



CPMARTH Training Manual



Acknowledgements

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We extend our heartfelt thanks to all ECLF staff members who contributed their insights, enabling the successful compilation of this manual. We also thank the community members who actively participate in peacebuilding efforts and those who allowed us to feature them in images during peace practices.

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Preamble

The Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF) workshop participant's Reader's Manual on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Transformation, and Healing serves as a handbook for participants to refer to after the sensitization workshops. Furthermore, this manual aims to equip participants and readers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to address and mitigate conflicts, ultimately contributing to the reduction of all forms of violence.

In today's world, conflicts and violence have become pervasive, hampering the progress and wellbeing of individuals, communities, and nations. Therefore, it is imperative that we proactively engage in conflict prevention, actively manage conflicts when they arise, and strive for peaceful resolutions to disputes that promote healing and transformation.

Through this manual, participants and readers will explore the multifaceted nature of conflicts and violence, gain insights into effective conflict prevention strategies, learn valuable conflict management techniques, delve into the art of resolving conflicts peacefully, and explore the transformative power of healing in the aftermath of violent conflicts.

By actively participating in this manual, readers will be equipped with a basic understanding of conflict theory and practice, be able to identify the underlying causes of conflict, cultivate effective communication and negotiation skills, and foster an environment conducive to peaceful resolutions of disputes. Also, readers will develop a deep appreciation for the importance of healing in the conflict's aftermath and how to promote reconciliation, restore trust, and rebuild communities.

We encourage all readers to engage actively and to apply the knowledge gained within their personal and professional lives. Together let us be agents of transformation and contribute to a more peaceful and just society.

We wish you all an enriching and impactful learning experience.

Contributions and Support

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the individuals and organizations who have contributed to the development of this Participants Readers Manual on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Transformation, and Healing. The insights, experiences, expertise, and dedication of these individuals, scholars, and organizations have made this manual a valuable resource for participants. We extend our sincere appreciation to:

1. *Experts and Practitioners*

We are grateful to the experts and practitioners in peace and conflict studies who continue to develop new knowledge and theories that have provided a theoretical framework as a foundation for this manual's development. ECLF, over the years, has also interacted and developed many practitioners whose experiences, knowledge, and best practices have greatly enriched the content of this manual.

2. *Contributors*

We acknowledge the contributions of individuals, facilitators, stakeholders, and local peace committee members who through our processes have shared their personal stories, and experiences and consented that such revelations inspire and empower other people who may be faced with similar circumstances. Furthermore, we acknowledge our Partners such as the UNDP have been instrumental in the initial design of the CPMRT model for peace programming, Rev Sikhalo Cele for triangulating the same to incorporate a theological perspective to the model, and the entire ECLF Staff collective for making a hybrid out of the model and ensuring that it is gender responsive and can apply to humanitarian, livelihoods, and developmental practice to mention but a few.

3. *Design and Layout Team*

We also acknowledge and appreciate our design and layout team through our Information Documentation and Research office for their creativity and dedication in creating a visually engaging and user-friendly manual.

4. Funding Partners

We also acknowledge and are grateful for the financial support we received from our funding partners in producing this resource material, especially from Bread for the World, which gave the first edition's production a great start.

Lastly, we would like to express our gratitude to all our participants who will embark on this transformative journey. Your commitment to learning and implementing the principles of conflict prevention, management, resolution transformation, and healing (CPMRTH) will be vital to reducing all forms of violence.

Together, we can make a meaningful contribution to nation-building and strive for a more peaceful and harmonious world.



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1.0 Definition of Key Terms and Concepts.

Conflict - Conflict is the energy generated when two or more individuals or groups compete for seemingly incompatible goals in their drive to meet their needs and interests.

Violence - Violence and other forms of abuse are most understood as a pattern of destructive behaviour, physical and verbal, intended to forcefully establish and maintain control over people and systems including family, household members, intimate partners, colleagues, individuals, or groups. While violent offenders are most often known to their victims (intimate or estranged partners and spouses, family members, relatives, peers, colleagues, etc.), acts of violence and abuse may also be committed by strangers. Violence is not only perpetrated through individual acts but also in political, social, and economic systems of oppression and exploitation.

Gender Based Violence- Gender-based violence is physical, sexual, or emotional harm directed at a person to create or maintain power and control. This power and control are linked to gender, sex, and sexuality. Some people hurt other people because of biological characteristics, because of perceived or self-identified gender or sexual orientation, or because of their difference from social or religious definitions of masculinity and femininity.

Conflict Prevention: Refers to initiative-taking measures taken to identify and address potential sources of conflict before they escalate into full blown conflicts. It involves identifying underlying causes of tensions and implementing strategies to prevent the outbreak or escalation of conflicts.

In this regard, ECLF invests a lot of its resources in capacity building sessions to empower communities to be able to manage conflict non-violently as its preventative action. The forum also supports the formation of local peace committees which amongst other responsibilities function as early warning systems and thrive to initiate preventative interventions. ECLF also collaborates with various stakeholders such as government, civil society, churches and communities through collective action and shared responsibility.

Conflict Management: Involves the strategies and processes employed to manage conflicts constructively and minimize their impact. It aims to address conflicts in a fair and balanced manner, facilitating effective communication, negotiation, and compromise among the parties involved.

