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Preventing and Mitigating Election-related Violence

Approved by: *Jeffrey Feltman, Focal Point for Electoral Assistance*
Approval date: *1 June 2016*
Contact: *Policy and Institutional Memory Team*
Electoral Assistance Division
Department of Political Affairs
ead@un.org
Review date: *As necessary*

Preventing and Mitigating Election-related Violence

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A. PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this policy directive is to improve the general understanding within the United Nations system of the causes of election-related violence, to assist relevant UN actors to effectively assess and analyse risks, to identify measures that can prevent or mitigate election-related violence, and to improve coordination and coherence in the UN's approach to election-related violence.

B. SCOPE

2. This policy directive applies to all entities of the UN system and UN personnel providing electoral assistance, but will also assist other parts of the UN system engaged in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, human rights work and other related activities. This includes those who engage with or support political, security, rule of law, or other institutions which might play a role in preventing or mitigating election-related violence. It is particularly relevant for senior UN personnel both in HQ and in the field, especially the most senior UN representative in the country who has responsibility for ensuring coherence and coordination of UN activities on the ground.

3. For the purposes of this policy, the UN is understood to refer to the entire UN system, that is, all UN departments, agencies, funds, programmes, entities, trust funds, commissions, peacekeeping missions, special political missions, country teams and other bodies. The policy also applies to advisory missions or services of a limited duration.

4. This policy should be read in conjunction with existing UN electoral policy, especially the Policy Directives on Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance (Ref. No. FP/01/2012), Promoting Women's Electoral and Political Participation through UN Electoral Assistance, UN Statements and Public Comment around elections (Ref. No. FP/02/2014), UN Support to electoral system design and reform (Ref. No. FP/02/2013), UN Support to the design or reform of electoral management

C. RATIONALE

5. Electoral processes are a means of regulating and deciding political competition. A whole range of issues, including competing viewpoints and priorities, balance of power and decision making, and allocations of resources, are affected by the outcomes of electoral processes. Given the critical nature of these issues, electoral processes are usually highly competitive. In most cases this competition is resolved through the electoral process itself and the acceptance of results by the competing parties. In other cases, the results may not be accepted by the competing parties. Existing and often deep-rooted tensions and grievances may come to the fore or be exacerbated, and, in the worst cases, violence can occur.

6. This risk is particularly high in countries with systemic, longstanding and unresolved grievances, combined with a “winner takes all” approach to competitive politics. The United Nations follows a comprehensive approach in promoting the acceptance of results and the prevention of election-related violence, involving mediation, good offices and electoral assistance expertise, to complement other United Nations system activities in support of peaceful transitions, democratic governance, the rule of law, human rights and gender equality, including in cooperation with regional organizations. This approach seeks to offer support in addressing underlying grievances by, for example, encouraging the design of political institutions to prevent the monopoly of power. It also encourages inclusive election processes; the establishment of election management bodies that enjoy broad trust and confidence; adequate measures to enfranchise all eligible voters; transparency in all phases of the process; and a fair, expeditious and accessible dispute resolution mechanism. An important feature of this broader approach is that it combines what is sometimes seen as merely “technical” electoral assistance on the one hand, and political engagement on the other.

7. Notwithstanding the fact that elections are sovereign processes, the UN often plays an important support role. In many post-conflict and transition contexts, elections are an integral part of peace agreements and the UN is often mandated by the Security Council or General Assembly to provide assistance and support. In many other cases the UN is requested by the member state to provide assistance or support to administer electoral processes. Assistance or support can take many forms including general support or facilitation of the peace process, mediation, good offices or technical electoral assistance. Even in situations where the UN has no formal field presence it may still have a role to play, either through its overarching mandates such as human rights promotion and protection, promotion of gender equality, or its responsibility to support the maintenance of international peace and security. In other situations the UN may be requested to assist in playing a role in dispute resolution surrounding an electoral process. Many parts of the UN may therefore play some role or have some engagement with member states’ electoral processes.

8. Within such a context, and with the overarching mandate of the UN to maintain international peace and security, it is critical that UN engagement in relation to electoral processes has, as one of its primary goals, the prevention or mitigation of election-related violence. Equally, given the sensitivity of electoral processes and the

complexity and deep-rooted nature of election-related violence, it is important that UN prevention and mitigation efforts are carefully planned, have a longer term focus, combine the political and the technical, and are comprehensively coordinated.¹

9. The UN Focal Point for electoral assistance, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, (hereafter “the UN Focal Point”) is the system lead in the development, issuance and dissemination of UN electoral policy. UN electoral policy is defined as the normative framework and prescriptive guidance that apply to all UN entities providing electoral assistance. This directive has been developed as part of the efforts of the UN Focal Point to develop a complete set of UN system-wide electoral policies.

10. The Department of Political Affairs is the focal point for conflict prevention on behalf of the whole United Nations System.² Preventing and mitigating election-related violence lies at the intersection of these two mandates and this policy provides guidance on how a coordinated approach should be undertaken.

D. Policy Directive

Background

11. For the purposes of this policy directive, election-related violence is understood to be a form of political violence, which is often designed to influence an electoral outcome and therefore the distribution of political power. It may take the form of physical violence or other forms of aggression, such as coercion or intimidation. It may take place prior to and during polling, in which case its perpetrators may seek to influence electoral authorities, candidates, observers, journalists or voters and therefore the results, or it may take place during or following counting, aggregation or publication of results, in which case its intended aim may be to negate the results or influence the future distribution of political power. But violence is not necessarily committed with the intention to pervert the process or its outcomes – it may well be an expression of protest against a process that was seen as unfair. Moreover, it is not only protesters or “the opposition” that may engage in violence: it can also be at the direction or behest of the government. Furthermore, violence may take place well in advance of the actual elections and the announcement of results, for example during the candidate nomination process, or when the electoral legal framework – and thus the ‘rules of the game’ – are being finalised. Whilst focused on the electoral process, which regulates the distribution of political power, its occurrence is often a symptom that the political order does not

¹ In a recent report on peace operations, the Secretary-General also underlined the importance of UN engagement geared towards long-term, sustainable and inclusive political solutions: “[m]any of our missions grapple today with the consequences of political failure and the preference for quick fixes. In many cases, international efforts reproduce earlier formulas for conflict resolution: disarmament, elections, infrastructure and institutions, which are critical for a country’s recovery, as seen in Guinea-Bissau and Liberia. However, they must be built on political foundations and result in mechanisms that can accommodate diversity and differences. Technical interventions alone cannot replace the difficult task of assisting parties in finding political solutions”. Contained in: *The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/357–S/2015/682)*, paragraph 13.

