
Saferworld submission



Conflict Pool Review

Saferworld submission to the Independent Commission on Aid Impact review of the Conflict Pool, March 2012

Introduction

Following the UK Government's commitment to make conflict prevention overseas a key policy priority, independent scrutiny of the UK Government's conflict prevention activities is to be welcomed. The recent publication of the Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS), which will guide resource allocations under the Conflict Pool, makes this an opportune moment to review the Pool's operations.

It is well recognised that conflict and fragility undermine development. According to the World Bank, eight out of ten of the most aid dependent countries in 2008 were affected by conflict and fragility. Not one low-income fragile or conflict-affected country has yet achieved a single Millennium Development Goal, and the OECD classifies as 'fragile' 29 of the 42 countries at the bottom of the UNDP's human development index.¹ If aid is to be effective in these contexts, it is vital that the causes of conflict and fragility are addressed. Saferworld therefore welcomes the UK Government's to prioritise tackling the causes of conflict through its development assistance.

The terms of reference for this review mention the BSOS commitment to "open up our work to more external challenge and evaluation, using an independent view of the Government's conflict prevention performance to challenge our thinking and drive continuous improvement."² Saferworld and the University of Bradford have been in discussions with the UK Government to assess its performance on conflict prevention as part of a larger project. The launch report of the Conflict Prevention Performance Project, which includes the framework used for this evaluation is attached as an annexe to this submission.

In order to keep this submission focused, rather than responding to all of the questions posed, we respond only to those which speak most directly to Saferworld's experience and expertise.

Objectives

- 6.2.1 Does the Conflict Pool have a strategic approach to allocating its resources, based on clear policies and objectives?

The terms of reference recognise that, until recently, there was no overarching strategy for the Conflict Pool(s), and therefore decisions on funding tended to be piecemeal in nature.³ It should be noted that the absence of an overarching strategy was not a deficiency of the Conflict Pool itself, but rather an issue with the Government's approach to engagement in conflict-affected and fragile states more broadly. The terms of reference describe the purpose of this review as "to assess whether the Conflict Pool has led to a coherent, strategic and effective approach to conflict prevention by the UK Government." In fact, Saferworld would argue that the experience of working cross-departmentally through the Conflict Pool

¹ World Bank, *World development report 2011: conflict, security and development* (2011), http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/WDR2011_Full_Text.pdf

² Independent Commission on Aid Impact, *Evaluation of the inter-departmental Conflict Pool: terms of reference* (2012), <http://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Conflict-pool-ToRs-FINAL5.pdf>, p 4.

³ Ibid, p 3.

⁴ Saferworld, *JACS – a new approach or SCA repackaged? Saferworld submission on the Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability* (2012), <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/Saferworld%20JACS%20submission.pdf>, p 2.

contributed to an awareness that a cross-Whitehall conflict strategy was needed, resulting in the development of the BSOS.

Saferworld welcomed the publication of the BSOS in July 2011, which now provides a platform on which to build a more strategic approach to allocating Conflict Pool resources. In Saferworld's view, the BSOS sets out a bold and progressive vision of upstream conflict prevention, which has the potential to drive interventions which have a real impact on building peace and stability in conflict-affected and fragile states.

Less than a year after the BSOS was published, it is still in the process of being integrated within government departments. Saferworld understands that a BSOS implementation plan is currently being developed, which will set out a number of processes for rolling out BSOS over a two year period. Therefore, it is too early to say with any certainty how the BSOS will impact on the Government's approach to allocating resources through the Conflict Pool. It is positive, however, that calls for proposals under the Conflict Pool are beginning to include the requirement that proposals meet BSOS objectives.

It is worth noting that while the BSOS sets out a set of principles for promoting stability and preventing conflict, it does not contain a set of objectives *per se*. This is not a criticism however: there are no one-size-fits-all solutions to conflict and fragility, and so the Government's objectives in each conflict-affected country or region should be tailored to the individual context. Saferworld understands that these will be contained in cross-departmental conflict strategies for each country or region, which have yet to be developed.

- 6.2.3 Does the Conflict Pool have a strategic approach to engaging with particular conflict situations, based on robust analysis of the country context and drivers of conflict?

The Government is currently in the process of developing the cross-departmental Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability (JACS) methodology, which will guide the development of conflict analysis which is jointly owned by the Department for International Development (DFID), Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defence (MOD). This will replace the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA), which was developed and used primarily by DFID, and other conflict analysis processes utilised by individual departments.

Saferworld has long called for the development of a cross-departmental conflict analysis tool, and so the introduction of the JACS is to be welcomed. The absence of such a tool has meant that the Government has lacked the shared analysis needed for developing shared objectives in particular conflict situations. At best, this means that the activities of DFID, FCO and MOD are not co-ordinated and therefore less effective than they could be. At worst, the activities of the three departments may undermine each other.

As Saferworld set out in its submission on the draft JACS methodology⁴, the greatest challenge will be designing a process which engages all three departments so as to promote a sense of shared ownership. Saferworld acknowledges that this is not a simple task: it will mean navigating different and sometimes competing policy objectives and organisational cultures. However, unless careful consideration is given to how this will be done at all phases of the JACS process, there is a danger that it will continue to be a tool owned and used by one department only.

- 6.2.4 Does the Conflict Pool complement other activities by the UK Government and other agencies and donors and avoid duplication?

In the past, grants dispersed through the Conflict Pool's annual call for proposals have operated in much the same way as other funding mechanisms such as those provided by DFID. However, the Conflict Pool has added significant value to other existing UK Government funding mechanisms through smaller, more flexible and quick-to-access grants, which can better respond to rapidly changing environments. While Saferworld strongly welcomes the introduction of three-year funding allocations, we would also recommend that flexible and quick-to-access funds continue to be made available through country offices.

One respect in which the Conflict Pool has successfully complemented other funding mechanisms is that it has provided relatively small amounts of money in comparison to other sources which deal only in multi-million pound grants. This function is vital, as smaller amounts of money are often much more appropriate

⁴ Saferworld, *JACS – a new approach or SCA repackaged?* Saferworld submission on the Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability (2012), <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/Saferworld%20JACS%20submission.pdf>, p 2.

for conflict prevention activities. In particular, many small community organisations and NGOs, or committed individual leaders in conflict-affected communities may lack the capacity to absorb large amounts of money. Yet these may often be the very groups and individuals who are best placed in terms of legitimacy and local knowledge to design and implement effective peacebuilding projects at the community level. While providing many small grants instead of a few larger ones may impose greater administrative burden on the Government, Saferworld believes that, properly managed, this investment will pay off in terms of the greater impact facilitated by local ownership and knowledge.

Another advantage of the Conflict Pool is its ability to combine Official Development Assistance (ODA) and non-ODA spending. This means that activities such as training military personnel in human rights law (which is excluded from ODA) can be undertaken alongside complementary ODA-funded activities such as building the capacity of civil society to scrutinise the military's human rights record. This may not be possible if decisions on ODA and non-ODA spending were entirely separate.

- 6.2.5 Are individual activities technically sound and based on clear and logical theories of change?

While it is too early to say how the new JACS tool will contribute to the development of theories of change and activity planning, Saferworld welcomes the Government's decision to open up its work to more external challenge, including greater scrutiny of country activities through Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) 'Star Chambers'. UK-based development and peacebuilding NGOs can offer a useful external challenge function and Saferworld would encourage the Government to involve them where appropriate in these processes. The Government has conducted a number of formal and informal consultation exercises with the Bond Conflict Policy Group on the implementation of the BSOS, which have helped to foster closer working relationships between Government officials and civil society on these issues, as well as providing useful inputs into the Government's plans for implementing BSOS.

6.3 Delivery

- 6.3.3 Is the delivery of Conflict Pool activities helping to improve co-operation across the three departments? Is there evidence of joint working and synergies between activities?

Saferworld notes that the recent NAO report on the Conflict Pool concluded that "while beneficial, the tri-departmental structure duplicates roles with each department having representatives at all levels."⁵ The report recommends that steps be undertaken to reduce this duplication. While Saferworld recognises the need to reduce inefficiency, care must be taken to ensure that measures taken to avoid duplication between departments do not inadvertently reduce the effectiveness of the Conflict Pool's activities by reducing cross-departmental buy-in. While it may seem time-consuming to include representatives from DFID, FCO and MOD in meetings and processes at all times, participation of all three departments at all stages of planning, implementing and evaluating activities is crucial to ensuring continued buy-in.

- 6.3.4 Is Conflict Pool spending helping to leverage resources from other UK and international sources?

While Saferworld cannot comment on overall spend, Conflict Pool funding received by Saferworld has helped to leverage resources from other donors. For example, Saferworld's Central Asia programme received funding in 2010 for a community security project in the Ferghana Valley to strengthen communities' resilience to violence. This initial grant enabled Saferworld to respond to rapidly changing conflict dynamics and establish the project which, based on its initial success, attracted follow-on funding from DFID, the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

6.4 Impact

- 6.4.1 Is the Conflict Pool delivering a sustainable reduction in conflict and conflict risk?

⁵ National Audit Office, *Review of the Conflict Pool* (2012), <http://www.nao.org.uk/idoc.ashx?docId=10be92b2-20a5-4c36-938a-cfb00e7d843&version=-1>, p 10.

Having the BSOS in place should improve the ability of the Conflict Pool to deliver a sustainable reduction in conflict and conflict risk. However, there is a danger that the first two pillars of the BSOS, which focus on early warning and rapid response to crises, may receive more attention than the third pillar, which looks at upstream conflict prevention. While the idea of upstream conflict prevention is an appealing one, for many there is a lack of clarity about what kinds of activities it might entail and so there may be a tendency focus on the first two pillars, which are perceived as less complex to implement. This would result in a greater emphasis on responding to conflict, at the expense of efforts to prevent it.

Resource allocations for upstream conflict prevention activities have also been threatened by the unpredictable nature of peacekeeping contributions. The level of the UK's peacekeeping contributions fluctuate with change in exchange rates, and although these changes may seem small in relation to the overall peacekeeping budget, resulting transfers of money from conflict prevention funds to the peacekeeping budget can have a significant impact on upstream conflict prevention programming. It is therefore welcome that a £7 million reserve has been introduced to allow for these fluctuations.⁶

Saferworld believes the introduction of three-year funding will be very beneficial in enabling the Conflict Pool to contribute to sustainable conflict prevention efforts. The three-year funding cycle enables greater ability to respond to changing developments on the ground, allows time for building key relationships, increasing the capacity of local partner organisations, and focusing on delivery and impact over administration.

- 6.4.2 Do Conflict Pool activities help to strengthen national advocates and community capacities for conflict reduction?

This is a crucially important question, and Saferworld welcomes its inclusion in this review. Saferworld believes that understanding the perceptions of those affected by and participating in conflict is vital for developing appropriate responses. Involving affected communities in the design and delivery of those responses is equally important if they are to have the buy-in and ownership needed to be effective. For the Conflict Pool, this may mean supporting international organisations to help build the capacity of local community-based organisations or, as suggested above (6.2.4), providing funds directly to those local organisations. Making funds available in sufficiently small amounts as to be manageable for local organisations is helpful in this regard, as is ensuring that the administrative burden of applying for funds is not prohibitively high for organisations or individuals who are not familiar with these kinds of donor requirements.

One example of this would be a project by Saferworld's Caucasus programme to increase regional capacity for community-based approaches to security as a tool for sustainable early warning, conflict prevention and local accountability, which has received funding from the Conflict Pool since 2010. This funding has enabled Saferworld to deliver training to community representatives in Georgia / Abkhazia / South Ossetia on community-based approaches to security and provide them with the necessary skills to analyse problems and plan solution strategies.

6.5 Learning

- 6.5.1 Do the three departments have appropriate arrangements for monitoring inputs, processes, outputs, results and impact from Conflict Pool activities?

