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FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMING AND STABILITY

Exploring conflict sensitivity in Dutch FNS programming

Rojan Bolling & Yannicke Goris

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Abstract

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and its embassies are implementing food and nutrition security (FNS) programmes in a large number of countries, many of which are considered fragile or conflict-affected. In response to the government's focus on addressing instability and root causes of migration through development programming, this project seeks to: 1) bring to the surface current practices, lessons and (tacit) knowledge already present in Dutch embassies and FNS programmes on how to respond to instability; and 2) help policymakers and practitioners in designing and implementing conflict sensitive FNS policies and programmes that contribute to doing good in unstable contexts.

The project focuses on three partner countries - Mali, Ethiopia and Burundi - for which three country quick-scans have been written based on an analytical tool develop for this research. The gathered data about the key drivers of conflict in the three target countries have formed the basis for an number of interviews with selected policy makers and practitioners at the MFA, embassies and programmes. These interviews served to determine what is already being done to take (drivers of) conflict and instability into account, so as to identify possibilities for future action.

Key outcomes of the interviews highlighted the importance of: 1) personal experience and 'champions'; 2) flexible approaches to programming; 3) finding complementarity and synergies in programming; 4) stakeholder inclusion; 5) building networks. The lessons learned have been translated into a tool 'Food security and stability. A tool for conflict sensitivity in FNS programming'. Based on the realities and practice of FNS programming in fragile settings this instrument, explicitly aimed at embassy level, provides a method for policy makers and practitioners in FNS programming to actively engage with all aspects of conflict sensitive programming and identify approaches appropriate to their context.

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List of abbreviations

AGP - Agricultural Growth Programme

CASCAPE - Capacity building for scaling up of evidence-based best practices in agricultural production in Ethiopia

DryDev – Drylands Development Programme

FNS – Food and nutrition security

ISSD – Integrated Seed Sector Development

ISSSS - International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy

MASP – Multi Annual Strategic Plan

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MONUSCO - United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

PAPAB - Projet d'Appui à la Productivité Agricole au Burundi

PIP - Plan Integrée de Paisants

PSNP – Productive Safety Nets Programme

SLP - Sustainable Landscape Programme

1. Introduction

Conflict sensitivity in Food and Nutrition Security Programming

Improving food security can help enhance stability and plays a key role in diminishing chances of conflict relapse in fragile contexts. Conversely, if FNS programmes fail to recognize and adapt to (changing) drivers of conflict, they run the risk of having negative impacts. Bearing in mind these risks and possibilities, this project aims to assist policymakers and practitioners to actively work towards improved and sustained conflict sensitivity in the practice of FNS programming and help identify ways in which FNS policies and programming can contribute to increased stability.

Ultimately, being conflict sensitive will 1) lead to more effective decision making and programming; 2) allow for better risk management; and 3) ensure that FNS programmes are doing no harm and contribute to doing good.

In recent years instability and migration have become a top priority in political debates and increasingly in all development policy fields as well.[1] The recently published coalition agreement of the new Dutch government has followed this trend. Central to its stated foreign and development policies is the aim to address the root causes of poverty, migration, terrorism, and climate change in the 'ring of instability' that surrounds Europe. The potential of food and nutrition security (FNS) policies to have an impact on these causes and further stimulate development in these regions means it will be playing a key role in Dutch development policies in the coming years.

Against this background, this project seeks to contribute to a better understanding of conflict sensitivity in existing FNS programmes of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and its embassies. Although the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has made efforts to formally incorporate more conflict-sensitive approaches in some of its programmes, so far this has not been the case for FNS policies.[2] Therefore, this project takes a pragmatic, bottom-up approach, focusing on practices - rather than official policy - at (Dutch) embassy level that can be defined as conflict-sensitive. Three partner countries, Mali, Ethiopia and Burundi, were chosen to focus the research as these countries are all challenged by different forms of instability in recent years while FNS programmes are a priority theme.[3] A literature study about conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis formed the basis for

[1] The 2017 State of Food and Nutrition Security in the World for instance shows that food insecurity and undernutrition increase risks of conflict while timely conflict-sensitive FNS interventions can contribute to stability and sustained peace. See: FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2017) The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017. Building resilience for peace and food security. Rome, FAO. https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000022419/download/

[2] Since the nineties there has been broad awareness and recognition of the importance of conflict sensitivity, it has largely remained an add-on for development programmes, for instance in the form of so-called toolboxes that may (or may not) be implemented yet. See: SwissPeace (2016) Conflict Sensitivity: Taking it to the Next Level, working paper.

[3] Strictly speaking FNS is not a priority for Mali, however water programming is, which is in most cases related to projects that contribute to FNS.

an analytical ‘lens’, which was used to map conflict drivers and possible sources of instability and write three quick-scans about the three target countries (see annex 2). The conflict analysis and quick-scans can be regarded as a preparatory phase for the interviews conducted with a number of selected policy makers and practitioners. Not only did the analytical lens and quick-scans form the basis for the formulation of the actual questions, they also served to sensitize the interviewers to the issues at stake and provide them with a solid foundation for conducting the interviews. These interviews focused primarily on current practice to determine what the MFA and embassies are already doing to take possible triggers for instability into account, thus seeking to identify the positive lessons learned in order to identify prospects for action.

Identifying such key lessons as well as generating new input for debate on FNS policies in fragile contexts are the main aims of this project. Instead of formulating definitive conclusions on the exact relationship between FNS and stability, it explores how FNS policies can be adjusted and respond to instability and conflicts, with the primary objective of ensuring they ‘do no harm’, and preferably ‘do good’ from a root causes perspective. In an attempt to ensure that the accumulated insights are valuable for the daily practice of FNS programmes, the lessons learned have been translated into a tool ‘Food security and stability. A tool for conflict sensitivity in FNS programming’. This instrument invites policy makers and practitioners in FNS programming to actively engage with all aspects of conflict sensitive programming. By drawing attention to key elements and obstacles, our tool takes them to the heart of what conflict sensitive FNS programmes can achieve in fragile contexts, and helps to reflect critically on existing practices and possibilities for (future) interventions.

The following report reflects the different phases of this project. Chapter 2 forms the theoretical backbone, explaining the concept of conflict sensitivity, the analytical tool used for determining conflict drivers, as well as potential relationships between FNS programmes and stability. The chapters that follow reflect the interview-phase of this project, with Chapter 3 describing the interview process and methods and Chapters 4-6 describing and analysing the different outcomes of the interviews: programmes and policies; perceptions of food security and stability; and tacit knowledge and lessons learned.

2. Conflict sensitivity

Chapter at a glance

- The preparatory phase of this project forms the foundation for the interviews. It includes the establishment of
  1. a clear definition of conflict sensitivity;
  2. an analytical lens for country mappings;
  3. a theoretical exploration of the potential connections between food security and stability.
- Conflict sensitivity is not only about 'doing no harm' it is also about 'doing good'; i.e. seeking ways to contribute to peace and stability
- Conflict sensitivity can be defined as organisations' ability to
  - understand dynamics of conflict
  - understand the interaction between their intervention and conflict dynamics
  - act upon this understanding to minimize negative and maximize positive impact
  - contribute to peace and stability
- FNS programmes are not only affected by, but also affect conflict and instability. Importantly, they have the potential to contribute to stability.
- Impact of FNS programmes will differ depending on the dimension of food security they are aiming for: availability, access, utilization, and/or stability.

2.1 The concept of 'conflict sensitivity'

Investigating the nature and scope of conflict sensitivity within FNS programmes requires, first and foremost, a thorough understanding of what is meant by the concept of 'conflict sensitivity'. At the heart of this concept lies the fact that aid and development programmes implemented in fragile or conflict-affected contexts are never neutral. The effects of their implementation go beyond direct effects and inevitably impact upon the dynamics of peace, conflict, stability and instability. Programmes can and do play a role in ameliorating or exacerbating root causes of conflict.[4] Consequently, they can cause *harm* if responsible parties - including NGOs, responsible ministries or other government bodies - fail to recognize the impact of their programmes on surrounding contexts.

