7 Tools and Templates

"The tools can be picked up at any stage of a process to support analysis, sorting information, prioritising and planning actions."

Introduction

This section provides some tools and templates that have been borrowed or adapted from existing resources, or developed in the process of producing this manual. Most of the tools refer to a specific section in the manual, but they can also be picked up at any stage of a process as deemed relevant to support analysis, sorting of information, prioritising and planning actions.

Depending on the character of the group and the process, as well as individual preferences, not all tools will prove useful to everyone. Different alternatives have been provided to allow for mixing, matching and adapting as each group sees fit. Additional tools are available in the GPPAC Conflict Analysis Field Guide and highlighted in the Bibliography.

We welcome feedback and examples from the use of these tools, as well as suggestions for additional resources that have proven helpful to support multi-stakeholder processes!

The templates are available to download from **www.preventiveaction.org.**

7.1 Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid

This grid helps you to summarise and sort some of key factors to consider when deciding whether to organise a multi-stakeholder process as a strategy for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as described in **Sections 4, 5.1 and 5.2**. It can be used alongside the checklist in 7.2.

The grid can be used in several ways, for example:
- The Core Group of organisers can fill it out individually based on internal discussions, and then come together to compare; the grid can be updated as potential stakeholders are approached in bilateral meetings.
- The Core Group can do a collective brainstorm supported by a facilitator, with teams from the respective organisations taking part. Key words and post-its can be used to visualise everyone's input on larger flip chart sheets, which are described and discussed in turn in smaller groups or by the group as a whole (depending on size).
- Potential participants can use the grid along with the checklist in Section 7.2 to cover all eventualities when deciding whether to join a process.

	PROS & BENEFITS	CONS & RISKS	ALTERNATIVE(S)
OPPORTUNITIES			
TIMING			
RESOURCES			
COMPETENCIES			

Example:

	PROS & BENEFITS	CONS & RISKS	ALTERNATIVE(S)
OPPORTUNITIES	Political influence through collaboration with other groups	Political reputation risk – association with certain participants	Lobby/campaign through outsider strategy
TIMING	New legal framework to be proposed by government	Emphasis on legal aspects rather than action/its implementation?	Civil society platform being formed around the government proposal
RESOURCES	Funding for lobbying to strengthen local governance	Earmarked for certain type of lobbying; donor conditions	Engage process participants in lobbying for basket fund by donors?
COMPETENCIES	Have's: mediation skills, coordination, process management	Don't have: convening power, administrative capacity	Mapping of skills of other participants, or outreach to additional participants with missing skills

7.2 Checklist for an Effective MSP

This checklist can be used either by organisers to inform the Go/No-Go decision discussed in **Section 4**, or by potential participants to gauge whether to join an official multi-stakeholder process. The list can also be a useful reference to inform design and planning stages of the process, as well as monitoring and evaluation once the process is underway. In addition, these pointers can give CSOs the ideas for formulating their own checklist tailored to their own priorities and needs.

Individual
- Inter-personal dynamics or chemistry between the potential participants
- Gender balance and other power dynamics
- Communication skills
- Negotiation skills
- Listening skills
- Participants see the relevance of the MSP
- Trustworthiness and responsiveness of participants
- Clear vision or individual or organisational mandate to participate
- Individual participants accountable towards colleagues, partners and constituencies
- Availability of participants to take part

Organisational
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Risk analysis, including reputational risk assessment and management
- Relevance of the MSP to the organisational vision and mission
- Relevance of the MSP to the organisation's constituency
- Institutional support for the MSP
- Clear expectations
- Role, contribution and added value to the MSP
- Exit strategy
- Available resources (staff, time, funding) to participate in the MSP
- Subject matter expertise (e.g. specific conflict issues)
- Internal accountability/reporting back mechanisms
- Involvement of more than one staff (at least as part of the information/feedback loop)

Civil Society

- How the MSP relates to/interacts with what other CSOs are doing: possible complementarity or risks of undermining other efforts
- Options for strategic division of insider/outsider roles
- Policy developments and regulatory frameworks concerning civil society

Process

- Power dynamics among the participating agencies
- Credibility of the convener
- Credibility of the process: clear decision-making, expectations, accountability structures
- Skilled facilitator
- Logistics and information that support inclusiveness and interaction
- Ownership of agenda, protocol, outputs and outcomes
- Feedback and monitoring mechanisms
- Agreement on internal and external communication rules
- Funding and resources to support the process
- Dispute resolution and grievance mechanisms
- Incentives for participation and for staying involved
- Evaluation, learning and adjustments

Adapted from source van Huijstee.