The NAO report concluded that monitoring and evaluation has tended to focus on immediate outputs because "there is a common culture of believing measuring outcomes is 'too difficult'. This has led to a pre-dominance of stating outputs, rather than outcomes, with "too early to say" often reported."⁷ Saferworld recommends that evaluation of Conflict Pool activities should place priority on assessing the long-term impact of action taken to prevent conflict upstream. However, measurement must be realistic and avoid falling between the twin traps of the unattributable and the limited realm of the easily quantifiable. Upstream conflict prevention will often be largely about promoting changes in institutional policies and individual attitudes and behaviour, which are difficult to 'count' meaningfully and will need qualitative indicators to accurately assess, as much as quantitative ones.

⁶ Andrew Mitchell MP, *Hansard*, 5 April 2011, column 58WS, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm110405/wmstext/110405m0001.htm#11040558000008>

⁷ *Op cit* National Audit Office, p 22.

Developing ways of assessing this impact is widely and rightly recognised as challenging. Saferworld believes that a key part of such evaluation could be the measuring of public perceptions of safety and security in conflict-affected and fragile states, undertaken through a co-ordinated range of activities such as large scale surveys, key informant interviews and in-depth assessments at a local level⁶, along with corresponding qualitative assessment of elite behaviours.

As upstream conflict prevention is such a long-term endeavour, it would be unwise to expect to see quick impacts within an arbitrarily defined time frame. Indeed, any pressure to show quick results may have the effect of skewing resource allocations toward projects which may demonstrate impact in the short term but which are not necessarily most effective for building peace in the long term. However, assessing the quality of the *process* – whilst in no way a substitute for rigorous assessment of impact – will be important in ensuring that conflict prevention efforts ‘stay the course’. In this regard, and given the importance of inclusion and participation in successful security-building, Saferworld believes that it would be valuable to include an assessment of how well conflict-affected communities have been included in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the UK’s conflict prevention work in such process evaluations.

▪ 6.5.2 Is there evidence of innovation and use of global best practice?

Developing innovative and more effective approaches to addressing conflict and fragility will require some significant ‘research and development’. In this regard, it is important to recognise that, if lessons are properly learnt, programme failure can lead to the design of better future programmes. The Government will therefore need funds where the tolerance rate for such programme ‘failure’ is set at a level that does not stifle innovation. If there is an expectation that any project which does not meet all of its specified objectives is automatically a ‘failure’ this is likely to lead to the setting of very simplistic objectives that do not get to grips with the tough issues which need to be addressed. Saferworld suggested in its submission to the BSOS development process that the Conflict Pool could be a useful source of ‘conflict prevention venture capital’ to meet this end.⁸

⁸ Saferworld, *Promoting sustainable security in a complex world: Saferworld submission to HMG Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS)* (2011), p 12.

Annexe

Conflict Prevention: Assessing and Enhancing States' Performance

Owen Greene

October 8 2010

Report No 1

Conflict Prevention Performance Project

Saferworld and CICS (University of Bradford)

Conflict Prevention: Assessing and Improving States' Performance

Executive Summary

This report is concerned with the opportunities and challenges of assessing and enhancing the performance of states and international organisations in supporting efforts to prevent violent conflict. It has been prepared as part of the Conflict Prevention Performance Project (CPPP) of Saferworld and the Centre for International Co-operation and Security (CICS), University of Bradford.

The overall aims of the CPPP are to:

- enhance knowledge and awareness of what needs to be done by governments and relevant international and regional organisations when they take conflict prevention objectives seriously; and
- promote improved conflict prevention performance and co-operation.

The CPPP is focused on the performance of states in helping to prevent violent conflicts in which they themselves are not primary conflict parties; that is, on their roles as external actors.

To this end, this report proposes an overall framework for understanding what is involved for any government (or coalition of governments and organisations) that has decided to take conflict prevention (CP) seriously as a major policy objective. This framework has several inter-related purposes, including to:

- clarify and elaborate the key dimensions and elements of serious, coherent and potentially effective CP policies and activities by states;
- facilitate and structure consultations and reviews within and between governments on their present CP performance and on priorities for further development of their CP policies and activities;
- facilitate engagement by civil society and others with selected governments and relevant inter-governmental processes to review and promote their CP performance, cooperation and coherence – focussing particularly initially on OECD, P5, and G20 states;
- provide a useful (and useable) analytical structure for reviewing and assessing states' CP performance; and
- form the basis of a proposed Conflict Prevention Performance Index (CPPI), designed to stimulate public and policy attention to the comparative performance of states' efforts to promote and support conflict prevention; and thus to support all of the other aims outlined above.

This report will be the first public output from the CPPP and is designed to stimulate and contribute to a debate about how best to promote and contribute to governmental efforts to improve performance in preventing violent conflict. We welcome comments to assist with the further development and refinement of the proposed framework and to inform our work to assess states' CP performance, including the elaboration of our proposed new Conflict Prevention Performance Index (CPPI).

This summary sets out the proposed Conflict Prevention Performance Framework, suggests potential uses for such a framework and introduces the idea of a Conflict Prevention Performance Index. A supplementary section looks in more detail at the rationale and guiding principles upon which the development of this project has been based and briefly sets out next steps.

The Conflict Prevention Performance Framework

For the CPP Framework, conflict prevention policies and measures include all types of policies, programmes, instruments and activities that are adopted and used to try to help to:

- reduce risks of violent conflict at an early stage by tackling underlying risk factors, or by reinforcing underlying factors that help to mitigate such risks and enhance resilience against risks of violence;
- identify and address tensions and conflicts at an early stage, to resolve them or establish peaceful frameworks for managing or reducing them before they develop to pose major risks of violent conflict;
- prevent escalation of major disputes or crises into violence, even at a late stage of a crisis; and
- prevent re-emergence of violent conflict in contexts where war or large-scale violence has recently come to an end.

In this context, the CPP Framework aims to facilitate reviews and assessments of states' performance in contributing to preventing violent conflict as an external actor (and not where they have become a primary conflict party) in the following three ways:

- *Contributing to a benign global or regional context for CP;*
- *Contributing as a 'third party' or external actor to preventing inter-state violent conflicts; and*
- *Contributing as a 'third-party' or external actor to preventing civil wars or large scale violence within fragile or conflict-prone states.*

These three strategic categories are the three main 'pillars' of the CPP Framework. In order to ensure appropriate focus and mitigate risks to the primary purposes of the CPP Framework, other relevant or related types of contribution to CP are largely excluded from its scope. This includes wider activities beyond the strict scope of CP (such as post-conflict reconstruction) or activities in contexts where the state under consideration has become a primary conflict party.

Thus the proposed overall structure for the CPP Framework is to identify and assess states' performance in preventing violent conflicts under the following headings:

Pillar 1: Contributions to a benign global or regional context for CP

- 1) International solidarity
- 2) Contributions to effective multilateral institutions and regimes
- 3) Contributions to effective regional co-operation and institutions
- 4) Contributions to international or regional capacities to support peace and security
- 5) 'Good Example' at home and in neighbourhood

Pillar 2: Contributions as an external actor to preventing inter-state violent conflicts

- 1) Contributions to international security and stability
- 2) Support for international mechanisms for preventive diplomacy
- 3) Support for regional mechanisms for preventive diplomacy and CP
- 4) Contributions to early warning and timely response to risks of inter-state conflict
- 5) Consistency and coherence of contribution to preventing inter-state conflict

Pillar 3: Contributions as an external actor to preventing civil wars of large scale societal or transnational violence

- 1) Contributions to CP relating to security and justice
- 2) Contributions to CP through conflict-sensitive development
- 3) Contributions to CP through conflict-sensitive governance assistance
- 4) Contributions to CP through support for societal conflict resilience and capacity for local CP and peace and reconciliation processes
- 5) Overall national commitment and capacity to contribute to CP in fragile and conflict-prone states

Under each of the sub-headings for each pillar, the report elaborates a set of types of policies, measures and activities whose presence or absence should be noted, and also possible indicators of their quality with respect to CP.

Using the Conflict Prevention Performance Framework

The proposed CPP Framework will hopefully be widely and readily accepted as a systematic way of laying out the key aspects of states' possible contributions to CP. As noted, it has been designed to reflect and incorporate 'basic common understandings' of the elements of CP from a wide variety of governmental (and expert) perspectives.

The CPPP aims to use this framework to facilitate and enable the following activities:

- consultations by CPPP partners with interested experts and government officials to refine and develop the CPP Framework so that it is a useful and widely acceptable basis for pursuing CPPP objectives
- engagements by the CPPP partners with individual governments to review and assess the overall CP performance of the government and to identify ways in which this performance could most usefully be strengthened
- reviews by government officials, parliamentarians and others of the strengths and weaknesses of their own government across the range of potential CP measures, with a view to identifying and promoting ways to improve performance
- intergovernmental consultations and reviews on their CP performance, including for example peer-review processes or developing international guidelines and good practices. Consultations between OECD and BRIC or G20 governments, hopefully also involving non-governmental experts and NGOs, to develop shared understandings of what government commitments to CP should involve
- independent and comparable assessments, by the CPPP partners and other concerned groups, of the CP performance of selected governments
- development of a 'Conflict Prevention Performance Index', to provide a regular systematic relative assessment of the performance of states, and of trends in performance.

The CPPP partners plan to pursue and promote each of these types of activities, in close consultation with the relevant governments and other interested organisations and experts. In the first instance, it is proposed to focus primarily on P5, G7 and OECD states, plus Brazil, India, China, Indonesia and South Africa.

Developing a Conflict Prevention Performance Index?

The CPPP has developed a detailed design of a possible Conflict Prevention Performance Index (CPPI). The primary aim of such a CPPI would be to provide a constructive and transparent tool to enable policy communities and the wider public concerned with CP to readily identify relative strengths and weaknesses in key aspects of selected countries' CP performance, in order to stimulate and focus efforts to learn lessons and improve their individual and collective performance in these areas.

Indexes have recently been established to help to monitor, assess and compare states' policies or performance in a variety of issue areas, such as: corruption; commitment to development; humanitarian response; state fragility; sustainable governance; environmental performance; peace; or climate change performance.

A well-designed performance index can usefully attract wide attention to states' performance in important policy areas, and provide readily digestible information about relative strengths and weaknesses of surveyed states which can stimulate media attention and debate. However, there are also risks involved: complex issues can be damagingly oversimplified and overall rankings of states' performance can be misleading. Such indexes need to be designed with care, and with a clear idea of their main objectives.

There is no existing index that can directly be used to assess and compare states' performance in promoting CP. The CPPP is actively considering the feasibility and value of preparing a CPPI for this purpose, and plans to conduct a number of expert consultations on this issue on the basis of a detailed proposed approach and methodology which is outlined in this report.

The proposed CPPI is designed to build directly on the CPP Framework elaborated in this report. States' performance would be separately assessed for each of the three CPP 'pillars', and would thus produce separate rankings of states' performance for:

- contributions to a benign global or regional context for CP;
- contributions as an external actor to preventing inter-state violent conflicts; and
- contributions as an external actor to preventing civil wars or large-scale societal or transnational violence.

A detailed draft methodology has been developed for assessing state performance under each of these pillars, in which a set of indicators of performance have been developed under each category of CP policy or practice listed in the CPP Framework outlined above. These combine quantitative and qualitative performance criteria, and are designed not only to produce 'scores' but also to provide

disaggregated qualitative assessments that can provide the basis for consultations with relevant government officials or parliamentarians. Each state's overall performance under each pillar is ranked by adding the scores for each category of CP activity.

An overall CP Performance ranking would be produced by combining the rankings of each of the three pillars. The emphasis of the overall ranking could thus readily be adjusted by changing the relative weightings of the rankings for each pillar. In this way, more than one overall ranking could be produced: for example, one focussed more on performance in preventing inter-state wars and another focussed on performance in preventing large-scale violence within conflict-prone countries or regions.

Saferworld and CICS plan to develop the CPPP, potentially including a CPPI, in close consultation with all key stakeholders and experts, including officials from relevant governments and international organisations. We therefore propose to engage in a series of consultations until early 2011, to refine the concept, design and usefulness of the proposed CPP Framework, and also of the proposed CPPI. In 2011, the CPP Project will develop an expert international CPP advisory group, to ensure high quality guidance and advice from a range of important perspectives.

