Conflict Sensitivity:
Lessons Learned in Nepal in Light of
International Discussions

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOGs</td>
<td>Basic Operating Guidelines</td>
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<td>CDA</td>
<td>Collaborative for Development Action</td>
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<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Peace Agreement Nepal</td>
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<td>CSPM</td>
<td>Conflict Sensitive Programme Management (by SDC)</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>UK Department for International Development</td>
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<td>DNH</td>
<td>Do No Harm</td>
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<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit¹</td>
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<td>LGCDP</td>
<td>Local Governance and Community Development Programme for Nepal</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD-DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>RPP</td>
<td>Reflecting on Peace Practice Programme</td>
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<td>SDC</td>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SED</td>
<td>Safe and Effective Development approach (by GIZ &amp; DFID)</td>
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<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>UNRHCO</td>
<td>United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator’s Office</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>WDR</td>
<td>World Development Report</td>
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¹ Due to the merger between GTZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, DED Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst and InWent Internationale Weiterentwicklung und Entwicklung, there is not yet an official translation in English.
1. Introduction

Violent conflicts remain a major development challenge of our time. The World Development Report 2011 indicates that one-and-a-half billion people live in regions affected by fragility, conflict or violence (World Bank, 2011, 50). No low-income, fragile or conflict-affected country has yet reached one of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (World Bank, 2011, 1). In areas with repeated cycles of political and criminal violence, economic growth is compromised and the human indicators are stagnant. Many countries are facing cycles of repeated violence, weak governance and instability (World Bank, 2011, 2). 90 percent of the last decade’s civil wars appeared in countries that had already had a civil war in the last 30 years. In addition, new forms of violent conflict, such as high levels of violent crime, are constraining development.

In view of this, it is still and perhaps more than ever a necessity for international agencies to work in a conflict sensitive manner. Since the late 1990s, international agencies have become increasingly aware of conflict sensitivity (KOFF, 2004, 1). All interventions of international agencies have the potential not only to have positive impacts, but also to create unintended negative impacts.

Therefore in 2007, the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (ten DAC Principles)\(^2\) were adopted. These principles, established by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC), attempt to maximize positive impact of engagement and minimize unintentional harm (DAC, 2007, 1).

In the meantime, many donor agencies and implementing organisations have adopted policies that include conflict sensitive approaches (Woodrow & Chigas, 2009, 2). In addition, they have started developing their own tools to assess the impacts of their programmes to the conflict context (Gurung, 2010, 15). The present essay compiles

experiences and lessons learned on conflict sensitivity with a specific focus on Nepal over the last years.

The methodology comprises desk research of primary and secondary sources. As a basis for the essay, both published experiences of development organisations and experiences during the author’s NADEL project assignment in Nepal are taken into account. In addition, insights from the NADEL course “peace promotion in international cooperation” of beginning March 2012 are incorporated.

The leading question, which will be answered, is the following:

**What lessons about conflict sensitivity have been learned as a result of experiences in Nepal in light of international discussions?**

In the current essay, conflict sensitivity is defined (Woodrow & Chigas, 2009, 1 in line with the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 2005, 1 and International Alert, 2004, 1) as the following:

“The ability of an organisation to
- understand the context in which it is operating,
- understand the interactions between its interventions and the context/group relations and
- act upon the understanding of these interactions, in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts.”

Translated into everyday language, the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium describes conflict sensitivity as follows (2009, 2): “Knowing that our work could increase existing conflicts or create new ones, and doing something about it.”

The main aim is to work in the context of conflict in order to minimize negative and maximize positive impacts of programming. The CDA Collaborative for Development

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3 There is a distinction between working “around”, “in” and “on” conflict (Interpeace, 2010, 1):
- “Working around conflict: donors and agencies avoid the issue of conflict or treat is as a negative externality;
- Working in conflict: donors and agencies recognize the need to be more sensitive to conflict dynamics and adapt policies and programmes accordingly, these are expected to be conflict sensitive;
- Working on conflict: donors and agencies have a more explicit focus on conflict management and resolution and deliberately seek to engage with drivers of conflict.”

In the present essay, the focus is on working in conflict which implies conflict sensitivity. In practice, the boundaries between working in and on conflict can be fluid.
Action claims that all programmes, of all types, in all sectors, at all stages of conflict (latent, hot, post-war) should be conflict sensitive.