ECLF emphasizes joint problem solving as a sustainable approach to conflict management as it is cooperative, and its outcomes maintain long term relationships.

Conflict Resolution: Refers to the process of reaching a mutually acceptable and sustainable solution to a conflict. It involves facilitating dialogue, negotiation, and mediation among disputing parties. The essence is also to provide other alternative strategies to resolve disputes finding common ground to resolve the underlying issues and restoring positive relationships.

ECLF not only provides capacities for negotiation, mediation, dialogue, and alternative dispute resolution strategies but it provides spaces for such processes to respond to conflict positively and effectively.

Conflict Transformation: This goes beyond resolution; conflict transformation aims to fundamentally change the nature and dynamics of a conflict. It seeks to address the underlying causes of the conflict, transform relationships, and create positive structural changes. The focus is on building sustainable peace, addressing injustices, and promoting long term reconciliation and societal change. In this regard, ECLF does peace education and awareness campaigns to change mindsets, influence behaviours and transform attitudes in the promotion of non-violent ways to resolve conflicts. ECLF also thrives in working towards systematic changes in governance, policies, and institutions to address the root causes of conflicts and promote social justice and equality.

Healing: In the context of conflict, healing refers to the process of repairing, restoring, and rebuilding individuals, relationships, and communities affected by conflict. It involves addressing the emotional, psychological, and social impacts of conflict and promoting healing and reconciliation among the parties involved.

ECLF emphasizes the importance of healing at an individual level to attain inner peace as this becomes the impetus to make peace with

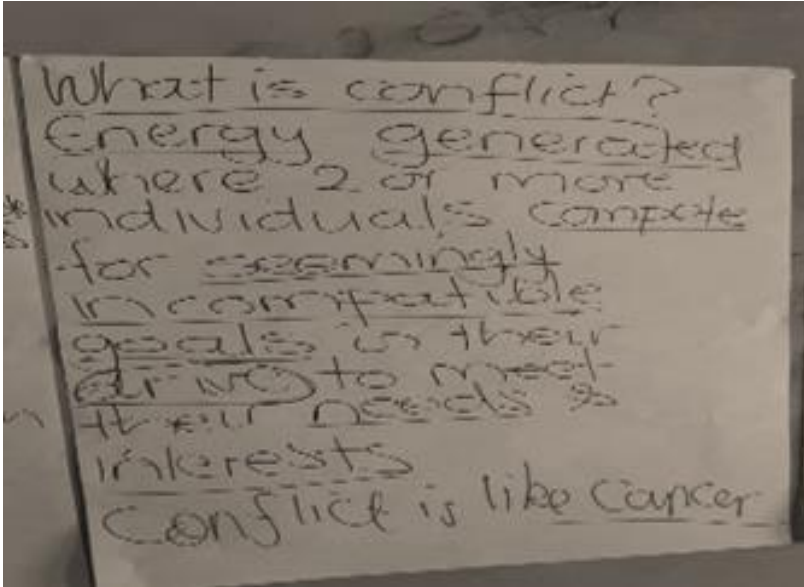
others and the environment. There cannot be significant community transformation unless the individuals in that community are transformed that is why healing becomes important as a catalyst.

Furthermore, ECLF develops peace practitioners, and the significance of healing is to ensure that these individuals do not become wounded healers but can come to terms with their hurtful experiences, heal from them, and then be able to assist others. Experience has taught us that pain that is not transformed is transmitted, and that hurt people tend to hurt others as such healing is an important process in conflict transformation.

It must be noted that these concepts and approaches are intertwined and often used together to address and reduce violence by addressing the root causes of conflict. This is why ECLF has triangulated them to provide a comprehensive model in which to design peace building initiatives that are responsive to the contemporary issues in the communities.

2.0 Conflict and Violence

2.1 Conflict



ECLF's working definition of conflict is *the energy generated when two or more individuals or groups compete for seemingly incompatible goals in their drive to meet their needs and interests.*

This perspective gives a deeper understanding of conflict from its source as opposed to its effects. A lot of people conceptualize conflict from a negative perspective only and tend to refer to it as violence. Conflict as an “energy” suggests to us that what makes conflict constructive or destructive depends on how that energy generated is handled or managed. Like fire, if it is handled well, we can cook, warm ourselves, get lighting, etc, but the same fire handled badly can burn, destroy, and even kill. So, conflict at source is an energy that is value neutral that depends on how we handle it to then become positive or negative.

Nature of Conflict

Dual

Conflict has two sides; it has a constructive side and a destructive side. It can tear relationships apart and it can also be the force that binds them together. Therefore, conflict is value-neutral, it is neither good nor bad, and it depends on how it is managed.