Rationale and guiding principles

The need for a framework for assessing states' Conflict Prevention Performance

As noted, many CP policies and mechanisms have been developed by a wide variety of states and other organisations. However, there is almost an equally wide variety of understandings and interpretations of what is meant by 'conflict prevention' policies and programmes; and what is their scope and priorities.

A wide range of types of factors can effect risks of violent conflict between or within states: political, economic, diplomatic, (in)security; cultural, ideological, institutional or social. Thus there is an equally wide range of types of ways in which CP activities can potentially be usefully pursued. Moreover, virtually every sphere of engagement with a country or region can impact (positively or negatively) on risks of violent conflict. Almost every act of engagement could potentially be declared to be intended as a contribution to CP.

Moreover, there are important overlaps between CP and closely related government policies, including: crisis response; conflict management; stabilisation; conflict reduction; conflict resolution; conflict transformation; peace-building. More widely, there are overlaps with promotion of multilateral co-operation, trade, sustainable development, human and minority rights, arms control and disarmament. States and international organisations often have policies and programmes that are labelled under one of these terms but which in practice cover important elements of CP.

In this context, any effective international consultation, review or assessment of States' performance in conflict prevention requires a useable overall framework that clarifies and elaborates the scope and key elements of CP policies and activities. Otherwise the risks of confusion, high contestation and unproductive debates will be unnecessarily high.

A number of frameworks for CP activities have been to some extent developed by various states, regional and international organisations for a variety of specific purposes and contexts. For example, every organisation, government ministry, agency or NGO in the world that has a declared policy to contribute to CP has an associated definition and statement of scope and priorities; and the UN has used 'conflict prevention' concepts or labels in a variety of ways. Similarly there is a wide academic and NGO literature on, or relevant to, CP – again for a wide variety of purposes and contexts.

These provide a rich foundation on which to build. However, a review of such existing frameworks indicates that, although there is much common ground and similar understandings, none of them provide the required basis for a systematic and appropriately comprehensive review of states' performance in contributing to conflict prevention. The CPPP has therefore focussed initially on developing such a conflict prevention performance framework.

Guiding principles for a useful Conflict Prevention Performance Framework

The primary aim of our proposed CPP Framework is to provide a constructive and widely acceptable framework to enable policy communities concerned with conflict prevention from a variety of countries to readily identify relative strengths and weaknesses in key aspects of countries' policies and measures to promote CP as external actors beyond their national territories, in order to stimulate and focus efforts to learn lessons and improve their individual and collective performance in these areas.

Conflict prevention is a complex and much-debated issue; and a wide range of experts, organisations and governments have developed their own framings and understandings of the concept and its policy implications. It is not useful in this context to try to 're-invent the wheel' and develop an entirely new approach in the hope that it will rapidly achieve wide acceptance. Rather, it is important to aim to develop a CPP Framework that incorporates and reflects as wide a range as possible of the existing approaches in an organised way, and which can be expected to be readily relevant and acceptable to a wide variety of key stakeholders – particularly governments.

Our aim is therefore to develop an analytically robust overall CPP Framework which is likely to be acceptable and useable for a wide range of experts and government officials with diverse perspectives, understandings and priorities about the causes of conflicts and CP approaches. Thus, for example, the CPP Framework needs to be relevant for, and useable by, experts, officials, parliamentarians and NGOs from BRIC and G20 countries as well from developed OECD states; and for officials from defence and development aid as well as foreign ministries.

Similarly, the CPP Framework must be customised for the particular purposes of reviewing and assessing states' performance in contributing as an external actor to CP. Such customisation is essential: the issues are too complex and contested to hope to design a CPP Framework that can be used by policy communities for all purposes and contexts.

In this context, it is important to avoid predictable 'bear-traps'. For example, the CPP Framework needs to avoid making assumptions which some key governments would regard as highly contentious and ideological, and would thus get in the way of constructive engagement with governments, and inter-governmental consultation and review. In view of the overall aims of the CPP, this implies as far as possible avoiding overall assumptions that would be highly contested by governments of P5 states such as China, Russia and the USA, even if they might be widely acceptable to most EU states.

Similarly, experience shows that governments are highly sensitive about discussing their CP performance in their own territories, or in relation to violent conflicts in which they are an active party. We reluctantly conclude that a CPP Framework designed to promote constructive engagement with governments, and inter-governmental reviews of CP performance has to choose between focussing on their performance in relation to preventing their 'own' violent conflicts and preventing conflicts as an external and relatively disinterested actor. In view of the aims of the CPP, we choose the latter in this report. (However, as the report details, we provide scope for recognising the roles that states may play as direct conflict parties, through a category of 'good example'.)

Within this framework, the following principles were used to guide the overall design of the CPP Framework.

- The potential value of a wide range of different types of CP activities should be clearly recognised; including direct contributions to preventing inter-state conflicts, civil wars, or large-scale violence within fragile or conflict prone states, as well as indirect contributions by promoting a benign global or regional context in which conflict risks can better be managed or reduced
- Use of the CPP Framework should not depend on difficult and highly contestable assessments of the extent to which specific CP policies and measures actually prevented specific violent conflicts in practice
- Use of the CPP Framework should instead focus on the extent to which the state whose performance is being reviewed has seriously developed, adopted, resourced and implemented policies, programmes and activities that can reasonably be expected to contribute to conflict prevention
- Indicators of serious and sustained CP efforts, including international leadership or co-ordination roles and willingness to take responsible risks in the interests of CP, should be clearly recognised and highlighted in the CPP Framework

It was also imperative that the CPP Framework should:

- primarily address intentional CP policies and activities. However, it should also clearly address the extent to which the state recognises and addresses risks that its engagements in conflict-prone regions might unintentionally 'do harm' and contribute to risks of conflict; that is, the extent to which the relevant state has taken steps to ensure the 'conflict sensitivity' of its various types of engagements in conflict-prone areas
- enable users to be able to distinguish assessments of different dimensions of states' CP performance. Most states can be expected to demonstrate some areas of relatively good performance as well as areas of weak or bad practice. These should be disaggregated in the

- CPP Framework, so that governments can readily identify and respond to areas of relative weakness even if they are overall relatively strong CP performers
- be designed as far as possible to retain a sufficient level of disaggregation or specificity in its elements to enable it to facilitate engagement with officials and policy-communities on a wide range of important types of CP issues. These issues include mid-level policy and programme issues such as use of conflict analysis; early warning mechanisms; SSR; SALW controls; preventive diplomacy; conflict sensitivity of aid; mechanisms to promote coherence of CP; or responsiveness to local conditions and local priorities.

Next steps

As noted above, Saferworld and CICS plan to develop the CPPP, potentially including a CPPI, in close consultation with key stakeholders and experts, including officials from relevant governments and international organisations. We therefore propose to engage in a series of consultations until early 2011, to refine the concept, design and usefulness of the proposed CPP Framework, and also of the proposed CPPI. In 2011, we aim to develop an expert international CPP advisory group, to ensure high quality guidance and advice from a range of important perspectives.

Conflict Prevention: Assessing and Enhancing States' Performance

Report

1. INTRODUCTION

This Report is concerned with the opportunities and challenges of assessing and enhancing the performance of states and international organisations in supporting efforts to prevent violent conflict. It has been prepared as part of the Conflict Prevention Performance Project (CPPP) of Saferworld and the Centre for International Co-operation and Security (CICS), University of Bradford.

The overall aims of the CPPP are to:

- enhance knowledge and awareness of what needs to be done by governments and relevant international and regional organisations when they take conflict prevention objectives seriously; and
- promote improved conflict prevention performance and co-operation.

The CPPP is focused on the performance of states in helping to prevent violent conflicts in which they themselves are not primary conflict parties; that is, on their roles as external actors in conflict prevention.

To this end, this Report proposes an overall framework for understanding what is involved for any government (or coalition of governments and organisations) that has decided to take conflict prevention (CP) seriously as a major policy objective. This framework has several inter-related purposes, including to:

- clarify and elaborate the key dimensions and elements of serious, coherent and potentially effective CP policies and activities by states;
- facilitate and structure consultations and reviews within and between governments on their present CP performance and on priorities for further development of their CP policies and activities;
- facilitate engagement by civil society and others with selected governments and relevant inter-governmental processes to review and promote their CP performance, cooperation and coherence – focussing particularly initially on OECD, P5, and G20 states;
- provide a useful (and useable) analytical structure for reviewing and assessing states' CP performance; and
- form the basis of a proposed Conflict Prevention Performance Index (CPPI), designed to stimulate public and policy attention to the comparative performance of states' efforts to promote and support conflict prevention; and thus to support all of the other aims outlined above.

The Report is structured as follows. The next section briefly reviews the development and challenges of international measures to help to prevent violent conflicts, and the particular roles of developed and major developing states. Section three then discusses the need to a framework for assessing state's conflict prevention performance, and establishes some key guiding principles for a useful framework. Section four presents our proposed Conflict Prevention Performance Framework (CPPF). Section five outlines some of the uses to which the CPPF is intended to be used in practice to promote conflict prevention, and thus clarifies the follow-on activities planned by the CPPP. Section 6 discusses the potential benefits of the Conflict Prevention Performance Index (CPPI), which is presently under development and presents our

proposed design for such an Index, to provide a basis for consultations with governments and other stakeholders on the possible full development of a CPPI. Section 7 addresses next steps.

This Report is the first public output from the CPPP and is designed to stimulate and contribute to a debate about how best to promote and contribute to governmental efforts to improve performance in preventing violent conflict. We welcome comments to assist with the further development and refinement of the proposed framework and to inform our work to assess states' CP performance, including the elaboration of our proposed new Conflict Prevention Performance Framework, and possible Conflict Prevention Performance Index (CPPI).

2. CONFLICT PREVENTION: A KEY FOCUS FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY-MAKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The importance of conflict prevention

It has long been recognised that it is better to prevent violent conflicts than to try to respond to them after large-scale violence has begun. Once violent hostilities have commenced, conflicts develop new dynamics and imperatives that disempower local peacemakers, re-inforce conflict divisions and grievances, escalate tensions and insecurities, and obstruct conflict reduction and conflict resolution efforts.⁹ The overall costs of war or large-scale violence are almost always very great, in terms of human death and suffering, destruction, and impoverishment. The costs of effective interventions to help to end wars and support post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building are similarly immense. It is preferable by far in terms of human welfare as well as international costs to take steps to prevent large-scale violent conflict.¹⁰

Efforts to prevent violent conflicts have always been a central concern for civil society activists, researchers and NGOs concerned with peace and conflict issues. Since the early 1990s, conflict prevention has been increasingly emphasised and prioritised by the UN, international and regional organisations and governments. A wide variety of international, regional and national policies, measures and mechanisms have been developed to help to provide early warning of risks of violent and to stimulate and facilitate timely and effective preventive responses.¹¹

Overall, relevant policies and mechanisms are now in place internationally and in most regions to address virtually every key aspect of conflict prevention activity, opportunity or instrument. This represents major progress over the last 20 years.

What is meant by conflict prevention?

At this point it is important to not only to define conflict prevention (CP) but also to recognise its ambiguities and breadth of scope.

Every country or region is characterised by many political, economic, cultural, social or other divisions, tensions and disputes. This is an intrinsic characteristic of any dynamic and developing society. The challenge is to manage, resolve or transform such tensions peacefully and creatively – a task in which every relevant person or organisation within or engaged with the society or region can play their part. In this Report, we are concerned with preventing tensions or conflicts from degenerating into violence.