The following chapter of the present essay briefly introduces the peace process in Nepal and then describes some experiences on conflict sensitivity in Nepal over the past years. The essay then provides an overview of two international discussions in the context of conflict sensitivity. The section that follows interlinks the experiences from Nepal with the international insights and discusses main findings. The final section draws conclusions and makes recommendations for possible ways forward.

2. Nepal’s peace process: need for conflict sensitivity

After sixteen years of struggling democracy and ten years of violent conflict, a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in November 2006 between the Maoists and the Government of Nepal (International Alert, 2011, 2). Since then, Nepal has faced continual problems in moving the peace process forward. But in recent months, according to the International Crisis Group Asia (2011, 1), the peace process has made significant progress. On the first November 2011, political parties made a breakthrough by signing a historic seven-point agreement. Finally, the parties have reached a deal on the Maoist fighters. Apparently, an unofficial deal describes power-sharing arrangements until the next election and the parties are concentrating seriously on the challenging task of writing a new constitution.

However, many challenges persist, including the evolving coalition dynamics and divisions within parties (International Crisis Group Asia, 2011, 1-2). In addition, the peace process has been focused informally too much on the Maoist fighters and the whole of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement has been neglected (International Crisis Group Asia, 2011, 1-2). Although the constitution is seen as an urgent issue, the politicians are tired. Furthermore, the mainstream parties have decided to ignore some crucial topics like the justice for war crimes, the land reform or the democratisation of

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4 International Alert (2011, 11): “The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) outlines priorities for political, economic, social transformation and conflict management; management of armed forces and arms; maintenance of ceasefire and the end of the conflict; compliance to human rights; management of differences and disagreements post-CPA, the monitoring of CPA implementation.”
the Nepal Army. But these issues will not lose their significance. In this sense, Human rights organisations have observed deterioration in Government’s apparent willingness to address violations and abuses committed during the violent conflict (OHCHR, 2011, 1).

This context shows the necessity for conflict sensitive programming because the situation in Nepal is still fragile and uncertain. When looking at the underlying causes of the conflict, this issue becomes even more relevant. Conflict analysts explain that the violent conflict in Nepal was the consequence of structural and socio-cultural conflicts such as regional, caste, ethnic and gender-based discrimination, bad governance and corruption (Bonino & Donini, 2009, 7-8). The international organisations were unknowingly supporting these conflicts because they provided opportunities to the elites of the country and did not reach those most in need.

The fact that international aid to Nepal has almost doubled since 2000, and therefore the financial power of donors, represents another reason for the necessity of conflict sensitive programming (International Alert, 2011, 1). In 2011, aid accounted for 22 percent of the Government budget and half of Government’s capital expenditure (The Economist, 2011, 1). The three main multilaterals, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations (UN) are the major contributors to Nepal’s national budget (International Alert, 2011, 1). A conflict sensitive approach is essential in this delicate context. But how is the current situation regarding conflict sensitivity within international agencies in Nepal?

**Conflict sensitivity within multilateral agencies**

International Alert highlights in its study from 2011 (5) that the donors in Nepal have “made progress in strengthening their institutional approaches to reflect the conflict aspects of the context. All international institutions are now either piloting or implementing some kind of conflict-sensitive tools or approaches.”

Although institutional approaches may have been made more conflict sensitive, it appears that there has been little incorporation of conflict sensitivity into sectoral approaches (International Alert, 2005, 3).
However, UNDP, UNICEF and the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator’s Office (UNRHCO) have initiated the UN Interagency Programme on Mainstreaming Conflict Sensitivity. This is a process of mainstreaming Do No Harm approaches within projects and programmes (http://www.un.org.np/oneun/donoharm). ADB staff members are applying, and the World Bank piloting, a “peace filter”\textsuperscript{5} to assess new projects from a peace and conflict impact analysis (International Alert, 2011, 5). Such initiatives are, according to International Alert, in early stages for all institutions. For this reason, effectiveness in modifying conflict risks like resource capture by political elites needs to be shown.

Apparently, the presence of trained staff with expertise and mandate to take conflict sensitive impacts into account has changed the ability of donors to address the local context (International Alert, 2011, 6). The need for experts on conflict and peace impacts, however, seems to be only a very recent consideration within these institutions. International Alert emphasises (2011, 7) the concerns regarding the limited staff capacity to ensure conflict sensitive engagement, though the positive efforts on operational level. The World Bank, for example, has outsourced the testing of the peace filter, but the team leaders do not receive training for its implementation. On the other hand, ADB has only one expert to mainstream conflict sensitivity across all its activities in Nepal.