The conscious effort to take into account the extent to which interventions impact upon instability or conflict and contribute to peace and stability is mostly referred to as 'conflict sensitivity'. Central to conflict sensitive approaches is the concept of 'Do No Harm', which raises awareness about potential conflict-exacerbating impacts of assistance. Conflict sensitivity however, goes further than this: it also draws attention to the potential of programmes to build upon positive and connecting factors in society which can strengthen trends towards peace and stability. In short: they

[4] Importantly, there is a difference between conflict and violent conflict. Fault lines exist in all societies as do inequalities and competition. Moreover, conflict is often a part of movements for change, greater justice and peace. Also see: GPPAC (2015) Conflict Analysis Framework: Field Guidelines and Procedures.

can do *good* beyond the initial focus of an intervention.

For this project we have taken USAID's definition of conflict sensitivity for FNS programming as point of departure. According to this definition conflict sensitivity refers to "the ability of an organization engaged in any kind of intervention to:

1. Understand the **conflict dynamics** in the context in which it operates, particularly with respect to **inter-group relations**;
2. Understand the **interaction** between the **intervention** and the **conflict dynamics** in the context; and
3. **Act** upon this understanding in order to minimize unintended negative impacts and **maximize positive impacts** of the intervention on the context of conflict".[5]

These three points are widely seen as the core of conflict sensitivity. They draw explicit attention to inter-group relations and hence underline the need to take notice of the different actors that influence the drivers of conflict and are influenced by development programming. For development programmes this means that programme-designers and -implementers should not only be aware of actors involved in the conflict, but also consider how the distribution of resources and knowledge into a community affects relationships between those actors. Beyond a focus on preventing negative impacts, USAID's definition also draws attention to the possibility of positive impacts on drivers of peace and stability. For this project, we have further expanded the definition to include the ability of an organization to:

4. Make **deliberate efforts** to address drivers of conflict and **contribute to peace and stability**.

2.2 Analytical lens

As explained in the foregoing, a conflict sensitive approach relies on having a thorough understanding of the dynamics of conflict. In other words, it is necessary to have sufficient insight into the drivers of conflict in a certain context. To appreciate the nature and extent of conflict sensitivity currently present in the FNS programmes in the three target countries - Mali, Ethiopia and Burundi - it was therefore necessary to first have a clear insight in their respective conflict dynamics. Three country quick-scans have been produced (see annex 2) by means of an analytical lens (see annex 1). This lens was developed based on current insights into the relationship between FNS and stability and the state of the art in conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis frameworks.[6]

Conflict sensitivity- and conflict analysis-literature has generated numerous analytical frameworks to map drivers of conflict. The lens developed for this project is a merger of a variety of

[5] USAID (2016) Conflict Sensitivity in Food Security Programming: Technical brief. URL: http://www.dmeforpeace.org/peacexchange/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Conflict-Sensitivity-in-Food-Security-Programming.pdf

[6] Sources include: SwissPeace (2016) Conflict Sensitivity: Taking it to the Next Level, working paper.; International Alert (2005) Conflict-Sensitive Business Practice: Guidance for Extractive Industries.; GPPAC (2015) Conflict Analysis Framework: Field Guidelines and Procedures.; SIDA (2006) Manual for Conflict Analysis.; UK Stabilisation Unit (2014) Analysis for Conflict and Stabilisation Interventions, what works series; Saferworld (2004) Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A resource pack.

frameworks used by governments, governmental agencies and NGOs working in fragile states on FNS policies or closely related human security fields. Its approach and translation into our three country quick-scans is based mainly on the 2016 UN Conflict Analysis Practice Note that identifies 'four minimum elements of a conflict analysis':[7]

- A situation profile, providing a snapshot of current and emerging historical, political, economic, security, socio-cultural and environmental context;
- A causal analysis of conflict factors, exploring the root causes, proximate causes and triggers of conflict;
- A stakeholder analysis, mapping people or groups that directly or indirectly influence, or are affected by, the conflict;
- The drivers of conflict, examining the interaction between the causes of conflict and the actors, trends and conflict systems.

Based on these four elements, and operating under the premise that a relationship between FNS programming and stability exists, a number of 'indicators of conflict' were selected that together form the analytical lens (see annex 1). To ensure comparability and analytical rigour, qualitative as well as quantitative indicators have been included in the lens. Additionally, indicators were selected based on their relevance in the context of FNS interventions and conflict dynamics related to food security.[8] It is important to note here, that given the constraints of time and availability of data, the analytical lens focuses on national-level rather than micro-level indicators. However, as macro-level drivers of conflict - including unemployment, lack of economic development, political or ethnic strife - shape the contexts in which households function and largely determine their course of action, this is not necessarily a limitation. Moreover, as FNS programmes usually target households and communities - thus focusing on a micro-level - a thorough understanding of the broader context in which such programmes operate is crucial.[9]

Informed by the application of the analytical lens three country quick-scans were written. These scans represent a summary of the key factors researched through the lens and provide a situation sketch of the three target countries, an overview of (potential) conflict factors in 5 separate dimensions (political factors, economic factors, social/cultural factors, environmental factors and factors of security), as well as an overview of relevant actors and population groups (see annex 1: analytical lens; annex 2: country quick-scans). It is important to note however, that the data resulting from our analysis are as extensive and in-depth as was possible within the boundaries of this project – i.e. a desk-study within a limited time frame. Consequently, there is a certain level of bias towards easily accessible data-sets, like those from the World Bank. To strengthen the quality of the

[7] UNDG (2016) Conflict analysis practice note. URL: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Conflict-Analysis-Practice-Note-13-May-2016-Version.pdf

[8] Sources informing these choices include: Hendrix, C. and H. Brinkman (2013) Food Insecurity and Conflict Dynamics: Causal Linkages and Complex Feedbacks. Stability: International Journal of Security & Development, 2(2): 26, pp. 1-18.; Lautze et al. (2012) Agriculture, Conflict and Stability: A call for renewed focus on protection and conflict-sensitive programming in agriculture and food nutrition security.; Chen, L. (2016) From food security towards a resilient society.

[9] Breisinger, C., Ecker, O., Maystadt, J.F., Trinh Tan, J.F., Al-Riffal, P. Bouzar, K., SMA, A., & Abdelgadir, M. (2014). How to Build Resilience to Conflict – the Role of Food Security. IFPRI, Washington, DC. https://www.ifpri.org/file/34510/download

information and the resulting quick-scans however, our researchers have attempted to create a good balance of indicators through a reflexive process. Additionally, a Reference Group of experts has been invited to review their choices as well as the amassed data.

2.3 The relationship between FNS programmes and stability

Taking a conflict sensitive approach in FNS programmes requires, first and foremost, a thorough understanding of the conflict dynamics in the contexts the programmes are to be applied in. It requires, in others words, a conscientious conflict analysis. This however, is not sufficient. What is needed in addition is a clear awareness of what impact the implemented (or intended) FNS programmes may have upon their surrounding context beyond the realm of food and nutrition. While the exact relationship between food and nutrition security and conflict or stability is not clear, evidence suggests that food insecurity and malnutrition can be a trigger for conflict - particularly in contexts where there is inequality and where institutions are fragile.[10] Food insecurity, rather than a direct cause of conflict, should be understood as a threat multiplier. In combination with other factors - poverty, underemployment, income inequality, limited access to land, scarcity of natural resources, natural disasters, and poor governance[11] - it can be of great influence and tip the scale toward outbreaks of conflict.[12] Conversely, through its potential to build resilience, contribute to livelihoods, perspective and general economic development, food and nutrition security and related development programming have the potential to contribute to increased stability.

Types of food security

From the above it follows that FNS programmes can have great impact upon their surrounding contexts. The nature and scope of this impact depends on a number of factors, but is determined mostly by the approaches and goals of FNS programmes themselves. These approaches and goals, in turn, are based on what dimension of food and nutrition security the programme focuses on. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, food and nutrition security 'exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life'. This definition encompasses four dimensions of food security: 1) availability, 2) access, 3) utilization, and 4) stability.[13] The first dimension relates to the amount of food that is available, determined by production-related aspects of food production, food stocks and food trade. The second dimension, food access, refers to whether or not an individual or household is able to obtain food. Such access

[10] FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2017) The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017. Building resilience for peace and food security. Rome, FAO. https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000022419/download/

[11] Hendrix, C.S. & Brinkman, H.J. (2013). Food Insecurity and Conflict Dynamics: Causal Linkages and Complex Feedbacks. Stability: International Journal of Security & Development, 2(2): 26, pp. 1.18.

