

# CONFLICT SENSITIVITY & DO-NO-HARM

Austrian Center for Peace, Stadtschlaining  
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# AGENDA

Key definitions

Conflict sensitivity explained

Conflict sensitivity in practice

Context analysis

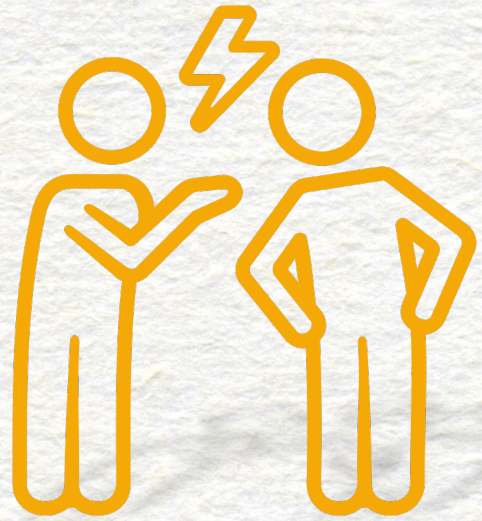
Interactions analysis

Adaptations

Conclusion & Feedback

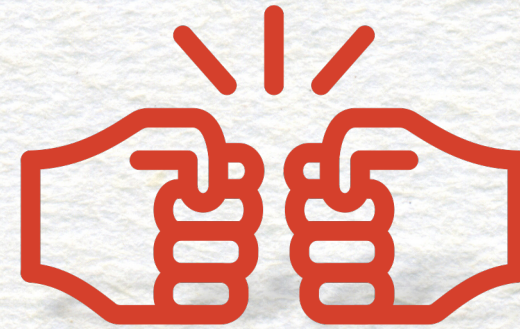


# KEY DEFINITIONS



## CONFLICT

Refers to a disagreement or clash between individuals, groups, or communities. It can arise due to differences in values, interests, or goals and can manifest in various forms, including social, political, or economic conflicts.



## VIOLENCE

Refers to the use of physical force or power to cause harm, injury, or death to individuals or groups. It can be direct, such as physical violence, or indirect, such as structural violence or systemic discrimination.



## FRAGILITY

Includes elements such as:

- Violent armed conflicts, insecurity and criminal violence as symptoms or origins.
- Weak state legitimacy.
- Institutional weakness (limited provision of basic services, lack of rule of law & justice, few economic opportunities for citizens).
- Lack of political will.
- Lack of trust in institutions.



# KEY DEFINITIONS



## PEACE

Refers to a state of harmony, tranquility, and absence of violence or conflict. It encompasses not only the absence of physical violence but also the presence of justice, equality, and respect for human rights.



## PEACEBUILDING

Refers to a process or set of activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, or recurrence of violence and promoting sustainable peace. It involves addressing the root causes of conflicts, promoting reconciliation, and fostering social cohesion and justice.



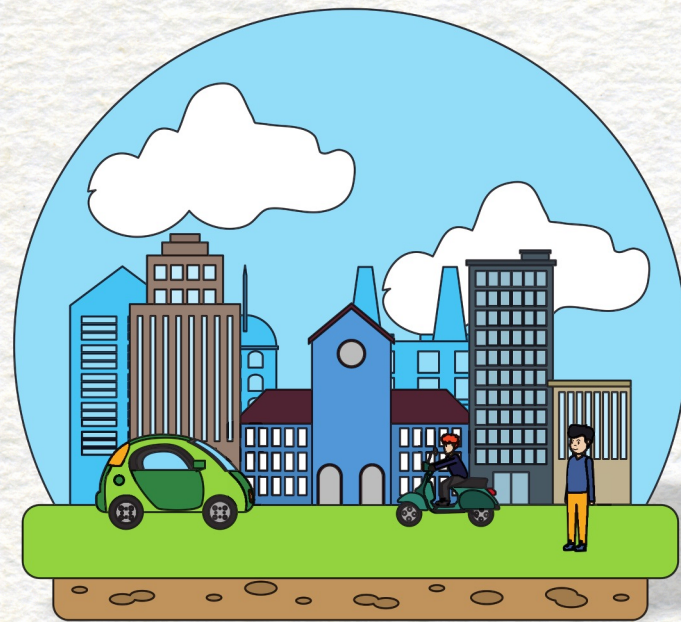
## CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

An approach or framework that seeks to understand and address the dynamics and impacts of conflict in all aspects of programming. It involves analyzing how interventions may interact with the conflict context and taking steps to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive contributions to peace and stability. It includes considering the needs, perspectives, and vulnerabilities of different groups, including women, men, and marginalized communities, in conflict-affected contexts.