² Progress Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict (A/60/891), para 90.

adequately address or balance competing political interests and, at its root, are underlying and often longstanding grievances and tensions.

D1. Existing Normative and Policy Framework

12. The existing normative and policy framework for the UN's engagement in preventing and mitigating election-related violence is derived from the UN Charter, international human rights law, decisions of the General Assembly and Security Council, UN conflict prevention policy and UN electoral assistance policy. In addition, in 2014 the Secretary-General launched the Human Rights Up Front initiative, which recognizes the value of identifying serious human rights violation as early warning signals of potential crises, and which has become a framework at the disposal of the UN system to prevent and address various forms of violence.

Normative framework in relation to the prevention and mitigation of election-related violence

13. As stipulated in Article 1, Paragraph 1 of the UN Charter, the objective of the UN is “to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace...”

14. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that, “everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” Election-related violence is a threat to these most fundamental of human rights. Violence can also restrict access of citizens to other human rights identified in the UDHR and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), such as limiting the opportunity to take part in elections as a candidate or a voter (Article 21 UDHR, article 25 ICCPR), or restricting freedoms such as those of expression (Article 19 UDHR, article 19 ICCPR), movement (Article 13 UDHR, article 12 ICCPR) or assembly and association (Article 20 UDHR, articles 21 and 22 ICCPR). By severely restricting these rights, election-related violence can undermine trust in the process and in some instances the outcome of an election and its overall credibility and acceptance.

15. Article 25 of the ICCPR obliges States parties to hold genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors. Violence in the context of an electoral process is directly addressed in General Comment 25 of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, which states that “Voters should be able to form opinions independently, free of violence or threat of violence, compulsion, inducement or manipulative interference of any kind.”³ Election-related violence can be an obstacle to voters freely expressing their will. Also of relevance is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which, among other obligations, commits States Parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country. In paragraph 72 of its General Recommendation no. 30 of 18 October 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted that “[s]ubstantive progress towards the equal participation of women as candidates and voters as well as the holding of free and fair elections will not be possible unless a number of appropriate measures are taken, including a gender-responsive electoral system and the adoption of temporary special measures to [...] ensure that women

³ General Comment 25 to the ICCPR, Para 19, 1996.

voters and female political candidates are not subject to violence either by State or private actors.”

Policy framework in relation to the prevention and mitigation of election-related violence

16. Conflict prevention is the core function of the UN. Through the UN Charter, Member States have conferred primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security to the Security Council, and agreed that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf (article 24.1). The Security Council responds to crises around the world on a case-by-case basis and has a range of options at its disposal, including the establishment of peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Where the Security Council has established such a peacekeeping or political mission it is for the mission leadership to play the lead role in addressing the risk of violence around elections.

17. Preventing conflict is also the Secretary-General's primary responsibility. Article 33 of the Charter confers on the Secretary-General the power to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter that may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. The Secretary-General uses a number of tools in his/her preventive engagement, particularly in the context of preventive diplomacy. The GA resolution 56/337 recognizes the need for “coordinating the prevention of armed conflict throughout the United Nations system”. The Secretary-General is supported in this task by the Department of Political Affairs, which provides “advice and support ... in the discharge of the Secretariat's global responsibilities related to the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts.”⁴

18. In both mission and non-mission settings, the use of mediation and good offices can be central to the UN's efforts to prevent or mitigate election-related violence. In peacekeeping or post-conflict environments where the Security Council has mandated the deployment of peace operations, responsibility for addressing election-related violence is normally led by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). S/he is supported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and/or the Department of Political Affairs, which provide political and policy guidance, and strategic direction to all peacekeeping and special political missions.⁵

19. Various additional parts of the UN system also have a role in preventing election-related violence, particularly in situations where the Security Council has not mandated a peace operation. Under the leadership of the SRSG in mission settings, or the Resident Coordinator (RC) in non-mission settings, this support includes those providing electoral assistance, but also those with mandates or responsibilities for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, human rights promotion and protection, and other related activities. A recent report of the Secretary-General on conflict prevention, noted the contributions made by entities throughout the United Nations system and the continued efforts to build bridges and work more coherently in partnership for prevention and for peace.⁶

⁴ Secretary-General's Bulletin on DPA (ST/SGB/2009/13)

⁵ Secretary-General's Bulletin on the Organization of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (ST/SGB/2010/1).

⁶ Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations and conflict prevention: a collective recommitment, S/2015/730 of 25 September 2015.

20. In addition to supporting conflict prevention in mission settings under the leadership of an SRSG, UNDP plays a critical role in conflict-prevention in non-mission settings. It works, for example, in the field to reduce the likelihood of conflict by developing local capacities for conflict prevention and management, facilitating dialogue and consensus-building, and conducting conflict analysis and assessment. The UNDP-DPA Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention, deploys Peace and Development Advisors to strengthen the resources of UN Resident Coordinators and country teams on prevention and peacebuilding initiatives. The UN Peacebuilding Commission, supported by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), was established in 2005 to focus on post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, as a means to lay the foundation for sustainable development and the prevention of a relapse into conflict. UN Women works globally and at the country level to enhance capabilities of national stakeholders in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as the promotion and protection of women's rights in development, humanitarian, conflict and post-conflict contexts.

21. The UN General Assembly has, in resolution 66/130, specifically called on the UN system to support Member States' national efforts to ensure women's equal participation, including their efforts to "investigate allegations of violence, assault or harassment of women elected officials and candidates for political office, create an environment of zero tolerance for such offences and, to ensure accountability, take all appropriate steps to prosecute those responsible". UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) calls for women's participation in conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, as well as for protection from sexual and gender-based violence. In its resolution 2250 (2015), the Security Council adopted its first ever resolution on youth, peace and security, and, among other things, recognized that youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation, and that a large youth population presents a unique demographic dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and economic prosperity if inclusive policies are in place.

22. The promotion and protection of human rights is critical in the prevention and mitigation of election-related violence. Serious human rights violations are widely recognized as an early warning for potential atrocities. The Secretary-General has renewed the UN commitment to uphold the responsibilities assigned by the Charter to Member States whenever there is a threat of serious and large scale violations of human rights or humanitarian law. The UN Human Rights Up Front initiative recognizes human rights and protection of civilians as a core UN responsibility, calls on staff to stay attuned to human rights violations that can signal worse to come, and encourages more proactive engagement with Member States to generate political support for early and preventative action. The aims of the initiative coincide with UN's approach to preventing and responding to election-related violence, which includes regular analysis of risk and a combination of different approaches.

