Introduction

Managing conflict, fragility and violence is crucial to the success of development policies. Almost two thirds of the partner countries of German development cooperation are affected by these conditions throughout their national territory or in individual regions. This can pose not only a risk to regional and global security, but also undermines the development prospects of these countries.

In March 2013, BMZ addressed these issues in a strategy paper entitled Development for Peace and Security – Development Policy in the Context of Conflict, Fragility and Violence. One of the objectives of this strategy paper is to strengthen development efforts in the field of peace and security. It also sets out to improve the capacity and efficacy of German development policy in situations marked by conflict, fragility and violence.

The Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA) is a methodological framework designed to facilitate the achievement of these objectives. The four main elements of this methodology are shown in the diagram below. They form a modular framework that brings together and gives a coherent structure to the existing planning and control methods adopted by development measures in contexts marked by conflict, fragility and violence. The four elements can also be used independently and are not tied to any rigid sequence. The PCA is intended to support the management of development measures that are being implemented against a background of conflict, fragility and violence. It can be adapted flexibly to specific contexts, levels and needs.

The aim of this factsheet is to outline the methodological framework known as the Peace and Conflict Assessment and to identify key questions that need to be asked in relation to its use.

Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA): Overview

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PCA Element 1: Main factors leading to conflict, fragility and violence. Needs for peace and security (context analysis)

**Context analysis**
The reason for conducting a measure-based context analysis is to identify the main factors leading to conflict, fragility and violence and consequently determine about the needs for peace and security.

**Key questions to ask when seeking to identify the main factors**
- **Structures of conflict, fragility and violence:** What are the central conflicts, manifestations of violence and features of fragility? What impact do they have? How do these different phenomena relate to each other?

- **Actors and those concerned by conflict, fragility and violence:** Who are the actors (perpetrators of violence)? What are their respective interests and relationships? Who is worst affected by conflict, fragility and violence?

- **Causes and dynamics of conflict, fragility and violence:** What are the underlying structural causes? What factors have contributed to an escalation? What dynamics are currently relevant? What are the most likely future scenarios?

- **Potential for non-violent conflict transformation:** What strategies and resources are already in place to overcome conflict, fragility and violence? Which actors could promote peace (if any)?

The results of the context analysis of the peace and security are compiled on the basis of the main factors and then flow into the other PCA elements.

**Needs for peace and security**
Drawing on the above context analysis, the next step is to name the needs for peace and security. This involves identifying the main changes that need to be made for peaceful and inclusive development. These needs are the basis for PCA element 2.

**Key questions to determine the needs for peace and security**
- What specifically need to be changed in order to overcome conflict, fragility and violence?
- What areas of activity should take priority for peaceful and inclusive development?
- At which levels should the first steps be taken (local, regional, national or international)?

➤ Important: Context analysis of the peace and security should take account of existing analyses where possible.
PCA Element 2: Assessment of relevance to peace and security

When conducting a relevance assessment, the first step is to check whether existing or planned development cooperation measures can make a relevant contribution to the previously identified needs for peace and security. If this assessment leads to the conclusion that a positive contribution is possible, the sector marker FS-1/FS-2 is awarded.

Key questions to ask when conducting a relevance assessment

- **Thematic relevance:** Does the development cooperation measure address issues that are important for overcoming conflict, fragility and violence?
- **Geographic relevance:** Does the development cooperation cover regions of the country that are particularly affected by conflict, fragility and violence?
- **Relevance of the actors:** Does the development cooperation involve the main actors and those most affected by conflict, fragility and violence?
- **Timing:** Does the development cooperation intervene at the right point in time, i.e. when there is still a chance of exerting an effective influence on conflict, fragility and violence?
- **Relevance of instruments:** Does the development cooperation employ appropriate and effective instruments in the context of conflict, fragility and violence?

The results of this assessment are used to develop options for action, in order to use the measure to make a positive contribution to peace and security.

Important: In the case of FS-1 and FS-2 measures, assessing the contribution made to peace and security is part of the monitoring system. This assessment must be set out clearly and logically on the basis of plausible assumptions about potential impacts.

PCA Element 3: Dealing with risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence

All development cooperation measures implemented in contexts marked by conflict, fragility and violence are exposed to particular risks that could jeopardise the achievement of development objectives. PCA element 3 involves first of all identifying, describing and assessing these risks before going on to formulate measures that improve the way they are managed. This is a continuous process. It presupposes a regular dialogue and the systematic monitoring of risks. This is vital given the frequently changing circumstances in which conflict, fragility and violence occur. In such contexts, measures must be capable of responding quickly and flexibly.

Identifying risks

In an ideal situation, a distinction can be made between contextual, programmatic, institutional and personnel risks.

Key questions

- **Contextual risks:** What changes might arise in the country as a result of conflict, fragility and violence that could have a negative impact on German development cooperation objectives in the country as a whole (e.g. political instability, economic crises, refugee flows)?
- **Programmatic risks:** What changes might arise in the general environment (e.g. insufficient capacity of partner) and within the measure (lack of understanding of the context, inadequate planning and implementation) as a result of conflict, fragility and violence? How might those changes impair or prevent implementation of the measure and the attainment of its objectives?
- **Institutional risks:** How might conflict, fragility and violence undermine the capacity to act and the reputation of development cooperation (e.g. fiduciary risks, corruption, personnel turnover and investment risks)?
- **Personnel risks:** How might conflict, fragility and violence jeopardise the security of development cooperation personnel (e.g. murder, robbery, kidnapping and medical care)?

Describing risks

Key questions

- Who are the actors involved? Which interests of these actors actually create the risk?
- What are the potential triggers?
• To what extent can German development cooperation tolerate these risks?

Assessment of risks

Key questions
• How likely are the different types of risk to occur?
• What would be the consequences for the measure and for German development cooperation as a whole?

Important: Management of risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence involves a range of actors with different roles and responsibilities. This must be taken into account when identifying and assessing risks and when developing options for responding to those risks.

PCA Element 4: Monitoring impacts and avoiding negative impacts

‘Do no harm’ principle and context-sensitive monitoring of impacts
All measures in the context of conflict, fragility and violence must take great care not to exacerbate existing negative dynamics. This is known as the ‘do no harm’ principle. The principle establishes a requirement to avoid negative impacts in the context of conflict, fragility and violence.

Key questions relating to the ‘do no harm’ principle
• What unintended negative impacts might the measure have on the context of conflict, violence and fragility?
• What are dividing actors, institutions and opinions of a society, and what impact does development cooperation have on them?
• What options are available to address unintended negative impacts?
• How can the monitoring system be designed to ensure that the measure remains sensitive to conflict?

Monitoring the impact of positive contributions to peace and security (FS-1 and FS-2)
The positive impact of measures that contribute to peace and security is assessed using the project’s existing monitoring system. This involves developing indicators that can be used to measure the degree to which the intended impacts are achieved.

Establishing and implementing options for responding to risks / risk monitoring

Key questions
• What measures can be taken at project level to reduce exposure to risk?
• What contingency measures should be prepared to facilitate an appropriate response in the event that risks materialise?
• Who is responsible for this?
• Which risks should be monitored? How, how often and by whom?

Risk monitoring as an element of context-sensitive monitoring (all measures in ‘red’ and ‘yellow’ countries)
Finally, another important factor is the process of monitoring the risks outlined under the heading ‘PCA Element 3’. The reason for this is that there is often a strong correlation between any negative impacts of the measure on the wider situation and any negative impacts of the wider situation on the objectives of that measure.