The coordination between international agencies on conflict sensitivity and the efforts for joint analysis represent other challenges. Apparently, ADB has started coordinating with the local civil society and the development partners.

But the lack of staff time within all organisations appears to be a major obstacle (International Alert, 2011, 7). In general, the incentives to chase quick results hinder

\textsuperscript{5} International Alert (2011, 5): „Peace filter is a tool for assessing and mitigating the impact of development projects on conflict-affected or –prone regions. In Nepal, DFID led the process, funding consultants to design and pilot project-sensitivity tools for both the World Bank and ADB country offices in early 2009. The “peace filter”, designed with support from Alert, was endorsed in Nepal in 2009 by the World Bank and ADB.”
strong consultative and informed processes which can support conflict sensitive and sustainable outcomes.\(^6\)

**Conflict sensitivity within bilateral and non-governmental agencies**

To some extent neglected in the above mentioned study of International Alert, there are a number of bilateral and non-governmental organisations in Nepal which have been promoting conflict sensitive programming since the beginning of the violent conflict. According to Ingdal et al. (2007, 9), most of the major development agencies (such as DFID\(^7\), GIZ\(^8\), SIDA, USAID, SDC) have developed their own approaches, models and tools for how to analyse and sensitise their programmes. As a basis, they took different theories and practices such as for example Do No Harm or the theory of conflict sensitive development approaches etc. (Gurung, 2010, 19). In the following overview, some agencies with their lessons learned on conflict sensitivity are presented. This overview is not meant to be exhaustive and shows only some selected lessons learned in an exemplary way.

In the case of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, the introduction of the Conflict Sensitive Programme Management CSPM (SDC, 2011, 1-4; SDC, 2006) has turned the Nepal programme experience into a potential learning case for all donor agencies (SDC, 2010b, 1). It is a joint programme that combines Swiss development, diplomatic, peace and human rights efforts (Paffenholz, 2006, 4) and thus

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\(^6\) In addition, the absorption of aid represents another major challenge. The World Bank assumes that the key period, during which aid absorption is exceptionally high, starts from the fourth year of peace and lasts until the seventh (Collier, 2002, 158; Collier & Hoefler, 2002, 8). In the case of Nepal, the Government is still struggling to absorb and spend the funds in a conflict sensitive way. One of the main examples is the Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP)\(^6\) (http://www.lgcdp.gov.np) where the donors themselves had to postpone the release of the third tranche due to reports of increased fiduciary risks. At the same time, the implementation of the programme was delayed critically, inter alia, because of missing funds on the operational level.

\(^7\) DFID has developed a system of conflict auditing to increase the conflict sensitivity of its programmes (Gurung, 2010, 20). It is an internal review process to help its country offices assess their level of conflict sensitivity and improvements for future. They look at what is being done and how, how it relates to the conflict situation and identify good conflict sensitive practices and where to improve.

\(^8\) GIZ (at that time GTZ) and DFID developed as a joined venture for Nepal the Safe and Effective Development (SED) approach during the period of the violent conflict (RMO, 2011). This guidebook brings three components together: (1) Do No Harm, (2) Risk Management and (3) Good Development practices. The SED approach aims to help programmes to work (RMO, 2011, 4) “safely and effectively in a conflict environment without increasing conflict and, if possible, to reduce conflict.”
implements a whole-of-government approach (DAC Principle 5)\(^9\) - which makes it even more interesting as an example in this essay. The Swiss decided to stay engaged (DAC Principle 9) when the armed conflict in Nepal intensified in 2001 (SDC, 2010a, 1). In order to stay engaged during the conflict as long as possible, the programme was adapted to the conflict situation. This was done through a number of strategies and instruments at different levels. A context-specific approach and an effective coordination were considered essential. For instance, SDC was and to this day remains engaged in a close monitoring of the conflict situation, continual local risk assessment and the monthly coordination meetings (SDC, 2008, 8). In addition, the coordination among the donor agencies was successfully implemented in Nepal through the Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs). Thirteen donors formulated fourteen Basic Operating Guidelines in which they declared their commitment to poverty reduction, impartiality, transparency, accountability, inclusion and upholding human rights (SDC, 2010b, 2).