Electoral policy framework

23. Before the UN provides any type of electoral assistance, two preconditions must be met: first, all UN electoral assistance must be based on a Security Council or General Assembly mandate or an official request from a member state or territory, and second, a needs assessment must be carried out under the aegis of the UN Focal Point for electoral assistance. The Focal Point will approve or deem inappropriate UN electoral assistance (in the case of requests from Member States), based on the assessment report, and define the type, parameters and modalities for the assistance. Whether the UN is providing electoral assistance or not and the type

of assistance being provided may impact how the UN approaches election-related violence.

D2. Principles and Policy Considerations

24. **Principles:** UN electoral assistance is guided by a number of principles, as elaborated in the Policy Directive on Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance, all of which need to be taken into consideration in relation to preventing and mitigating election-violence. The following principles are particularly relevant. Many of these are also relevant in cases where UN engagement around potential violence is based on a broader conflict prevention effort rather than electoral assistance as such.

- **National sovereignty and ownership.** General Assembly resolution A/RES/68/164 of 21 February 2014 reaffirmed that UN Member States are responsible for organizing, conducting and ensuring genuine electoral processes. UN electoral assistance in general, and assistance in preventing and mitigating election-related violence in particular, must be undertaken with the understanding that decisions and implementing measures are the primary responsibility of the host country and the various national stakeholders in the electoral process.
- **Norm-based, but not prescriptive.** While there are common methods to preventing and mitigating election-related violence, developing effective programming requires measures to be context-specific and based upon a country-specific and comprehensive electoral risk analysis.
- **Political perspective.** Although elections involve many technical elements, they are fundamentally part of the overall political process. Due consideration must be given to the political context when planning an electoral process, providing electoral assistance, analysing the risks of election-related violence and designing measures to prevent or mitigate election-related violence.
- **Broader and longer-term focus.** All UN electoral assistance must have a longer-term focus. This is particularly relevant in relation to preventing and mitigating election-related violence as efforts are most successful when they address the structural causes of conflict. Furthermore, a longer term approach reflects the fact that violence can occur at different stages of the electoral process, and the recognition that building sustainable and credible national institutions is part of a sound preventive approach.
- **A gender perspective.** UN electoral assistance will take into account the barriers and constraints that women face to participate in elections, including financial constraints, security constraints, and discrimination based on gender stereotypes, and should fully mainstream a gender perspective. In the context of this directive, a gender perspective entails, among other things, taking into consideration the particular impact of election-related violence on women, and considering the role women could play in preventing and mitigating the risk of all forms of election-related violence.
- **Promote inclusiveness, including the involvement of under-represented or marginalized groups.** Understanding the risk for election-related violence requires detailed analysis of all stakeholders in the political and electoral process, including marginalised groups. Designing an electoral process in a way that maximises the involvement of all groups in terms of participation in the process, as well as in terms of having a stake in the outcome, regardless of winners and losers, is key to reducing the likelihood for violence.
- **Integration.** All electoral assistance in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, or special political mission settings should be delivered in a fully integrated

manner from the outset. Given the cross cutting and sensitive nature of measures to prevent or mitigate election-related violence, it is particularly essential that these measures are planned and delivered in an integrated manner. In all other settings measures to prevent or mitigate election-related violence also need to be coordinated and coherent.

25. **Policy considerations:** A number of policy considerations should be taken into account with regard to preventing and mitigating election-related violence.

26. In democracies the results of elections are generally accepted and the subsequent allocation of executive and legislative power usually takes place in an orderly fashion. There are two main factors usually evident in such cases. Firstly, the outcome (and the process overall) is adjudged and accepted as sufficiently accurate and reflective of the will of the electorate. Secondly, the various stakeholders believe that the political system, overall, balances the competing viewpoints and interests and distributes resources, power and decision making in an equitable, acceptable and sustainable manner.

27. In some democracies, however, including in some post-conflict or nascent ones, the conduct and outcome of elections may not be as readily accepted and subsequent allocation of executive and legislative powers implemented smoothly. In such situations, the planning and administration of electoral processes are generally less well established and familiar to stakeholders. This can have implications for establishing and maintaining trust in the process and the outcomes. Moreover, past conflict is an indicator that the political system did not adequately balance the competing viewpoints and interests or distribute resources, power and decision-making in an equitable, acceptable and sustainable manner. If the current political system also falls short in this regard, then even the most well run and accurate electoral process is unlikely to resolve political tensions and the potential for political violence. In such scenarios, while the electoral process may spark violence, it is the underlying political tensions that are the true cause of such violence.

28. Even in well-established democracies, society is not static and past or new tensions can emerge as threats to stability and peace if the political system does not adapt itself or adequately balance evolving or competing viewpoints and interests.

29. While a poorly administered electoral process, or one which does not accurately reflect the will of the electorate, can spark election-related violence, it is unlikely to cause serious violence of itself – this will be a function of whether underlying socio-political tensions exist which are not adequately addressed by the political system. Even if elections are typically not more than a potential trigger for violence, this does not reduce the responsibility of providers of UN electoral assistance to do their utmost to support national authorities in their efforts to hold genuine and periodic elections in accordance with their international obligations, and to contribute to building the capacity to hold elections that have the full confidence of the various stakeholders.

30. Conversely even the best administered electoral process, the results of which are generally accepted, may not assuage political tensions or political violence if underlying socio-political tensions exist that are not adequately dealt with.

31. Based on the understanding that the causes of violence are deep-rooted, it is essential to identify, understand and address these causes to prevent or mitigate election-related violence.

32. Structural, or deep-rooted, causes of conflict are broad and diverse, including, a consistent and pervasive denial of human rights, social exclusion, inequities and inequalities, systematic discrimination, and other long standing grievances of marginalised groups. They are usually complex and require a holistic, long-term approach.⁷ Many factors overlap, and the existence of multiple factors increases their possibility to cause violence. Yet, what might lead to violence in one context may not necessarily do so in others where effective coping mechanisms exist.

33. In his progress report to the General Assembly on the prevention of armed conflict (A/60/891), the Secretary-General provided a conceptual framework for the analysis and prevention of armed conflict which identifies a number of structural factors associated with violent conflict. This framework can also be used in an electoral context to help identify and prepare possible strategies. The structural factors associated with conflict revolve around inequality and inequity (disparities in the distribution of assets or power, or discriminatory treatment), injustice, and insecurity.

Election-related violence risk analysis

34. In order to understand the structural causes of conflict in any given situation, to understand the potential for election-related violence and to identify possible prevention and mitigation measures, an analysis of the risk of violence around an election should be carried out.⁸

35. The process of risk analysis does not need to follow a strict format but should include the following four main elements, and should be carried out well in advance of an election and then updated from time to time:

- A contextual analysis is an important element in developing a broad understanding of the possibility for conflict. Building on a historical timeline of relevant socio-economic and political events, this would entail a careful analysis of previous elections and any history of election-related violence, as well as an assessment of the nature of the election (presidential, parliamentary, local etc). Gender analysis should be an integral part of context analysis.