Normal

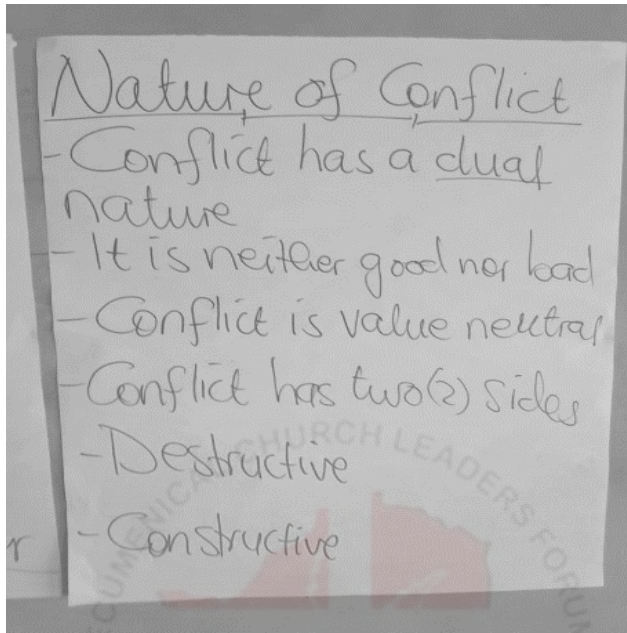
There is nothing wrong with conflict. Conflict is a natural phenomenon found in every society. Because God created us differently, we will always be different. Normally, we are different. Naturally, we are not the same and it is good. Imagine a world where all people are like you. It would certainly be boring. Our diversity ought to spice our lives rather than divide us.

Necessary

Some people have seen conflict from a negative perspective only. Conflicts are sometimes necessary. When there is a conflict, issues are attended to, and certain issues are clarified.

Inevitable

Conflict is bound to happen; it is part of life. Because of our diversity, we will see things differently, and we need different things as well. Therefore, we shall pursue different interests. This is alright and normal, and it cannot be avoided.



As has been mentioned above, conflict has two sides, and these are made manifest by our responses or reactions to conflict. Below is a table that illustrates the key elements of each side with a direct contrast of each:

Constructive Conflict	Destructive Conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of issues • Resolving problems and challenges • Leading to authentic communication • Venting out emotions, anxiety, stress • Learning and cooperation • Understanding the other parties • Bringing people closer together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes attention from more important issues or things. • Undermines respect. • Undermines morale. • Sharpens differences and divisions. • Leads to irresponsibility. • Polarizes people.

Personal Reflections

- *Destructive conflict leads to irresponsibility and makes people lose focus on important issues.*
- *However, Constructive conflict clarifies issues and leads to peace building which liberates both the oppressed and the oppressor.*
- *Furthermore, Conflict by its nature can therefore tear relationships apart and can also be a force that binds them together.*
- *Lastly, conflict is value-neutral, it is neither good nor bad, and the outcome depends on how it is managed.*

Kinds of Conflict

Intrapersonal

This is conflict within oneself and can stem from internal struggles, inner turmoil, conflicting desires, values, and emotions. This kind of conflict manifests in different ways such as decision-making dilemmas, cognitive dissonance, and emotional turmoil to mention but a few. Inner peace is quenched in the presence of intrapersonal conflict and to a certain extent is influenced by background issues such as where and how we grew up, our life experiences especially what we have gone through, and how we were socialized. This baggage we carry tends to then steal our inner peace, and forms are certain pattern of behaviour that is extreme, that makes society wonder how normal person are would do such acts. These tendencies are propelled by the internal battles that people contend with which makes them become what they are not. Behind every behaviour there is a story, at times society is quick to judge or condemn certain behaviours from individuals and little do they know that people will be being pressured to act in that way because of internal struggles that they have not found closure to. By dealing with Intrapersonal conflict, individuals can free themselves, find inner peace, and be able to relate well with others. Finding peace at a personal level is the impetus of building peace with others and the broader community.

Interpersonal

It is a conflict between two or more people. This can be caused when two or more people who are required to interact have incompatible goals, desires, ideas, values, and styles. Since this type of conflict is between individuals, the conflicts can get very personal. Interpersonal conflict can arise in any relationship, whether it be between friends, family members, neighbours, or romantic partners. There are many diverse types of interpersonal conflict, and each one can be damaging to the relationship if not resolved. Some of the most common types of conflict

- **Power struggles:** This type of conflict often occurs when one person tries to dominate the other or disagrees over who makes decisions in the relationship.
- **Communication breakdowns:** Misunderstandings and lack of communication are breeding grounds of conflicts. When people cannot or will not talk to each other about their feelings, problems tend to fester and grow.
- **Personality clashes:** Conflict is almost inevitable if two people do not get along because their personalities are incompatible.
- **Intimidation and manipulation:** When one person uses threats, coercion, or emotional extortion to get what they want, it can result in various conflicts.
- **Resentment:** If one person feels like they are always doing all the work in the relationship or their partner never listens to them, resentment can build up and lead to conflict.

Intra-group

This level of conflict is a form of dispute that occurs among group members when they have differing views, backgrounds, and experiences. The differences can be in communication styles and personalities which can contribute to this type of conflict. Intragroup conflict can hinder productivity, development, and cause tension within the group. However, if it is managed effectively, intragroup conflict can be beneficial, leading to better problem solving and increased creativity. There are several ways to manage intragroup conflict. The most important thing is to ensure that everyone feels heard and understood. Open communication is critical, and everyone should be encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings. It is also important to establish ground rules for operating the group and ensure

everyone follows them. Then, if necessary, a mediator can help the group resolve its conflicts. It is up to the group members themselves to resolve intragroup conflict in a way that is beneficial to all involved. This type of conflict can be a challenging but rewarding experience because by working through their differences, group members can learn more about themselves and each other, developing better critical thinking skills. Moreover, if managed effectively, intragroup conflict can lead to a more productive and cohesive group.