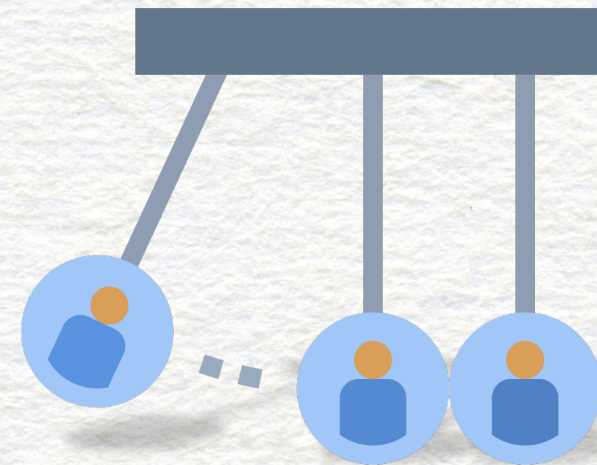
# CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

IS THE ABILITY OF AN ORGANISATION TO



## CONTEXT

Understand the context in which it operates



## INTERACTION

Understand the interaction between its intervention and the context.



## ACTION

Act upon the understanding of this interaction, in order to minimize negative impacts (do no harm) and maximize positive impacts (do good).



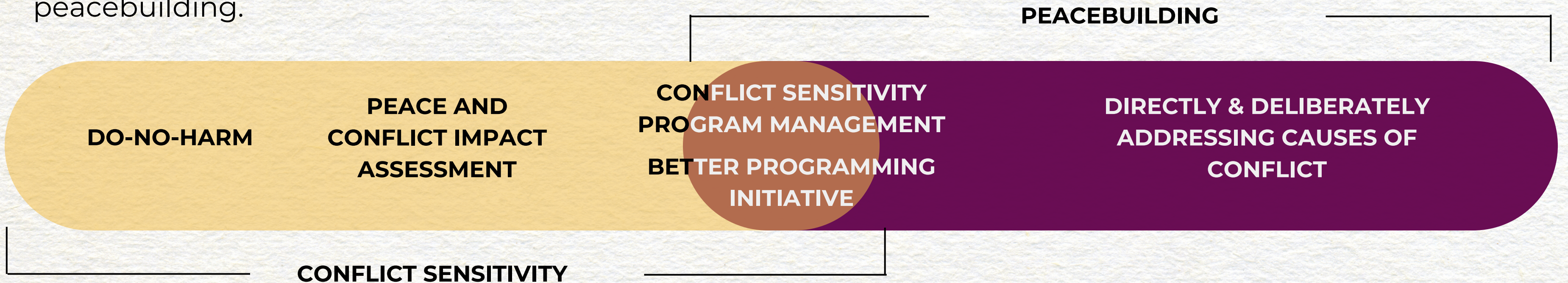
# CONFLICT SENSITIVITY vs. PEACEBUILDING

Applies in all contexts, to all types of work, and to all aspects and areas of work.

Is concerned with destructive conflict, both manifest (violent) and latent (underlying).

Does not require organizations to change their mandate, mission, or priorities.

Does not require an explicit commitment to peacebuilding.





# DO-NO-HARM

## AS CONFLICT SENSITIVITY TOOL



Developed through collaborative learning methodology, beginning in 1994.

Evidence base via field-based case studies, practitioner feedback, testing and adaptation.

See *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - or War* by Mary B. Anderson.



# OUR PRESENCE

INFLUENCES THE CONTEXT

PATTERNS OF IMPACT FALL INTO TWO CATEGORIES



## **ACTIONS aka RESOURCE TRANSFERS**

What organizations do.

How they transmit goods and services.

What they transmit.



## **BEHAVIOR aka IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGES**

What individuals do.

How they interact with each other, other organizations, and with local people.