- Based on the context, structural causes of conflict that could provide early warning of an increased risk of election-related violence should be identified, along with measures that could address them.

- An analysis of the stakes involved in an election along with the stakeholders (as organizers, participants, and particularly as spoilers, including, for example,

⁷ In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States have committed themselves, among other goals, to peaceful and inclusive societies (goal 16) and a number of related targets, mainly to “develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels”, “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels” and “strengthen national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime”. In a similar vein, the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674) makes reference to “poor governance, violations of human rights and the rule of law” as one of the conditions conducive to violent extremism. The document goes on to note that “national plans should fortify the social compact against violent extremism by promoting respect for the principle of equality before the law and equal protection under the law in all government-citizen relations, and developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels, as well as ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making” (para. 44b).

⁸ This shall be referred to in the remainder of this directive as an “electoral risk analysis” – it being understood that the focus is on the risk of violence.

armed anti-government forces) will better define their motivation and the actual level of any threat. Once the actors are identified, a conflict map that identifies the linkages between the various actors can be developed that assess actual levels of risk.

- Possible triggers for violence can then be identified by mapping stakeholders and risks against the electoral timeline, noting that each phase of an electoral process may carry different risks. This identifies which aspects of an election might be most likely to trigger violence and can assist in identifying areas of strategic response across the UN system, including for electoral assistance providers as well as the senior UN officials in country and staff involved in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, human rights and related areas. All analysis should include assessing the different threats and impacts of violence on women and men.

36. Tools for undertaking these elements of analysis can be found in Annex 1. However, the list provided is not exhaustive and more information on conflict analysis tools, including their advantages and disadvantages, can be found in existing academic literature and other technical resources, including the United Nations Integrated Assessment and Planning (IAP) Handbook and the UNDP Elections and Conflict Prevention Guide. It is also important to note that no single tool is preferred over the other and that the context needs to be carefully considered. Sometimes, a combination of tools can enrich the analysis.

D3. Policy Directives

37. Given the above, UN efforts in relation to preventing or mitigating election-related violence should address both the electoral process (potential triggers) and also the broader, political, legal and social system in its ability to resolve political and socio-economic tensions and their potential to cause political violence (underlying causes). In addition, strategies should combine efforts to prevent and mitigate with measures to respond in cases where violence is imminent or breaks out.

Electoral risk analysis and the framework for UN electoral assistance

38. Where the UN is providing electoral assistance, an electoral needs assessment will have already been carried out by the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD). Such needs assessments will include an initial analysis of the risks to the process, including the risk of election-related violence, although a fuller assessment may still be needed. Therefore, in all cases described below, the first question to be considered is whether further analysis is required. EAD and the UN leadership in country will consult each other on this issue. Furthermore, in every case where the decision is taken to conduct analysis, and where the UN provides electoral assistance, EAD staff must be consulted.

39. An electoral risk analysis should identify the potential for violence around the electoral process and, where necessary, determine what measures can prevent or at least mitigate these risks. On the basis of the analysis, a careful assessment should be made on the appropriateness of the UN undertaking or supporting the activities identified, keeping in mind the UN's strategic priorities and comparative advantages in a given context. Consequently, recommendations can be made for the UN to undertake certain measures of an electoral, political, human rights or other nature to help prevent and mitigate the risk of violence. Where such recommendations would entail an adjustment of the parameters for electoral assistance approved by the UN Focal Point, the recommendations must be submitted to the UN Focal Point for further approval. It should be emphasized that such cases are expected to be rare, and that any type of election-related risk analysis, under whatever label or name, is

never a substitute for a needs assessment in accordance with UN system-wide electoral policy.

40. In mission settings, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) is the most senior UN representative in the country and he/she represents the Secretary-General. In most cases, the mission will have a mandate related to peace and security, much of its focus will be on maintaining or building peace, and, as such, will carry out regular conflict risk analysis. The SRSG leads such efforts. Electoral risk analysis may also be needed to build upon, update and reorient the existing analysis to focus on the electoral process (building in particular on the analysis done through the electoral needs assessment). The SRSG should be involved in this process as well. He/she will provide guidance and will in turn keep UN HQ, in particular the Department of Political Affairs, and, for peacekeeping operations, also the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, informed, particularly in relation to risks to the process and any actions that the UN may need to undertake in order to prevent or mitigate election-related violence. In certain circumstances, engagement of non-resident envoys or advisors, or UN regional offices may be warranted.

41. Electoral risk analysis should be primarily the responsibility of the mission's Chief Electoral Adviser and should involve EAD as well as relevant parts of the mission, such as political affairs, and relevant parts of the UN Country team, such as UNDP and OHCHR. In peacekeeping contexts, DPKO's Office of Operations is likely to be involved. The broader the engagement, the more comprehensive the analysis is likely to be. National, regional and other international actors can also play an important role in information gathering and analysis. As with all electoral assistance activities in mission settings, any measures identified for implementation should be implemented in a fully integrated manner. If there is as yet no Chief Electoral Officer in country and there is a pressing need to analyse election-related risks, the SRSG will consult EAD on alternative courses of action.

42. In non-mission settings, the Resident Coordinator (RC) is usually the most senior UN representative in country and he/she represents the Secretary-General. In such settings it is less likely that a comprehensive analysis of conflict and violence risks around elections has been carried out, although the electoral needs assessment will contain an initial analysis of risk. Consequently, further analysis may be warranted. Should such analysis be warranted, it should begin well in advance of the next election. The RC should be involved in analysing electoral risk. He/she will provide guidance and will in turn keep UN HQ, in particular the Department of Political Affairs and UNDP informed, particularly in relation to risks to the process and any actions that the UN may need to undertake in order to prevent or mitigate election-related violence. In certain circumstances, engagement of non-resident envoys or advisors, or UN regional offices may be warranted.

43. Electoral risk analysis should be the primarily the responsibility of the Chief Technical Adviser, usually UNDP, and may involve the Peace and Development Advisor and other staff designated by the Resident Coordinator, such as the UNDP Head of Governance. It should also involve EAD and the relevant regional Division in DPA as well as other parts of the UN Country Team, for example OHCHR, where relevant. The broader the engagement, the more comprehensive the analysis is likely to be. National and other actors can also play an important role in information gathering and analysis. If there is as yet no Chief Technical Adviser in country and there is a pressing need to analyse election-related risks, the RC will consult EAD and the relevant regional Division in DPA on alternative courses of action.