[12] Chen, L. (2016) From Food Security towards a resilient society, the Food & Business Knowledge Platform. Available at: http://knowledge4food.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/160518_fbkp-article_fs-resilientsociety.pdf

[13] FAO (2008) Food security information for action: practical guides. An introduction to the basic concepts of food security. European Commission, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Food Security Programme, FAO, Rome. http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/al936e/al936e00.pdf

is determined by factors including income, markets, food prices and safety. Third, food utilization relates to the body making the most of various nutrients in the food, which is influenced by food diversity, food safety and knowledge of nutrition. Food stability, the fourth dimension, is obtained when the first three dimensions are satisfied over time. This stability depends on factors such as weather condition, political stability and economic factors like unemployment.

Figure 1. Food security and its four dimensions.[14]

Given these differences, it logically follows that when FNS programmes focus on one (or more) of these four dimensions their approaches will differ as well. A focus on increased food production results in different actions than a focus on increased food access and, consequently, in different (potential) impacts on the surrounding context and stability. This chapter does not include a detailed description of different possible impacts of FNS programmes on stability. Rather, it serves to draw attention to the connection between the multidimensional definition of food security and possible impacts. In relation to conflict sensitivity in FNS programmes this means that 1) FNS programmes are not only affected by, but also affect, conflict and instability; and that 2) such impacts will differ depending on the dimension(s) of food security one chooses to focus on.

[14] Figure from Harrie Lövenstein, Wageningen UR) In: van Ittersum & Giller 2014

3. Interview process and methods

3.1 Interviews: set-up

This project focuses on conflict sensitive practices at Dutch embassies in their Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) policy in Mali, Ethiopia and Burundi. Given our assumption that much of this conflict sensitivity takes shape in an informal manner - i.e. based on personal experience and tacit knowledge, rather than directed by formal policy - interviews have been conducted with those most closely involved in the process of designing, directing and implementing FNS policies in these three countries. Country-coordinators at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) were approached as a logical 'first' step in the interview-phase. Based on their input as well as drawing from our own network, embassy staff members working in the field of food security were also invited to participate in interviews. Finally, these staff members were asked for contact details of project employees relevant for the purposes of our project. In total, nine people were interviewed, representing policy-makers at the level of the MFA and at the level of the embassies, as well as practitioners at project-level (for a full overview of respondents and interview questions, see Annex 3).

Table 1. Overview of interviewees

	Country-coordinator	**Embassy staff**	**Project staff**
Mali	x	x	
Burundi	x	x	x
Ethiopia	x	x	x
Other		x	

Interviews were conducted either face-to-face (at the MFA), via Skype or telephone, and one interview was carried out via email. The questions that formed the basis of the interviews had been formulated prior to the interview phase, but as insights progressed small adjustments were made along the way. Additionally, during the interviews questions were added or omitted, depending on the direction of given answers. Four main topics formed the core of each of the conducted interviews (see annex 3 for the full list of interview questions, including guidance on how questions were prioritized):

1. FNS policy instruments and programmes in place in the country at hand.
2. Perceived drivers of conflict and instability and their interaction with policy and

programmes.

3. Conflict sensitivity in practice; evidence and lessons.
4. Formal/official elements of conflict sensitivity in FNS policy instruments.

Unfortunately, several confirmed interviews fell through, most notably an interview with an entrepreneur in Burundi who changed his strategy in response to perceived risks of exacerbating local conflicts as well as an interview with a staff member of the Malian embassy. We made up for this shortfall in the next phases of the project, in which feedback sessions on the relevance of our outcomes were held at the level of the Ministry and embassies. The four topics mentioned above are reflected in the structure of chapters 4 (country strategies and programmes), 5 (views on the relationship between FNS programmes and drivers of conflict or stability) and 6 (conflict sensitivity in daily practice).

3.2 Interviewees: roles and relationships

Before the in-depth discussion of the interview results, this section briefly sheds light on the role of and relationship between the different interviewees that participated in this project. Among the first to be interviewed were the country-coordinators of Mali, Burundi and Ethiopia working at the MFA in The Hague. These country-coordinators can be considered as the 'linking pin' between the embassies and the MFA and are responsible for the design and direction of centrally funded programmes. In addition to the 'central funds', there is a second flow of funds - the so-called delegated (or decentral) funds - which is the responsibility of the embassies. When it comes to these delegated funds, the embassies are (more or less) free in designing and implementing projects, although naturally they must stay within the boundaries of established policy frameworks and the country level Multi-Annual Strategic Plans (MASPs). That said however, the country-coordinators do play an important role in both types of programmes - central as well as delegated - and therefore stand in close contact with the embassies. The country-coordinators provide embassies with feedback and advice and there is a regular exchange of ideas and experiences between the Ministry and the embassy staff.

If the country-coordinators are the linking-pin between the embassies and the MFA, the embassies in their turn act as the bridge between the Dutch development programmes (including the FNS programmes) and the country-coordinators. Based on the MASPs, which provide a general policy framework for each country, programme proposals are evaluated by the embassies. Plans, submitted by (consortia of) international and/or local NGOs, are (re)formulated in close cooperation with the embassy. Eventually, after a process of thorough review, the selected organisations implement their project 'on the ground'. In this process embassies have a certain level of autonomy vis-à-vis the MFA, the extent of which is perceived differently among the various interviewees. Discussing the autonomy of the embassy in Mali for instance, this was regarded as 'significant' and this perceived freedom described as crucial for adequately responding to changes in local circumstances. Views on the situation in Burundi were similar and embassy staff was thought to have "considerable room to steer decentralized programmes in a certain direction" as long as decisions fit within the framework of the policy guidelines of the MASP. Views on the Ethiopian

situation were a little different and interviewees, rather than underlining the embassy's extensive freedom, drew attention to the limitations thereof - limitations which were deemed necessary for ensuring synergy between the centrally funded and decentralized programmes.

'Implementing partners' or 'practitioners' are the third and last category of interviewees. They are putting the Dutch FNS programmes into practice, carrying out the programmes approved (and / or designed) by the embassies or The Hague. In most cases these implementing partners exist of a mix of local and international organizations, where the international organization often functions as a coordinator or penholder of the project. In regular contact with embassy staff and experiencing on a daily basis the practical implications of policies, the insights of these practitioners have been vital in adding to our understanding of conflict sensitivity in the daily practice of Dutch FNS programming.

4. Programmes and policies

Chapter at a glance

- The 4 main themes of Dutch development cooperation policy are Security & the rule of law; Water management; Food security; and Sexual & reproductive health & rights.
- For each country 3 of these 'spearheads' are selected to direct policy and programmes
- Implemented programmes are either centrally funded and directed by the MFA; or they are paid for by decentral funds and the responsibility of embassies
- Mali:
  - Food security is incorporated in the spearhead Water management (water for food)
  - The DryDev programme takes a conflict sensitive landscape approach
- Burundi:
  - FNS programmes are concentrated in conflict-affected provinces to promote stability
  - The leading PAPAB programme takes a participatory approach to enhance sustainable food production and knowledge development
- Ethiopia:
  - Identified as 'transition country', greater emphasis is put on economic transition
  - The Dutch approach is characterized by the *on plan* (rather than *on budget*) support of large 'tanker' programmes implemented by the Ethiopian government
  - Dutch 'Pilot boat' programmes aim to strengthen and give direction to these tankers. CASCAPE is one key example of these pilot boats

In each of the three focus countries both centrally funded as well as decentrally funded programmes are in place. Moreover, to give direction to policy, in each country three (out of a possible four) focal areas – the so-called spearhead areas – have been selected, giving general direction and purpose to the implemented programmes (see Table 2.).

