

ANNEX 5

The Do No Harm Approach

The aim of the Do No Harm (DNH) approach has been developed to **promote positive, conflict-reducing results of a project and to identify negative results in time and to avoid them**. The Do No Harm approach can be applied flexibly both as a methodological framework and as a management tool.

The 3 elements of the Do No Harm review:

Step 1: Conflict analysis

The Do No Harm review must include a **project-related conflict analysis**.

The conflict analysis identifies conflicts and tension in the area of the planned project, which may have the potential for destabilisation or violence.

This includes the description of the causes of the conflict and the conflict actors (dividers), but also the identification of common interests and connecting factors (connectors), as well as local actors who play a positive role in the conflict (local capacities for peace).

Connectors and dividers may be found at structures and institutions, in personal attitudes and actions, values and interests or collective experience and symbols.

Typical dividers include scarcity of resources, discrimination of population groups, differing ideologies and political power struggles.

Typical connectors may be trade relations, common values or individuals held in joint esteem by all sides.

Step 2: Results analysis

The Do No Harm approach recognizes that the aim of a project and the way in which it is implemented may unintentionally have a negative impact on a conflict situation. Therefore, the 'do no harm' review must also include a **project-related results analysis**.

For a results analysis, the planned achievements of a project must be reviewed with the existing conflict in mind.

Examples of factors with possible negative influences, which may affect and change a project result, are: project resources and personal attitudes:

- Project resources and benefits may be claimed, taxed or stolen by one side of the conflict,
- Benefits distributed to one side of the conflict only,
- Project resources causing an imbalance in the local market,
- Abuse of project resources for private purposes,
- Lack of individual responsibility and accountability.

A conflict-related results analysis must first answer the “W” questions (what, why, where, when, with whom/by whom/for whom) that define the project and then dividing & uniting questions:

Which aspects of the project have a dividing effect and should be avoided?

What aspects of the project reinforce existing causes and actors involved in the conflict or even create new conflict scenarios? What aspects weaken those elements that connect the conflicting parties or local capacities for peace?

Which aspects of the project have a uniting (connecting) effect and should be promoted?

What aspects of the project help overcome conflicts and build local capacities for peace?

Step 3: Developing alternative courses of action

If the conflict and results analyses reveal that a planned project may have unintended negative consequences, **alternative courses of action** must be developed to enable the project to achieve its goal without intensifying or creating conflict.

This involves adapting or changing certain elements of the project to increase the support to connectors and local capacities for peace.

Visualization of the DNH review process:

Options	Tension/ Dividers	PROJECT	Connectors/ Local capacities for peace
Alternative courses of action	Systems & Institutions Attitudes & Actions Values & Interests Experience & Symbols	Description: What? Why? Where? When? With whom? By whom? For whom? How?	Systems & Institutions Attitudes & Actions Values & Interests Experience & Symbols
		Transfer of resources Personal attitudes/ behaviour Accountability	