44. Given the complex nature of the underlying causes of conflict and the sensitivity of the UN's engagement in Member State's electoral processes, any UN engagement in this regard should be cognizant of, in line with, and complementary to the UN's overall interaction with the Member State. Appropriate coordination between the field and HQ is required to ensure that the totality of interactions and implications are fully taken into account. In situations where there is a risk of election-related violence, coordination between the field and HQ is particularly important as UN HQ can play an important lead or support role through the provision of resources or expertise or through diplomacy or public statements.

45. Coordination between the UN and regional/sub-regional organizations can also play an important part in the prevention and mitigation of election-related violence. In some cases, the political engagement of regional and sub-regional organizations will be critical to shaping long-term peace consolidation efforts. At the same time, the experience of the wider international community, particularly the UN, can help enrich and consolidate peace. UN coordination with regional and sub-regional initiatives should draw upon the comparative advantage and capacity of each institution across the broader spectrum of conflict prevention, including diplomacy, mediation, electoral assistance, peacebuilding and human rights. Along these same lines, engagement with neighbouring countries may also play an important role in preventing and mitigating election-related violence.

46. In conducting electoral risk analysis and considering follow-up action, attention should turn to ways in which the UN, in support of national efforts, can help strengthen the credibility of the process and prevent potential triggers leading to actual violence. Since the risk analysis should also identify the structural/underlying causes of conflict, follow up action may include longer-term measures.

47. Measures to be considered in relation to building the credibility of the electoral process and preventing or mitigating the risk of election-related violence include supporting Member States efforts in ensuring that:

- The process is well managed and the outcomes reflect the will of the people;
- The process is as inclusive as possible;
- The rules of the process are understood and accepted by all stakeholders;
- The process is as consultative and transparent as possible.

48. Consideration should also be given to the role the UN might play in relation to the above, keeping in mind the potential risks and benefits of UN involvement in undertaking or supporting these measures.

Measures to prevent or mitigate election-related violence

49. Below are some of the main measures that could usefully be promoted, supported or implemented by the UN to prevent or mitigate election-related violence. The list highlights the political dimensions of electoral contests, and also places them alongside technical features, in keeping with the considerations mentioned earlier.

50. It should be stressed, nevertheless, that while this list aims to look beyond "just" technical electoral assistance, it does not purport to provide comprehensive guidance with respect to the root causes of conflict. For example, grievances arising out of long-standing human rights violations or economic marginalization may spill over into violence at the time of a contested election. These require long-term interventions that are not strictly related to elections as such, or to electoral support.

51. **Reducing high stakes in politics, promoting measures to move away from ‘zero sum’ politics and ensuring against a monopoly of power by one group.** This can be an effective means to create political space and contribute to de-escalating tensions before an election. The UN role in this area would typically be limited to promoting suitable approaches and advising national authorities. UN engagement could (where appropriate) include promoting the development of political structures that provide an opportunity for diverse groups to work together, such as with regards to the functioning of parliaments, the distribution of positions between governing parties and the opposition in parliamentary committees, etc. Ensuring the role and stature of the opposition is a method of widening or opening political space. This can be further enhanced by providing state funding for parties or by providing a pre-determined role for those who do not win an election.

52. **Promoting inclusive and appropriate electoral systems.** The United Nations does not promote any one single electoral system. However, the technical details of election systems determine how power is allocated among electoral winners, and represents an important consideration when developing a legal framework. Proportional systems have often been successfully adopted in countries with deep social divisions because they more consistently mirror the diversity of society and offer opportunities for the inclusion of politically or economically marginalized groups, but may at times produce less stable governments which can heighten conflict risk. The choice of system can also impact on the way candidates and parties interact with voters. UN assistance should support the development of policies and implementation of measures to promote as much as possible the participation of all sectors of society. See the policy on UN Support to Electoral System Design and Reform (FP/02/2013) for more details on electoral systems.

53. **Supporting stronger democratic institutions.** Strengthening institutions and processes to make them more responsive to the needs of citizens and ensuring they include a system of accountability that can reduce the potential for corruption, build trust and help address the potential root causes of conflict. UN engagement includes supporting rule of law institutions, improving access to justice and public administration, strengthening the inclusion of marginalized groups, and developing greater capacity to deliver services, particularly to those most in need.

54. **Supporting broad discussions of, and acceptance of, the rules of the electoral process.** Broad discussions of, and where possible acceptance of, election legislation increases the buy-in of stakeholders and builds trust and confidence in the electoral process. Acceptance of the process is further promoted by administrative instructions (procedures, instructions, guidelines and documents) that are broadly viewed as fair. Dissemination of clear and accurate information in this regard to all stakeholders is also vital to the success of the process. In the design or revision of the legal framework for elections by national stakeholders, UN engagement should support a highly consultative process providing for input from a wide range of election stakeholders, including traditionally marginalized groups, and a process that is ideally concluded well in advance of the start of the electoral process. Such efforts create a sense of national ownership by all stakeholders and increase the chance that contestants would use the official structures in place for resolving grievances rather than resorting to violence.

55. **Bringing potential spoilers, such as armed groups, into the political process.** Elections can act as a conflict prevention tool when actors outside the political system are persuaded to address their grievances peacefully through the election process. In certain circumstances the UN may wish to support national

authorities in developing incentives that could persuade those groups not engaging to join a political process. However, while there should be incentives for armed groups to join a political process, their ability to use weapons to subvert the process or intimidate voters should be curtailed, they should renounce violence, and agree to a clear path to eventual disarmament. Any such support should also always take into consideration the possibility that potential spoilers might attempt to undermine the system from within or return to violence after an election if they find results unsatisfactory.

56. **Promoting dialogue.** Dialogue among stakeholders is an essential element to lessen the likelihood of violence, and a core element to be promoted by the UN in most contexts. In this context, senior UN officials can be requested by national stakeholders, or proactively offer to facilitate dialogue. Additionally, in an electoral process, EMBs can host consultative mechanisms to discuss specific electoral topics, or parties can develop such fora separately. Dialogue, particularly at the grassroots level, with election stakeholders such as political parties, the election administration, local authorities and security forces, civil society organizations, community and religious leaders, and women's groups, can promote peace and seek to address concerns before they turn violent. Women's engagement, including at the community level, is an essential element of ensuring that prevention efforts address the needs of all sectors of society.