Broadly, the term 'Conflict Prevention' is understood here to refer to *policies and activities to that aim to help to prevent large-scale violent conflict before it occurs.*

Conflict Prevention (CP) thus includes policies and activities that:

⁹ M. Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts: a strategy for preventive diplomacy*, USIP, Washington DC, 1996; Carnegie Commission for Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict*, Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1997, New York

¹⁰ As discussed, for example in M. Chalmers et al, *Spending to Save: an analysis of the cost effectiveness of conflict prevention versus intervention after the onset of violent conflict*; Synthesis Project Report, Centre for International Cooperation and Security (CICS), University of Bradford, UK, 2004

¹¹ As surveyed, for example, in C. Crocker et al (eds), *Leashing the Dogs of War: conflict management in a divided world*, USIP Press, Washington DC, 2007; C. Crocker et al (eds), *Turbulent Peace: the challenges of managing international conflict*, USIP Press, Washington DC, 2001; C. Mwaura and S. Schmeidl (eds) *Early Warning and Conflict management in the Horn of Africa*; Red Sea Press, Eritrea, 2002; M. Lund op cit 1996; S. Hideo, *Containing Conflict: Cases in Preventive Diplomacy*, Japan Centre for International Exchange/Brooking Institution Press, Washington DC, 2003; J Davies and T Gurr (eds); *Preventive Measures: building risk assessment and crisis early warning systems*; Rowman and Littlefield Ltd, Oxford 1998; B. Ramcharan, *Preventive Diplomacy at the UN*; Indiana University Press, 2008..

- Reduce risks of violent conflict at an early stage by tackling underlying factors that contribute to such risks, or by re-inforcing underlying factors that help to mitigate such risks and enhance resilience against risks of violence;
- Identify and address tensions and conflicts at an early stage, to resolve them or establish peaceful frameworks for managing or reducing them before they develop to pose major risks of violent conflict;
- Prevent escalation of major disputes or crises into violence, even at a late stage of a crisis;
- Prevent re-emergence of violent conflict in contexts where war or large-scale violence has recently taken place.

There have been many studies of the causes of violent conflicts within or between states, and many theories have been developed. Every theory that focuses on only a few key explanatory variables or structural factors has proved to be highly deficient or misleading. In practice, factors that are often identified as 'root causes of internal violent conflict' - such as poverty, inequality or ethnic difference – are also widely present in societies that have successfully avoided large-scale violent conflict.

A wide range of types of factors can contribute to risks of violent conflict between states: political, economic, diplomatic, (in)security; cultural, ideological, environmental, institutional or social; and in practice risks depend on how these combine, often in unanticipated ways. Similarly, a wide range of factors that could contribute to risks of internal violent conflict can be identified in any 'fragile' state or region – including numerous underlying (or structural) political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and security factors; a wide range groups and organisations with actual or potentially opposing interests; and numerous dynamic processes that could drive or trigger violence. The actual risks these pose should not be pre-judged, but depend on up-to-date and context specific analysis. Normally the overall risks depend on the ways in which several factors combine.

In summary, many different factors can contribute to the risks of violent conflict within or between states, and conflict processes depend on how these combine dynamically, or in response to events. Thus there is an equally wide range of types of ways in which CP activities can potentially be usefully pursued.¹² Moreover, virtually every sphere of engagement with a country or region can impact (positively or negatively) on risks of violent conflict.

Conflict prevention policies and activities are those where there is some deliberate or conscious use of such engagements to reduce risks of violent conflict. But a responsible CP policy should also include concerns about the 'conflict sensitivity' of all types of engagement for non-CP purposes.

In practice, there are important overlaps between CP and closely related activities and processes, including conflict management, stabilisation; conflict reduction, conflict resolution, conflict transformation and peace-building. Moreover, States and international organisations often have policies and programmes that are labelled under one of these terms but which in practice cover several of these types of activities. The scope of an assessment of Conflict Prevention Performance (CPP) therefore covers such 'grey areas' as well as purely CP-labelled policies and activities.

Challenges of Effective Conflict Prevention

Not surprisingly, experience has shown that the existence of relevant conflict prevention policies and mechanisms is not in itself any guarantee of improved performance in preventing violent conflicts. The policies and mechanisms need to be actively and effectively used in a timely and concerted way in order to make a real difference to conflict risks.¹³

For example, initiatives to enable 'early warning' of emerging risks of violent conflict has often not been following by 'early responses' to address the risks. Similarly, regional and international mechanisms to facilitate conflict prevention depend for their effectiveness not only on their institutional design and capabilities but also on the willingness of political leaders for them to be actively used. Too often, such political will has been inadequate.

¹² See, for example, discussions in O. Ramsbotham, T. Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2005; M. Lund (1996), op cit; Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1997), op cit; and also the references cited in footnote 4 above.

¹³ See for example, M. Lund, *Conflict Prevention: theory in pursuit of policy and practice*; in *Sage Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, pp 285-321, 2008; Carnegie Commission, *Preventing Deadly Conflict Final Report 1997*, (op cit).

Our Conflict Prevention Performance (CPP) project starts from an understanding that, where it is most needed, preventing violent conflicts is generally complex, difficult and controversial; and poses special challenges for well-intentioned external actors.

Although low-level violence is a problem everywhere, most societies and regions show great resilience against allowing social tensions or political divisions to lead to war or large-scale violence. However, where such resilience is lacking, and where the overall conflict divisions and dynamics are deeply embedded and prone to violence, effective conflict prevention is hard.

External actors can play a critically important role in these contexts, for example by providing mediation, preventive diplomacy, confidence-building assurances, or well-targeted resources to mitigate or address conflict risks factors and facilitate co-operative agreements. Some of this support may sometimes be welcomed by all sides to the conflict. But measures designed seriously to address conflict risk factors have not only to engage with but also to change or challenge institutional structures and patterns of power, interests, norms or understandings. This work involves developing potentially problematic partnerships with local actors. It is difficult and complex to responsibly conduct, involving political, economic or other risks and costs.

In some cases, even the most well-targeted and concerted CP efforts cannot prevent large-scale violence from occurring: the drivers towards violent conflict can overwhelm preventive efforts.

In the context of globalisation and complex-interdependence, few actors can be completely 'external' to conflict risks and dynamics in any country or region in the world. Every international actor is likely to be at least indirectly implicated in one or more of the structures, actors or dynamic processes relevant to risks of conflict. Moreover, many outside actors will have at least some interests involved. However, there is a difference between such indirect involvement and active engagement as a primary conflict party. Thus, when we refer here to 'external CP actors', we refer to actors that are mainly based outside the country or countries where the conflict process of concern is taking place, and that have not become (intentionally or unintentionally) a primary conflict party.

Many different types of actors can and do engage as external actors in important conflict prevention work around the world, including the UN, a wide variety of international and regional organisations, governments and government agencies; civil society groups (including NGOs, churches, academic institutions), and private sector companies and entrepreneurs. Each such actor brings their own histories, approaches, capacities and interests to the task. Each has to address the challenges of developing and implementing appropriate conflict prevention strategies and activities, and of addressing issues to promote the relevance, coherence, sustainability and effectiveness of their contributions. Many assessment tools, procedures and good-practice guidelines have been developed for these purposes.

3. THE NEED FOR A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING STATES' CONFLICT PREVENTION PERFORMANCE

Governments' Responsibilities for Conflict Prevention

Governments have the primary responsibility for preventing violent conflicts that directly involve their own state; either within their territory or in inter-state violence with neighbours or rivals. Moreover, governments and their national agencies also have important responsibilities as external actors, to help to prevent violent conflicts outside their direct area of territorial jurisdiction or interest - within or between other states or regions.

Capable states can bring major institutional capacities, resources, and instruments for influence to conflict prevention activities; directly through their political, economic, diplomatic, security; cultural, or ideological capacities and influence; and also indirectly through funding; aid; or encouragement, regulation and protection of civil society or private sector actors. States have critical decision-making authority, access and influence as members of the UN and through their membership of relevant international and regional organisations.

This is particularly true of certain groups of states. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council (the P5) have special roles, responsibilities and capacities for conflict prevention, as part of their UNSC responsibilities relating to international peace and security. The 'G7' and OECD states tend to have relatively high capacities to support conflict prevention: through their national capacities as wealthy countries with relatively large and well-developed government institutions and resources; and through

their influence as members of G7 and OECD institutions and at the core of powerful international and regional institutions, such as the World Bank or EU. In addition, certain major developing countries (such as Brazil, India, South Africa or Indonesia) are now widely recognised to have major international or regional influence, recognised for example through their participation in G20 processes or so-called 'BRICS' groupings.

Over the last decade, virtually all of these relatively influential states have not only made national policy commitments to contribute as external actors to CP beyond their territories, but also have joined a range of regional and international agreements and declarations on this matter.

It is important to ensure that such states' CP performance are adequately monitored, reviewed and assessed; to promote consultation, coherence and accountability and also to learn lessons to improve effectiveness in the future.

Different Understandings of States' CP Policies and Activities

In this context, any effective international consultation, review or assessment of States' performance in conflict prevention requires a useable overall framework that clarifies and elaborates the scope and key elements of CP policies and activities. Otherwise the risks of confusion, high contestation and unproductive debates will be unnecessarily high.

Conflict prevention is a complex and much-debated issue; and a wide range of experts, organisations and governments have developed their own framings and understandings of the concept and its policy implications. At present, there is no shared framework for understanding States' CP policies and activities. Many CP policies and mechanisms have been developed by a wide variety of states and other organisations. However, there is almost an equally wide variety of understandings and interpretations of what is meant by 'conflict prevention' policies and programmes; and what is their scope and priorities.

As discussed, a wide range of types of factors can effect risks of violent conflict between or within states: political, economic, diplomatic, (in)security; cultural, ideological, institutional or social. Thus there is an equally wide range of types of ways in which CP activities can potentially be usefully pursued. Moreover, virtually every sphere of engagement with a country or region can impact (positively or negatively) on risks of violent conflict. Almost every act of engagement could potentially be declared to be intended as a contribution to CP.

Moreover, there are important overlaps between CP and closely related government policies, including: crisis response; conflict management; stabilisation; conflict reduction; conflict resolution; conflict transformation; peace-building. More widely, there are overlaps with promotion of multilateral co-operation, trade, sustainable development, human and minority rights, arms control and disarmament. States and international organisations often have policies and programmes that are labelled under one of these terms but which in practice cover important elements of CP.

A number of frameworks for CP activities have been to some extent developed by various states, regional and international organisations for a variety of specific purposes and contexts. For example, every organisation, government ministry, agency or NGO in the world that has a declared policy to contribute to CP has an associated definition and statement of scope and priorities; and the UN has used 'conflict prevention' concepts or labels in a variety of ways. Similarly, there is a wide academic and NGO literature on, or relevant to, CP – again for a wide variety of purposes and contexts.

These provide a rich foundation on which to build. However, a review of such existing frameworks indicates that, although there is much common ground and similar understandings, none of them provide the required basis for a systematic and appropriately comprehensive review of states' performance in contributing to conflict prevention.

For example, amongst OECD governments, guidelines for development aid agencies have been developed within OECD-DAC to clarify their potential contributions to conflict prevention. But these are rather distinct from shared understandings of CP instruments amongst NATO allies, for example in relation to the potential role of military deterrence or intervention. Officials from mostly the same states, but in different ministries, have developed overlapping but different shared understandings of CP policies for different policy contexts. Governments of emerging developing countries such as China, India, Brazil, South Africa or Indonesia have their own, often not fully explicit, understandings of CP policies, and it is not at all clear that these are the same as for OECD or G7 states.

The CPPP has therefore focussed initially on developing such a conflict prevention performance framework.

Guiding Principles for a Useful Conflict Prevention Performance Framework

The primary aim of our proposed CPP Framework is to provide a constructive and widely acceptable framework to enable policy communities concerned with conflict prevention from a variety of countries to readily identify relative strengths and weaknesses in key aspects of countries' policies and measures to promote CP as external actors beyond their national territories, in order to stimulate and focus efforts to learn lessons and improve their individual and collective performance in these areas.

It is not useful in this context to try to 're-invent the wheel' and develop an entirely new approach in the hope that it will rapidly achieve wide acceptance. Rather, it is important to aim to develop a CPP Framework that incorporates and reflects as wide a range as possible of the existing approaches in an organised way, and which can be expected to be readily relevant and acceptable to a wide variety of key stakeholders – particularly governments.