# OUR PRESENCE

INFLUENCES THE CONTEXT



## PATTERNS OF ACTIONS (RESOURCE TRANSFERS)

Theft

Market Effects

Distribution Effects

Substitution Effects

Legitimization Effects



## PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR (IMPLICIT ETHICAL MESSAGES)

Respect

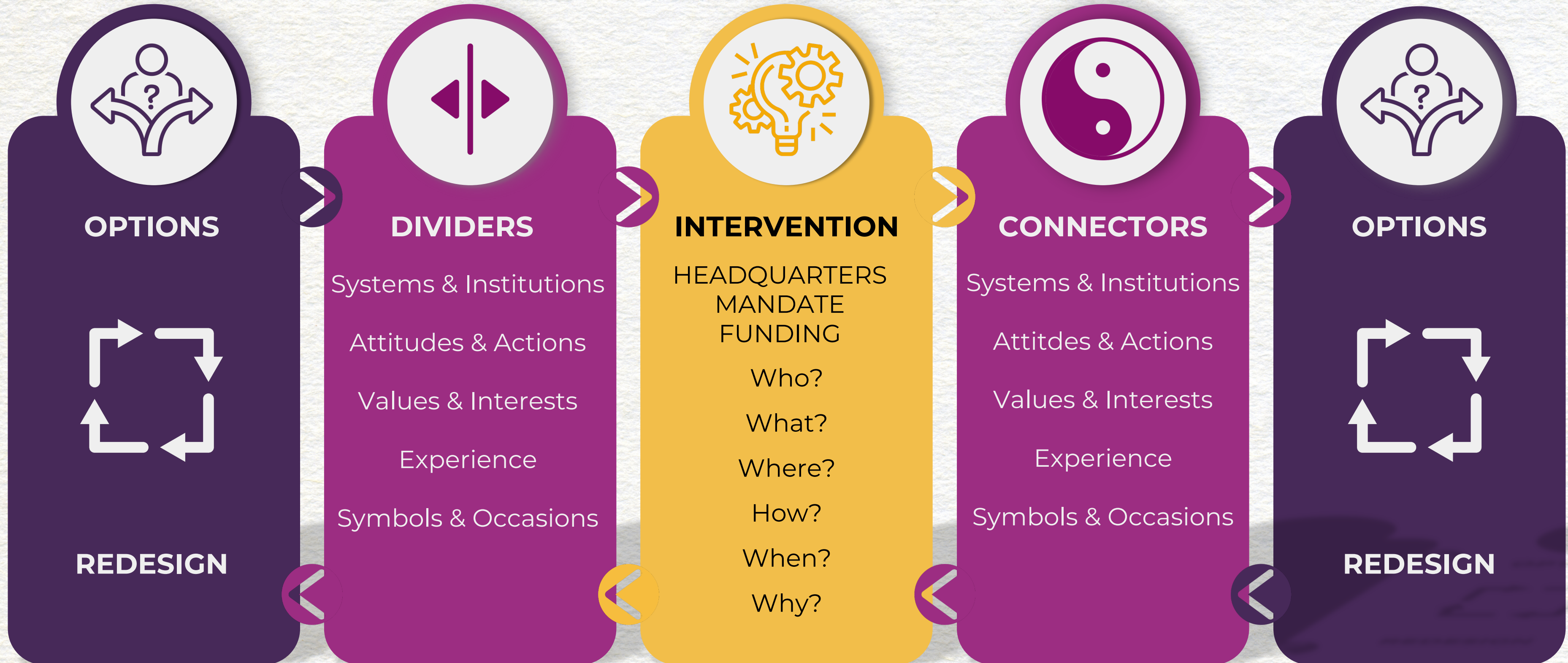
Accountability

Fairness

Transparency



# CONTEXT OF CONFLICT





# SIX LESSONS

## OF DO-NO-HARM PROGRAM

1

When an intervention of any kind enters a context, it becomes part of that context.

2

All contexts are characterized by both Dividers and Connectors.

3

All interventions will interact with both Dividers and Connectors, making them better or worse.

Interventions interact with Dividers and Connectors through their organizational Actions and the Behavior of staff.

4

The Details of an intervention are the source of its impacts.

5

There are always options.

6



# COMPLEXITY



- Multitude of actors (national and international)
- Linking of small and large scale
- Inter-dependency of different parts
- Un-predictability, constant change and adaptation



# DIFFERENT LEVELS

CONFLICT SENSITIVITY APPLIES TO DIFFERENT LEVELS





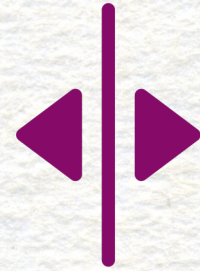
# DIVIDERS & CONNECTORS



- Always present in groups (societies, families, workplaces colleagues), even when there is no obvious conflict.
- Can shift in strength, importance, and meaning over time.
- Can be prioritized for use in program planning (i.e. some are more powerful than others).
- Can be categorized for analysis: ethnicity, geography, power, infrastructure, economic, leadership, common or public space, politics, gender, community concerns.



# DIVIDERS & CONNECTORS



## DIVIDERS

Cause or increase:

- Tension -
- Suspicion -
- Mistrust -
- Divisions -
- Capacities for conflict or violence  
between groups of people -



## CONNECTORS

Bring people together despite their differences.