Table 2. Overview of policy focus areas per country

	Mali	**Burundi**	**Ethiopia**
Security and the rule of law	x	x	x
Water management	x		
Food security		x	x
Sexual and reproductive health and rights	x	x	x

This chapter provides an overview of programmes and policies discussed during the interviews. The described programmes can thus be considered representative of the programmes and policies currently in place, but do not constitute a complete and exhaustive overview of FNS programmes present in these countries.

4.1 Mali

Although for each country only three spearhead areas can be selected, most interviewees point out that in practice the boundaries are not as strict. The same holds true for Mali, where until 2012 'Food security' was still a main priority area. When conflict escalated in 2011/2012 and - as one interviewee described it - 'all hell broke loose', Food security had to make way for Security and the rule of law. Officially then, programmes in Mali are no longer prioritizing food security, but in practice these programmes still exist. Mali's water programmes are built around the principle 'water for food', meaning that all efforts are aimed at improving water management and efficient water use for agriculture and livestock.[15]

For the present project, the regional Drylands Development Programme (DryDev) proved particularly interesting. This centrally funded programme takes place in Kenya, Ethiopia, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali. DryDev's main goals are to make agriculture, and smallholder farming in particular, more sustainable and empower households in the targeted drylands to move beyond subsistence farming and emergency aid. To this end, a wide variety of approaches is used, focusing on the improvement of water management, prevention of land degradation as well as spatial planning.

4.2 Burundi

In contrast to Mali, Dutch development policy in Burundi does have Food security as one of its focus areas. As such, FNS programmes funded by centralized as well as delegated funds are in place and the MFA as well as the embassy are explicitly aiming for synergy between the two.

The embassy in Burundi has a yearly food security budget of approximately 20 million, which it can spend at its own discretion – though within the limits of the MASP – on FNS programmes. As also described in the MASP[16], in general the Burundian embassy does not fund activities with a budget lower than €300.000, meaning that most programmes are of considerable size. Additionally, these programmes are mostly located in three particular provinces: Bujumbura Rural, Bubanza and Cibitoke. These provinces have faced the most serious problems of political violence and are therefore regarded as key priority areas for development. Moreover, the Great Lakes Region programme - which will be discussed in more detail below - focuses on these provinces as well and

[15] Multi Annual Strategic Plan for Mali, 2014-2017, URL: https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2014/02/05/meerjarige-strategische-plannen-mjsp-2014-2017/mali-multi-annual-strategic-plan-2014-2017.pdf

[16] Multi Annual Strategic Plan for Burundi, 2014-2017, URL: https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2014/02/05/meerjarige-strategische-plannen-mjsp-2014-2017/burundi-multi-annual-strategic-plan-2014-2017.pdf

this geographical overlap allows for better synergy between the two funding flows. That said however, the Burundian embassy also implements programmes in other regions and is presently considering to invest more in national programmes, as a number of projects are thought to be 'ready for upscaling'.

One of the most important FNS programmes currently in place in Burundi is the Projet d'Appui à la Productivité Agricole au Burundi (PAPAB). The PAPAB project, which operates in 6 provinces and works with over 80.000 farmers, aims to sustainably increase food production. It takes an integrated approach that seeks to promote market-oriented, climate resilient and sustainable agricultural techniques, combined with a fertilizer subsidy system and a participatory approach to increase farmers' motivation as well as knowledge development. PAPAB is becoming the 'lead programme' for the embassy in Burundi and increasingly other activities - including land registration, ISSD, microfinancing, and value chain development - are built around and integrated within this programme. As for the most important centrally funded programmes in Burundi, these are constituted by the so-called Facility for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Food Security (FDOV) projects and the Addressing Root Causes (ARC) programmes. These are all directed from The Hague, but the Burundian embassy is constantly looking for complementarity with its own programmes. Because of the intensive contact between the embassy and experts in The Hague, programmes are well-aligned and the embassy has some influence on the direction of the centrally funded programmes in Burundi.

4.3 Ethiopia

In the MASP for Ethiopia one difference with the MASPs of Mali and Burundi immediately becomes apparent: The plans for Ethiopia are focused on economic growth and trade rather than aid in the 'classical' sense of the word.[17] This difference is based on a division made by the Dutch government of its 15 partner countries: Eight were classified as 'transitional countries', the rest as 'aid countries'. Even though reality is much more complex than this simple division and enormous differences exist within countries - a fact that is recognized by the MFA as well as the embassies -, the division greatly affects the way in which development (including FNS) programmes are approached and designed. In terms of organization, for states that are regarded as transitional countries – like Ethiopia – more funds are allocated to business development, entrepreneurship and trade. This focus is reflected in the three main goals of FNS programmes in Ethiopia: 1) augmenting production and commercialization of the agro-sector; 2) supporting agribusiness to increase its competitiveness; and 3) improving food security of vulnerable households. While the third goal still reflects the more aid-oriented dimension, it is clear that the majority of FNS efforts in Ethiopia are directed towards economic growth. This is in line with the general direction of policies of the Ethiopian government, which are supported by The Netherlands. In contrast to on budget support - where funds are added to the receiving government's budget -, the Dutch policy in Ethiopia is marked by its on plan support of Ethiopian policies. In practice this means that, on the one hand, Dutch money is invested in large

[17] Multi Annual Strategic Plan for Ethiopia, 2014-2017, URL: https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2014/02/05/meerjarige-strategische-plannen-mjsp-2014-2017/ethiopia-multi-annuial-strategic-plan-2014-2017.pdf

existing projects of the Ethiopian government – the so-called 'tankers' - and, on the other hand, the embassy uses its delegated funds to develop programmes that support and give direction to these governmental programmes – the so-called 'pilot boats'.

The three major 'tanker' programmes developed by the Ethiopian government are the Agricultural Growth Programme (AGP), the Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP) and the Sustainable Landscape Programme (SLP), two of which (the AGP and the PSNP) are supported by The Dutch government. The PSNP is a social safety net for the most vulnerable households, who are mostly living in the poor and chronically food insecure lowlands of the country. The programme is vital for ensuring basic levels of food security, but, as the lowlands of Ethiopia have very limited economic assets, the PSNP is not likely to bring about a true transformation. The AGP focuses on Ethiopia's high potential areas and aims to increase agricultural productivity and market access for key crop and livestock products. Targeting millions of farmers, the AGP 'tanker' has the potential to have great impact on the Ethiopian economy. With its pilot boats the Dutch embassy in Ethiopia is trying to make sure that this tanker 'is set on the right course'. One of the ways in which the embassy seeks to keep the AGP on course and enhance its impact is by means of the CASCAPE project (Capacity building for scaling up of evidence-based best practices in agricultural production in Ethiopia). As one of the 'pilot boats', the CASCAPE project is designed to support existing AGP activities by identifying and disseminating best practices in agricultural production and improving linkages between farmers, NGO's, private sector, universities, research institutes and policy makers. The project thus promotes the uptake of agricultural innovations among those Ethiopian farmers that are already beneficiaries of the AGP. At present the CASCAPE team is also working on an extension of the project: This 'new' CASCAPE will be connected to the other large governmental programme in Ethiopia, the PSNP, which means that it will focus exclusively on smallholder farmers who are often food insecure.

4.4 Additional programme: Great lakes region

In addition to programmes that are implemented in one of the three target countries, a programme outside these countries caught our interest as it explicitly focuses on the combination of food security and stability: The Dutch regional programme in the 'Great Lakes' region, which is implemented in Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and the Eastern Kivu region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). What makes this Great Lakes Programme particularly interesting for the present research is the fact that all of its efforts must contribute to stability in the Great Lakes region.[18] Presently, programme-activities related to FNS are only taking place in East-Congo. Even though this is not among the target countries of this study, the application of explicitly conflict sensitive approaches gives great insight into possible ways to promote similar modes of operation in other contexts. Recognizing the crucial importance of security and access to land, activities in North and South Kivu take an integrated approach, focusing on agricultural value chain development as well as safe access to markets and farmland.