Our aim is therefore to develop an analytically robust overall CPP Framework which is likely to be acceptable and useable for a wide range of experts and government officials with diverse perspectives, understandings and priorities about the causes of conflicts and CP approaches. Thus, for example, the CPP Framework needs to be acceptable, relevant for, and useable by, experts, officials, parliamentarians and NGOs from BRIC and G20 countries as well from developed OECD states; and for officials from defence and development aid as well as foreign ministries.

The CPPI should be designed to facilitate engagement with all relevant major aspects of government policy and programmes: including foreign; defence/peace support; development aid; economy/trade. This implies, for example, avoiding frameworks or language that are perceived to be dominated by one sector (e.g. development co-operation).

Within this framework, the CPPF should be designed to enable users to be able to distinguish assessments of different dimensions of states' CP performance. Most states can be expected to demonstrate some areas of relatively good performance as well as areas of weak or bad practice. These should be disaggregated in the CPP Framework, so that governments can readily identify and respond to areas of relative weakness even if they are overall relatively strong CP performers.

In this context, it is important to avoid predictable pitfalls. For example, the CPP Framework needs to avoid making assumptions which some key governments would regard as highly contentious and ideological (for example, whether liberal market reform or democratisation is intrinsically malign or benign for CP), which would get in the way of constructive engagement with governments, and inter-governmental consultation and review. In view of the overall aims of the CPPF, this implies as far as possible avoiding overall assumptions that would be highly contested by governments of P5 states such as China, Russia and the USA, even if they might be widely acceptable to most EU states.

Scope of CPPF: address CP efforts relating to all types of large-scale violent conflict

Large scale violent conflicts can have a wide range of characteristics, and the conflict and security analysts often aim to categorise them into different types, such as: inter-state war; civil wars; 'new wars'; inter-communal conflicts; ethnic conflicts; natural resource conflicts, and so on.¹⁴

These distinctions are relevant, but most are highly contested. Moreover, experience shows that the characteristics of large-scale violent processes can change over time, for example acquiring a stronger ethnic or political-economy dimension as the conflict progresses; or mixed inter-state/intra-state dynamics.

For these reasons, the overall scope of the CPPF includes all types of large scale violent conflict, while recognising within its design primary distinctions between inter-state conflicts on the one hand and internal or civil wars on the other.

Scope of CPPF: address the full range of types of conflict prevention policies, instruments or activities

In principle, it would be possible to restrict the scope of the CPPF to particular types of mechanisms, instruments or sectors (such as early warning mechanisms, preventive diplomacy, economic incentives or

¹⁴ As discussed for example in: *M. Kaldor, New and Old Wars: organised violence in a global era*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001; H. Munkler, *The New Wars*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2005; M. Brown (ed); *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, CSIA Harvard University, Cambridge Mass, 1996; D. Grenfell and P. James (eds), *Rethinking Insecurity, War and Violence*, Routledge press, London, 2009; ICRC, *Typology of Armed Conflicts*, *International Review of the Red Cross*, ICRC Geneva, 2009.

sanctions; arms control; or poverty alleviation aid). However, effective CP can involve the deployment of a wide range of different types of instruments and approaches; selected according to the specific circumstances, risks and opportunities of each situation. Such scope restrictions would thus be arbitrary, and might even detract from good CP practice to develop relatively comprehensive and flexible approaches towards CP.

Similarly, it would be undesirable to single out certain strategic approaches to CP for attention in the CPPF. Within the CP literature, for example, the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflicts distinguishes 'operational prevention', which focuses on preventing crises that can escalate into violence, and 'structural prevention', which focuses on addressing underlying structural conflict-risk factors (or 'root causes').¹⁵ Similarly, some distinguish between 'light prevention' and 'deep prevention' along similar lines.¹⁶ However, both dimensions of CP are very important, and in practice can be hard to distinguish in dynamic or enduring conflicts. The CPPF should aim to re-inforce and encourage combined approaches rather than weaken linkages or polarise debates on this issue.

Moreover, the CPPF should also clearly address the extent to which the state recognises and addresses risks that its engagements in conflict-prone regions might unintentionally 'do harm' and contribute to risks of conflict; that is, the extent to which the relevant state has taken steps to ensure the 'conflict sensitivity' of its various types of engagements in conflict-prone areas.

Finally in this context, the CPPF should be designed as far as possible to retain a sufficient level of disaggregation or specificity in its elements to enable it to facilitate engagement with officials and policy-communities on a wide range of important types of CP issues. These issues include mid-level policy and programme issues such as use of conflict analysis; early warning mechanisms; SSR; SALW controls; preventive diplomacy; conflict sensitivity of aid; mechanisms to promote coherence of CP; or responsiveness to local conditions and local priorities.

The CPPF should not directly promote reviews of States' CP Performance in contexts where they are a primary conflict party

There is legitimate and high concern about each States' performance in relation to conflict prevention, management, resolution and peace-building within its own territory or in relation to conflicts it has with its neighbouring or other countries. It is in these contexts that each State has greatest power, interest and influence to contribute to conflict prevention and conflict resolution; and they should be accountable for their policies and actions.

In these contexts, the state is typically acting very much as a primary party to the conflict, rather than as an 'external' actor that is promoting CP without a strong interest in the way the conflict is resolved. Even if the state concerned sincerely claims that it is trying to act as an external mediator or facilitator to prevent local conflicts, this claim is likely to be highly contested at least some of the other conflict parties will perceive the state as an adversary or ally in the conflict. This is also the case in relation to tensions or conflicts with neighbouring countries, such as for India in relation to Pakistan.

The problem is that experience shows that governments are highly sensitive about discussing their CP performance in their own territories, or in relation to violent conflicts in which they are an active party. The main aim of the CPPF is to facilitate engagement with and between national officials and policy-makers on international CP priorities and actions. This likely to be obstructed if the CPP Framework directly raises highly politically-sensitive 'internal security' or 'sovereignty' issues for the states concerned.

We reluctantly conclude that a CPP Framework designed to promote constructive engagement with governments, and inter-governmental reviews of CP performance has to choose between focussing on their performance in relation to preventing their 'own' violent conflicts and preventing conflicts as an external and relatively disinterested actor. In view of the aims of the CPPF, we choose the latter in this Report. However, as discussed below, we provide scope for recognising the roles that states may play as direct conflict parties, through a category of 'good example'.

We recognise that the boundary between a state's 'external' CP performance as a 'non-conflict' party and performance as a conflict party is not clear cut. States can normally be expected to bring their own interests and perspectives to their 'external' CP-related activities. Moreover, effective engagement in CP in a conflict prone country or region often implies taking sides on some issues, with the risks of being perceived at least as a secondary party in the conflict processes.

¹⁵ Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1997), op cit

¹⁶As discussed, for example, in O. Ramsbotham, T. Woodhouse and H. Miall op cit 2005, chapter 5.

The CPPF should include States' contributions as external actors to post-conflict stabilisation, reconstruction and peace-building only where they directly relate to conflict prevention

In principle, a good case can be made for including within the CPPF States' contributions to UN and other multilateral or bilateral post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building process in countries that are emerging from armed conflicts following a peace agreement – including measures to sustain the 'peace process', stabilisation, and assist with humanitarian and recovery needs. By helping to consolidate the peace, such measures contribute to the re-emergence of conflict, and thus to conflict prevention.

On balance, however, we propose specifically to exclude most contributions to post-conflict reconstruction, peace-building and development from the CPPF, except to the extent that they can be recognised under the categories 'contributions to a benign environment to CP' or 'conflict prevention in fragile and conflict-prone states' (see below). The main reason for this to retain the focus of the CPPI on conflict prevention, and to avoid the risk that including assessments of contributions to wider post-conflict reconstruction processes would divert attention and resources from the CPPF's core objectives.

The CPPF focuses on reviewing States' CP policies and measures rather than their impacts

The CPPF aims to promote and facilitate reviews of States' overall performance in trying to prevent violent conflict, rather than assessments of why a conflict did, or did not, actually occur at a particular time or place. Thus it should be designed to assess the extent to which the state under consideration has seriously developed, adopted and pursued policies, programmes and activities that can reasonably be expected to contribute to conflict prevention in other countries and regions.

As emphasised, effective contributions to conflict prevention as an external actor are hard to achieve. They require focussed and concerted efforts, involving detailed assessments, difficult decisions, and regular policy and programmes reviews and adjustments to respond to emerging risks and opportunities. Key indicators for CP performance by states' thus focus on indicators not only of good CP policies and intentions, but also on indicators of serious and sustained efforts, international leadership or co-ordination roles and willingness to take responsible risks in the interests of CP. However, it is beyond the scope of the CPPF also to provide a framework for evaluating impacts on the actual risks of conflict in a range of specific cases.

We do, of course, recognise the wider importance of promoting and facilitating evaluations of the effectiveness of external efforts to prevent violent conflicts - to assess the extent to which measures by external actors have actually successfully prevented violent conflicts as intended through their CP policies and measures. Such assessments are intrinsically difficult, resource-intensive, and contestable.¹⁷ As often noted, claims of successful conflict prevention can be interpreted by sceptics as evidence that the conflict risks had been exaggerated in the first place. Conversely, if violent conflict breaks-out, is this evidence that external CP activity was: ineffective; effective but undermined by other actors; or effective in addressing one conflict risk but overwhelmed by other factors?

Conflict processes are driven by a combination of many distinct structural factors and actors; each one of which is imperfectly understood and dynamic. Outcomes are likely to be determined by the ways in which these factors dynamically interact in a highly path-dependent way. At some times and contexts, relatively small incidents can trigger profound changes in the course of events; but at other times a similar event might either have little or different types of impacts. In this context, assessments of the extent to which external CP efforts contributed to preventing a specific conflict are difficult, but by no means impossible. It is possible to develop credible evaluations on the basis of detailed conflict assessments, using a combination of social science research methods. It is part of our overall CPPP project to promote the preparation of such detailed evaluations, in relation to particular countries or regions. However, the CPP Framework presented here is not designed to guide such assessments, and can only partially contribute to them.

¹⁷ See social science research methods references, including: M Smith and G Robinson; *Researching Violently Divided Societies*, Pluto Press, London 2001; A Bryman; *Social Science Research Methods*, Oxford University Press, 2008; A. George and A. Bennet, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, MIT Press, Cambridge Mass, 2005; T. Jacoby, *Understanding Conflict and Violence*, Routledge, London, 2008. OECD-DAC Guidance on Evaluations is also relevant: including OECD-DAC, *Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peace-building Activities*, OECD, Paris, 2008.

4. THE CONFLICT PREVENTION PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

On the basis of the above considerations, the proposed CPP Framework aims to facilitate reviews and assessments of states' performance in contributing to preventing violent conflict as an external actor (and not where they have become a primary conflict party) in the following three ways:

- *Contributing to a benign global or regional context for CP;*
- *Contributing as a 'third party' or external actor to preventing inter-state violent conflicts; and*
- *Contributing as a 'third-party' or external actor to preventing civil wars or large scale violence within fragile or conflict-prone states.*

These three strategic categories are the three main 'pillars' of the CPP Framework, which are elaborated below.

For the CPP Framework, conflict prevention policies and measures include all types of policies, programmes, instruments and activities that are adopted and used to try to help to:

- reduce risks of violent conflict at an early stage by tackling underlying risk factors, or by reinforcing underlying factors that help to mitigate such risks and enhance resilience against risks of violence;
- identify and address tensions and conflicts at an early stage, to resolve them or establish peaceful frameworks for managing or reducing them before they develop to pose major risks of violent conflict;
- prevent escalation of major disputes or crises into violence, even at a late stage of a crisis; and
- prevent re-emergence of violent conflict in contexts where war or large-scale violence has recently come to an end.

In order to ensure appropriate focus and mitigate risks to the primary purposes of the CPP Framework, other relevant or related types of contribution to CP are largely excluded from its scope, such as activities in contexts where the state under consideration has become a primary conflict party, or post-conflict reconstruction programmes that are directed towards recovery rather than conflict prevention objectives.