57. **Promoting acceptance of results.** The greatest responsibility for peaceful elections often rests with political leaders and candidates. Their commitment to peaceful conduct and to playing by the rules will largely define the actions and attitudes of their supporters. The UN should engage with political actors to promote responsible actions, including supporting those who win credible elections to listen to those who did not vote for them, and commit to active engagement with the opposition. At the same time, those who lose an electoral contest generally considered to have been credible should be supported to accept defeat and encouraged to play a constructive role in opposition. Such measures can help ensure stable transitions and deepen democracy.

58. **Promoting a level playing field for all contestants.** Fair access and treatment for all contestants through the stages of an electoral process can reduce the potential for violence. The UN can, for example, promote efforts to ensure: candidate and party registration that is open and inclusive, equal opportunities are provided for campaigning, use of state resources by incumbents is regulated and enforced, equitable access is provided to the media, and that security forces behave in a professional and impartial manner.

59. **Supporting the development and application of standards of conduct.** Understanding that the Government, political parties and candidates usually hold the greatest responsibility for peaceful and credible elections, a particular focus to highlight their role in peaceful elections can have a positive impact on preventing the potential for violence. Promoting codes of conduct, where leaders of political parties and/or candidates all publicly commit to adhere to specific principles (such as avoiding inflammatory language, denouncing violence, and supporting national institutions to ensure safe and peaceful elections), can be valuable in this regard. Their commitment should include a willingness to support the outcome, regardless of the winner. Codes of conduct can also be beneficial for media, which include commitments to refrain from using inflammatory language and to provide equitable coverage to political contestants. Codes of conduct are most effective when their commitments are monitored and ways to deal with breaches are agreed upon.

60. **Supporting calls for non-violence.** Candidates and political leaders can also be encouraged to call on their supporters to act peacefully throughout the electoral process. Specific calls for calm can have an impact during sensitive stages of an electoral process, such as after the release of results. These calls can also come from eminent personalities, both domestic, regional and from the wider international community.

61. **Supporting national and international eminent persons groups in their efforts to promote dialogue and mediate crisis.** Groups, such as those consisting of respected members of the community (e.g. - religious leaders, former politicians, retired military leaders and civil society leaders), can promote dialogue, mediate crisis, and generally encourage a smooth and peaceful process. Ideally such dialogue would begin outside of electoral periods when tensions are likely to be lower. While dialogue can focus on political or electoral issues, it can also be started on more “innocuous” topics that might enjoy broader support (such as education, or health related issues). The process is the primary focus, so any topic that instigates a conversation with key stakeholders can be sufficient at the start. Sometimes international eminent persons, particularly from the region, as well as senior UN officials may also be able to play such a role.

62. **Ensuring accountability for crimes.** Supporting a secure environment also requires taking steps to ensure that a culture of impunity for election-violence is not allowed to develop. The UN can support this through the promotion of proactive steps to respond to election-related violence where it has occurred, for example advocating for timely conduct of investigations, adequate remedies for victims and trials for perpetrators, conducted fairly and in accordance with the rules of due process. In mission settings with protection mandates, efforts should be integrated into broader protection of civilian strategies. Other measures that could be supported also include support to police, prosecutors and other relevant authorities to address election-related violence in a fair and expeditious manner and in accordance with international norms and standards. Furthermore, the UN can support the development of legislation to prevent and penalize violence in elections, including against women in politics and elections.

63. **Promoting confidence in electoral administration.** EMBs that are (and are seen as) independent, impartial, capable and credible, applying the same rules, processes and standards throughout the country can reinforce trust in the electoral process. One of the measures to build trust in an EMB is when its members, particularly senior members, are selected through a process that is consultative and commands public and stakeholder confidence. While the UN does not promote any particular model for selection, EMBs formed following a consultative process and of individuals of high personal integrity should be the goal of any process and the focus of UN engagement. This equally applies to appointment for other institutions relevant to electoral administration, such as the judiciary or electoral courts. Confidence in electoral administration also requires a professional body. The adoption and wide dissemination of comprehensive rules and procedures, the formation of a cadre of personnel that is thoroughly trained in their application and internal quality control mechanisms to detect irregularities are all elements of a professional EMB. See the policy on UN Support to the Design and Reform of Electoral Management Bodies (FP/01/2014) for more details on EMBs.

64. **Supporting transparent, accurate and timely counting, tabulation and issuance of results.** One of the most sensitive parts of an electoral process is the period between the close of polls and the announcement of results. Delays in completing this phase of the process can create doubts, particularly if deadlines for

announcing results are not met. At the same time, speeding complicated processes can increase the chance of errors. This is particularly true if results are expected to be close. Understanding the need for a delicate balance, any UN engagement should support EMBs to enact rigorous technical preparations for the prompt release of preliminary results but also include support to managing expectations early through sharing a realistic timetable for announcing final results. Engagement with political parties, candidates and other stakeholders to remain patient during this sensitive moment can also be an important area for UN engagement. Supporting measures such as election administration providing party or candidate agents with copies of results sheets from individual polling stations can also increase transparency and confidence in the process.

65. **Safeguarding against fraud.** Widespread fraud poses a serious risk to the credibility of an election, but even isolated instances of fraud or the perception of fraud is at times sufficient to spark election-related violence. Technical elements aimed at detecting or guarding against irregularities are important and should be supported, including: ensuring an accurate and comprehensive voter register, measures to ensure only eligible voters cast ballots, measures ensuring persons cast only one ballot such as the use of indelible ink, maintenance of the secrecy of the ballot and the secure handling of polling materials, and preparations by the election complaints body to investigate and respond to possible allegations in a timely manner. It is important to bear in mind that measures taken to safeguard against fraud should not be so stringent that they lead to disenfranchisement of eligible voters.

66. **Fostering a secure environment.** Securing the environment around elections is a vital role of national police and other security forces not only on election day, but throughout the electoral process. As intensity of violence may differ across the country, as well as during different phases of an electoral process, the most effective security planning is that which can be adapted based on accurate assessments and need. Adequate training for the specific roles and responsibilities of police and other security forces in an election period is also important, particularly where tensions may be high such as at campaign rallies, at polling stations on polling day or when election results are announced. Security forces should always conduct themselves in accordance with international human rights norms and standards. The UN can play an important role in assisting the EMB in ensuring appropriate dialogue and information sharing with police and other security forces. In some cases where peacekeepers or UN police are deployed, the UN may have a more direct role, such as through training police and security forces, building confidence in at-risk communities in the period leading up to an election, or working with security forces to develop security plans.

67. **Deploying international/domestic election observers and human rights monitors.** The presence of observers, both international and domestic, can help to deter election-related violence. Their deployment may be supported by the UN in both political and operational terms. International observers are likely to receive greater coverage in the media, while domestic observers are likely to be able to deploy far more observers over the election period and have a better sense of local contexts. When the UN is itself observing, the release of statements should also be carefully considered in advance of issuance. (As with any other form of international engagement in an election, international observer comments, from the UN or otherwise, may be instrumentalized politically, and care should be taken in this regard).

