

NEXUS ANALYSIS: LINKAGE MAPPING

CONFLICT ANALYSIS

Conflict analysis is a critical step in designing effective and conflict-sensitive environmental peacebuilding interventions. The purpose of conflict analysis is to build holistic knowledge about a problem, with particular attention to the underlying concerns and root causes of the issue(s). When used correctly, conflict analysis tools can help you understand the broader context, break complicated problems into manageable pieces, and inform interventions. Without sufficient conflict analysis, peacebuilding projects will likely overlook possible solutions, and may unintentionally create harm or exacerbate tensions.

This worksheet provides an overview and a step-by-step guide for using a tool specifically designed to support conflict analysis for the environment, climate, conflict, and peace nexus. It is important to remember that this is one of many conflict analysis tools, and you should think about which approach(s) are most useful – and practical – for you. It can be helpful to use several different tools, then integrate their results to form a clearer picture.

LINKAGE CHARTS

Linkage charts allow you to map the environment-climate-conflict-peace nexus in a chosen context, showcasing the complicated interactions and relationships between actors, aspects, and events in a particular setting.

Various environmental, socioeconomic, and conflict factors are identified, and placed on a chart in scattered block shapes. (For example, a group of factors relevant to a local context might be drought, famine, livelihood insecurity, human-wildlife conflict, and armed group recruitment.) Causal connections between the different aspects are depicted through lines, which may have directional arrowheads to indicate causality. Feedback loops can be noted by dotted lines.

STRENGTHS and USES	WEAKNESSES and LIMITATIONS
• incredibly flexible • visualize the nexus: multi-directional relationships, feedback loops, coexisting positive and negative connections • can inform solution brainstorming through 'linkage disruption' ideas	• can be complex and difficult to follow without accompanying annotations • not as widespread a method (best used for internal analysis or as an 'abstract', rather than as standalone reporting)

CREATING A LINKAGE CHART

Step 1. Identify your conflict context.

Be clear and specific about the situation you want to examine and address. Consider ‘zooming in’ on a particular area and/or period if you are tackling a large-scale and/or long-term conflict.

Conflict Context: _____

(e.g., Western Sahara; apartheid in South Africa; or deforestation in the Amazon basin)

Step 2. Highlight environmental factors involved.

Consider key ecological concerns. You can choose some from the list below, or add your own.

Biodiversity Loss

Environmental Degradation

Pollution/Contamination

Change in Food & Resource Availability

Extreme Weather

Sea Level Rise & Coastal Issues

Change in Water Availability

Loss of Ecosystem Services

Other: _____

Climate Change

Natural Disasters

Other: _____

Step 3. Pinpoint socioeconomic issues at play.

Consider social and livelihoods dynamics. You can choose some from the list below, or add your own.

Disease and Illness

Illicit Economic Activities

Public Health Concerns

Educational Access Concerns

Livelihood Insecurity

Socioeconomic Inequality

Gender-Based Issues affecting Women

Malnutrition

Other: _____

Gender-Based Issues affecting Men

Migration & Displacement

Other: _____

Step 4. Address peace and conflict dimensions.

Consider tensions, violence, collaboration, and governance structures. You can choose some from the list below, or add your own.

Community Tension

Ineffective/Fragile Institutions

Resource Competition

Fragmented/Siloed Solutions

Injury and Death

Violent Conflict

Growth of Armed Groups

Interpersonal Conflict

Other: _____

Identity Politics and Marginalization

Lack of Communication & Cooperation

Other: _____

Step 5. Organize your issues on a linkage chart.

Write key elements in the tiles below, and feel free to draw additional shapes if more dimensions are relevant in your context.



Step 6. Visualize the nexus interactions between your environmental, socioeconomic, and peace and conflict factors.

Draw cause-and-effect arrows linking elements in your chart. Remember that interactions may be positive or negative, and will often be multidirectional. There may be any number of arrows illustrating the complex relationships involved in your scenario. Feedback loops can be indicated using dashed lines.

Step 7. Annotate your linkage chart.

To help with external communication, and to serve as a record of your analysis (which will be helpful for solution brainstorming and intervention design!), make notes about each of your arrows. What factors and intersections are complicating the environmental peacebuilding nexus in your chosen context?

It may be helpful to number each arrow in your linkage chart, cross-referencing your write-up with the corresponding numbers. Your write-up will likely take more than one page; the space below may be useful for brainstorming and note-taking about your numbered arrows - add more arrows/lines if you need to!

Linkage Arrow #1: _____

Linkage Arrow #2: _____

Linkage Arrow #3: _____

Linkage Arrow #4: _____

Linkage Arrow #5: _____

Linkage Arrow #6: _____

Linkage Arrow #7: _____