Pillar I: Performance in contributing to a benign global or regional context for CP

Pillar I of the CPPI relates to States' performance in contributing to a global or regional context which:

- reduces or addresses the underlying international or regional structural factors that contribute to overall risks of violent conflict; or
- contributes to the development of generic international/regional capacities to prevent or respond to emerging violent conflicts.

Under this category, a state would not directly be engaged in specific conflict prevention activities. However, the CPPI should recognise States' wider contributions as 'good international citizens' to providing a benign environment for preventing violent. It is under this category that indicators would fit such as: support for relevant UN or other multilateral or regional institutions or regimes; scale of development aid; commitment to establishing an effective climate change regime; support for international rule of law; support for human rights; or overall scale of participation or responsible control of the international arms trade.

It is through this pillar that the CPPI recognises State's wider performance in contributing to a benign environment which indirectly, and perhaps unintentionally, helps to promote peaceful resolution or management of disputes and to reduce the overall risks of conflicts. Policies, programmes and actions considered within this part of the CPPI are not aimed at preventing any specific conflicts, but may nevertheless contribute generically to CP at a global or regional level.

It is important to note that different analysts and policy-communities tend to give very different weightings to this category of CP activity in the overall balance of contributions to CP. On the one hand, there are governments, organisations and researchers that very heavily emphasise the importance of global or regional structural factors (such as absolute levels of poverty, climate change, globalisation of world trade, etc) in determining risks of specific violent conflicts; and which prioritise policy actions to address such global factors for effective CP. These would therefore allocate heavy weight to State's performance in this part of the CPPF.

On the other hand, there are at least an equal number of governments, organisations and researchers that emphasise that the risks that tensions or disputes escalate into large-scale violence are above all

determined by factors directly related to the specific context and dynamics of the emerging conflict, and who are sceptical about whether global or regional-level actions addressing wider structures are likely to contribute to preventing any particular violent. These would therefore tend to allocate rather little weight in a CPPF to States' performance on wider global or regional contextual issues.

The CPPF is designed to avoid having to take sides in such major and unresolved debates, by recognising the value of this type of activity in a general way. However the proposed core elements and indicators for this Pillar 1 of the CPPF remain deliberately at a relatively high or general level. They are designed more to enable scope for a State's good or bad performance in this category of concerns to be generally recognised, without having to enter into detailed review or consultations of policies and measures that are not directly aimed at CP goals.

Proposed Sectoral Categories and Illustrative Indicators for Pillar I

Under this Pillar I, states entering into consultations about the CP performance would be invited to highlight their contributions in the following areas as indirect indicators of their contributions to a benign environment of CP.

1. International Solidarity

- Scale and quality of development aid
- Scale and quality of humanitarian aid
- Actions to mitigate and aid adaptation to global environmental problems (such as contributions to environmental regimes)
- Openness to importation of poor developing country agricultural exports
- Quality of practical co-operation to prevent combat crime and trafficking

2. Contributions to effective multilateral institutions and regimes

- Quality of support for global or multilateral institutions, especially UN and its agencies
- Efforts to mobilise international support and capacity to achieve MDGs
- Contribution to development of effective climate change regime
- Contribution to key international security regimes (such as active membership of NPT, CWC, BWC, UN Register of Conventional Arms, UNPoA on SALW)
- Contribution to international economic regimes (such as participation in trade, finance, money-laundering good practices; support for concerns of poor vulnerable countries)
- Contribution to development of effective human rights regimes (including participation in regime mechanisms, support for political rights, women's rights, children's rights, rights of refugees/migrants)

3. Contributions to effective regional co-operation and institutions

- Active participation and support for development of strong regional co-operation mechanism and institutions (in own region) –
- Active support for regional organisations in other regions
- Active support to facilitate co-operative regional frameworks to address emerging problems that could contribute to conflict (such as access to freshwater water, displacement, humanitarian, transnational crime, terrorism)

4. Contributions to international or regional capacities to support peace and security

- Contributions to UN capacities for peace-keeping and peace support (scale of contribution UN peace missions (relative to size); support for identifying and promoting good practices; support for integrated/comprehensive approaches)
- Contributions to UN-recognised regional organisations capacities for peace-keeping and peace support.

5. 'Good Example' at home and in neighbourhood

- Respect for human security and human rights in addressing disputes or conflicts within the State's own territorial jurisdiction

- Establishment of, and use of, mechanisms and approaches enabling constructive and peaceful conflict management or conflict resolution within the State's own territorial jurisdiction
- Quality of efforts to achieve peaceful conflict prevention or conflict resolution with neighbouring countries (within region)
- Respect for human security, human rights and IHL in the conduct of any inter-state or cross-boundary violent conflicts to which the State is a primary conflict party.

Note that the fifth sector in Pillar I is designed to facilitate presentation and discussion of good CP performance by participating governments within areas under their own jurisdiction, while avoiding prominent and politically-contentious discussion that distract from the overall objective of the CPPF.

Pillar II: Performance in contributing as an external actor to preventing inter-state violent conflicts

Much of the literature and experience of international conflict prevention focussed on efforts to prevent armed conflict between states. This is an important 'traditional' focus for CP, which remains valid even though much attention has shifted since the end of the cold war towards preventing civil wars. Pillar II of the CPPF thus relates to States' performance in contributing specifically to preventing specific inter-state conflicts to which it is not itself a direct party. It includes policies and actions to enhance regional or international capacities or mechanisms to prevent inter-state conflicts, as well as those addressed directly towards preventing a specific conflict.

Factors that would fit under this strategic category include: direct engagement in mediation, preventive diplomacy; support for confidence-building measures or peace agreements; regional or international mechanisms directly designed to prevent interstate conflict; preventive military deployments; contribution to UN-sanctioned peacekeeping operations; security guarantees or deterrence.

Participating governments using the CPPF would be invited to highlight their contributions under the following headings, to provide a basis for relatively focussed review by others. The concept is that the review would focus on current and recent policies and activities – say over the last five years – rather than in the more distant past.

1. Contributions to international security and stability

- Active participation and support for co-operative security arrangements (active member of relevant organisations and arrangements; recent leadership roles in promoting good practices and CP programmes within these organisations)
- Active participation in, and support for further development of, international confidence and security building measures (such as Transparency and reporting; consultation, re-assurance and CBM restraints; UN Register of Conventional Arms; IAEA new model protocol)
- Active participation in, and support for relevant regional CSBMs
- Active participation and contributions to defensive collective security arrangements
- Active respect and support for UNSC arms embargoes, including contributions to enforcement and non-circumvention
- Well-developed and responsible national controls on arms and dual technology transfers (clear relevant guidelines for decision-making consistent with international norms; capacity and commitment to implement detailed guidelines seriously (including risk analysis); use of mechanisms to reduce risks during and after transfers).
- Contributions to the further development of international norms, agreements and good practices relating to national controls on conventional arms transfers, including contributions to the development of an ATT.

2. Support for international mechanisms for preventive diplomacy

- Contributions and support for timely identification of and response to emerging risks of interstate conflict by UNSC and UN Secretary General or his nominees (general approach; recent examples)
- Contributions and support for other international mechanisms and institutions designed to contribute to preventive diplomacy (focussing on current or recent, e.g. UNPBC UN early warning analysis resources)

- Contributions to and support for international civil society networks and resources to promote and support preventive diplomacy (direct support for such networks; evidence of co-operation such networks)

3. Support for regional mechanisms for preventive diplomacy and CP

- Support for establishment and active use of preventive diplomacy mechanisms in regional organisations in which state is a member (e.g. HCNM in OSCE; PD in ARF) Support for establishment and use of preventive diplomacy capacities in other regions (e.g. in sub-Saharan Africa)
- Active support for establishment and use of specific regional or sub-regional co-operation mechanisms to facilitate peaceful cooperative management on potential conflict issues (e.g. water-basin management, nuclear materials management, trans-border crime)
- Participation and/or active support for specific inter-state dispute resolution or CP processes.

4. Contributions to early warning and timely response to risks of inter-state conflict

- Contributions to identification, analysis and international awareness-raising of emerging risks of specific regional instability or inter-state conflicts (recent cases);
- Recent initiatives to promote or facilitate consultations and development of timely international or regional responses to address emerging risks of regional instability or specific inter-state conflicts (recent)
- Recent direct contributions to preventive diplomacy, including 'fact-finding' missions, mediation, peace initiatives, for specific possibilities of inter-state conflict
- Recent direct contributions to incentives or sanctions to support 'early response' preventive diplomacy or conflict prevention processes
- Recent contributions to preventive diplomacy for specific crisis management or resolution processes relating to risks of inter-state conflict
- Material contributions to crisis management and to inter-state CP in the context of crisis (recent)

5. Consistency and Coherence of Contribution to Promoting Security and Preventing Inter-State Conflict

- Extent to which the State has taken available opportunities to contribute to inter-state CP
- Extent to which the State has been consistent in its interest and efforts to contribute to inter-state CP across the countries and regions with which it is engaged.
- Extent to which the State has demonstrated a sustained and co-operative approach in relation to its Interstate CP initiatives
- Extent to which the State has established and resourced adequate capacities and mechanisms to enable it to effectively and coherently contribute to inter-state CP
- Extent to which the State has ensured coherence across different sectors of its engagement with relevant countries and regions in relation to inter-state CP objectives.

In reviewing each States performance under Pillar II (and Pillar III below), appropriate account should be taken of its relative size, capacity and global or regional presence. Only a relatively few states can now reasonably be expected to have a relatively global presence and concern (e.g. USA, UK, France, Russia, China, India, Germany, Brazil). However, if for example a State neglects feasible CP opportunities in a region in which it is normally actively engaged, this is noteworthy.

Pillar III: Contributing as an external actor to preventing civil wars, or large scale societal or transnational violence

Pillar III relates to CP contributions in relation to fragile states or countries at risk of civil war or large scale societal violence. This category of CP covers CP for fragile states and also specifically conflict *prevention* policies and activities in conflict affected countries following peace settlements. In relation to the latter, this Pillar focuses on CP efforts focussed on preventing the re-emergence of violent conflict rather than post-conflict reconstruction (to the extent that it is possible to make this distinction). Thus for example, it would cover contributions to DDR, SSR and SALW programmes, and promoting emergence of reasonably legitimate and effective governance with conflict-sensitive characteristics. It would also cover actions designed to address emerging new types of conflict risks.

There are now many indexes aiming to assess the extent to which a state can be judged 'fragile'. Nevertheless the term remains contested, as do the criteria for assessing such fragility. It is proposed that the CPPF avoids adopting any specific indicator of state fragility, but rather focuses on whether and how the State identifies fragile or conflict-prone states and the extent to which it effectively supports or pursues CP priorities in relation to such states.

For this Pillar III of the CPPF, we propose that the main sectoral categories of CP be based broadly on an adaptation of the categories identified in the *OECD-DAC Draft Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peace-building Activities*.

Thus, in addition to three sectoral OECD_DAC categories of 'security and justice', 'development' and 'governance', we recommend the fourth and fifth categories of 'conflict resilience, dispute resolution, reconciliation' and 'conflict prevention capacity'.

The importance of each of the first four sectoral categories scarcely needs explanation. Since the CPPF is concerned with facilitating reviews of the performance of states in helping as external actors to prevent civil wars and societal violence, each of the four sectoral categories refer to the CP policies, programmes and actions of these external states to address these sectors within fragile or conflict-prone countries - not to an assessment of these sectors within the fragile states themselves.

Our proposed fifth category is added to address the policies and efforts by external states to clarify the extent to which they can and do effectively and coherently pursue conflict prevention and conflict sensitive engagement with fragile and conflict-prone states. It can be very challenging for external states to substantially contribute to preventing conflicts in conflict-prone states – almost by definition – and this fifth category is proposed to indicate the extent to which the States using the CPPF have seriously tried to ensure that they have the capacities, policies and programmes required to do so.