Besides multilateral and bilateral agencies, some non-governmental organisations (NGO) such as Helvetas\(^10\) and CARE Nepal have been applying the Do No Harm (DNH)\(^11\) approach for some time in Nepal. The founders of the Do No Harm approach, CDA Cooperative for Development Action, undertook a review of CARE Nepal’s Do No Harm application in 2006. The review was part of the worldwide case studies and is therefore presented in more detail in this essay. The review team of CDA found a considerable variation in conceptualisation and application of the DNH framework within CARE Nepal (CDA, 2006, 13-14). The staff members had strongly absorbed the concepts of dividers and connectors as well as the resource transfers and implicit ethical messages. A main learning from the review was that DNH trainings achieved a mind-set amongst staff. The staff members were exposed to a new way of thinking.

\(^9\) During the author’s NADEL project assignment, she gained a deepened understanding of the implementation of SDC’s conflict sensitive approach in the field.

\(^10\) For Helvetas, conflict sensitivity means to train its staff on the Do No Harm approach as a part of the mainstreaming process (Gurung, 2010, 20). Helvetas also has a monitoring system of the conflict situation where data are collected frequently for the field offices and sent to the central office. In this way, they know about the place and intensity of a conflict and adapt accordingly their programmes.

\(^11\) The Six Lessons from the Do No Harm Project (CDA, 2011a, 1) are as follows: “(1) Whenever an intervention of any sort enters a context it becomes part of the context. (2) All contexts are characterized by Dividers and Connectors. (3) All interventions interact with both, either making them worse or making them better. (4) Actions and Behaviors have Consequences (ABC). (5) The details of interventions matter. (6) There are always Options.”
about their work in a conflict setting. However, there appeared different understandings relating to geographical locations in Nepal, levels and types of training and closeness to the ground.\textsuperscript{12}

After the introduction of different experiences on conflict sensitivity, we leave now Nepal and move on to the international debates.

### 3. International discussions: WDR framework and mainstreaming

In the international arena, numerous discourses have developed. With view to the developments in Nepal, the insights of the World Development Report (WDR) 2011 and of conflict sensitivity mainstreaming are of particular interest and will be introduced in this chapter.\textsuperscript{13}

The World Development Report 2011 has suggested a new framework to address repeated violence and vulnerability to violence of fragile states. The authors have therefore collected lessons from national and international responses to conflicts. To break cycles of insecurity, first international actors need to restore confidence and then transform the institutions that can provide citizen security, justice and jobs (World Bank, 2011, 99-115). Another lesson emphasises the need for international support to build confidence and transform institutions (World Bank, 2011, 181-207). The current problem is that international interventions are often separated, slow to start, quick to finish, dependant on international technical assistance and delivered through parallel structures. The 2011 WDR framework outlines the following new directions (World Bank, 2011, 270):

\textsuperscript{12} In addition, the review of CDA recommends including DNH activities such as staff capacity building, project review, exchange visits, in budgets and timelines of CARE Nepal (CDA, 2006, 32). This allows engaging actively with donors to protect these budget lines and activities.

\textsuperscript{13} Another international discussion focuses on effective peace building. This Reflecting on Peace Practice Programme (RPP) by CDA works on the question (2011c, 1): "How can international agencies engaged in peace practice make their efforts more effective?" As RPP cooperates with agencies who work on conflict, this discussion is excluded in this essay. There has been so far no case study for Nepal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track 1</th>
<th>Preventing repeated cycles of violence by investing in citizen security, justice, and jobs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Track 2</td>
<td>Reforming internal agency systems to support rapid action to restore confidence and long-term institution building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Track 3</td>
<td>Acting regionally and globally on external stresses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Track 4</td>
<td>Marshalling experience and support from lower-, middle-, and higher-income countries and global and regional institutions to reflect the changing landscape of international policy and assistance</td>
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**Table 1: The four tracks of the 2011 WDR Framework**

According to International Alert (2011, 2), the WDR 2011 changes the nature of how international development is conceived, but raises many questions as well. However, International Alert (2011, 1) hopes that this report will figure as a game-changer in international approaches.