Inter-group

Inter-group conflict refers to any disagreement or conflict between two or more groups. This can include anything from minor disputes to full-blown wars. However, it is important to note that this definition is not limited to just interpersonal relationships or group interactions; intergroup conflict can also exist between organizations, companies, political parties, activist groups, and any other type of social entity. Several, varied factors can contribute to intergroup conflicts. Some of the most common include competition for resources, fear or hostility towards other groups, and misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the other group's intentions or motives. Additionally, if the groups involved have different power levels or social statuses, this can also lead to conflict.

NB: It is important to note that these conflicts can overlap and that conflicts can also occur at multiple levels at the same time. Understanding the specific causes of conflicts helps in addressing them effectively and finding suitable strategies for resolution or transformation.

Personal Responses to Conflict

- **Fight**
When there is a conflict, the response that people tend to lean towards is fighting. In conflict situations, fighting can be in many forms such as physical, verbal, emotional, psychological, or even spiritual.

- **Flee**
When there is a conflict, others choose to run away from it. This fleeing can also be in the form of avoiding, literally drifting away from the issue or temporarily disengaging from the situation.
- **Freeze**
When there is a conflict, others freeze, which means they keep quiet and say or do nothing.
- **Flow**
This is engaging with the conflict with the view of finding a resolution.

In conflict situations, **FLOW** is the appropriate response to take as it enables the conflicting parties to apply joint problem solving and be able to engage on the matter towards a peaceful resolution. **FIGHT** on the other hand is **NOT** an option as conflict degenerates into becoming destructive.

However, **FLEE** and **FREEZE** can be good if the party to the conflict, then moves to the **FREEDOM SQUARE** where he or she recollects, cools down and then goes back to engage with the conflict in search of a resolution.

2.2 Violence



Source: [The Hidden Impacts of Domestic Violence on Children \(stopchildabuse.org\)](http://stopchildabuse.org)

Definition of Violence:

Violence refers to the intentional use of physical force, power, or threat against oneself, another person, or a group, which can result in physical, psychological, or emotional harm, injury, or even death.

Different forms of Violence

Physical Violence:

This involves the use of physical force, such as hitting, punching, kicking, or any other act that causes bodily harm or injury.

Sexual Violence:

It encompasses any non-consensual sexual act, including rape, sexual assault, harassment, and exploitation.

Emotional or Psychological Violence:

This type of violence includes threats, intimidation, humiliation, verbal abuse, or any behavior that causes emotional or psychological trauma.

Domestic or Intimate Partner Violence:

It involves perpetrating violence within the context of a domestic relationship, such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse by a current or former partner.

Structural Violence:

This refers to violence that results from social, political, or economic structures that perpetuate inequality, injustice, and marginalization.

Child Abuse:

It refers to any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment, neglect, or exploitation of children.

Bullying:

This form of violence includes repeated aggressive behavior, usually among peers, which can be physical, verbal, or psychological.

Hate Crimes:

These are violent acts committed against individuals or groups based on their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

2.3 Gender-based violence (GBV)

Refers to any form of violence, discrimination, or abuse that is inflicted upon individuals or groups based on their gender, particularly targeting women and girls. It is rooted in gender inequalities and social norms that perpetuate power imbalances, leading to the violation of human rights and hindering peaceful and inclusive societies.

Important Tips

- ✓ *Whilst Conflict is necessary and unavoidable, Violence is unnecessary and avoidable.*
- ✓ *Violence begets Violence.*
- ✓ *ECLF says No to any form of Violence.*

ECLF Perspective on addressing GBV and the relevance of Gender to the Peacebuilding work.

Human Rights Perspective

GBV is a violation of human rights, including the right to life, liberty, security, dignity, and physical and mental integrity. Addressing GBV is essential for fostering a culture of respect for human rights and promoting social justice, which are crucial elements of peacebuilding.

Conflict Prevention and Resolution

Addressing GBV is crucial for preventing and resolving conflicts. During conflict situations, GBV is often used as a tactic of warfare to terrorize, intimidate, and degrade individuals or communities. By tackling GBV, peacebuilding initiatives can help mitigate conflict dynamics and prevent further violence.

Women's Empowerment

GBV disproportionately affects women and girls, perpetuating gender inequalities and limiting their opportunities for social, economic, and political participation. By addressing GBV and promoting gender equality, peacebuilding efforts can empower women, enabling their full participation in decision-making processes and contributing to sustainable peace.

Post-Conflict Reconstruction

In post-conflict situations, addressing GBV is crucial for rebuilding societies and achieving reconciliation. Survivors of GBV require access to justice, reparations, healthcare, psychosocial support, and economic opportunities. By providing these services and addressing GBV, peacebuilding initiatives can contribute to the healing and rebuilding process.

Gender Mainstreaming

Integrating a gender perspective into peacebuilding efforts is essential for ensuring inclusivity and long-lasting peace. By addressing GBV and promoting gender equality across all sectors of society, peacebuilding initiatives can address root causes of violence, strengthen societal resilience, and foster sustainable peace.

Engaging Men and Boys

Involving men and boys in addressing GBV is crucial for transformative change. Men and boys play a critical role in challenging harmful gender norms, promoting healthy relationships, and becoming active allies in the fight against GBV. Inclusive peacebuilding approaches that engage men and boys as partners can contribute to more sustainable and gender-equitable peace.

