

Conflict Analysis

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Conflict analysis 'in three easy steps'

1. Map the situation

- Identify relevant actors, structure and issues at local, state, regional, global level
- Establish what their interests are and how they relate to each other
- Calculate the balance of power between them



2. Identify scenarios

- Clarify potential pathways to escalation and de-escalation
- Establish indicators
- Identify critical junctures



3. Monitor the situation and assess threats

- Monitor indicators and map them onto pathways
- Establish when critical junctures are reached
- Adjust threat assessment regularly

The local level of analysis

State Structures and Actors	Non-state Structures and Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• local elites• representatives of the central government• established institutional arrangements and socio-economic structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• locally resident ethnic/religious groups and their members and elites• locally operating<ul style="list-style-type: none">– NGOs and their members and elites– rebel forces and their members and elites– private sector interest groups and their members and elites– criminal networks and their members and elites

The state level of analysis

State Structures and Actors	Non-state Structures and Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• national elites• central government and its members• established institutional arrangements and socio-economic structures (including resource allocation/distribution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ethnic/religious groups and their members and elites• nationally operating<ul style="list-style-type: none">– NGOs and their members and elites– rebel forces and their members and elites– private sector interest groups and their members and elites– criminal networks and their members and elites

The regional level of analysis

State Structures and Actors	Non-state Structures and Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• neighbouring states and their elites• regional powers and their elites• regional IOs and their members and elites• established structures of political and economic cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cross-border/trans-national networks (including their members and elites)<ul style="list-style-type: none">– ethnic– religious– civil society– business– organised crime– rebel groups

The global level of analysis

State Structures and Actors	Non-state Structures and Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• powerful states of global reach and their elites• IOs and their members and elites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INGOs and their elites• diaspora groups and their members and elites• international organised crime networks and their members and elites• TNCs and their members and elites

Cross-cutting issues

	'Issues' (examples)
Local	
National	
Regional	
Global	

- environmental degradation
- resource scarcity
- energy security
- food security
- communicable diseases

Scenario-building

- Draw on
 - Past pathways to escalation and comparative cases
 - Consider key events (holidays, anniversaries, elections)
- Indicators
 - Levels and forms of protest (local vs. national, non-violent vs. violent)
 - Governmental responses (dialogue, force, criminalisation, acknowledgement, recognition)
 - External involvement (partial vs. impartial, unilateral vs. multilateral)
- Critical junctures
 - First death/s
 - Arms shipments from abroad
 - Forces build-up in border areas
 - General mobilisation

Situation monitoring and threat assessment

- Diversify sources
 - Mass media at all levels
 - Embassy reports
 - Intelligence reports
 - HR reports
- Verify sources
 - ‘Triangulate’ information
 - Seek independent or second-source confirmation
 - Consider general trends
 - Consider possibility of disinformation
- Assess threats
 - Objectively on basis of available information
 - Avoid self-fulfilling prophecies
 - Consider critical junctures/thresholds

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