It is important to note that there are in principle several distinctive aspects of CP performance within each of the first four sectoral categories in Pillar III of the CPPF. These can be roughly outlined as follows:

- Structural (or longer term) CP and operational (urgent and often crisis-oriented) CP;
- Activities specifically designed for CP and 'conflict-sensitive' activities designed primarily to achieve other worthwhile non-CP objectives;
- Policy development and adoption; design and planning of programmes and activities; and effective implementation and adaptation of such programmes, activities and policies.

We have aimed below to develop the sets of issues/indicators for each of the sectoral categories so that they cover all of these different aspects. However, in the interests of avoiding excessive complexity, they are not systematically elaborated in these terms.

Thus, under Pillar III of the CPPF, States would be invited to present their performance in the following areas for review.

1. Contributions to CP in fragile states relating to Security and Justice

- Performance of State in efforts to control arms transfers to fragile or conflict-prone states and to promote security of authorised arms stocks (policies and practices for national control systems; contribution to promoting wider regional or international control agreements; contribution to tackling illicit trafficking or destabilising transfers).
- Extent to which the State has well-developed policies and programmes to help to enhance security and access to justice in fragile or conflict-prone states, including SJSR, SALW control, rule of law (substantial policy statements; substantial programmes in a range of such states; evidence of conflict-sensitive approaches to the design and implementation of such security and justice programmes).
- Extent to which the State has made efforts to ensure that DDR and security and justice related programmes have been geared to address needs of poor and vulnerable people and to respond to any emerging risks of large-scale violence.
- Extent to which State's security and justice related programmes have taken opportunities to address regional, cross-border and 'border-lands' issues
- Contributions of State to identifying and promoting international agreements on good practices for security and justice assistance to fragile and conflict-prone states (for example, taking Paris Principles forward)
- Commitment to coherence and co-operation with other external actors to provide conflict-sensitive security and justice assistance.

2. Contributions to CP in fragile states through development co-operation

- Performance in adopting and implementing good practice guidelines for development engagement with fragile or conflict prone states (evidence of policy commitment; national capacities to enable coherent implementation; contribution to further development of international good practices)
- Extent to which the State takes serious account of conflict analyses and 'drivers of fragility' assessments into account and ensures 'conflict sensitivity' when developing and designing its development co-operation policies and programmes for fragile or conflict-prone states (government procedures; specific cases of conflict-sensitivity in policy and programme documents)
- Extent to which the State takes steps to enable and ensure conflict-sensitive implementation and adaptation of development co-operation programmes in fragile and conflict-prone states (capacity (e.g. M&E systems, flexibility for adaptation); evidence of practice)
- Commitment to conflict-sensitive international trade and investment and natural resource management in fragile and conflict prone states (commitment to relevant international guidelines, implementation of good practices, contribution to further international development of good practices).
- Extent to which the State's integrates conflict-prevention priorities into its support for post-conflict reconstruction and development aid in countries emerging from conflict.
- Evidence of commitment by State to coherence and to co-operation with other external actors to provide conflict-sensitive development assistance

3. Contributions to CP in fragile states through conflict-sensitive governance assistance

- Performance in adopting and implementing good practice guidelines for governance engagement with fragile or conflict prone states (evidence of policy commitment; national capacities to enable coherent implementation; contribution to further development of international good practices)
- Extent to which the State takes serious account of conflict analyses and 'drivers of fragility' assessments into account and ensures 'conflict sensitivity' when developing and designing its governance aid policies and programmes for fragile or conflict-prone states (government procedures; specific evidence of conflict-sensitivity in policy and programme documents)
- Extent to which the State takes steps to enable and ensure conflict-sensitive implementation and adaptation of governance aid co-operation programmes in fragile and conflict-prone states (capacity (e.g. M&E systems, flexibility for adaptation); evidence of practice)
- Extent to which the State strives for conflict-sensitive aid for democratisation programmes (addressed in policy documents; procedures to promote conflict sensitivity; contributions to promoting conflict-sensitivity of international democracy support)
- Extent to which the State strives for conflict-sensitive aid for constitutional reform or decentralisation programmes (addressed in policy documents; procedures to promote conflict sensitivity; contributions to promoting conflict-sensitivity of international support in these areas)
- Extent to which the State promotes integration of conflict prevention concerns into state-building and governance aid to countries emerging from conflict.
- Commitment of State to coherence and co-operation with other external actors to provide conflict-sensitive governance assistance.

4. Contributions to CP in fragile states through support for societal conflict resilience and capacity for sustaining local CP and peace and reconciliation processes

- Overall extent to which the State engages with fragile and conflict-prone states in ways that are intended to support societal conflict resilience and develop multi-level capacity for CP and peace and reconciliation processes (policy documents; stated programmes)
- Extent to which the State facilitates and supports local and international civil society or multi-stakeholder partnerships and capacities in a conflict-sensitive way when engaging with fragile or conflict-prone states (statements, policies, programmes)
- Performance in supporting or facilitating local confidence-building, inter-communal bridge-building, cultures of non-violence, or reconciliation initiatives and processes in fragile or conflict prone states, particularly in relation to alienated, marginalised or 'borderlands' groups (statements, policies, programmes)
- Performance in prioritising empowerment of women as a key element of State's engagement with fragile and conflict prone states (statements, policies, programmes)
- Performance in prioritising engagement and addressing youth needs and priorities as a key element of the State's engagement with fragile and conflict prone states (statements, policies, programmes)

- Performance in enhancing controls on availability and use of SALW, and supporting armed violence reduction programmes in fragile and conflict-prone countries

5. Overall commitment and capacity to contribute to CP in fragile and conflict-prone states

- Extent to which the State has established a track-record for strong policies and programmes for prioritising CP in fragile and conflict prone states
- Extent to which the State has demonstrated commitment to develop national capacity to contribute to CP in fragile and conflict prone states (use of conflict analysis, development of administrative capacity, government mechanisms to develop CP strategies towards specific fragile and conflict prone countries);
- Extent to which the State has demonstrated commitment to promoting conflict sensitivity in both design and implementation of its aid programmes in fragile and conflict prone states (mechanisms, reviews, reforms, main-streaming efforts)
- Extent to which the State has contributed to the establishment, adoption, implementation and further development of regional and international agreements and guidelines directly designed to support external CP and conflict sensitive engagement in fragile and conflict prone states
- Extent to which the State has supported wider research, networks and civil society engagement with CP in fragile and conflict prone states
- Commitment to coherence of national activities and effective co-operation with other external actors to provide assistance for CP

5. USING THE CONFLICT PREVENTION PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The proposed CPP Framework aims to provide a readily understood and acceptable way of systematic laying out the key aspects of states' possible contributions to CP as an external actor, to facilitate disaggregated and focussed reviews from which lessons can be learned. As noted, it has been designed to reflect and incorporate 'basic common understandings' of the elements of CP from a wide variety of governmental (and expert) perspectives.

The CPPP aims to use this framework to facilitate and enable the following activities:

- consultations by CPPP partners with interested experts and government officials to refine and develop the CPP Framework so that it is a useful and widely acceptable basis for pursuing CPPP objectives
- engagements by the CPPP partners with individual governments to review and assess the overall CP performance of the government and to identify ways in which this performance could most usefully be strengthened
- reviews by government officials, parliamentarians and others of the strengths and weaknesses of their own government across the range of potential CP measures, with a view to identifying and promoting ways to improve performance
- intergovernmental consultations and reviews on their CP performance, including for example peer-review processes or developing international guidelines and good practices. Consultations between OECD and BRIC or G20 governments, hopefully also involving non-governmental experts and NGOs, to develop shared understandings of what government commitments to CP should involve
- independent and comparable assessments, by the CPPP partners and other concerned groups, of the CP performance of selected governments
- development of a 'Conflict Prevention Performance Index', to provide a regular systematic relative assessment of the performance of states, and of trends in performance.

The CPPP partners plan to pursue and promote each of these types of activities, in close consultation with the relevant governments and other interested organisations and experts. In the first instance, it is proposed to focus primarily on P5, G7 and OECD states, plus Brazil, India, China, Indonesia and South Africa.

6. DEVELOPING A CONFLICT PREVENTION PERFORMANCE INDEX (CPPI)?

The CPPP has developed a detailed design of a possible Conflict Prevention Performance Index (CPPI). The primary aim of such a CPPI would be to provide a constructive and transparent tool to enable policy communities and the wider public concerned with CP to readily identify relative strengths and weaknesses in key aspects of selected countries' CP performance, in order to stimulate and focus efforts to learn lessons and improve their individual and collective performance in these areas.

The Potential value of a Conflict Prevention Performance Index.¹⁸

A CPPI would go beyond providing a framework for systematic review of conflict prevention performance within and between governments to develop assessments of states' performance, with associated rankings. It thus offers a way of raising the public profile of such reviews, and usefully attracting high-level political as well as media interest.

An index of key States' performance in contributing to conflict prevention has the potential to contribute substantially to efforts to promote lesson-learning, effectiveness, and accountability in this important issue area. It could offer a systematic and accessible mechanism for combining substantial relevant information in an accessible form, enabling everyone concerned with effective conflict prevention to track and compare countries' CPP performance, identifying relative strengths and weaknesses, and hopefully focussing attention on opportunities for improvement.

In recent years, a number of indexes have been established to help to monitor, assess and compare countries' policies or performance in a variety of issue areas, such as corruption; commitment to development; humanitarian response; state fragility; sustainable governance; environmental performance; peace; or climate change performance.¹⁹ Moreover, a major aspect of OECD policy analysis services for its member states is to prepare reports comparing performance in virtually every policy issue area.

There is no existing index that can directly be used to assess and compare states' performance in promoting CP. Thus, there is a 'gap' in current provision that the CPPI would fill

The potential value of country performance indexes has been well-established by the range of existing Indexes as outlined above. Experience shows, however, that such potential can be hard to realise. Such indexes need to be designed with care, and with a clear idea of their main objectives.²⁰

In a complex and contested issue area, such as conflict prevention, the design of an Index needs to navigate an effective balance between simplicity and clarity on the one hand and a credible and useful reflection of complexities, uncertainties and diverse interests on the other. It is intrinsic to the concept of a country performance index that readers can use it to produce apparently clear rankings between different countries. Ensuring that these rankings are meaningful and constructive presents a challenge.

Aims of the CPPI

In this context, it is important to be clear from the outset about the primary aims of the proposed CPPI, and to make strategic choices about its focus.

The primary aim of this CPPI would be to provide a constructive and transparent tool to enable policy communities concerned with conflict prevention to readily identify relative strengths and weaknesses in key aspects of selected countries' policies and measures to promote CP as external actors beyond their

¹⁸ This report builds upon an internal CPP project Concept Paper (O. Greene, 'Overall Structure and Core Elements of a Conflict Prevention Performance Index: concept paper' November 2009, CICS-Saferworld); which itself benefited from CPP project discussions and an early initial concept paper *Towards a 'Conflict Prevention Index'*; prepared for Saferworld by Robert Picciotto.

¹⁹ Corruption Perceptions Index and 'Bribe Payers' Index (Transparency International); Commitment to Development Index (Centre for Global Development); Global Peace Index (Institute for Economics and Peace); Global Report 2009: Conflict, Governance and Fragility (Centre for Systemic Peace/Centre for Global Policy); Climate Change Performance Index (GermanWathc/CAN Europe); Environmental Performance Index (Yale centre for Environmental Law and Policy/Center for International Earth science Information Network); Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) Data International); Sustainable Governance Indicators (Bertelsmann Stiftung).

²⁰ As discussed, for example in D. Roodman, 'Building and Running an Effective Policy Index: lessons from the Commitment to Development Index, Centre for Global Development, 2006; and R.Picciotto, CPP Project 'issues paper', 'Contribution to a CPPI' March 2008.

national territories, in order to stimulate and focus efforts to learn lessons and improve their individual and collective performance in these areas.