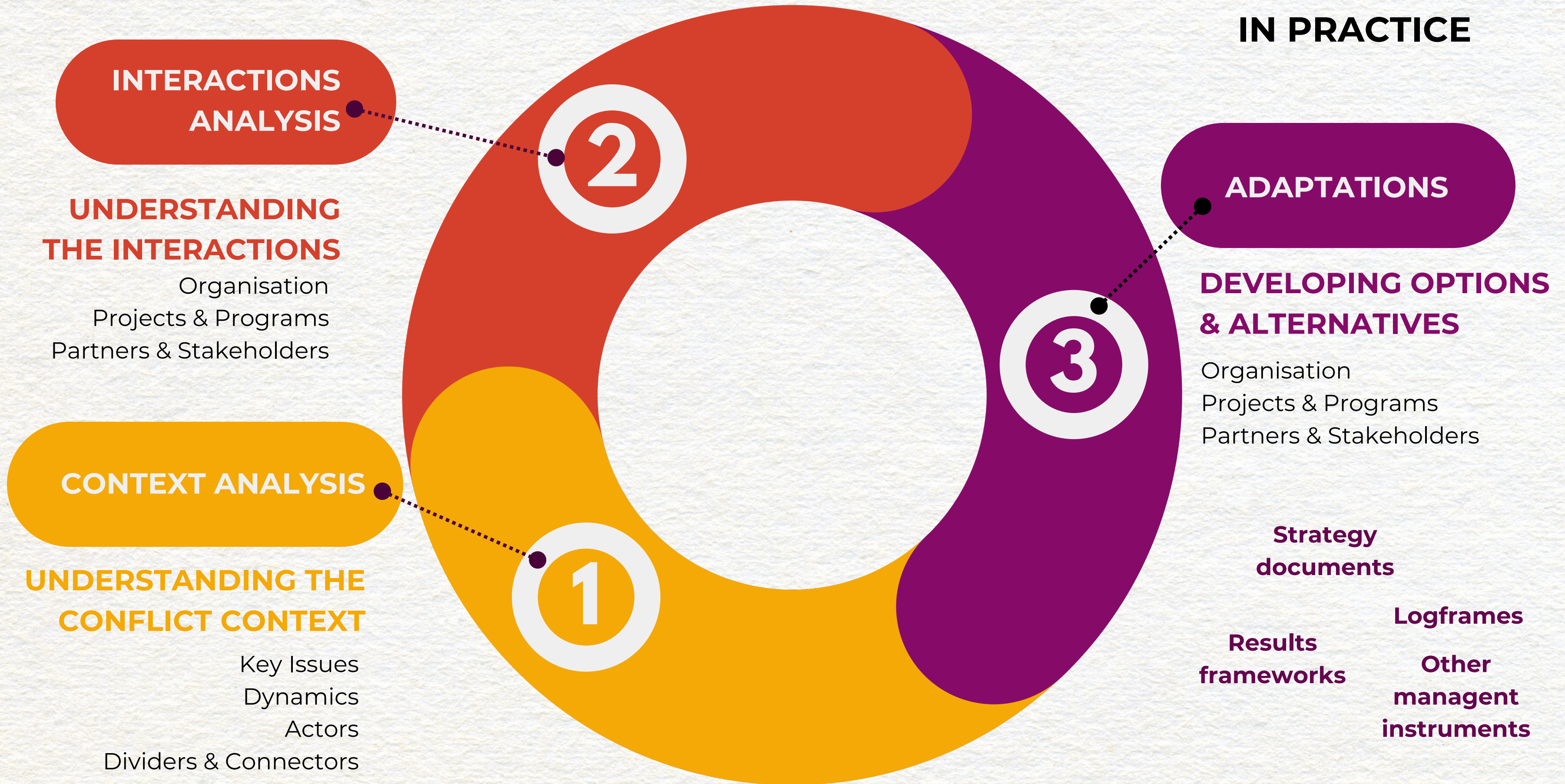
Connectors can increase:

- Trust -
- Interdependence -
- Equality -



# CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

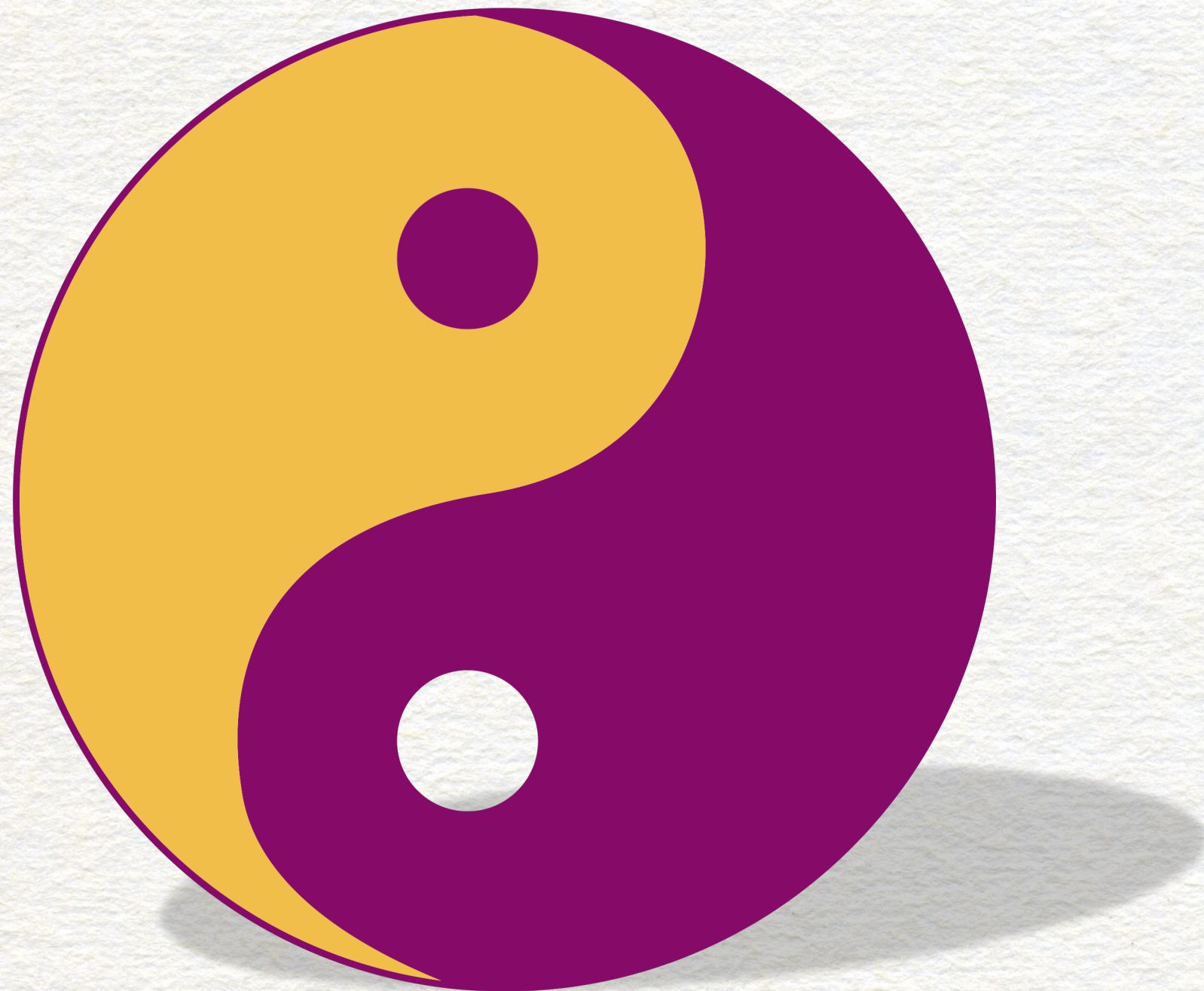
IN PRACTICE





# CONTEXT ANALYSIS

## FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS



Identify factors that **support** (positive/driving factors) or **hinder** (negative/restraining factors) the achievement of a desired **change**.

Assess the **strengths and weaknesses** of those factors and how they could be influenced.

Understand what is maintaining the **status quo**.



# CONTEXT ANALYSIS

## CONNECTORS & DIVIDERS ANALYSIS



Identify elements that bring people together across tension/conflict lines, i.e. factors of cohesion, peace, stability (cohesion factors).



Identify elements that separate them, those that are triggers or sources of tension, i.e. factors against cohesion, peace, stability (dividing factors).



# CONTEXT ANALYSIS

## CATEGORIES OF CONNECTORS & DIVIDERS

### **Systems and Institutions**

Inclusive education and health systems

Systematic exclusion of a group from access to basic services.

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### **Attitudes and Actions**

Friendship across ethnic lines.

Disrespect of cultural differences and insulting behavior.

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### **Values and Interests**

Shared religious beliefs; upholding of values of cohabitation across groups

Unequal marriage practices between men and women.

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### **Experiences**

Shared experience of disaster and loss.

Disrespectful behavior by a particular group.

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### **Symbols and Occasions**

Symbols that demonstrate unity.

Nationalistic symbols that clearly manifest the power of one group.



# INTERACTION ANALYSIS

## KEY QUESTIONS



Does the project trigger or reinforce tensions/conflict?

Does the project contribute to reduced tensions/conflict; does it contribute to positive change?

What risks does the conflict context pose for our project?