Overall, it is important to recognize the interconnectedness of GBV and peacebuilding efforts. By addressing GBV, peacebuilding initiatives can create safer, more inclusive, and equitable societies, fostering sustainable peace and development, hence ECLF adoption of a gender responsive approach in peace building.



3.0 Conflict Management



There are two ways of managing conflict.

Negative management of conflict:

- Use of violence
- Force.
- Coercion
- Threats
- Avoiding the conflict.

This can be done even through demonising others and dismissing them as evil, demons, agents of the devil etc and seeing oneself as a 'saint.' This does not solve the conflict. It is a way of avoiding it. It remains there until the day you interface with it.

Positive management of conflict:

Joint problem-solving.

This means engaging with people one conflicts with. It refers to going to your brother or sister and extending a hand seeking forgiveness and

reconciliation. It does not mean you become naïve, but you state your feelings and opinions so that you are understood.

3.1 Approaches to Conflict

Power-Based Approach

- Use of force
- Use of position
- Fear/Intimidation
- Coercion
 - Effects: Destruction of relationships as results are win-lose

The use of power in conflict situations is usually classified into these three categories and these determine the effects of such conflict on their management.

a) Power over

This is a hierarchical one which can block effective communication and create barriers to empathy and understanding. This power can either be physical or authority. If it is authority, it could be that someone controls the instruments of power. Some in a position can use his or her position to exercise power. This is the most abused form of power. It destroys relationships if abused and creates conflicts. The decisions are not owned by the subordinates.

b) Power under

This is the power of those who are under someone with a position of authority. e.g. at a workplace, the employees can go on strike, and the management will have nothing to do except engage them in a negotiation to settle the causes of the strike. They will use their power from below. They can stay away or sit in, and the job will not be done.

c) Power with

This is the form of power that energizes people to develop voices to participate effectively in decision-making and to be open to the ideas of others. This may lead to individual, or group needs being met. We often get so caught up in the power struggles that we forget about the tremendous potential of the positive combined energy that emanates

from working together. Positive power is choosing the 'power with' approach. Negative power is choosing to power over or power under. These provide enormous potential for fuelling conflict. They lead to win-lose or lose-lose outcomes.

Rights-Based Approach

- Arbitration and litigation.
- Legal System: must exercise equal access to law and the legal system.
- You need knowledge of the law to use this approach.
 - Effects: Can destroy relationships as results are win-lose

In conflict situations, the use of a rights-based approach limits the role and influence of emotions and to that extent, there are limitations to managing conflict. However, some cases are criminal and some that require justice, and these can be appropriately handled using the rights-based approach.

Interest-Based Approach

- **Negotiation:** Parties talk to each other face-to-face.
- **Conciliation:** *To overcome the distrust and animosity; to appease. To regain or try to regain (friendship or goodwill) through pleasant behaviour. To make or attempt to make compatible; reconcile.* Parties to the conflict agree to utilize the services of the conciliator. The conciliator meets parties separately to resolve their differences. Conciliation lowers tension, improves communication, interprets issues, provides technical assistance, explores potential solutions, and brings about a negotiated settlement.
- **Facilitation:** Third party or parties engaging conflicting parties separately
- **Mediation:** Third party offering procedural assistance so that parties seek conflict resolution
 - Communication is important.
 - The interests of the parties are considered.

- Effects: It enhances relationships and results are a win-win situation.



Conflict analysis is at the centre of effective conflict resolution as it establishes the root causes of an issue which enables a relevant treatment to be used to deal with the matter.

E.C.L.F.
Church & Community Working Together For Peace
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3.2 Conflict Analysis



Why do we analyse conflict?

- To understand background, history, and current events.
- To identify all the relevant actors.
- To understand perspectives and relationships.
- To identify factors and trends that underpin conflict.
- To get to the root cause of the conflict.

Conflict Analysis Tools



Circle of Conflict.

This is an analytical tool for examining disputes and uncovering the root causes of conflict behaviour. By examining a conflict and evaluating it according to the five categories of relationship, data, interest, structure, and value we can begin to determine what causes the dispute, identify what sector is primary, and assess whether the cause is a genuine incompatibility of interests or conceptual problems of involved parties. These insights can assist us in designing a resolution strategy that will have a higher probability of success than an approach that is exclusively trial and error.

Below is the summary of the tool with its five (5) categories.



i. Relationship Problems

These are problems of how people relate, how they talk to each other, and how they view each other. This is an analysis of what type of relationship exists - Are relationships good or bad? If relationships are poor, conflicts are bound to happen. Poor relationships create perceptions that exacerbate conflict. When the conflict is manifested, one needs to understand the nature of relationships to understand the root cause of the conflict. In other words, is the conflict not caused by poor relationships? Such an analysis opens the understanding of what

one needs to deal with. It is possible that you can deal with the symptoms of a problem and not the problem itself if a proper analysis is not done.

ii. Data Problems

Data problems are problems emanating from information. Information may be withheld from people who ought to have it, or one may be misinformed. Misinformation, non-information, and propaganda can result in a conflict. Analysing data problems can show where the problem that relates to data emanates. It is critical to ensure that data is checked and understood in any conflict.

iii. Values Differences

Values are critical principles by which individuals or societies agree to live / would guide them in various facets of life. They are the central point of reference of a family, group, community, or any society. They can also be referred to as rallying points. Values are those principles that unite us together. Using values differences in conflict analysis means that one looks at what values the conflicting parties have. If their values are different, that can be the cause of the conflict if not a feeder into the conflict. Fundamental values can differ from one family to another or one group to another and even society at large.

