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HOW TO DO A ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS OF LAND AND CONFLICT FOR PEACE BUILDING

SECURING LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS FOR ALL

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
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**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**

GLTN
GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK

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WHO WE ARE

The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is an alliance of international partners contributing to poverty alleviation and the Sustainable Development Goals through land reform, improved land management and security of tenure, through the development and implementation of inclusive and gender-responsive land tools.

The Land and Conflict Coalition (LCC) is a group of UN and non-UN organizations working on land and conflict issues, including conflict sensitive land tools and approaches at global and country level and it is part of GLTN. The objective of the Land and Conflict Coalition is to promote peace and stability by addressing land as root cause of conflict and to contribute to the UN peace and stability reform for sustaining peace.

THE CHALLENGE:
WHY LAND CAUSES CONFLICT

Competition over land is a common challenge that becomes explosive when linked to other root causes of violent conflict. Some of the key factors that exist in contexts where land issues cause violent conflicts are:

1) Weak land governance, including dysfunctional legal systems and lack of land administration rules that practically work on the ground;

2) Governments' inability to manage land-related conflicts and disputes;

3) Corruption;

4) Asymmetry in power, with few wealthy people owning most of the land and the majority of the population does not have legal land documents;

5) Large portions of urban or rural land being appropriated by national or foreign investors to the detriment of local communities;

6) Mismanagement and illegal use of natural resources and public land.

7) Competition based on ethnicity and identity

Such land issues are encountered in a large number of contexts across the globe and are increasingly being recognized as the core of violent conflicts, particularly in the Middle East, the Great Lakes Region in Africa, parts of Latin America and Asia. To meaningfully address violent conflicts a land-related root cause analysis is required.
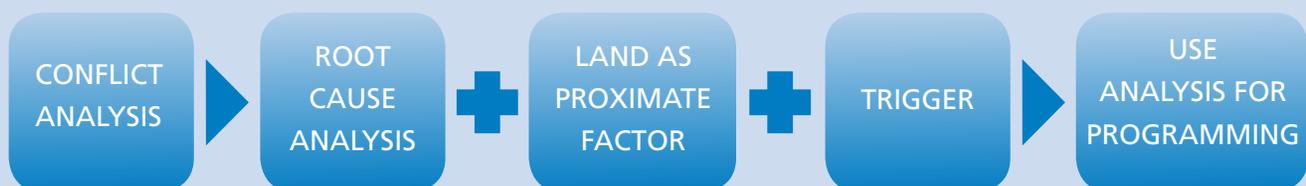
▶ *WHAT* IS A ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS OF LAND AND CONFLICT?

It is an inter-disciplinary framework to build a common understanding and think strategically about how to address land conflicts. It makes it possible to ask the right questions for programming in any country or area where land is part of the conflict. This policy brief outlines the key elements of it.

▶ *HOW TO* DO A ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS OF LAND AND CONFLICT

Programming often addresses triggers and symptoms of conflicts, while the focus should be on targeting root causes and their proximate factors. When a conflict analysis indicates that land is an issue, a land and conflict analysis should be done prior to programming. This will enable the identification of the root causes, what land looks like as a proximate factor for those root causes, and what are the linked triggers for conflict. The diagram below shows how the different components of the analysis fit together. Programming should also use a fit for purpose approach and a theory of change based on catalytic activities, champions and initiatives that are peace engines.

Diagram: Components and sequence of analysis

| CONFLICT ANALYSIS | ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS | ✚ | LAND AS PROXIMATE FACTOR | ✚ | TRIGGER | USE ANALYSIS FOR PROGRAMMING |

TARGET AUDIENCE

This analytical approach can be used by people at different levels and with different backgrounds working for UN and non-UN organizations, including governments.

WHEN TO USE THE ANALYSIS

- This approach can be adapted to be used for different contexts and levels (global, regional, sub-regional, national, sub-national and/or local).

- The root cause analysis can be used across the UN pillars in peace and security, humanitarian, human rights and development contexts for land-related interventions and to harmonize land interventions across different UN agencies and between the UN and non-UN partners.

- It can be used by UN (including UN mission, mediation and non-mission settings as well as part of an ISF, IMPP, UNDAF/UNCT, CCA, PCNA, IAP or IAF/IATF) and non-UN organizations (including governments, INGOs, civil society, academia, land professionals, donors, etc.) for programming and prioritizing land activities which

have peace, reconciliation, stability, and reconstruction outcomes.

- It can be used for high level political engagement as well as for operational activities, as it is both a political and technical tool.

- It is suitable for prevention, early warning, assessment, engaging with inter-communal violence, monitoring peace agreement implementation, QIPS and displacement management.

- It can be used for annual, multi-year and/or one off strategic analysis.

- It can be used for disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation where land records and related proof of land rights is not available.

DEFINITIONS

Conflict analysis: This activity helps in analyzing a situation of violent conflict.

Root cause: This is a long-term invisible factor underlying violent conflict. Land is one of a number of potential root causes of conflict. It can also be be historical, political, economical or social.

Proximate factor: A proximate factor exists only because there is a root cause of conflict. There are many different types of proximate land factors depending on the nature of the root cause (see examples below). For land, both the visible and invisible proximate factors feed into and contribute to worsening the violent conflict.

Trigger: Triggers are flashpoints that feed into the root cause and proximate factors of the conflict and fuel a response from the population that leads to violent conflict.

THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

A number of root causes, one being land, were identified from important conflict related UN reform documents. Where land is identified in a conflict analysis as a root cause, proximate factor and/or trigger an additional land analysis should be done using the table below. In the table, each root cause is described with examples of the land related proximate factors that are likely at country level, as well as examples of the land triggers that could exacerbate conflict. Complex conflicts often have multiple over-lapping root causes and land-related proximate factors. Using this analytical framework will make it possible to undertake better programming for peace outcomes in conflict settings.

TABLE: ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND LAND AS A PROXIMATE FACTOR AND/OR TRIGGER

ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT	EXAMPLES OF LAND-RELATED PROXIMATE FACTORS	EXAMPLES OF LAND-RELATED TRIGGERS
1. Weak governance	Dysfunctional land administration systems and weak capacity of land-related institutions; Inability to solve land-related disputes;	Displaced population settlements and/or returns after wars;
2. Capture of state instruments	Capture of state land institutions and records for political and/or financial purposes	Grabs of state land
3. Politics of exclusion	Land grabbing by a group in power	Actions to displace ethnic / religious groups; Elections or coups;
4. Population pressure	Large-scale land scarcity; Youth bulge without secure land rights	Displacement and migration; Food insecurity, famine;
5. Poverty	Homelessness and slums prevalence; Unequal access to land; Historical discriminations against the poor; Food insecurity because of limited access to land for livelihood opportunities	Land grabbing by the state of indigenous/ customary land.
6. Economic and political competition between global and/ or regional power blocks	Competition between countries and their investors for productive land in other countries; Transnational conflict leading to flows of refugees, illegal natural resources and arms between countries	Land grabs by investors linked to armed groups and/or national interests; Refugee/ IDP migration; Armed insurgencies
7. Nation State fragmentation	Identity groups grab land from other ethnic / religious groups	Invasion of territory
8. Criminality	Revenue from land and natural resources used by criminals linked to rebel groups	International criminals moving into the area
9. Plural legal systems	Competition over the use of natural resources between private investors and indigenous groups and their group forms of land rights	Expansion of control of national institutions into local indigenous/customary area to the detriment of local communities
10. Scarce natural resources including land	Population pressures and competition over increasingly scarce resources including land; Scarcity of usable land;	Desertification; Natural disaster (mudslides, flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis…)
11. Natural Resource exploitation	Armed groups control land for natural resource extraction to fund their insurgency	Rebel movements. Investors.
12. Water scarcity	Land is indirectly part of many disputes linked to water access and allocation	Clean water shortages
13. Exploitative trade and investment	Inadequate land laws to manage the demand for state land by investors and no protection for occupants on the state land.	Investors acquiring land to the detriment of vulnerable ones
14. Chaotic urbanization	Migration puts pressure on host communities for infrastructure and services supply, land and rental markets, shortage of housing and accomodation.	Refugee, IDP flows and migration and rapid urban population growth.
15. Weak land administration and management	Denial of access, use, or control of land; Competing land claims; Land grabs; Weak land dispute resolution mechanisms	Elections or coups; Land grabs; Establishment of large infrastructure that impacts large number of people (e.g. dams); Politicization and manipulation of land disputes

▶ **ANALYZING NORTHERN NIGERIA AND BOKO HARAM AS AN EXAMPLE**

In Nigeria, there is conflict in the north east part of the country. The root causes of instability and conflict are weak governance, increased population density and a youth population bulge, climate change and poor water management leading to food insecurity, unemployment, migration, protracted tensions between pastoralists and farmers, inter-ethnic conflict and displacement (two million people are IDPs).

The prevailing situation is ripe for violent conflict, which could be triggered by different factors, such as an election, a famine or the emergence of an armed group (e.g. Boko Haram). In this case, the Boko Haram insurgency was the trigger for conflict.

The way the root causes analysis play out in regard to land (as a proximate factor) is: land degradation leading to food insecurity; an increased land-to-people occupancy ratio leading to an intensification and change of land use; competition between different land uses by different ethnic groups with different livelihood approaches; inadequate land administration and inability by the state to give security of tenure in a way that fits local rules and land management; and insufficient land related livelihoods, particularly for the youth (IDMC:2015).

This example demonstrates that by using a conflict analysis framework that identifies root causes,land-related proximate factors and triggers it is possible to link symptoms and root causes of conflict. In this way, concrete entry points for preventing, limiting and addressing conflicts and building peace through land-related interventions can be easily identified.

▶ *LAND AND CONFLICT COALITION PARTNERS*

The Land and Conflict Coalition (LCC) is a key group that will have a role in taking forward the work on the root cause analysis on land and conflict. The LCC was established in 2015 to address the land and conflict challenges across the conflict cycle – from prevention, to humanitarian response, to peace and security, to development. Forty six UN and non UN partner organizations and a number of government representatives are part of it such as: FAO, UNDPA, OHCHR, UNDP, UN-Women, IOM, UNEP, UNHCR, UNODC, Office of the Special Envoy of the SG for the Great Lakes Region, UNAMA, Huairou Commission, Habitat for Humanity, BRAC USA, Les Afriques Dans Le Monde, Norwegian Refugee Council, Landesa, Land Alliance, Urban Training and Studies Institute, Union of Arab Surveyors, USAID, Interpeace DRC, Danish Refugee Council, Technical University of Munich, Rights and Resources International RRI, Durable Solutions Initiative, DSDI, Slum Dwellers International, HIC-HLRN, Max Plank Institute, Oxfam, McGill University and the World Bank Group.

The Secretariat of the LCC is located in the Global Land Tool Network / UN-Habitat with funding from the SDC.

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