Another international discussion focuses on mainstreaming conflict sensitivity. The Berghof Conflict Center for Constructive Conflict Management suggests integrating appropriate attitudes, approaches, tools and expertise into the organisation’s culture, systems and processes (Barbolet et al., 2005, 6). In its Resource Pack on conflict sensitivity, a framework with five pillars has been developed by the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium (2005b, 3-16). The first pillar is institutional commitment regarding which the authors affirm that without support from management, conflict sensitivity will not be implemented successfully. The organisational leadership needs to be actively and enthusiastically supportive of conflict sensitive approaches. As a second pillar, it is an advantage if there is a willingness to make changes in organisational culture and institutional structures because the changes would be likely if a conflict sensitive approach is taken seriously. The key question for the third pillar, support of capacity development, is which skills does the organisation as a whole, staff in different departments and partners need to have and to develop in order to enhance conflict sensitivity. The external relationships, as a further pillar, highlight the importance of the commitment and support of external partners such as funders or partner
organisations. Finally, **accountability** mechanisms need to reward staff and teams who implement conflict sensitivity in their daily practice. The sub-issues of the five pillars are the following (Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 2005b, 17-19):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key aspects for developing institutional capacity for mainstreaming conflict sensitivity</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A. Institutional commitment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Externally:</td>
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<td>1. Leadership’s personal background 2. Leadership’s perception of the organisational history 3. Commitment at non-management levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table 2: Key aspects of mainstreaming conflict sensitivity</td>
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</table>

According to the Resource Pack, all five pillars require strength in order to build capacity for a successful mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity.

**4. Nepal’s development partners in the light of international insights**

In this chapter, the presented experiences and lessons learned on conflict sensitivity in Nepal will be discussed in the light of the international insights.

The recent developments in Nepal regarding conflict sensitivity programming are, from the author’s point of view, promising. In particular, the multilateral donors like UN, World Bank and ADB have finally made progress in enhancing their conflict sensitive approaches (International Alert, 2011, 5). The fact that the financially strongest donors
are piloting or implementing different conflict sensitive tools or approaches in a systematic way is, in the author’s view, an important step forward. As the Berghof Conflict Center for Constructive Conflict Management outlines (2005, 14): “At the core of conflict sensitivity is an investment in learning about the conflict context and a responsibility to act upon that learning to make better-informed choices.” Berghof emphasizes that behind this deceptively simple task, a great deal of commitment from the organisations is needed. In the opinion of the author, it seems as if such commitment is now being enhanced, in general, in Nepal. In accordance with Berghof, the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity prevents conflict sensitivity from remaining an island of better practice and makes true impacts possible (Berghof, 2005, 14). But they emphasize that mainstreaming is a significant task of an organisation and necessarily a long-term process.

However, given that international discourse on conflict sensitivity started in the late 1990s, the question can be reduced to why the multilaterals in Nepal have initiated relatively late the process of mainstreaming conflict sensitivity in their programmes. To what extent, the five factors, previously described, for successful conflict sensitivity mainstreaming (institutional commitment, adaption of structures, capacity development, external relationships and accountability) have been considered by the multilaterals in Nepal, would require an in-depth analysis and cannot be answered by this essay.

Some bilateral and nongovernmental agencies (such as for example SDC, DFID, GIZ or CARE Nepal) began earlier and rather simultaneously to the international discourse to transform the institutional practices on conflict sensitivity. These agencies dispose already of several years of experience in the application of their developed tools on conflict sensitivity. The author considers that the challenge for these organisations relies in the maintenance and regular application of the conflict sensitive tools - in particular during times of new strategic alignments or change of personnel. For the organisation, that started their conflict sensitive efforts during the conflict, there is, in the author’s view, also a risk to classify the necessity for conflict sensitivity as less important as Nepal is officially in a post-conflict transitional period.
The coordination and the efforts for joint context analysis remain a challenge in Nepal (International Alert, 2011, 7). In view of the ten DAC Principles, such activities would be of great importance. The principle of “Taking context as starting point” (Principle 1) and the principle of “Practical coordination-mechanism” (Principle 8) would constitute, in the author’s opinion, important elements for conflict sensitive interventions in Nepal. However, it seems that the lack of staff time within the organisations is a major obstacle for such efforts (International Alert, 2011, 7). The incentives for quick results make consultative and informed processes difficult or even impossible. The World Development Report 2011, as previously mentioned, came to the same conclusion that the internal agency structures themselves are one of the major problems of international interventions in fragile and conflict-affected states. The delivery mechanism of international agencies, for example, should be adapted to the local conditions rather than the headquarters preferences (World Bank, 2011, 31). Thus, Track II of the 2011 WDR framework claims reforms of internal agency procedures (World Bank, 2011, 276). Not only the procedures are to be adapted, but as well the risk and result management of the international agencies.\(^\text{14}\) The author of this essay considers this recommendation as a possible starting point for the international agencies in Nepal. How the recommendations of the WDR 2011 will be taken up by them remains to be seen.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The present essay has explored experiences and lessons learned on conflict sensitivity in Nepal in the light of international discussions. In conclusion, a brief compilation and synthesis of these learning are offered.

