflected as a measurable outcome. Depending on the particular project activities, it will be a challenging task for programme planners to adjust their indicators accordingly.
- d) **Decide on guidelines for the organizational presence in the field.** As the discussions leading to the development of the ‘Do No Harm’ approach have revealed, organizations influence their respective conflict environment not only through their activities, but also through the implicit ethical messages that they or their staff transfer. Particular procedures or the behaviour of individual staff might unknowingly provoke war mentalities, and so organizations should be prepared to spend some time on reflecting how they would like to be perceived in an environment of violent conflict. This might involve the adaptation of guidelines and procedures, the adherence to a code of conduct, and an induction process for new staff.

-
- e) **Take an informed decision on whether peace-building should become an objective in itself.** While 'Do No Harm' tries to make sure that projects do not have any negative side-effects on the conflict situation, it does not address the causes for the tensions in a particular context. For this purpose, specific peace-building tools would need to be applied. Any organization working in a pastoralist environment should reflect on the respective needs; in terms of time, resources, capacities and, if appropriate, take up peace-building in a genuine way. This would mean establishing "peace" as a separate project objective without neglecting the cross-cutting nature of conflict sensitivity in the core activities of the respective intervention.

6.2 Structures and capacities

- What type of training is needed in order to qualify staff for conflict-sensitive programming?
- How can conflict sensitivity be incorporated into capacity-building?
- What structures are necessary to assure conflict-sensitive implementation of activities?
- How can we establish a system of continuous learning from the experience gained in the field?

If conflict-sensitive planning is seen as a mandatory aspect of programme implementation in pastoralist environments, then it will have consequences on the required skills of staff members both in the field and at the headquarters. It cannot be taken for granted that experts in water and sanitation, livestock management or veterinary health services are able to adapt their way of working to a situation of violent conflict just by common sense. Some investment into capacity-building of project staff is needed as well as awareness creation among local partners and beneficiaries. Since conflict sensitivity must be a cross-cutting issue, this would necessarily involve training on all levels of an organization and not restrict it to one particular person covering the "peace" component of a project. At the same time, there needs to be a circular process of continuous learning based on the lessons from field experience. The following steps are recommended:

- a) **Conduct an exposure workshop on 'Do No Harm' for all staff involved in a project.** The process of integrating conflict sensitivity into programme implementation should start with a formal workshop, during which the theoretical concept is presented and its relevance for a particular project environment is discussed. Based on this initial learning, further reflections will be stimulated, which will eventually enable project staff to appropriately consider the context of conflict in their programming decisions. It should be clear, however, that a workshop can only mark the beginning of a process and should not be regarded as an end in itself. Experience has shown that the capacity-building should also involve the responsible persons in human

resource management, finance administration, logistics and programme management, so that the various departments of an organization understand each other's language.

- b) **Select a focal person for conflict sensitivity within your organization** and entrust him or her with the follow-up of the process. Such a person may not only serve as a constant reminder for the need to be conflict-sensitive, but may also act as an internal resource person for capacity-building, as for example in a training of trainers workshop. In addition, this could give an organization access to a whole network of practitioners working in similar contexts on similar challenges. It is important, though, to select a suitable person for this task from within the existing programme staff and not to create a specific position which would undermine the cross-cutting nature of the issue.
- c) **Conduct an introductory workshop on 'Do No Harm' for selected beneficiaries.** The experience of VSF in northern Kenya has clearly shown that the communities involved in a context of conflict react very positively to the 'Do No Harm' approach, particularly to the parts that analyse the local context. The attitude change observed among the Gabbra and the Dasanach is a result of sharing the knowledge of conflict-sensitive planning with local people on the ground, who would then even be able to develop own suggestions for project activities linking people to each other. A 'Do No Harm' workshop on community level may be quite different from an exposure workshop for project staff, with more emphasis on the context, on dividers and connectors. This is what local people know much better, compared to the more complicated assessment of the consequences of certain programming decisions. Furthermore, it is recommendable to involve local authorities, religious leaders and other decision makers at this stage.
- d) **Invest in additional capacity-building on participatory approaches.** Since 'Do No Harm' cannot stand on its own, there may be an additional need for capacity-building on the moderation of participatory planning approaches. In the end, the successful integration of conflict sensitivity depends on the ability of the staff to combine the respective questions with the process of developing community action plans. Even though there may still be a great need to explain the true meaning of "ownership" and "participation", experience has shown that the sustainability of interventions is highly dependent on the degree to which local people see a project as theirs. This is particularly true for pastoralist communities, who are used to making decisions on their own. As there is no blueprint for integrating 'Do No Harm' into participatory planning, programme staff are required to have a good understanding of both.
- e) **Invest in additional capacity-building on peace-building and conflict management.** The importance which violent conflicts have on the life of many pastoralist communities may force organizations to do more than "no