# INTERACTION ANALYSIS

## FIELDS OF OBSERVATION



### ORGANISATION

#### Organizational structure:

- Strategy and mandate
- Working approaches
- Administrative procedures
- Human resources
- Security



### PROJECT / PROGRAM

#### Operational side:

- Objectives
- Activities
- Selection of beneficiaries
- Implementation approaches
- Project team
- Information gathering / sharing



### PARTNERS / STAKEHOLDERS

#### Relationships:

- Implementing partners
- Stakeholders
- Communication
- Donors



# INTERACTION ANALYSIS

## SENSITIVE AREAS OF INTERACTION

### **TARGETING LOCATION AND BENEFICIARIES**

Who benefits from the intervention and who doesn't?

### **PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION**

Who benefits from procurement? Are we able to detect if suppliers are part of 'predatory elite networks'?

### **IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES**

Short-term projects, remote management, rigid PCM?

### **LEGITIMIZATION & RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTNERS**

Who do we empower? How do we work with government counterparts who have multiple identities?

### **COORDINATION**

How do we coordinate with others? Do we contribute to collective problem-solving?



# ADAPTATIONS

DEVELOPING OPTIONS & ALTERNATIVES  
TO ACHIEVE CONFLICT SENSITIVE INTERVENTION

← BEFORE PROJECT START  
as part of project planning →

← DURING IMPLEMENTATION  
as part of project monitoring →

INTERACTIONS  
ANALYSIS

INTERACTIONS  
ANALYSIS





# CAUTION!

## IF YOU THINK THAT

### **SOMETHING APPEARS TO BE BOTH A DIVIDER AND A CONNECTOR:**

Ask: WHICH GROUPS are being divided or connected?

Ask: HOW does it divide? Or HOW does it connect?

Be Specific!

Use the Categories.



### **A PERSON APPEARS TO BE A DIVIDER OR CONNECTOR:**

Ask: WHAT that person is doing? Or HOW they are behaving?

Ask: Is that person impacting ON other Dividers or Connectors?

Ask: Is that person a symbol for a larger movement?



# PROGRAM ANALYSIS

## MAPPING CRITICAL DETAILS

- It is rarely the whole intervention that causes a negative impact on a Divider or Connector.
- Programs are made up of a series of decisions, some large, some seemingly small.
- The small details of well-designed and well-intended programs can cause negative impacts.



### WHAT ARE CRITICAL DETAILS?

- Targeting**
- Staffing**
- Partnering**
- Working with authorities**
- Resources**
- Locations**
- Timeframes**
- Criteria (Why did we make these decisions?)**
- Execution (How do we do this?)**



# KEY PROGRAMMING DECISIONS



Who are you working with?

- Staff, Beneficiaries, Partners, Authorities

What are you doing?

Where are you working?

When is your intervention taking place?

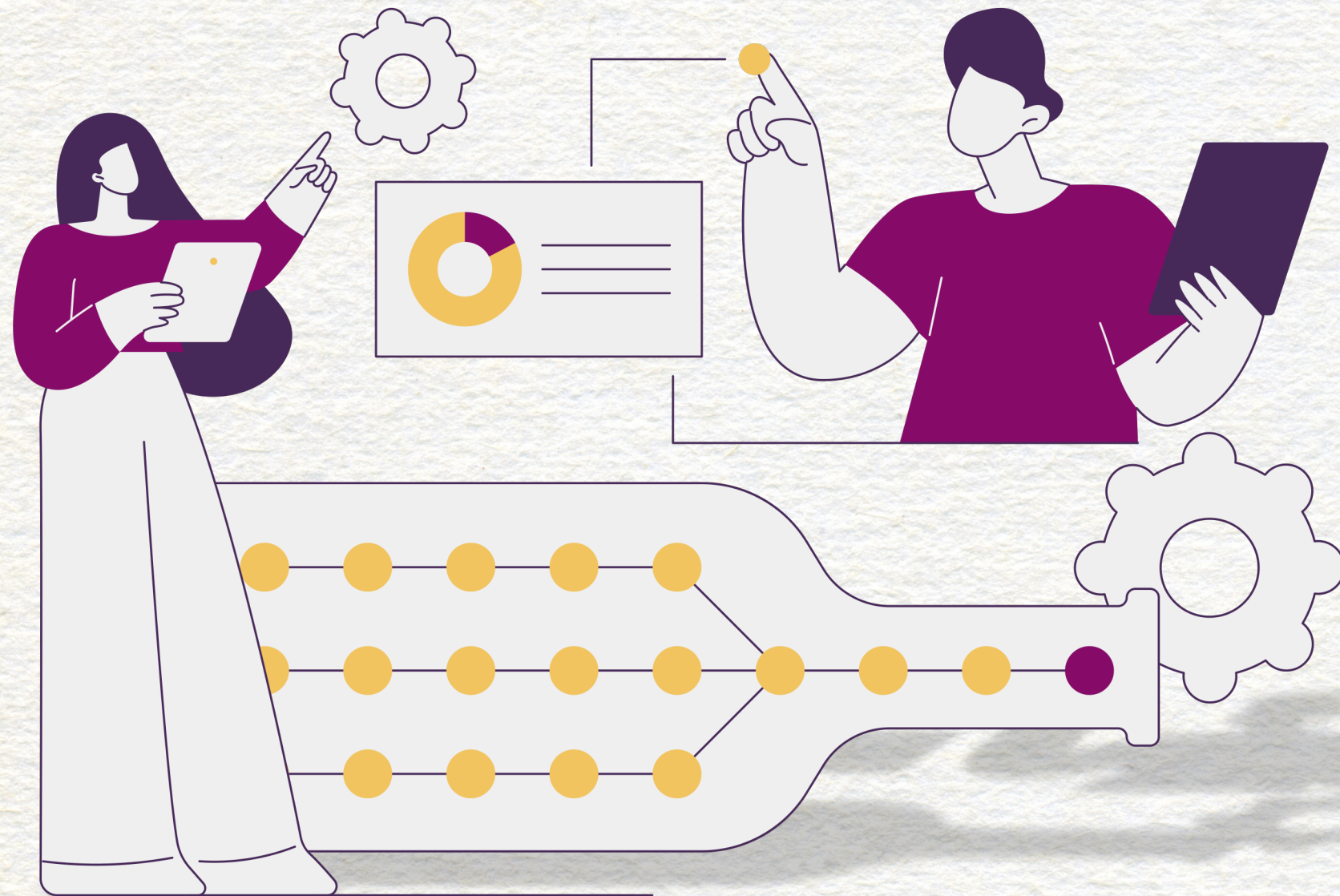
Why and How = cross cutting elements to all of the above program pieces.