7.3 Interview Questions for Potential Participants

A crucial step in the process is the preparation stage when potential stakeholders are approached in bilateral meetings to inform the stakeholder and situation analysis, as well as trust-building mechanisms such as terms and rules of engagement, as discussed in **Section 5.2**. It is useful if a facilitator/mediator is already involved at this stage to take the lead in preparatory meetings.

Ideally, the meetings are conducted individually and in person. When time and distance stand in the way, interviews can also be conducted over the phone or in groups. The interview approach may have to be modified for each group/individual for the most productive results.

The interviews can help to gather insights into the causes, characteristics, and the complexities of the context. In these initial interviews, the facilitator begins to:
- Frame the issues.
- Identify the parties that should be involved.
- Assess their commitments to a process and outcome.
- Assess data and technical resource needs.
- Get information that will shape the preliminary process design.

In relation to the potential participants, the facilitator:
- Consults with the potential participants about their needs and concerns to help them decide to participate in the process.
- Provides information on the intended purpose and proposed proceedings of the process.
- Works with the parties to explore and assess their options for addressing the issues at hand, so that the parties can weigh all of their options, and so that the convener gets a sense of the level of commitment from parties.

7. Tools and
   Templates

7.1   Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid
7.2   Checklist for an Effective MSP
7.3   Interview Questions for Potential Participants
7.4   Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks

7.5   Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and
      Self-Assessment
7.6   Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
7.7   Basic Action Plan Template
7.8   Tailoring Communication Strategies

Interview questions for suggested participants:

What are the issues?
- Which issues are most important to your group?
- Are there limits to the issues that are open for negotiation?
- Are there outside dynamics that affect negotiation of these issues at this time?

Who needs to participate?
- Who can represent your group or constituency in a credible and responsible fashion?
- Who needs to be at the table from other stakeholder groups? (i.e., who is needed to make a decision, has valuable information, will be affected by a decision, and/or has the ability to impede implementation of a decision?)
- What is the history of relationships among stakeholder representatives and groups?
- Are there stakeholders who are critical to the process who may be reluctant to participate? What would be the impact of their refusal on your participation?
- What will it take for you and your group to participate? What commitments would you want from others (parties or decision-makers or agencies) in order to participate?
- Other than the stakeholders at the table, who would support such a process and who would oppose it? Other than the stakeholders at the table, who is critical to bring along or link with the negotiations?

Assessing options and commitments
- What is most important to your group about each issue? (i.e., procedural, psychological and substantive interests)
- Do you have fears or concerns about negotiating these issues?
- What are your alternatives to participation in a cooperative decision-making process? (i.e., best, worst, most likely outcome)
- What do you have to gain or lose from a negotiated decision?
  What do you have to gain or lose from the status quo?
- Do you understand the consensus decision-making process, and are you willing to try it?

Process design considerations
- How could the negotiations be structured to gain the cooperation of your group and other key interest groups?
- Are there any procedural ground rules that you believe will make the negotiation more effective and productive?
- What do you see as the major barriers, if any, to such a collaborative process? What could a neutral facilitator do to overcome these barriers?
- What are the processes that need to take place within your group or constituency regarding decision-making and ratification?
- Are there limitations on your time or resources that might affect your capacity to negotiate?

Data needs
- What kinds of data will you need during the negotiating process?
- What kind of data or information exchange is needed to build a common base of knowledge for all the stakeholders?
- Whose information would be most credible? Who should present it? How should it be presented? When?
- What kind of technical expertise/support will you need during the negotiation process?

What haven't I asked that you think would be helpful to us in convening this group?

7. Tools and Templates

7.1 Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid
7.2 Checklist for an Effective MSP
7.3 Interview Questions for Potential Participants
7.4 Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks

7.5 Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
7.6 Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
7.7 Basic Action Plan Template
7.8 Tailoring Communication Strategies

7.4 Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks

As the organisers are initiating the process and start approaching potential participants and donors, as described in **Section 5.1**, they may be required to present a convincing case of what they are hoping to do and achieve through the process. The following summary of building blocks from CIVICUS can be helpful in summing up and communicating the rationale and expectations of the process as a whole, and can lay the basis for a concept note that is updated as the initial consultations and steps are taken.