[18] Multi Annual Strategic Plan for the Great Lakes Region, 2014-2017, URL: https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2014/02/05/meerjarige-strategische-plannen-mjsp-2014-2017/great-lakes-region-multi-annual-strategic-plan-2014-2017.pdf

5. Interviews: Food security and stability

Chapter at a glance

- So far, the exact relationship between food security and stability has not yet been established. Yet, based on their experiences, interviewees agreed that FNS programmes have the potential to contribute to stability. Providing **future perspective** in particular was regarded as vital for promoting or maintaining peace and stability.
- FNS programming in volatile settings can have positive impact, but risks of conflict exacerbation also exist:
  - **Possible negative impacts:** Undermining local authorities or institutions, reinforcing or creating grievances e.g. by targeting specific groups (social, ethnic etc.), geographic areas, or neglecting to secure land rights
  - **Possible positive impacts:** Programmes provide households in fragile contexts with (socio-economic) perspective, increase contact of groups across societal divides or provide incentives for (conflict) stakeholders to support stability
- The impact goes both ways: FNS programmes are affected by changes in their given context. Sudden outbreaks or more indirect effects of conflict can have serious consequences on programme impacts as well as the livelihoods of beneficiaries.

5.1 Do FNS programmes lead to more stability?

When asking questions about the relationship between food security and stability, it is important to be aware of the underlying assumption: the notion that there is in fact such a relationship. This connection is by no means self-evident however, and has so far not been unequivocally established. For the present project, more important than what can be proven, is what views are held by people working on FNS policies at the Dutch MFA and embassies. After all, their views on the connection between food security and stability - based on their extensive professional experience and knowledge - have more impact on programme design and implementation than what may be deemed 'fact' by the academic community. Moreover, often it determines how conflict sensitivity is applied in practice.

In general, our interviewees agreed on the notion that FNS programmes have the potential to contribute to improved stability. This connection was described in terms of an indirect effect rather than a direct causal connection. As FNS programmes usually take the form of projects that aim to enhance inclusive and sustainable agricultural production and development, they result in more employment opportunities, economic growth and, consequently, future perspective. This perspective in particular is seen as essential for conflict prevention and stability: As many young people in the three target countries are un(der)employed and become more and more dissatisfied with their lack of opportunities, they seek other means to improve their future prospects: Many

decide to migrate elsewhere, leaving everything behind and often risking their lives in the process. Others, frustrated and desperate, may resort to criminal means of generating an income or fall prey to recruitment efforts of armed groups that make an already precarious situation more unstable.

Although none of the interviewees disagreed with the idea of this indirect positive connection between FNS programmes and increased stability, ideas differed about the potential of direct influence of FNS interventions. While the approach central to the Great Lakes programme clearly testifies to a strong belief in the transformative power of improved food security as an important piece of the puzzle - contributing to stability being at the heart of all its projects - some interviewees argued that this influence should not be overestimated. Other factors, they explained, are of far greater influence when it comes to a nation's conflict and instability, making the effect of FNS programmes - at least for conflict transformation - negligible. This does not mean however, that contributing to food security is regarded as unimportant. It only means that one should be realistic about goals and ambitions: FNS programmes remain crucial in the lives of people who are food insecure, they can spur economic growth to some degree and may even help alleviate conflicts at the local level. Yet, they will not - according to those who take this more 'conservative' view - have a significant effect on macro-level or nation-wide stability or conflict transformation.

Box 1. Transformative power of FNS programmes: PAPAB in Burundi

Even though so far the idea that contributing to food security leads to more stability has not been scientifically proven, anecdotal evidence provided by our interviewees suggests such positive impact is, at least, possible: In Burundi's rural areas, many smallholder farmers produce barely enough to sustain their own families. The PAPAB programme PAPAB programme seeks to elevate these households out of poverty, by helping them increase their production through improving access to fertilizers as well as knowledge on improved farming methods. Central to the programme is a participatory approach, the so-called PIP approach (Plan Integrée de Paisants), which means that not only the farmers, but also their communities - including the women, youth and elderly - are part of the process. Families are assisted in formulating a business plan for a sustainable future, an approach which is thereafter applied on a broader community-level as well.

By linking households together and creating shared local markets, the PAPAB programme prevents further fragmentation of farmland - thereby preventing more conflict over land - and promotes local social cohesion; a sense of 'us'. For young people in particular these developments have proven to be crucial: With better prospects for a profitable future in their own communities they may be less inclined to resort to criminal means of survival, as one of the interviewees pointed out based on his own experiences with young people in Burundi. Additionally, communities in PAPAB target regions have been found to invest more in land, improved farming methods and seeds; choices that all indicate more faith in the future of their business. As such, interviewees pointed out, a positive 'critical mass' has emerged which fosters motivation, entrepreneurship, cooperation as well as stability. Thus, even though PAPAB is not solving conflicts on a national scale, at a local level, by working towards increased food security in several ways, it certainly provides some of the elements required for enhanced stability.

5.2 Risks of conflict exacerbation

Whilst FNS programmes aim to bring about positive change, it is important to be aware of the risk that interventions might have auxiliary, unwanted effects as well. While this awareness was shared among all interviewees, opinions differed about the type of risks and possible negative effects as well as about the necessity and desirability of trying to prevent them at all cost.

One of the possible ways in which FNS programmes run the risk of having a negative effect is a risk inherent to all aid programmes: As explained by one of our interviewees, at times donors have a tendency to 'wave their own flags' a little too much; that is, they celebrate project achievements as their own successes but fail to include and recognize the role of local authorities. This tendency creates a risk for local democracies, as beneficiaries often get the idea that all that is good comes from 'the foreigners' and their own government is not doing anything. A different type of risk is related to the problem of inequality and inclusion: As FNS programmes cannot benefit all inhabitants of a country, some parts of the population are bound to be left behind and, as such, inequalities - and, therefore potential for conflict - may be exacerbated.

Box 2. Inequality and economic growth

In interviews about FNS programmes in Ethiopia the issue of inequality and potential for unwanted effects was discussed in great detail.

As Ethiopia is classified as a 'transition country', FNS programmes implemented there focus predominantly on economic growth of the nation's high potential areas - an approach which is in line with Ethiopia's government policy. The CASCAPE project for instance, by buttressing the AGP, targets farmers located in the country's fertile highlands. These farmers are generally already better off than their counterparts in the drier lowlands and, hence, have greater potential to make a significant contribution to the nation's economic transformation once they have the means to develop a profitable business.

Beneficiaries of the CASCAPE project have indeed been able to improve their outputs, generate a better income and invest in more land and improved farming methods. Our interviewees are aware of the risks inherent in this approach, but point out that the focus on the high potential areas is the best way forward to achieve meaningful economic development of Ethiopia as a whole. Moreover, efforts are made to ensure that, even though they may not be diminished, inequalities are not exacerbated. Active Dutch support of the PSNPs helps ensure that the food insecure areas are not falling further behind. And as the CASCAPE project will soon be extended to include smallholder farmers as well, this particular project too, testifies to an awareness of and willingness to respond to possible risks inherent in FNS programmes.

Invariably, our interviewees recognized the possibility of this negative impact and, in accordance with the 'do no harm'-principle, agreed that efforts should always be made to ensure that conflict risks do not grow because of FNS programmes. This commitment to 'doing no harm' and fighting inequality does, however, bring along difficult choices and questions. Given that the means available

to carry out programmes are limited, it logically follows that choices must be made between approaches, target groups and regions. Should efforts then be focused on producing enough food to feed the entire population, or should they prioritize economic growth? Should smallholder farmers be supported to produce for themselves and the market, or should successful entrepreneurial farmers take precedence – with the risk of them buying out the less fortunate? Should programmes try to be as inclusive as possible, or rather target the high potential areas? Answers to these questions each have their own risks, which can hardly be avoided. However, by adopting appropriate measures, possible negative impacts may be minimized or even avoided entirely.