harm". They may need to spend much more time on addressing the tensions in the environment in which they are working. This may even mean that organizations would need to go beyond their original mandate and engage in direct peace-building and conflict resolution activities. The sensitive nature of such issues requires a high degree of mediation skills and a reliable knowledge of particular approaches. In case an organization solely decides to extend by working on conflict and implementing respective activities, staff members would need to be introduced to additional tools and concepts. This should by no means be underestimated!

- f) **Support the emergence of inter-community structures and involve them in programming decisions.** The 'Do No Harm' approach allows local people to look at their own conflict situation and analyse the relationships between the various groups in a particular environment. Participatory planning on the other hand invites them to develop their own action plans and address some of their basic problems by themselves. In the case of the workshops conducted in Buluk and in Sabare, the discussions around 'Do No Harm' have resulted in the emergence of inter-community structures that proved to be instrumental for the joint planning of activities. In order to sustain this process, it would be important to support such structures and to promote their role in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating of project activities. At this stage, there would also be an opportunity to introduce those steps and modules of the 'Do No Harm' approach that might not have been covered in other workshops.
- g) **Coordinate the systematic documentation of lessons learned with the application of 'Do No Harm' .** The integration of the 'Do No Harm' approach requires a lot of flexibility and creativity. Since every context is different, there can be no schematic solutions, and so programme staff have to develop their own options depending on the particular environment they find themselves in. It would be helpful for the global community of 'Do No Harm' practitioners to share those experiences and learn from each other. It is advisable to collect relevant information systematically and make the lessons learned available to the general public. This report itself is considered a step in this direction.

6.3 Approaches

- When are the various steps and modules of the 'Do No Harm' approach best used in practice?
- How can the effective participation of local communities be ensured?
- Through which ways do programming decisions affect local conflict and how can that be observed?
- What options do staff members have to add a conflict-sensitive lens to their routine work?

People working in conflict-prone areas, are usually very enthusiastic about 'Do No Harm'. After an initial workshop, facilitators often receive comments about the high relevance of the approach for a particular context. They also get to know about the advantages that a systematic way of looking at the interaction between relief and development; and the context of violent conflict offers.

The step from training to application, however, is not an automatic one. Programme staff often find it difficult to implement the 'Do No Harm' approach in practice. This is because they are overwhelmed by so many practical challenges in the field like demands on implementation, coordination, data collection, logistics, report writing and financial accountability. Unless there is an explicit requirement for monitoring conflict sensitivity, it is easily forgotten. For this reason, a process of "accompaniment" is recommended that would help field staff to reflect on their decisions and get a regular feedback. The following suggestions should be kept in mind:

- a) **Apply 'Do No Harm' systematically in the analysis of the context together with the communities.** The first three steps of the 'Do No Harm' approach (context of conflict, dividers and connectors) offer a good understanding of the dynamics of a particular conflict situation. This is not only in terms of actors, but also regarding attitudes, values and experiences. It has been shown that the systematic use of this part of the approach enables programme staff to get a detailed picture of the area in which a project is supposed to be implemented and about the people living there. As this documentation has shown, local people love this analysis, and both Gabbra and Dasanach reported how it had opened their eyes on many issues. Whether as part of a formal workshop on 'Do No Harm', as a separate activity or at the beginning of a planning workshop, it is highly recommendable to do this analysis together with the communities, who know best about the various categories of dividers and connectors.
- b) **Integrate conflict-sensitive questions into participatory community planning procedures.** The subsequent steps of the 'Do No Harm' approach are a bit more difficult to understand and are not seen as so valuable for workshops at community level. The effects that programming decisions have on local markets; on the relationships between direct beneficiaries and others; on the self-help capacities of the local population, or on the reputation of individual persons; remains abstract unless related to very concrete activities. Accordingly, the respective explanations should rather be given when it comes to planning, and the resulting questions should be raised when local people start developing their own action plans as part of a participatory process. This requires, of course, that the facilitator of the planning workshop has sufficient knowledge about 'Do No Harm'.
- c) **Support inter-community activities that promote the strengthening of connectors.** As a result of the analysis of the context of conflict, some of the

activities suggested might be linked to a particular set of connectors. Based on the fact that the livelihood strategies and lifestyles of different pastoralist communities can be quite similar, it is usually easy to find a number of connectors that such communities share in spite of the tensions that exist. Here, it becomes a question of creativity to shape activities in such a way that they are intentionally strengthening these connectors. For example by promoting joint implementation, by addressing issues of common concern, by bringing people together, or by establishing market linkages.

- d) **Use ‘Do No Harm’ as a continuous monitoring tool for understanding the impact of the project.** In order to internalize the ‘Do No Harm’ thinking, project staff should be encouraged to document their observations and to note down their reflections about the potential impact of their decisions on the local conflict settings. Eventually, all programming decisions about the location of venues, the composition of beneficiaries, the selection of partners among others, should automatically raise certain questions about their effects on the conflict setting. This would enable various options to be valued against each other.
- e) **Incorporate ‘Do No Harm’ into organizational procedures for planning, monitoring and evaluation.** The conflict-sensitive perceptions should have become common practice during all stages of programme implementation. Once this is done, the experience gained in the field would need to be reported to other departments of the organization. This would be part of a conscious effort to influence organizational procedures. While many donor governments already demand that project interventions undertake a conflict impact assessment, there are still few concrete models of how to make this part and parcel of proposal development and practical implementation. It is recommended to engage in such a mainstreaming process at the organizational level, from the perspective of lessons learned in the field so as to secure a greater buy-in.

6.4 Linkages

- How can those who work with different approaches in the same region be influenced?
- In what way can the work of an organization be complemented through inputs provided by others?
- How can the linkage between development and peace be clarified, and how could this be translated into concrete activities?

Even in a remote area like Ileret, relief or development organizations do not work in isolation. Usually, there are a number of others with whom cooperation or coordination may be helpful. Experience has shown, however, that the application of different approaches can send contradicting signals to the local population.

This is particularly true for the conflict-sensitive perspective of 'Do No Harm', which often questions certain routine ways of doing things. It also questions true participatory approaches, which demand a change in the roles of international organizations. According to case studies from Kenya and South Sudan, field staff there expressed their frustration about the impossibility to achieve meaningful changes as long as other organizations did not change their approach. Accordingly, there is also a need to look beyond the work of an organization and influence the general discussion about development work. The following activities are recommended:

- a) **Organize a regular exchange of experience for 'Do No Harm' practitioners.** One important aspect of cooperation is the networking among those that are in the same process of gaining experience with conflict-sensitive approaches. Also listening to success stories from colleagues in other projects and collecting best practices. It is however, important to also assess shortcomings and challenges in a collaborative way so as to help field workers gain confidence and enhance creativity in finding options for difficult situations. For this purpose, it is advisable to have staff members participate in a coordinated process of exchange of experience, which could be on the level of sister organizations (like the VSF family); a common geographical focus (such as the former Kenya Forum of the "Local Capacities for Peace Project in the Horn of Africa"); or as part of the networking within a particular sector (e.g. a network of organizations working with pastoralist communities).
- b) **Liase with other actors who are directly involved in peace-building and conflict resolution.** Due to the high level of tension in most pastoralist environments, peace organizations are usually engaged in such areas, too. Despite the obvious linkage between peace and development, relations between the "development organizations" and "peace organizations" have unfortunately not been very strong in the past. This is because their approaches, concepts, and backgrounds have been too different. This has started to change with the emergence of conflict-sensitive approaches and readily available funds for peace-building activities. Based on the experience of VSF in northern Kenya, it was exactly this combination of peace-building aspects and practical development work which has led to the obvious success of the programme. Given the limited experience of most development organizations with conflict management, a stronger cooperation with institutions specialized in that field is highly recommended.
- c) **Lobby for the application of conflict-sensitive approaches among other organizations.** In conclusion, positive experience should not be hidden. There is need for sensitive programme implementation in situations of violent conflict. This would then be promoting the 'Do No Harm' approach. VSF is now among other organizations in the North and South who are lobbying for conflict sensitivity. This is for the sake of promoting improved development practices.

7. References and Resources

- Aklilu, Y & Wekesa, M (2002) Drought, Livestock and Livelihoods – Lessons from the 1999–2001 Emergency Response in the Pastoral Sector in Kenya. Humanitarian Practice Network Paper No. 40. London 2002
- Anderson, MB. (1997) 'Do No Harm' . How Aid can Support Peace – or War. Boulder 1997
- Anderson, MB (2000) Options for Aid in Conflict – Lessons from Field Experience. Handbook produced by Collaborative for Development Action. Cambridge 2000
- Anderson, MB & Olson, L (2003) Confronting War – Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners. Handbook produced by Collaborative for Development Action. Cambridge 2003
- CDA (2004) The 'Do No Harm' Handbook (The Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Assistance on Conflict). Collaborative Learning Projects, Cambridge, <http://www.cdainc.com/dnh/docs/DoNoHarmHandbook.pdf> (accessed 23 March 2012)
- Githinji, J (2009) Critique of Past Emergency Interventions in Somali, Oromiya and Karamoja Clusters. Supporting Document for the Final Evaluation, July 2009
- Githinji, J & Mursal, H (2009) Improved Community Response to Drought (ICRD) Project Final Evaluation, August 2009
- Hartung, H (2009a) Technical Appraisal No. 06. Comments on the Peace-Building Component, March 2009
- Hartung, H (2009b) Technical Appraisal No. 07. Comments on the VICOBA Component, March 2009
- LCPP (2004) Summary of the "Local Capacities for Peace Framework". Brochure produced for the Partners of the Local Capacities for Peace Office in Nairobi. Nairobi 2004
- Obala, E (2009a) Inter-Community Reciprocal Agreement (between Gabraa and Dasanach Communities). Workshop Proceedings Report, February 2009
- Obala, E (2009b) Inter-Community Reciprocal Agreement (between Gabraa, Borana, Albore, Hammar and Dasanach Communities). Workshop Proceedings Report, March 2009
- Pantuliano, S & Wekesa, M (2008) Improving Drought Response in Pastoral Areas of Ethiopia – Somali and Afar Regions and Borena Zone of Oromiya Region. Study published by the Humanitarian Policy Group at the Overseas Development Institute. London 2008
- Pastoralist Communication Initiative (2009a) Dhadacha Nagaya – The Acacia of Peace. Brochure produced by DFID Democracy Growth and Peace for Pastoralists Project. 2009
- Pastoralist Communication Initiative (2009b) The Puff Adder, the Fire, the Spear, the Peace ... – Reporting from the Maikona Peace Gathering. Brochure produced by DFID Democracy Growth and Peace for Pastoralists Project. 2009
- Sukunatu, JG (2009) The Livestock Development Sector. General Report, June 2009
- VSF (2009a) Improved Community Response to Droughts (ICRD). Second Intermediate Report to ECHO, March 2009
- VSF (2009b) Improved Community Response to Droughts – II (ICRD-II). Proposal to ECHO, June 2009

ISBN 978-9966-754-01-1



9 789966 754011