When we ask ourselves What? We must also ask “Why that?” and “Why not something else?”



# KEY PROGRAMMING DECISIONS

## CONSTRAINTS



There are constraints on what any organization can do. These cannot be changed or adapted by any individual in the short term.

- Mandate
- Headquarters (policies, procedures)
- Donors and Funding

These constraints affect or determine the criteria for the decisions we make.



## NEGATIVE PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR

## POSITIVE PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR

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Competition  
Suspicion  
Anger and aggression (Belligerence)  
Indifference  
Fear  
Telling (people about themselves, what to think, what to do)

### RESPECT

Cooperation and Collaboration  
Trust  
Calm  
Sensitivity (to local concerns)  
Courage  
Listening (to what people say is important to them, to why they think what they think)

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Claiming Powerlessness  
Impunity  
Arms & Power

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Taking Positive Action  
Responsibility  
Rule of Law or Nonviolence

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Different Value for Different Lives  
Ignoring Rules  
Unfairness

### FAIRNESS

Recognition of Value  
Following Rules  
Fairness

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Closed  
Decision making process unknown  
Hide information  
Lack of transparency contributes to all above behaviors.

### TRANSPARENCY

Open  
Decision making process shared  
Share information.  
Transparency contributes to all above behaviors



# GENERATING PROGRAM OPTIONS

## OR ALTERNATIVES FOR REDESIGN



Organizations often find that small adjustments to the Critical Details of their program are necessary in order to improve impacts on Dividers and Connectors.

Understand the interplay between the Critical Details of your program and D/C.

Think creatively to generate Options for adjusting programs!



# GENERATING PROGRAM OPTIONS

## TIPS



Work in teams! More perspectives and experience = more ideas.

Think creatively about your specific context: what others have tried in another context may spark ideas, but each context is unique.

Collaborate with local people. Locals know their own context much better than outsiders, and have a good sense of what will work and what won't. Ask!



# ONGOING DNH PROCESS

Contexts change during implementation, so DNH should be an ongoing process. Ask:

- Have Dividers and Connectors changed in priority or intensity?
- Have new Dividers and Connectors surfaced?
- How might our program an impact on the emergent Dividers and Connectors?

Review D/C regularly for changes. Revisit priority D/C to monitor and adjust prioritization as needed.

Determine which details of the program caused changes in D/C.

Identify the Patterns of Impact.

Identify an Option to change the patterns (if you make a change and there is no difference, your change may not be conflict sensitive either!)

Cross-check: Will an option to mitigate Dividers affect Connectors? Will an option to amplify Connectors affect Dividers?



# ONGOING DNH PROCESS

## PLANNING / DESIGN

### Dividers and Connectors

Analyze and Prioritize

### Program Details

Make Explicit

### Patterns of Impact

Predict potential

### Options

Fine tune

## EVALUATION

Did conflict sensitivity mechanisms function?

- Systems
- Procedures
- Accountability mechanisms
- Documentation processes

## IMPLEMENTATION / MONITORING

### Dividers and Connectors

New D/C? Changes observed?