5.3 Effects of conflict on FNS programmes

When trying to bring about positive change by implementing FNS programmes, these programmes not only impact upon their given contexts, the context impacts upon the programme and programme-staff as well. Especially in the sometimes volatile situation of the countries that form the focal points of this study, sudden outbreaks of conflict may have serious consequences. In Mali, for instance, a situation emerged in which Dutch staff could not safely enter certain areas, which rendered adequate monitoring of programmes practically impossible. Conflicts may even become so threatening that work must be temporarily put on hold. Yet, while the safety of programme staff always has priority, The Netherlands is one of the few countries that has not retreated from certain areas completely.

In 2012, for instance, when things got out of hand in Northern Mali, many donors ceased working in these areas. Dutch efforts continued - albeit in altered form with additional safety measures - motivated by the idea that the Malian population, already suffering due to the conflict, was in need of support more than ever. Similar situations occurred in Burundi as well as Ethiopia, where, in the face of crises and conflicts, most other embassies scaled down their running projects and ceased the implementation of new projects altogether. Thus, while conflicts undoubtedly have had (and still have) great impact on the daily reality of Dutch FNS programmes; rather than allowing these conflicts to push them out of the affected regions, where possible the Dutch government and embassies have continued their projects. By doing so, they did not only contribute to food security, they also gave local communities hope and support and, in some cases, the continued presence greatly enhanced relationships with (local) government actors.

6. Tacit knowledge and lessons learned

Chapter at a glance

- Conflict sensitivity is often located in the practical, day-to-day business of those involved in FNS programmes.
- Conflict sensitivity can take different forms, depending on actors involved, context, policy framework and resources.
- A multitude of actions and dynamics can underpin conflict sensitivity in practice:
  - Personal experience and knowledge of programming in fragile settings
  - A clear understanding of local complexities and the role of different stakeholders
  - Ensuring complementarity of different programmes and continued suitability in changing contexts
  - Providing and using flexibility to enable embassy personnel as well as partners to adapt and make decisions based on emerging dynamics
  - Building networks and personal relationships with relevant stakeholders
- Based on examples and research findings in this project, a number of recommendations are made to maintain or improve conflict sensitivity in FNS programming

6.1 The location of conflict sensitivity

The present project is based on the dual assumption that 1) Dutch food and nutrition security (FNS) policies and programmes are conflict sensitive to some extent, and 2) this conflict sensitivity is located not so much in formalized policy, but often takes shape in more informal activities and decision-making. The series of interviews as well as a brief exploration of the latest MASPs for our three target countries suggest that these assumptions are indeed correct: According to our interviewees the MFA does not provide detailed instructions or guidelines for conflict sensitivity, nor do MASPs make explicit mention of how projects should be operated in a conflict sensitive manner. This is not necessarily a sign of ignorance however, but more likely results from conscious choice: As the embassies are much more aware of daily goings-on in the regions they operate in, they are deemed - by country coordinators as well as embassy staff - better equipped to decide how to respond to changing situations and local conflicts than ministry officials located in The Netherlands.

Although specific guidelines are deliberately left out of broad policy, the MASPs do include broader aims related to (inter)national or regional conflicts and general stability. In the MASP for Burundi for instance, three provinces neighbouring DRC and Rwanda are identified as the core regions for the implementation of FNS programmes, because these "three provinces have since 1993 faced the most serious problems of political violence. Therefore, developing this particular region has an important impact on regional security".[19] In the MASP for the Great Lakes Region,

[19] Multi Annual Strategic Plan for Burundi, 2014-2017, p. 15.

conflict features more prominently in the description of FNS projects. This difference with other, country-specific MASPs can be attributed to the fact that the multi annual strategy for the Great Lakes Region aims specifically to contribute to the improvement of the region's stability.[20]

Most conflict sensitivity then, takes shape not on paper, but through the actions, relations and decisions of people involved in the day-to-day process of designing and implementing FNS programmes. In the section that follows, the multiple ways in which conflict sensitivity can take shape will be further explored by delving into the practice of FNS programme design and implementation.

6.2 The shape of conflict sensitivity

This section will pinpoint more specifically what it means to operate in a conflict sensitive manner and what conflict sensitivity may look like in the daily practice of FNS programming. The practical application, or the 'shape' of conflict sensitivity depends on a number of factors, including personal knowledge, relations and experiences; the particularities of the given (local) context; the nature and extent of conflicts; existing policy frameworks; and the financial and human resource capacity of embassies and implementing partners. Given the variety of dynamics at play in different countries and situations, what constitutes 'conflict sensitive actions' is highly context specific. Therefore it seems difficult and even undesirable to formulate mandatory guidelines for conflict sensitive operations - a view which was expressed by many of our interviewees.

Rather than giving a broad and generalizing account of actions that could, in particular contexts, be regarded as conflict sensitive, this section takes a more anecdotal approach reflective of the context-specificity of conflict sensitive actions. The anecdotal evidence will shed light on the various forms of conflict sensitivity throughout the process of FNS programming - from conception to implementation, including interim adjustments and evaluation - and provide a starting point for discussions on how we can draw lessons from these experiences and apply them in other contexts.

Personal experience

When talking about informal - or at least unformalized - processes, personal experience has a prominent role. It is important in the sense that experience and knowledge of local customs, relationships and programming in conflict-affected settings shape the way in which a person is able to intuitively identify risks and opportunities. Thus, conflict sensitivity in the informal / unformalized sphere is built on (partly intuitive) knowledge and know-how, which is rooted in experience, practice and values. This means that the way in which conflict sensitivity is practiced and takes shape, depends to a large degree on the people working at the Ministry, embassies and within the programmes. Without a formal, mandatory, approach for conflict sensitivity these people function as 'champions' of a conflict-sensitive perspective.

As the anecdote in box 3 suggests, the way in which embassy- and programme-staff approach projects and beneficiaries - in terms of opportunities, potential, risks and limitations - often depends on their personal experiences. Multiple other interviewees pointed to similar

[20] Multi Annual Strategic Plan for the Great Lakes Region, 2014-2017, p. 11.

processes, explaining how previous positions had left them with important lessons that now inform their choices and course of action. One employee of the embassy in Mali for instance, noted that his experience of working for the governor in Mali's Mopti region taught him to avoid bias towards certain groups; to prioritize the involvement and interests of local actors; to avoid non-inclusive or non-participatory projects; to take into account customs and habits; and to constantly monitor the development of destabilizing factors in a given context.

Box 3. How experience and awareness shapes action

In the aftermath of the devastating conflicts in Rwanda, one of our interviewees worked for an aid programme which applied the concept of Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD). The basic idea of LRRD is to link short-term relief measures with actions that promote longer term development in order to create synergies and provide a more sustainable response to crisis situations.

Before his experience in Rwanda our respondent admitted he had been sceptical about the type of emergency aid that was provided. However, thanks to the LRRD approach it was possible to start working on actual development in addition to emergency relief. Rather than identifying beneficiaries primarily as dependent victims, they were recognized for their skills and resilience. The knowledge and experience of these people - who had previously been entrepreneurs or farmers - was used to jumpstart the rebuilding of their communities and food systems and work towards rebuilding stability and security.

In his work in Rwanda our interviewee witnessed first-hand 1) the importance of building on people's resilience and skills to achieve meaningful development and 2) how this development contributes to more stability. Currently responsible for FNS programmes at the embassy of Burundi, he still builds on this experience: central to his approach in the Burundian context is the belief that FNS programmes can contribute to stability, as long as you build on the opportunities and possibilities present within local communities.

A clear understanding of local complexities and the role of stakeholders

Most interviewees expressed the feeling that FNS programmes cannot be expected to make a meaningful difference in terms of larger, national-level conflicts. They did however, express faith in the influence these programmes can have on the improvement of stability on a local level within the limitations of these settings. What is needed to contribute to conflict transformation and stability is 1) a clear understanding of what issues are at the heart of ongoing conflict and who the relevant stakeholders are; and 2) once the relevant stakeholders and issues are identified, to ensure that none are left behind in programming that promotes stability and connects different groups in a positive way. One way in which this can be achieved is taking a participatory approach, in which local stakeholders are actively involved in the design and implementation of FNS programmes. This approach ensures that stakeholders, despite tensions or differences, work together to achieve common goals, thereby contributing to development as well as conflict transformation.