68. **Promoting confidence in electoral dispute resolution.** Election stakeholders and the wider public have a right to an effective remedy where their political rights have been infringed or denied. In a contested election, lack of legal remedy, or the loss of confidence in the process for dispute resolution, can act as a trigger for violence. Conversely a strong system that enjoys the confidence of stakeholders can promote acceptance of electoral outcomes. The UN should promote efforts to develop or strengthen an independent and professional judiciary or other administrative body responsible for election-related appeals or disputes. The UN should also promote structures and mechanisms for dispute resolution that are firmly based in legislation and international commitments, and ensure that disputes are handled in an efficient and transparent manner that is easily accessible to all.

69. **Ensuring appropriate timing for a post-conflict election.** The timing of an election, particularly post-conflict, is a complex and sensitive issue. If too much time is scheduled after a conflict or unconstitutional change in power, power vacuums may develop that can be filled by non-democratic, even violent, means. Populations may also lose trust in the authorities vested in organizing elections, or even with transitional governments. However, if not enough time is given, technical aspects of an electoral process may fail, or the outcome may heavily favour those with existing political structures that can reach voters, which can produce outcomes that are not credible or represent the will of the people. Timing decisions are not normally for the UN to take. The UN, in its engagement, should promote a balanced approach to any decisions in this regard.

70. **Promoting women's electoral safety and security.** Women's ability to fully participate in secure and peaceful elections is an essential element of any democratic process, but one which has historically faced prohibitive barriers. All such barriers should be examined, and measures developed to overcome them. These measures may include ensuring adequate security is provided to female candidates, making electoral sites secure for women, promoting legislation or policies that protect against harassment and violence against women, ensuring women have full and equal access to dispute resolution mechanisms, encouraging authorities to monitor and take preventative actions with particular attention to violence that is targeted against women, awareness raising activities on ending violence against women, and the promotion of reporting on gender-based violence. UN efforts can include support to build the capacity of electoral management bodies to record data about violence, including incidents of violence against women.

71. **Promoting free, independent and responsible media.** Media outlets and journalists can be a particular target for violence during an election period. At the same time, inflammatory statements repeated in or made by the media can also be a trigger for violence. Efforts to prevent and mitigate violence must then focus on protecting those outlets and journalists at risk, while also promoting their independence and integrity. The *UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity* aims at improving the protection of journalists and coordinating the efforts of all stakeholders on this issue, and can be used as a tool in preventing and mitigating election-related violence. The plan calls for coordination mechanisms, awareness raising strategies, and the promotion of best practices.

Responding to election-related violence

72. This directive focuses on the prevention and mitigation of violence. In the event that violence around an election occurs, particularly if it escalates, numerous other considerations will come into effect for the UN, not covered in this directive. Primary responsibility for security lies with the government. In the context of a

peacekeeping and political mission setting, the UN will have a comprehensive contingency plan in place to respond to violence and conflict. The military and/or police component of a peacekeeping mission may also have been more intensively engaged with national authorities in developing security and contingency plans around the time of an election. Furthermore, some of the prevention and mitigation strategies outlined above may in fact continue to be applicable in the event of actual violence. For example, the political will of national actors to stop conflict will be central to ending violence, and it may be useful to have leaders reiterate appeals to their supporters for calm and a peaceful conduct. Where political leaders themselves are the ones calling for and instigating violence, significant UN engagement should promote dialogue between competing sides and a call for a cessation of violence. In all such cases, electoral risk analysis should be up to date.

73. There are a number of mapping and tracking tools that have been developed to identify levels of risk based on actual acts of election-related violence. (This includes, for example, International IDEA's election risk management tool). The purpose of such tools is to allow for easier analysis and identification of possible areas of concentrated violence or other patterns of violence. Crowdsourcing tools can also play a role in timely and focused responses to acts of violence. However, all tools are only as useful as the data entered into them – if a decision is made to support their use, care should be made to ensure that analysis is only based on verified data, which can require a resource intensive review process. Such data – and analysis of what may have triggered the violence – can also be used to inform future lessons learned exercises.

E. DEFINITIONS

F. REFERENCES

F1. Normative or superior references

United Nations Charter

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

General Comment 25 of the UN Human Rights Committee on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and UN Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008) on Women, Peace and Security

GA Resolution 66/130 on Women and Political Participation (2012)

F2. Related guidance

Reports of the Secretary-General on “Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization” (A/68/301 (2013), and A/70/306 (2015).

Policy Directive on Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance (FP/01/2012)

Guideline on United Nations Needs Assessments (FP/02/2012)

Policy Directive on UN Electoral Assistance. Supervision, Observation, Panels and Certification (FP/01/2013)

Policy Directive on UN Support to International Election Observers (FP/03/2012)

Policy Directive on UN Support to Electoral System Design and Reform (FP/02/2013)

Policy Directive on Promoting Women’s Electoral and Political Participation through UN Electoral Assistance (FP/03/2013)

DPKO/DFS Guideline on United Nations Police Support to Security in Electoral Processes (2013/03)

DPKO-DFS Policy on Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping (2015/07)

UNDP Elections and Conflict Prevention – A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Prevention (2009)

Human Rights Up Front Plan of Action (2014)

F3. Further reading

Report of the Secretary-General on “Prevention of Armed Conflict” (A/55/985), 2001

Report of the Secretary-General on “Progress Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict” (A/60/891), 2006.

Report of the Secretary-General on “Preventive Diplomacy: Delivering Results” (S/2011/552), 2011.

Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston, Election-related violence and killings (A/HRC/14/24/Add.7)

G. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

The Focal Point is tasked with ensuring coordination within the United Nations system with regard to electoral assistance and will help ensure that the principles outlined in this document are followed.

Managers of UN electoral assistance programs and projects will also be responsible for ensuring that this policy directive is disseminated to all staff under their supervision.

H. DATES

This policy directive became effective on 1 June 2016. It shall be reviewed as necessary.

I. CONTACT

Policy and Institutional Memory Team, Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political Affairs. ead@un.org

J. HISTORY

Drafted by the Policy and Institutional Memory Team, Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political Affairs, 2015-2016.

Consulted with members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism for Electoral Assistance prior to adoption.