To pursue this primary aim, the CPPI aims to promote engagement with the following stakeholder groups:

- a. To stimulate awareness and initiatives by relevant national government decision-makers, officials, parliamentarians and policy communities of weaknesses and opportunities to improve the CP performance of their State, including through: recognition of good efforts, exposure of poor performance, identification of opportunities and good practices from elsewhere, and encouraging constructive country comparisons amongst state officials and policy-makers to stimulate debates about improvements.
- b. Provide information and useful comparisons that help to empower those officials, policy-makers, and organisations who are trying to improve their country's CP performance.
- c. Provide a focus for civil society groups concerned with promoting CP to engage with relevant national policy communities and institutions in the CPPI target countries on ways to enhance their country's activities and effectiveness in preventing violent conflicts;

In the first instance, the selected countries for the CPPI would be states that are members of the OECD and/or P5 plus Brazil, India, and South Africa. Once established, it is expected to expand the target country group to include all OECD and G20 states.

Design of the CPPI

As noted, the CPP project is actively considering the feasibility and value of preparing a CPPI with the above aims. The proposed CPPI is designed to build directly on the CPP Framework elaborated in this Report.

The focus and scope of the CPPI would thus be the same as for the CPPF in all strategic respects. It would not, for example, cover States' CP performance within their own territories or in conflicts in which they have become widely regarded to be primary conflict parties (even if with the best of intentions), except through a category of 'good example' which is designed to recognise such issues without allowing highly contestable judgements on such questions to thoroughly distort the rankings produced by the Index.

The overall strategic approach to the design of the CPPI design is to maintain a reasonably strong separation between rankings of countries' performance in relation to the three main categories CP contributions within the scope of the index: which thus constitute the three 'pillars' of the CPPI. This is done in order to limit the problems that arise from Index rankings that mix-up different categories of CP problems and objectives in ways that users cannot readily disentangle. Within each of the three pillars, several key aspects of states' types of CP contributions are separately assessed, enabling the degree of ready disaggregation necessary to facilitate comparisons and engagement with policy-makers on specific issue areas.

Through this overall design approach, countries' performance under each of the three main pillars (or categories) can readily be separated; with the possibility of separate rankings for each. An overall CP Performance ranking would be produced by combining the rankings of each of the three pillars. The emphasis of the overall ranking could thus readily be adjusted by changing the relative weightings of the rankings for each pillar. In this way, more than one overall ranking could be produced: for example, one focussed more on performance in preventing inter-state wars and another focussed on performance in preventing large-scale violence within conflict-prone countries or regions.

There are several useful examples of other Indexes adopting this overall strategic approach. A successful example of this type of overall structure is the OECD Index of 'Child Well-Being' in OECD States.²¹ Obviously, this OECD Index is different from the CPPI in many respects, but nevertheless the performance index is strategically separated into six distinct strategic categories of 'child well-being': material well-being; housing and environment; educational well-being; health and safety; risky behaviour; quality of school life. Within each of these (still complex) categories, there were secondary categories (e.g. youth, younger children, migrants; or sectoral (education, training, quality, quantity, etc). The clarity of this separation of categories rankings was more or less maintained throughout the published study and press release, with only a deliberately crude averaging of scores providing an overall ranking. This contributed to effective use of the OECD report, and helped to encourage media reports to respect these separations of rankings and to provide relatively nuanced and constructive coverage.

²¹ OECD, 'Doing Better for Children', OECD 2009, www.oecd.org/document/18/...

Thus the proposed overall structure for the CPPI is as follows:

I: Overall CPPI Ranking

II: Separate rankings for each of the three CPPI Pillars

Pillar I: Contributions to a benign global or regional context for CP;

- International solidarity
- Contributions to effective multilateral institutions and regimes
- Contributions to effective regional co-operation and institutions
- Contributions to international or regional capacities to support peace and security
- 'Good Example' at home and in neighbourhood

Pillar II: Contributions as an external actor to preventing inter-state violent conflicts

- Contributions to international security and stability
- Support for international mechanisms for preventive diplomacy
- Support for regional mechanisms for preventive diplomacy and CP
- Contributions to early warning and timely response to risks of inter-state conflict
- Consistency and coherence of contribution to preventing inter-state conflict

(NB for the purposes of the CPPI, an additional indicator is proposed to be added to the performance areas in the CPPF for each of the above on whether the States has recently taken a major cross-governmental initiative to enhance performance in the relevant area)

Pillar III: Contributions as an external actor to preventing civil wars of large scale societal or transnational violence;

- Contributions to CP relating to Security and Justice
- Contributions to CP through conflict-sensitive development
- Contributions to CP through conflict-sensitive governance assistance
- Contributions to CP through support for societal conflict resilience and capacity for local CP and peace and reconciliation processes
- Overall national commitment and capacity to contribute to CP in fragile and conflict-prone states (as indicated within the CPPI by whether there have been recent major cross-government initiatives to enhance performance in one or more of the above issue areas)

For each of these five sectors of CP contribution in Pillars I, II and III, a set of specific performance areas are identified in the CPPF (see section 4 above). The performance of the State for each of these is assessed on a scale from 0 – 5 (5 = very good); and the score for each of the 5 sectoral categories is calculated by taking the average of the scores for each indicator.

The overall score for Pillar I could be the average across each of the five sectoral categories; and visibly compared with a norm (possibly median average) across all States covered by the CPPI. For Pillars II and III, the overall assessment of the performance under each pillar will either be a simple average, or a weighted average to emphasise relatively important areas.

For each Pillar, we also propose to present a graphical representation of the performance of the State, similar to the one used on the Humanitarian Response Indicator website, which provide a useful means of presenting not only the balance of performance between different sectoral components but also comparing it with the norm for all of the States covered by the CPPI.

Approaches towards selection and assessment of performance indicators

A detailed draft methodology has been developed for assessing state performance under each of the three pillars, in which a set of indicators of performance are being developed under each category of CP policy or practice listed in the CPP Framework outlined above (in section 4). These combine quantitative and qualitative performance criteria, and are designed not only to produce 'scores' but also to provide disaggregated qualitative assessments that can provide the basis for consultations with relevant government officials or parliamentarians.

As in the CPPF, the indicators of States' CP performance as an external actor in the CPPI will not focus on the extent to which they have actually prevented conflicts in specific countries: which would be too ambitious for any feasible CPPI. Instead the proposed approach for the CPPI is to assess the extent to which the state under consideration has seriously developed, adopted and pursued policies, programmes and activities that can reasonably be expected to contribute to conflict prevention.

As emphasised in relation to the CPPF, we adopt the approach for the CPPI that effective contributions to conflict prevention as an external actor are hard to achieve. They require focussed and concerted efforts, involving detailed assessments, difficult decisions, and regular policy and programmes reviews and adjustments to respond to emerging risks and opportunities. Key indicators for CP performance by states' thus focus on indicators not only of good CP policies and intentions, but also on indicators of serious and sustained efforts, and willingness to take responsible risks in the interests of CP. The indicators under development for the CPPI are thus designed to reward initiatives or leadership in addressed 'hard' CP questions, rather than risk avoidance in this context.

The indicators used for the assessment of the State for each area of performance are under development, and presently include: giving credit to a State' for making significant recent contributions to CP in the relevant area; recognising instances in which the State has neglected or obstructed manifest opportunities to contribute to CP in that area; or, assessing efforts by the state to ensure overall coherence or consistency of the states policies and activities relating to CP. The approach presently under development is to focus on qualitative assessments of recent initiatives or issues and cases, rather than identifying a more quantitative index of performance. This appears to be well-adapted for facilitating engagement with the states concerned, while limiting the resources required for compilation.

In assessing each States performance, appropriate account will be taken of its relative size, capacity and global or regional presence, in line with common sense and good judgement. Only a relatively few states can now reasonably be expected to have a relatively global presence and concern (e.g. USA, UK, France, Russia, China, India, Germany, Brazil). However, neglect of CP opportunities in a country or region in which a medium or small State has substantial engagement would be noteworthy.

Within this framework, the overall approach under development for scoring a state's performance for each indicator is as follows:

- develop clear and transparent qualitative criteria and algorithms for each score (with recognised authoritative data sets where these exist and are readily available), but to make these sufficiently robust that inadequacies of information— though regrettable – have only modest implications for the state's overall score under each Pillar;
- actively reward positive evidence of serious CP efforts, so that available evidence of good performance can legitimately be used without the need to fully comprehensive assessment, and to encourage states to provide the CPPI with such evidence if it is concerned about aspects of its CPPI score;
- develop the CPPI in active communication with the governments of states under consideration, to enable them to offer appropriate information to fill information gaps or to elicit evidence of improved performance in specific areas;
- take opportunities annually (once the CPPI is established as an annual index) to reward or punish states for improved or declining efforts – states should not rest on their laurels.
- maintain an easily compiled and updated matrix recording the basis of each assessment, in case assessments need subsequently to be justified or revised.

As noted, work is progressing on developing the criteria, data-sources and algorithms for each of the indicators to be used in the CPPI, which are drawn from the CPP Framework elaborated in section 4 above.

Engaging with Governments during the compilation of the CPPI

The CPPI is designed primarily to provide a focus for constructive engagement with Governments and policy communities, thus it is important to consider how to organise such engagement. Clearly, it will be

important to engage with governments after the CPPI has been released annually, and to take account of feedback and any further information while preparing the next CPPI.

Early in the preparation process for each CPPI, we propose to: request 'relevant' information from one/two relevant strategically placed units within each government early in the preparation of the CPPI, to supplement information otherwise available.

After consideration, we then propose to prepare the CPPI without substantial further consultation with government officials (except for specific fact-checking where really necessary) until after that year's CPPI is released. This is partly in order to simplify the preparation process, but also to reduce the risks of generating avoidable resentments. Government officials are more likely to take offence if we decide during the preparation process the CPPI team are not persuaded by their arguments on specific rankings. However, in the first year of the CPPI, we propose to give governments substantial scope to comment on draft marks for each indicators, as well as on the criteria for assessment – to emphasise that this is a constructive exercise.

Overall Rankings and Interaction between strategic parts of CPPI

As emphasised, the CPPI is designed to enable performance under each Pillar to be examined separately as far as possible, bringing them together only in a final summary table.

This implies possibilities for producing more than one summative ranking in a relatively transparent way; which could help to discourage over simplistic presentations of the overall CPPI rankings. Thus for example, we are considering three summative rankings:

- *Average CP Performance Ranking*: using straight average of average score for each of the three Pillars of the CPPI
- *Performance in Preventing International Conflict Ranking*: use weighted average with the following weights: Pillar I: 1; Pillar 2: 3; Pillar III: 2. (This would be justified because civil wars are now often linked with risks of wider wars)
- *Performance in Preventing Civil Wars ranking*: use weighted average with the following weights: Pillar I 1; Pillar II: 1; Pillar III: 3. (This would be justified because preventing civil wars above all requires direct engagement with the countries at risk, but is certainly influenced by international conflict and by wider structural factors)

7. NEXT STEPS

We hope that the publication of this Report, will contribute substantially to promoting reviews and consultations on states' performance in contributing to conflict prevention and ultimately to improve it.

Saferworld and CICS plan to develop the CPPP, potentially including a CPPI, in close consultation with all key stakeholders and experts, including officials from relevant governments and international organisations. We therefore propose to engage in a series of consultations until early 2011, to refine the concept, design and usefulness of the proposed CPP Framework, and also of the proposed CPPI. In 2011, the we aim to develop an expert international CPP advisory group, to ensure high quality guidance and advice from a range of important perspectives.

About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent international NGO. We work directly with local people, as well as governments and international organisations, to prevent violent conflict and encourage co-operative, people-centred approaches to peace and security. We believe that everyone should be able to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from insecurity and violent conflict.

While we are not a traditional development agency, we seek to understand and influence the relationship between conflict, security and international development.

We work in over 15 countries in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. We have over 80 staff, based in Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Nepal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda, as well as in London, Brussels and Vienna. Our funding for 2010-2011 was around £6.8 million – mainly in the form of government grants from Canada, Denmark, the EU, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the UK.

Saferworld 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT, UK • Registered Charity no 1043843 • Company limited by guarantee no 3015948 •
Tel: +44 (0)20 7324 4646 | Fax: +44 (0)20 7324 4647 • Email: general@saferworld.org.uk • www.saferworld.org.uk