One lesson of the developments on conflict sensitivity in Nepal is that conflict sensitivity – and in particular – its mainstreaming is a long-term process. Compared with the

\(^{14}\) The WDR 2011 provides, instead of a concrete approach for the implementation of Track II, four principles which should be followed (World Bank, 2011, 276-277):

1. “Accept the links between security and development outcomes.
2. Base fiduciary processes on the real world in fragile and violence-affected situations.
3. Balance the risks of actions with the risks of inaction.
4. Expect a degree of failure in programmes that require innovation and engagement with weak institutions in risky environments, and adapt accordingly.”
international developments on conflict sensitivity, the multilateral organisations in Nepal have started rather late with the mainstreaming efforts for conflict sensitivity. Nevertheless, these efforts have to be recognized and valued in terms of “better late, than never”. Some bilateral and non-governmental organisations in Nepal can look back on more years of experiences on conflict sensitivity than others. However, the effectiveness of the recent mainstreaming efforts of the multilaterals in Nepal needs to be seen.

Another experience or lesson learned concerns the considerable variation in the applied tools on conflict sensitivity by the different international agencies in Nepal. Even within one organisation, CARE Nepal (CDA, 2006, 13-14), there were different ways of the applying one tool. In this sense, the harmonization of one approach or tool becomes, in the author’s view, superfluous. Instead, exchange and coordination are gaining importance. In general, the advantage of any conflict sensitive approach (including training) is a new way of thinking about international interventions in a conflict setting (CDA, 2006, 14) and should be valued as such.

The first recommendation drawn from this essay is the necessity for the systematic implementation of conflict sensitive mainstreaming. Long-term processes include always a certain risk. As CDA (2011b, 1ff) outlines, it happens that donors and partners become distracted by other issues or new tools. As a consequence, mainstreaming is never done once and the maintenance of tools is important. Conflict sensitivity has to become part of the organisation’s procedure (2011b, 1). In the author’s view, sufficient resources (in particular staff time) need to be allocated for a consequent implementation. The adaption of internal structures, risk and result management to the reality of fragile states is as well required (World Bank, 2011, 270).

The second and third recommendations cover, in accordance with International Alert (2011, 7), both the attempts for joint conflict analysis and more coordination among development actors. The new wind blowing around conflict sensitivity in Nepal provide, in the author’s view, an opportunity for joint conflict analysis and coordination. The creation of new coordination structures should be as far as possible avoided because, in the author’s opinion, there are already enough coordination structures in place. It is
more appropriate to use already existing structures among donors and implementing agencies as well for the purpose of conflict sensitivity.

As consequence or complement of the above coordination efforts, the integration of conflict sensitivity into sectoral approaches represents the fourth recommendation. As International Alert (2005, 3) emphasise there is a lack of comprehensive guidance and policy positions to address the incorporation of conflict sensitivity into sectoral approaches. In order to enhance the effectiveness of conflict sensitivity, in the author’s view, sectoral approaches would play a vital role because actors from different levels and with different profiles, including the Government of Nepal, are involved in the implementation.

The experiences of bilateral and nongovernmental development agencies could make an important contribution to the successful implementation of conflict sensitivity mainstreaming within the multilateral organisations. For this purpose, more detailed studies on conflict sensitivity in Nepal are required. At a meta-level, the research question: “In which way conflict sensitive approaches of international agencies in Nepal have supported the peace processes?” would be as well of great interest. In this sense, the last recommendation concerns the realization of more actor overlapping studies, including multilateral, bilateral and nongovernmental agencies, on conflict sensitivity in Nepal.
6. References and further reading


**Weblinks on conflict sensitivity**

Center for Peacebuilding KOFF: [http://www.swisspeace.ch/projects/koff.html](http://www.swisspeace.ch/projects/koff.html)
Conflict Sensitivity Consortium: [www.conflictsensitivity.org](http://www.conflictsensitivity.org)

**Weblinks Nepal**