Box 4. Involving all stakeholders and tackling complex issues: A landscape approach in Mali

Conflict sensitivity in FNS programming relies, to a large extent, on an organization's ability to understand local conflict dynamics and inter-group relations. The Drylands Development Programme (DryDev), an international programme currently implemented in Kenya, Ethiopia, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali, testifies to the importance of such understanding.

DryDev focuses on enhancing sustainability and productivity of smallholder farming by promoting better water management, soil conservation and value chain development. For DryDev's Malian project, the continuous competition over land between agriculture and cattle farming in Mali's eastern provinces has significant impact. The traditional cattle farming of the Fulani - a large, pastoralist ethnic group that is spread across West Africa - is threatened by a rapidly expanding agricultural sector, resulting in the marginalization of the Fulani and increasing inter-ethnic tensions.

With its focus on sustainable land use and farming, the DryDev programme directly impacts upon these tensions. To ensure the interventions do not add to existing conflicts and possibly contribute to solving them, the programme must relate to the inter-group dynamics. To do so the DryDev programme takes an approach that includes at its core distinctly conflict sensitive elements: a so-called landscape approach. Central to this approach is to ensure that the available benefits of a certain landscape is divided among key stakeholders, while at the same time protecting this landscape as well as working towards sustainable development. In the Malian context this means that concerns of both agricultural farmers and cattle farmers are taken into consideration. Recognizing that the pastoralist Fulani must have a place within the landscape, so-called pastoral corridors are created: Passageways through predominantly agricultural land, where cattle has room to move and graze, without damaging the landscape or agricultural productivity.

Ensuring complementarity and suitability

As exemplified by the application of a landscape approach in Mali, FNS programmes have the potential to build bridges between stakeholders and have positive impact on issues that go beyond the realm of food security. In addition to involving all relevant stakeholders and addressing issues of conflict, conflict sensitivity also benefits from 1) FNS programmes complementarity with other types of programmes; i.e. they should work towards common goals and contribute to stability on multiple fronts; and requires that 2) programmes continue to be appropriate; i.e. they should continue match their context in order to achieve their objectives in a conflict sensitive way, even when this context changes. In practice, these two aspects demand continuous efforts in terms of coordination and communication - to ensure synergies and complementarity between programmes - as well as monitoring and evaluation - to ensure embassy employees and programme staff are always aware of the latest developments and changes in the areas they work in. This is especially important in

areas of high fragility. Yet since the division between stages of conflict and post-conflict is mostly artificial and prone to reversal, the described approach is fitting for areas in conflict-affected settings that are more stable as well.

Box 5. Complementarity and continuous monitoring in FNS programmes in Kivu (DRC)

The Great Lakes programme, coordinated from the embassy in Rwanda, includes multiple interventions in the Kivu region. One of our interviewees, responsible for coordinating this regional programme, explained how these different interventions - one aimed at integrated water resource management, one at safe access to clean drinking water, and another at food security - complement and reinforce one another, each working towards sustainable value chain development.

One way in which this complementarity is achieved is by following one overarching strategy: Central to the Dutch Great Lakes programme is the so-called International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS). This strategy was developed in 2008 on the basis of an extensive conflict analysis conducted by MONUSCO (The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The ISSSS was adopted by the international community working in the regions and provides an overarching strategy for their programmes. As such, the ISSSS not only contributes to complementarity and synergy within, but also between different programmes.

The three projects within the Great Lakes programme are also linked to one another by means of a monitoring model. Each of the programmes are evaluated on a regular basis: Three times during the first year and twice in the years that follow. In that way continuous complementarity is safeguarded and, more importantly, it ensures that the adopted approaches are effectively contributing to conflict transformation. As our interviewee pointed out, these monitoring-visits are also used to re-evaluate and (if necessary) adjust conflict analyses. If changes in conflict dynamics are observed, programmes will be changed accordingly.

Providing and using flexibility

The example of the monitoring model applied in the Great Lakes Region draws attention to another important aspect of conflict sensitivity: being responsive to what is needed in a changing context. Such responsiveness, in turn, requires a level of flexibility; a theme that has come up in many interviews and discussions over the course of this project. For the programmes implemented in the Kivu such flexibility was apparent in the embassy's ability to adjust these programmes according to their monitored impacts on conflict transformation and on the basis of re-evaluated conflict analyses. Other interviewees also emphasized the importance of flexibility. In Ethiopia for instance, it was needed (and used) to respond to imminent tensions that arose due to severe youth employment (see box 6). And in both Burundi as well as Mali, embassies could continue their programmes amid severe crises, while other embassies - bound to stricter, more centralized regulations - were forced to retreat from conflict-riddled areas.

Box 6. Flexibility: Responding to changing circumstances

Due to combined tensions of political discrimination, conflicts over land and dramatic levels of youth unemployment, Ethiopia's region Oromia has become one of the most volatile areas of the country. According to a staff member of the embassy, young people in the region now have higher levels of education than ever before, which means that their aspirations for 'proper' jobs have risen accordingly. Faced with unemployment or the prospect of low-skilled jobs in subsistence level farming, these educated and ambitious young people have caused great unrest and pose a threat to stability.

In response to these tensions, development partners were called upon to place more emphasis on job creation in their programmes. Recognizing the severity of the problem, the Dutch embassy in Ethiopia turned to its FNS programmes for solutions. Even though employment creation was not part of Ethiopia's MASP, the embassy enjoyed enough freedom to change the direction of its programmes: As the problem was considered very urgent and intimately connected to the sustainable development of Ethiopia's agricultural sector, efforts to alleviate youth unemployment became an integral part of its FNS programmes.

Building networks and personal relationships

Conflict sensitivity can take many forms and those described here are far from exhaustive. However, one component that cannot be left unmentioned is that of building personal relationships. Operating in a conflict sensitive manner requires a clear understanding of 'what is really going on' as well as the support and involvement of local communities and authorities. Especially in contexts where the official government is weak or where organizational structures rely on family ties and community bonds, establishing personal relationships is an indispensable aspect of conflict sensitivity.

Box 7. Building a network and establishing relationships: roadside beers in Burundi

Conflict sensitive operations often take place outside the office, located - quite literally - in the informal sphere. In the context of Burundi, where the government is weak, informal contacts are an important part of the Dutch development efforts. Local as well as national government officials are seldom free to speak their minds when they are in office. To build meaningful relationships, establish agreements and get a good understanding of local conflicts, informal contacts with these officials is therefore of crucial importance.

When talking about his experiences, one of the interviewees emphasized that in Burundi - as in many other African countries - having a beer with public officials at a roadside bar is one of the most important ways to ensure programmes are accepted, supported and fit the local context. According to this same interviewee, operating in a context- and conflict-sensitive manner cannot be guaranteed by policy guidelines, but depends, to a large degree, on personal relationships that are built over the course of many years.

6.3 Conditions for conflict sensitivity: Recommendations

Based on the abovementioned examples of conflict sensitivity in practice and further informed by insights from our interviewees and preparatory work on conflict sensitivity, this final section includes some recommendations and conditions for promoting conflict sensitivity in daily practice and identifying ways to contribute to stability in FNS programmes. These recommendations also provided the basis for a 'tool for conflict sensitivity'. This tool is specifically aimed at (Dutch) embassies but can also be used by other professionals working on FNS in fragile settings. It is designed to bring the recommendations below into practice, facilitating the integration of conflict sensitivity into the daily practice of the FNS programming cycle, and providing guidance on how programmes can be designed to contribute to stability.