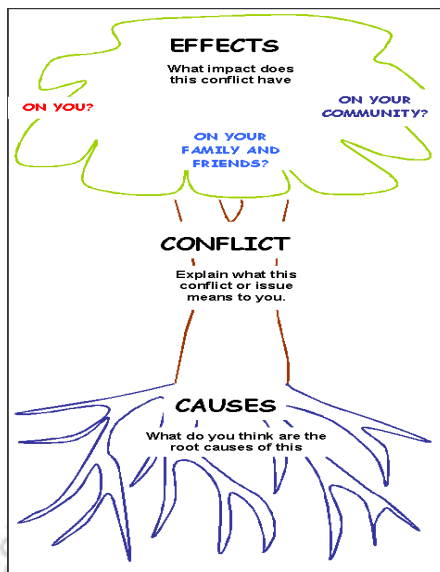
iv. Structural Problems

These are structures that inhibit certain activities because the bureaucracy has not been followed or ought to be followed. Following the bureaucracy can delay the process until the whole idea is overtaken by events. On the other hand, bypassing the bureaucracy may be regarded as insubordination followed by its consequences.

v. Interests

Interests are what people want and like. They are what one person desires to see happening or one wants to do. Conflicts are sometimes a clash of interests and unsatisfied needs. Technically speaking, needs and interests are different, but they relate closely in so far as conflict is concerned. If what people need is not given to them, there is a conflict.

Conflict Tree



The conflict tree is a valuable tool used in conflict analysis to visualize the causes and consequences of a conflict. It helps to identify and understand the different factors contributing to the conflict and how they relate to each other. Here's how the conflict tree works:

Identify the Conflict:

Clearly define the conflict you want to analyse. It could be a personal, interpersonal, community, or international conflict.

Root Causes:

Identify the primary underlying causes of the conflict. These causes are usually deep-seated and often structural, such as political, economic, or social inequalities.

Branches:

Draw branches extending from the root causes, representing different factors that contribute to the conflict. These could include specific events, actions, or policies that exacerbate the conflict.

Consequences:

From each branch, identify the consequences that arise because of the factors contributing to the conflict. These consequences can be both immediate and long-term.

Effects:

Analyse the effects of the consequences on individuals, groups, communities, and broader society. This helps to understand the impact of the conflict on different stakeholders.

Feedback Loops:

Identify any feedback loops that exist within your conflict tree. Feedback loops represent how the consequences and effects of the conflict can influence and reinforce the root causes and factors contributing to the conflict.

Analyse Connections:

Examine the connections and relationships between the different elements in the conflict tree. This helps to understand the complex dynamics of conflict and how different factors interact with each other.

In essence, by using a conflict tree, one can gain a comprehensive understanding of the underlying causes, consequences, and dynamics of a conflict. This information can then be used to develop effective strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Member of **actalliance**

3.3 Conflict Resolution Strategies

Conflict resolution strategies are techniques and approaches used to address and resolve conflicts constructively and peacefully, here are four commonly used strategies:

Facilitation:

Facilitation involves the involvement of a neutral third party, known as a facilitator, who assists in managing the conflict resolution process. The facilitator helps to create a safe and structured environment for

open communication, encourages active listening, and guides the participants towards finding mutually agreeable solutions.

Negotiation:

Negotiation is a process where individuals or groups engage in dialogue to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Participants work together to identify common interests, explore different options, and make compromises to find a solution that satisfies all parties involved. Negotiation can be either direct between the conflicting parties or facilitated by a mediator or arbitrator.

Mediation:

Mediation involves the intervention of a neutral third party, known as a mediator, who helps facilitate communication and negotiation between the conflicting parties. The mediator remains impartial and assists the parties in identifying underlying interests, improving understanding, and finding mutually beneficial solutions. Mediation empowers the parties to take ownership of the resolution process.

Dialogue:



Dialogue is a collaborative and inclusive communication process that aims to foster understanding, empathy, and mutual respect between conflicting parties. It involves open and honest conversations where

participants actively listen, share their perspectives, and seek to understand each other's viewpoints. Dialogue can help build relationships, address underlying issues, and find shared solutions to conflict.

It must be understood that each strategy has its advantages and is suitable for different types of conflicts. The choice of which strategy to use depends on the specific context, the nature of the conflict, and the willingness of the involved parties to engage in the resolution process. In some cases, a combination of these strategies may be employed to achieve a successful resolution.

Furthermore, indigenous knowledge systems and traditional mechanisms are also effective alternative dispute resolution strategies that must not be ignored in conflict resolution they put the power of conflict resolution in the hands of the community members themselves. They also promote a sense of ownership and active participation, allowing community members to have a say in the process, such empowerment helps foster resilience and self-determination.