SIGNED:



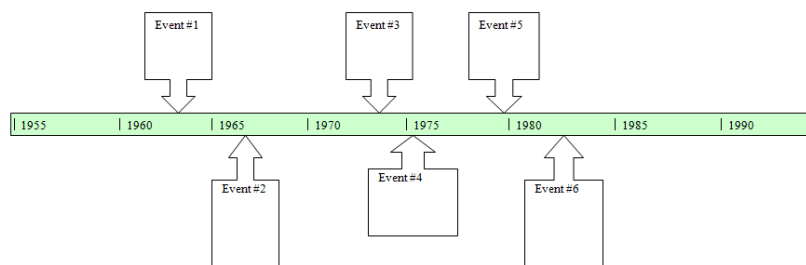
DATE: 1 June 2016

Annex1: Tools for electoral risk analysis⁹

Tool 1: Timeline

Analyzing contextual analysis through a timeline will provide a broad overview of the history leading up to the current situation in a given country or region. The timeline should help identify the following:

- What are the key moments defining the political, economic, human rights and socio-cultural context? Is there a broad consensus in society around those key moments?
- What specific conflict prone/affected events should be included in the timeline?
- Is there a history of conflict, and if so what events preceded or followed previous violence?
- What form has conflict taken in the past? Was it always violent or did it also take other forms such as election boycott, human rights violations, social discrimination, political exclusion, personal rivalries, support to unconstitutional changes of government, etc. Who was targeted? Were women specifically targeted because of their gender?



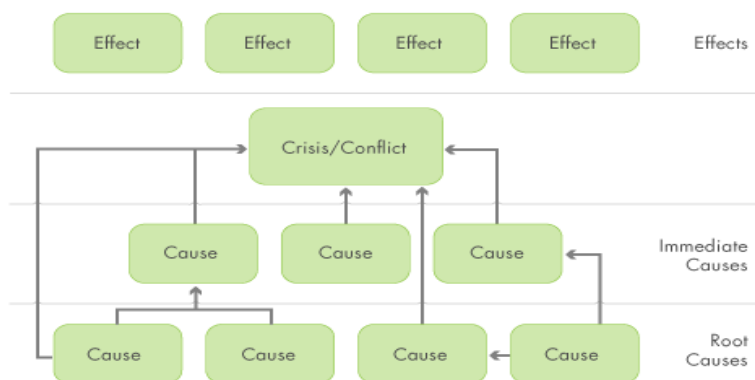
Tool 2: Causal Analysis

There are a number of tools available to help identify causes of conflict. They all involve looking at different levels of an issue, differentiating between long-term factors, i.e. structural causes and escalating factors, i.e. triggers. Examples include taking a causal analysis by starting at the top at the manifestation of a problem and working down to the fundamental cause (e.g. – similar to an iceberg, the core causes lie unseen) or looking at the core problem then looking both how it can manifest itself and what caused it to begin with (e.g. – similar to a tree, with a trunk as its core, branches as manifestations and roots as causes).

⁹ This section draws on the UN Integrated Assessment and Planning Handbook (2013), UNSSC Conflict Analysis Framework and Simon Fisher et al. (2000). Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action.

Guiding questions that can be useful to identify the structural causes of conflict can include:

- Do issues have clear implications for the stability and sustainable development of the country/region?
- What are the core issues of the previous conflict? Have these been resolved, or do they still exist?
- Are there pervasive issues such as political exclusion, economic marginalization, human rights violations, and social (including gender-based) discrimination that have become structurally entrenched in the laws and customs of society?
- Have there been any outbursts of violence recently, and if so what was the immediate cause?
- Who are the principal targets of violence (young men, women, religious groups)?



Tool 3: Stakeholder Analysis Sheet

Stakeholders often have complex stances that need to be properly understood to be able to assess possible prevention or mitigation techniques. A stakeholder analysis should start with identifying the key characteristics of each stakeholder and then providing an assessment of their positions, interests, needs and capacities.

Characteristics	Positions	Interests	Needs	Capacities
<i>Features that describe the actor (organization or group), e.g. Size of the group or organization. Location? Isolated? Scope—narrow - local – widespread - national. Membership</i>	<i>What are the relationships among the various actors? What their positions on fundamental issues? What are the “drivers” behind their actions.</i>	<i>How do these interests influence the conflict. How can the interests of the actor be described? Are their interests political, economical, religious, environmental, educational?</i>	<i>How can underlying needs and concerns be addressed in order to transform the conflict and address some of the drivers of potential violence?</i>	<i>What resources do they have to influence conflict? Examples: large active membership, external financial support, products, information, etc.</i>

Other guiding questions in the analysis could be:

- Positions: What people say they want. What are their demands and positions on fundamental issues?
- Interests: What people really want. What interests do they have in relation to the conflict and how do these interests influence the conflict?
- Needs: What people must have. What basic needs and concerns lie ‘behind’ the publicly articulated demands?

- Capacities: what resources do they have to influence conflict either positively or negatively?

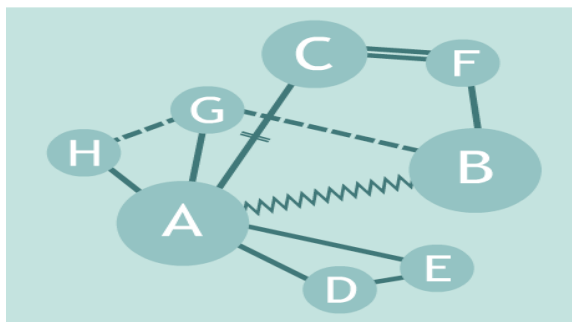
Tool 4: Conflict Map

Conflict mapping is a visual technique for showing the relationships between stakeholders in conflict. Key questions in conflict mapping are the following:

- Who is involved in this conflict situation?
- Who are the main parties?
- What are the relationships between all these parties and how are they connected? Have they changed over time?
- In which areas or regions is the conflict occurring? What are the known socio-demographics of these areas?
- Are women a likely target of the violence? What forms of violence are commonly perpetrated against women? To what extent do traditions or norms influence underlying power dynamics?

The answers are captured in a drawing, with each actor is represented by a circle. The size of a circle indicates the strength of that particular actor. The relationships between actors are shown by drawing lines between the circles. The type of line you draw indicates the nature of the relationship.

Different lines indicate different types of relationships. For example, a zig-zag can represent conflict, a double line an alliance, and a dotted line an informal link.



Tool 5: Analysis of Triggers

An analysis of possible triggers could include the following elements:

- A description of the possible manifestation the trigger will take.
- Where is it likely to happen (country-wide or in a specific region/area)?
- What is the chance of occurrence (noting this may evolve during an election)?
- How significant is the possible impact on the election (to help determine the resources that should be devoted to prevention)?

Possible Trigger	Perpetrator	Targets	Likelihood	Impact	Timing	Location	Prevention Tools	Mitigation Tools