BUILDING BLOCKS	1. Identifying the added value of working together	2. Co-creating a vision and shared priorities, imagining new scenarios	3. Action! Adopting collective and individual initiatives	4. Monitoring the process and learning along the way
RATIONALE/ LEAD QUESTIONS	• What is not working well in our society? • What would be the added value in collaborating with different actors that typically do not work together to address a common challenge that is too big/complex to be tackled alone?	• What would the ideal solution/situation be? • What could be done differently, more effectively? • What needs to change?	• What needs to be done, by whom and how? • How can each of us embed the collaborative priorities in our respective groups or organisations?	• How is the progress going? • What corrective measures are needed to better address the challenge? • Do we need to bring on board new actors?
POSSIBLE ACTIONS	• Analyse the system • Identify and engage key stake holders • Create shared knowledge and a common language	• Create visions of desired change Develop change narratives • Conduct learning journeys • Share research	• Design and implement projects/actions/campaigns • Share knowledge, raise awareness • Collect and analyse data • Empower vulnerable groups	• Assess progress against plans • Share views around challenges and gaps, if any • Share lessons learned • Plan way forward based on learnings
POSSIBLE WAYS OF WORKING	• Desk research • Interviews/focus groups with key informants • One-on-one dialogues or small focus groups and interviews	• Creation of a core group of Champions • Hosting initial face-to-face meeting(s) • Organising a big kick-off meeting	• Formalised partnerships • A joint action plan • Small meetings/conference calls at periodic intervals	• Convening meetings at periodic intervals • Collecting feedback through online/telephonic surveys
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES	• Clarification of issue at stake, common goals (added value) and expectations from each other	• Determination of priorities for collaboration and ideas	• Implementation of the agreed initiatives • Achievement of the envisaged results	• Identification of necessary adjustments/additional actions/new stake holders, if needed

Source Towards New Social Contracts: Using Dialogue Processes to Promote Social Change, p. 16.

7. Tools and Templates

7.1 Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid
7.2 Checklist for an Effective MSP
7.3 Interview Questions for Potential Participants
7.4 Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks

7.5 Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
7.6 Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
7.7 Basic Action Plan Template
7.8 Tailoring Communication Strategies

7.5 Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment

This summary chart brings together and illustrates how the analysis and ideas about the peacebuilding strategy can be linked with self-assessments. It can provide a useful overview when the process is underway and the participants are at a point of considering what actions they can take, whether individually or collectively—as described in **Section 5.4.**

See the Conflict Analysis Field Guide.

The facilitator can use the chart to summarise the findings of conflict assessment exercises of the groups, which can be followed by individual and/or collective self-assessments and planning input. It can also be a useful overview for taking stock and testing whether the initial analysis and assumptions (theories of change) are still valid or whether they need updating.

	Self-Assessment	Conflict Assessment Lens	Theory of Change	Peacebuilding Planning
WHERE	How well do you understand the local context, language, cultures, religions, etc.? Where will you work?	Where is the conflict taking place—in what cultural, social, economic, justice, and political context or system?	If x parts of the context are at the root of conflict and division or provide a foundation of resilience and connection between people, what will influence these factors?	How will the context interact with your efforts? Given your self-assessment, identify your capacity to impact the elements of the context that drive conflict and your ability to foster institutional and cultural resilience.
WHO	Where are you in the stakeholder map? Where do you have social capital? To which key actors do you relate?	Who are the stakeholders—the people who have a stake or interest in the conflict?	If x individual or group is driving or mitigating conflict, then what action will incentivise them to change?	Who will you work with? Given your self-assessment, decide whom to work with to improve relationships between key stakeholders or support key actors who could play a peacebuilding role between key stakeholders.
WHY	How do stakeholders perceive your motivations?	Why are the stakeholders acting the way they do? What are their motivations?	If x group is motivated to drive or mitigate conflict, what will change or support their motivations?	Why will you work? Given your self-assessment of your motivations and how stakeholders perceive your motivations, identify how these align with the motivations of the key actors. What is your goal?
WHAT	What are you capable of doing to address the key drivers and mitigators of conflict?	What factors are driving or mitigating conflict?	If x power sources are driving and mitigating conflict, what actions will influence these factors?	What will you do? Given your self-assessment, identify which driving and mitigating factors you will address.
HOW	What are your resources, means, or sources of power? How will these shape your efforts?	How is conflict manifested? What are the stakeholders' means and sources of power?	If x power sources are driving conflict, what will influence these sources of power?	How will you shift power sources in support of peace? Given your self-assessment, identify and prioritize your capacities to reduce dividers and to increase local capacities for peace.
WHEN	Do you have an ability to respond quickly to windows of vulnerability or opportunity?	Are historical patterns or cycles of the conflict evident?	If x times are conducive to violence or peace, what will influence these times?	When is the best timing for your peacebuilding efforts? Given historical patterns, identify possible windows of opportunity or vulnerability and potential triggers and trends of future scenarios.

Source Schirch, Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning, pp. 69–70.

7.6 Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions

An action plan is only useful if it is realistic and specific, as described in **Section 5.4**. This matrix can help the facilitator support the group to prioritise which actions to focus on in their planning. It works by rating each issue you identify against given criteria.

1.   Identify three or four possible priority issues, using the group's context analysis, upon which you can base your action strategy.