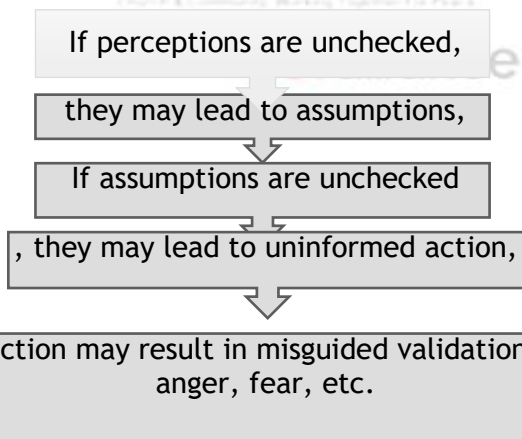
However, one significant challenge to conflict resolution is the issue of perceptions, and in conflict situations, this refers to negative perceptions. Perceptions by their nature do not create conflicts but rather exacerbate it. Let us explore what perceptions are, how they are formed and the appropriate way of managing them through effective communication.

Member of **actalliance**

4.0 Perceptions



Perceptions refer to interpretation, a perceived reality, an observation that might not consist of the absolute truth. Perceptions also mean the way one perceives or sees something or someone. In conflict situations, perceptions refer to wrong biases and prejudices held about other people.



Important Tips

- *Perceptions do not cause conflict, but they exacerbate conflict and complicate resolution because of the dynamics involved in perception formation and maintenance.*
- *Perceptions affect the quality of intergroup communication between parties. Perception closes ears and eyes to what is said by the party negatively perceived.*
- *Perceptions complicate the building of trust and mutual understanding.*
- *Messages from opponents are determined by perceptions not as intended by the sender, but as held by recipients.*

How are perceptions formed?

- **Culturally determined perceptions.** Culture is more than customs and rituals. It is a collective worldview or a manner of understanding historical and environmental realities forged through centuries. What we speak in our languages can influence our perceptions. Perceptions in a conflict situation affect the way you deal with the conflict. The way you filter the message e.g. when people come to you for assistance you can say, 'I know these people they are violent, they are thieves, they are prostitutes, etc. The generalization in which an individual experience is ascribed to the entire collective or group is essentially what entrenches stereotypes.
- **Perceptions created by psychological need for self-esteem:** Self-esteem of individuals is deeply connected to the esteem of the ethnic group. Ethnic groups develop favourable self-esteem vis-a-vis other ethnic groups through processes of comparison. "We are THE people others are less." Ethnic groups assess their well-being not through objective analysis but through comparison with significant groups. They determine their deprivation.
- **Perceptions created by selective interpretation of history:** Ethnic identity maintained by continuous interpretation of historical events. The interpretation is aimed at enhancing the self-esteem of the group (the glorious past) or victimhood (the evilness of the enemy). Religious and ideological meanings attached to such

selective interpretation are strengthened and create a sense of absolute truth.

- **Perceptions created by past life experiences:** As people go through life, they meet a lot of encounters, and these create an impression on how they view things or people. For example, someone who has been in an abusive relationship may be quick to perceive that men are dogs by the mere experience of one abusive man. Such a negative perception is informed by an experience which is then generalized as a norm for all.

In conflict situations, if negative perceptions are left unchecked, they may result in dehumanization. The way one views others as wrong and begins to call them names is dehumanising. In essence, no human being murders another human being it has not happened, and it will not happen especially in the eyes of the perpetrator. What tends to happen is that the perpetrator must dehumanize the victim, it could be through calling them names such as a cockroach, rat, sellout, prostitute, thief, a liar, or whatever is derogatory, why they can injure, hurt or even kill without feeling remorseful. This is the reason why ECLF emphasizes the need to rehumanize such that as conflicts unfold people remain perceiving each other as human beings. Have you not noticed that what triggers a fistfight is what people say to each other, especially insults, those are a form of dehumanization that triggers a fight and complicates conflict resolution. Therefore, negative perceptions are what fuels a conflict, and these tend to complicate resolutions as such it is important to manage them.

Management of Perceptions

- **Clarify Perceptions**

An alternative option for dealing with unchecked perceptions is for perceptions to be clarified which may then result in positive and informed decisions and actions.

- **Confront Perceptions**

Awareness of one's biases, perceptions, and belief systems are an important step in managing perceptions. One must be able to confront his stereotypes, prejudices, and biases as a starting point of broadening their worldview and to be able to understand where the other is coming from.

- **Contrast Perceptions.**

The ability to analyse a conflict from the inside out helps parties develop empathy and perspective-taking.



5.0 Effective Communication through Active Listening Skills.



Effective communication is at the centre of building strong relationships as well as enhance effectiveness in resolving conflicts. The essence of effective communication is in how messages are understood in the same way in which it was intended. In conflict situations, communication is usually not a challenge to the one conveying the message, the issue tends to be in the ability to actively listen to what is being communicated. Active listening therefore becomes one of the most important skills in peace building and this is how to become an effective listener.

Five levels of listening

Head

- **Facts:** First level of Listening is the Head (Facts)

- **Feelings:** Second level

you the story, listening

feels. Try to

perspectives of the

Stomach

- **Needs:** Third the needs represented by the stomach. If someone presents a story, listen and understand what they want you to do. Do not assume, ask them to tell you what they want you to do.

culture represented by clothes. Our cultural bias and cultural differences. Understand their cultural background because

behaviour, the reaction to what you want to do.