### Program Details

Effects of selected options?

### Patterns of Impact

Causes for observed changes

### Options

Adaptations to Program Details

## REPROGRAMING

### Dividers and Connectors

Revisit Analysis and priorities

### Program Details

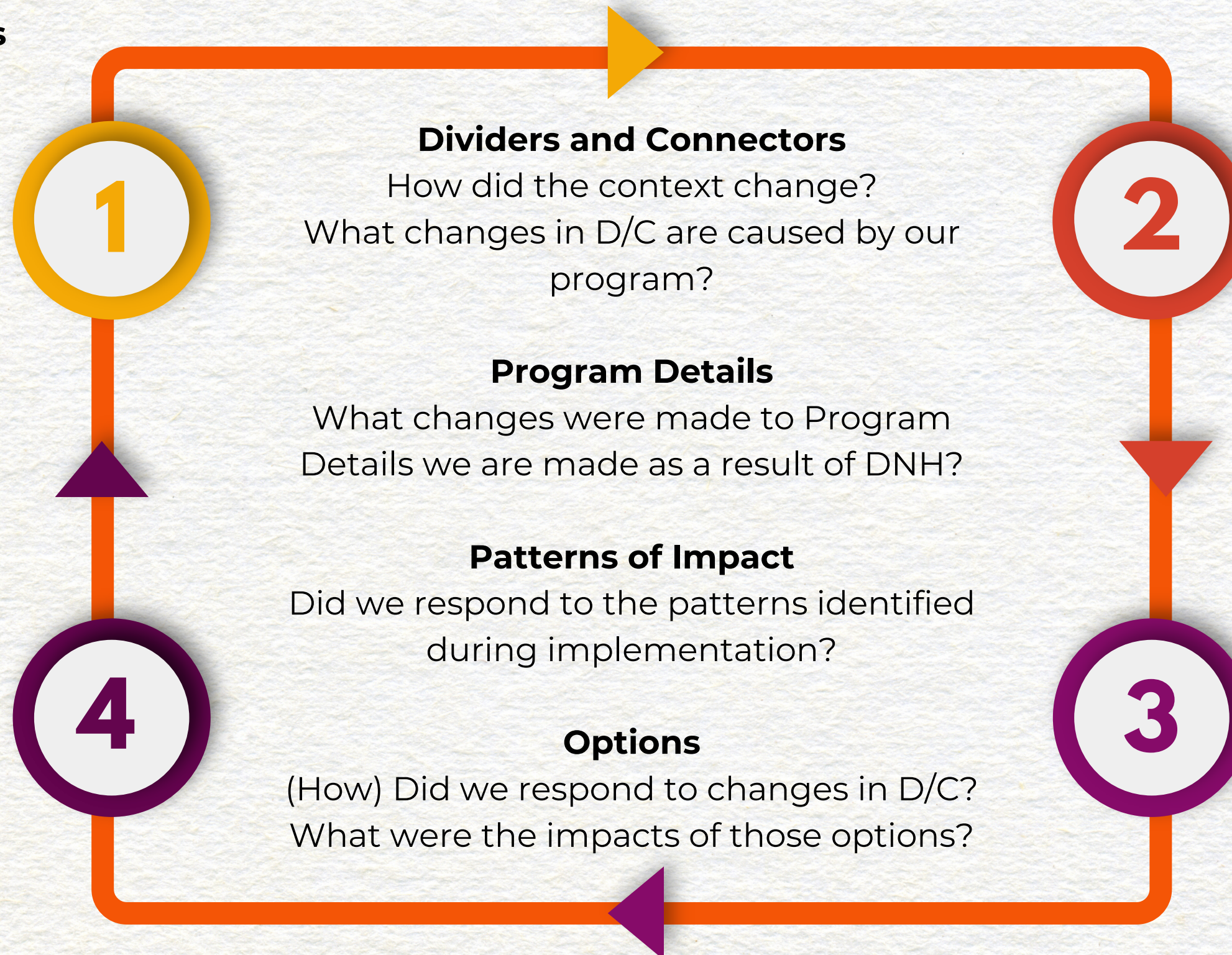
Details of new program elements?

### Patterns of Impact

Predict potential patterns

### Options

Adaptations to Program Details





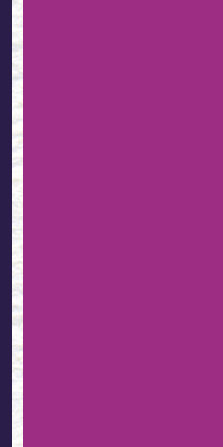
# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



<http://cdacollaborative.org/what-we-do/conflict-sensitivity/>

<http://www.conflictsensitivity.org>





Thank you



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