2.   Discussing each issue in turn, the group can work through its chosen criteria to rank each from 1–5 (5 = maximum effectiveness). A practical way of doing this as a group exercise is to draw up the table on a white board or flip chart, then give each participant a marker pen or a set of stickers that they can use to allocate points over the different priority issues. This gives a visual impression of where most people see the priorities. Note: the criteria used below are just examples, which can be amended according to the group's own situation and perceived level of importance.

3.   Add up the totals (or visually identify where most of the stickers have been placed): the issue with the most points should in theory become your strategy priority. Note: While in theory you may just add up the points, in practice it is the discussion that is crucial and not just the numbers. It should not be a mechanical process where you just add up numbers. Ideally, the group should decide the most important issue(s), by consensus.

CHOICE MATRIX: PRIORITISING ACTIONS			
CRITERIA	**Action proposal 1** Organise delegations to the Electoral commission	**Action proposal 2** Facilitate community discussions on human security	**Action proposal 3** Train local monitors on early warning and response
Link to conflict analysis (relevance)	4	4	4
Theory of change (how likely are the assumptions)	3	3	4
Link with participants' vision and mission, institutional support	2	3	5
Funding/resources available	4	4	4
Expertise required vs. expertise in the group	2	3	4
Supporting coordination or complementarity (e.g. joint actions)			
[Other criteria here…]			
TOTAL	15	17	21

Adapted from source **Choice Matrix – Advocacy Toolkit: Influencing the Post-2015 Development Agend**a,
Participatory Advocacy: A Toolkit for VSO Staff, Volunteers and Partners (VSO, 2012), p. 26.

7. Tools and Templates

7.1   Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid
7.2   Checklist for an Effective MSP
7.3   Interview Questions for Potential Participants
7.4   Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks

7.5   Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
7.6   Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
7.7   Basic Action Plan Template
7.8   Tailoring Communication Strategies

7.7 Basic Action Plan Template

There are many different formats for action plans, and the facilitator with the process participants should opt for one that is familiar and easy to understand and update for the group as a whole.

Key components of the action plan are:
- **Why?** Relation to the broader goal/objective the group is working towards (the more specific the better; note that there may be more than one specific goal).
- **What?** Specific activity that is planned.
- **Who?** Lead person and organisation responsible for making the activity happen; supporting or participant people/organisations.
- **When?** Timeline for the activity and when the lead person/organisation will report back to the group.

This basic template is one way of keeping an overview of what the group is planning to do together. Note that for each specific activity, the responsible lead may have to develop a plan with more detailed steps and time frame/dates and related budget. When using the action plan as part of fundraising bids, it may be necessary to add progress indicators and results/outputs.

Goal	Activity	• Who is responsible • Who is involved	By when

Example

Goal	Activity	• Who is responsible • Who is involved	By when
To collaborate with the National Defence Council on the protection of minority rights as part of conflict early warning and early response in the Country Development Strategy	Draft position paper/ recommendations	Organisation(s)/ individual(s)	Dates, occasion
	Advocacy delegation to (individual/department) at the National Defence Council		
	Communication strategy (radio, statements, social media)		
	Plan regional discussion event		
	Follow up/monitoring of recommendations		

7.8 Tailoring Communication Strategies

This chart can support the group to develop a communication strategy once the process is underway and an action plan has been formed, in particular in the implementation phase described in **Section 5.5**. This strategy can contribute to making the process more inclusive and accountable to a broader audience, as well supporting any advocacy objectives the group may have.

The communication strategy is more effective if different messages and means of communicating are tailored to different audiences, as suggested in the chart below. One way of using it is to work in small groups that each select a target group identified in the stakeholder analysis, considering the following questions that are subsequently presented and discussed in plenary:

1. **Who** are you trying to reach, and why?
2. **What** will you say, and how does your message relate to what they care about?
3. **How** will you reach them?

Remember that for each broad category below there are sub-categories that will be more or less relevant to your strategy!

	WHO	WHAT	HOW
SMALL NUMBERS OF PEOPLE ↕ **LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE**	Policy makers, opinion formers.	Detailed, evidence-based arguments, link to how the issue relates to their position and status.	Detailed policy documents or simpler letters or meetings to establish the importance of the issue to them.
	Relevant groups and individuals interested in the issue.	Explaining what you are aiming for and why, identifying barriers to change, in broad lines; how to find out more.	Newsletters, leaflets, newspaper articles/Op-Eds; More detailed information to those who ask for it.
	Wider public.	Simple and emotional stories and messages that make it easy to understand and engage with the issues.	Using public profile personalities or personal testimonies of those who have suffered as a result of violence/conflict issues.

Adapted from source **Advocacy Capacity Building: A Training Toolkit,** The People's Peacemaking Perspective Project (Conciliation Resources and Saferworld, 2011).