- **Interests/Intentions:**

Fifth level is the intention represented by the feet. Try to pick the intention of the person who comes and talks to you. Try to handle conflict that it is reduced than to allow it to escalate.

Facts

To be an effective listener, you must be able to hear what the message is clearly. You must be able to understand fully what the person wishes to communicate and be sure that you understand it as intended by the person saying it.

Feelings

We need to understand that people are emotions, so it is not enough to only listen to words. Psychologists tell us that most of what people say does not always come out in words but rather non-verbal. It is therefore important to have a listening ear to body language, expressions, tone of voice, etc. We must take time to hear how people are feeling about the conflict situation, are they hurt, angry, bitter, depressed, helpless, etc. This enables a peace practitioner with a base of knowing what sort of response or appropriate deed is needed.

Needs

It is also important to listen to the person's needs, and what they want you to do. Without listening to needs, there is a risk of taking inappropriate actions that can worsen the situation at hand. By listening to needs, one can establish what their role on the matter is and what the person really wants as an outcome.

Culture

It is important to also understand the background, cultural orientation, and perspectives so that you can be holistic in listening. In conflict situations, culture plays a significant influential role in shaping perspectives as such it is important to know and listen to the dynamics associated with one's tradition, belief systems, identity as it has a significant part in the communication.

Intentions

As an active listener one must be able to pick the intentions of the person communicating, what they are intending to do. In most cases people who are suicidal tend to hint their intentions in subtle ways, it takes an active listener to be able to tell that this person is thinking of taking their own life. Intentions do not easily come out, that is why it is important to probe and ask the right question to unlock barriers and be able to pick intentions.

It must be noted that these five levels are illustrative in that order from first to last for the purposes of conceptualization, in real life situations things do not always start in that order so a competent peace practitioner should be able to pick these in no order depending on the specific case and how it presents itself.

6.0 Healing



Pain not transformed is easily internalized and/or transferred to others through violent behaviour.

You cannot heal others when you carry a load of hate and hurt. You need to deal with your own baggage first. A lot of people have failed to progress in life because of past hurts. Their behaviours and attitudes often portray how traumatized they are. ECLF has a saying which says: "Behind every behaviour there is a story" A lot of people's behaviours are influenced by their past experiences and if the pain is not transformed it is easily transferred. This is what is seen in most families, resulting in Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence. Children who have grown up in homes with Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence are likely to pass it on to their families, church, work, and society. This is what kills the social fabric as people are caught up in wanting to take revenge. Therefore, as peacebuilders it is necessary to recognise and deal with our own limitations and baggage first before we try to assist individuals and communities. This

is why ECLF places healing at the heart of their processes so that personal transformation within an individual can be a catalyst to societal transformation.

***Theological Reflection:** The Dutch Catholic theologian Henri Nouwen, in his book *The Wounded Healer* (1979:87), wrote, "...a deep understanding of [the peacebuilder's] own pain makes it possible for him/her to convert his/her weakness into strength and to offer his/her own [human] experience as a source of healing..."*



7.0 Summary:

The Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF) workshop participant's Reader's Manual on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Transformation, and Healing serves as a manual for participants to refer to after sensitization workshops. The manual aims to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to address and mitigate conflicts, ultimately contributing to the reduction of all forms of violence. In today's world, conflicts and violence have become pervasive, hampering the progress and wellbeing of individuals, communities, and nations. By actively using this manual, participants will gain insights into effective conflict prevention strategies, learn valuable conflict management techniques, and explore the transformative power of healing in the aftermath of violent conflicts. The readers manual will develop a basic understanding of conflict theory and practice, identify underlying causes of conflict, cultivate effective communication and negotiation skills, and foster an environment conducive to peaceful resolutions of disputes. ECLF is grateful to experts, practitioners, contributors, the design and layout team, and funding partners for their contributions. The commitment to learning and implementing the principles of conflict prevention, management, resolution transformation, and healing is vital for achieving the objective of reducing all forms of violence.

Conflict refers to the energy generated when individuals or groups compete for seemingly incompatible goals. Violence is a pattern of destructive behavior, physical and verbal, intended to forcefully establish and maintain control over people and systems. Gender-based violence is physical, sexual, or emotional harm directed at a person to create or maintain power and control. Conflict prevention involves proactive measures to identify and address potential sources of conflict before they escalate. ECLF invests in capacity-building sessions and supports the formation of local peace committees, while conflict management involves strategies and processes to handle conflicts constructively and minimize their impact. Conflict resolution involves facilitating dialogue, negotiation, and mediation among disputing parties. Conflict transformation aims to fundamentally change the

nature and dynamics of a conflict, addressing underlying causes, transforming relationships, and creating positive structural changes. ECLF does peace education and awareness campaigns to change mindsets and attitudes in promoting non-violent ways to resolve conflicts.



CPMARTH READERS MANUAL

Dive into the empowering pages of 'The CPMARTH Manual' where transformative approaches await.

Synopsis:

Discover practical tools to address conflicts and promote peace within your community. From proactive prevention to nurturing healing, this manual offers essential guidance for building a world free from violence. Take the first step towards lasting change today.

Explore practical strategies to navigate conflicts and foster peace within your community

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