1) *Conflict sensitive FNS programming requires a thorough understanding of the drivers of conflict.*
   Such understanding, in turn, demands regularly updated conflict analyses. This however, demands time and resources, both of which are often scarce. To ensure that knowledge about conflict developments remains up-to-date, practical solutions must be sought to overcome such challenges such as: 1) creating an inventory of local contacts who provide current information about 'on the ground' developments on a regular basis; 2) collaborate with a (knowledge) brokering organization that can bring together experts, partners and others in suitable formats, and provide regular syntheses reports on conflict dynamics or other relevant insights for your region; 3) seek partnerships with other donors to conduct joint conflict analyses and programme monitoring or commission such activities together.
2) *Conflict sensitivity relies on personal experience and knowledge.*
   As conflict sensitivity often takes shape in non-formalized, day-to-day goings-on, it is rooted in personal experiences, behaviour and actions. In practice, individual people are the ones

who are (or should be) operating in a conflict sensitive manner. Therefore, a clear awareness of who has the experience and knowledge necessary– the 'champions' if you will – is important to safeguard and promote conflict sensitivity across your organization. Especially in light of the regular rotation of personnel within and between the embassies, the preservation of sufficient experience and knowledge within your organization is something to keep in mind. Making available this wealth of experience can take the form of regular exchange, but can also include a regularly updated inventory/database of resource people providing relevant details about their programming- and thematic experience.

3) *Flexibility for embassies and implementing partners is vital to ensure conflict sensitivity.*

   Up-to-date knowledge of drivers of conflicts is only valuable if embassies and implementing partners can also adjust their programmes and actions accordingly. Therefore, they need the freedom necessary to adequately respond to (changing) circumstances and/or monitored impacts on conflict transformation. This means that policy frameworks and the 'modus operandi' must leave room for such flexibility and adaptation of programming. This requires an increase in attention (and budgets) for monitoring of programmes in fragile settings, enabling quick decision making processes and results reporting that best reflects the needs in fragile settings.

4) *Seek complementarity between programmes to increase efficiency and (indirectly) impact on drivers of stability.*

   At the heart of this recommendations lies the idea that by seeking synergies with other initiatives more can be achieved with the same resources. Even if your own programme cannot work directly towards stability and conflict transformation, by seeking synergies with others you can ensure that – in addition to 'doing no harm' – your programme contributes to stability in a more indirect manner. This can take the form of integrating or sequencing programmes, linking FNS and other programmes in monitoring models, or coordinating programmes within international or regional strategies.

5) *Be realistic as well as ambitious with regards to what FNS programming can achieve in terms of conflict transformation.*

   The impact of FNS programmes can only take you so far. While it is possible – and therefore worth pursuing - to contribute to conflict transformation within local communities and stability in a more indirect fashion, enhanced food security programming alone will not necessarily be able to significantly impact upon conflict drivers on a larger – e.g. regional or national – scale. Therefore, try to think local, recognize opportunities and always identify drivers of conflict and stability in the design of new programmes.

6) *Including local stakeholders and avoiding biases in your FNS programmes, from design to implementation, is a crucial aspect of conflict sensitivity.*

   FNS programming can only be truly conflict sensitive in so far as local stakeholders' views and interests are taken into account in a way that does not exacerbate conflict dynamics. A necessary precondition is, therefore, to know what tensions are at play in the local context, what divides and connects (groups of) people, and which stakeholders are involved. Once the relevant stakeholders are identified, deliberate efforts must be made to ensure that

none are left behind and all are involved in the process. Here, it is especially important to consider if the views of less powerful stakeholders have also been identified and represented properly.

7) *Building relationships with local communities, leaders and policymakers is necessary to better understand conflict dynamics and to ensure support for interventions.*

   Establishing formal agreements or official ties is not always possible in fragile settings, especially in the case of weak or corrupt governments. Moreover, as local organizational structures often rely on family ties and community bonds, establishing personal relationships with those people with authority in the local context, is an indispensable aspect of conflict sensitivity. Your implementing partners can be an important link, but they too are part of the context and may not always be viewed as neutral parties. Therefore, invest in personal contact through (field) visits and organizing meetings with different stakeholders.

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Annex 1. Conflict sensitivity lens

	Political/governance	Economic	Social/cultural	Environmental	Security
Issues	Degree to which the law applies to all citizens, groups and organizations equally	Rate and distribution of economic growth	gender equality rating (1=low to 6=high)	Occurrence of changing weather patterns (rainfall, drought, warming, etc) due to climate change	Prevalence of armed conflict in the past ten years
	Perception of corruption	Distribution of wealth	Access to (safe) water, sanitation, health services	Natural resources	Presence of organized crime groups in the past five years
	Incidence of human rights violations in the past five years	Availability and distribution of (arable) land	Average life expectancy	Land quality and availability	Presence of terrorist groups in the past five years
	Equality of political representation among social/cultural groups	Degree to which wealth creation of the national economy is inclusive	Percentage of youth (under 25) and elderly (over 65) as part of the population	Forest area (% of land area)	Prevalence of communal conflict incidents in the past five years
	level of independence judiciary	Amount of internal migrants and external immigrants	Internally displaced persons (number, high estimate)	Arable land (% of land area)	Presence of non-state armed groups in the past five years
	Violent or contested transfers of (executive) power in the past ten years	Rate of economic self sufficiency	Gross enrolment ratio, primary education, both sexes (%)	Renewable internal freshwater resources per capita (cubic meters)	Violent crime rate
	Presence of clientelist or patronage-based governance systems and practice	Amount of food and nutrition insecure households	Gross enrolment ratio, secondary education, both sexes (%)	Incidence of natural or climate-related disasters in the past ten years	Perception of security by the population
	(Perception of) oppression by the state	Sustainability and inclusiveness of import/export food value chains	Population living in slums (% of total urban population)	Degree to which citizens and local communities are impacted positively (benefit) or negatively (disadvantaged) from natural resource extraction by third parties	Trust in (state) security forces among the population
	Independence of law, justice and mediation systems	equity of public resource use rating (1=low to 6=high)	Urban population (% of total)	Prevalence of (human-induced) environmental degradation (e.g. deforestation, desertification, pollution, soil degradation, etc.)	Availability of small arms

	Political/governance	Economic	Social/cultural	Environmental	Security
	property rights and rule-based governance rating (1=low to 6=high)	Import dependency of national economy	Prevalence of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, etc.		Presence of landmines and unexploded munitions
	building human resources rating (1=low to 6=high)	Importance of food production for national economy	Literacy rate		Prevalence of cattle raiding and agro-pastoral conflicts
	transparency, accountability, and corruption in the public sector rating (1=low to 6=high)	Percentage of income spent on food per socio-economic group	Distribution of assistance by geo- graphic region ethnicity- # bene- ficiaries by group, region, gender		Number of incidents of inter-ethnic violence, including physical attacks and attacks on property
	Degree to which justice and government services are accessible to all	Market integration of small-scale versus large-scale food producers	space for civil society and citizen activism		level of state control over military
	Protection of minority groups	Evolution of staple food prices in the past ten years	Presence of international aid and development interventions		Presence of international security interventions in the past five years
	Legitimacy of the government and governing institutions	Percentage of the population receiving food aid	Degree of geographic separation of different ethnic/religious groups		Percentage of government budget spent on security sector
	Working of the system of land ownership, rights to land use and how land is distributed (land rights)	Food (price) inflation			
	ranking on fragile states index	% of population living in poverty			

Annex 2. Country mappings

1. Mali

Political/governance

Generally speaking, the Malian population supports democracy, but is not satisfied with the way it is organized in their own country. At the heart of this dissatisfaction are various problems with the state of governance in Mali. Ranking 116 out of 176 on the corruption perception index, corruption is widespread in Mali - especially among business executives, judges and magistrates, the police, tax officials and local councillors. In its clientelist political system, Malian political candidates need to privately invest large sums of money to get elected, the cost of which needs to be regained afterwards. Additionally, the political arena is not representative of Mali's diversity. Dominated by elites from the populous south since colonial times, northern Tuaregs and Arabs are underrepresented. Together with the Peul in Mali's central area they were often suppressed by southern governors who used divisive tactics to control this vast space. The rule of law applies only partially in Mali, which scores in the medium range for quality of laws according to the World Bank's indicators. Those with more resources are able to influence the state justice system. Consequently, those without such resources are often at a disadvantage within the official legal system. Hence, most Malians opt for the alternative of customary justice or traditional mediation systems as they have greater trust in traditional and religious leaders than in state representatives.

Economic

After a slump in economic growth during the first years of the Malian conflict the country's growth has recovered to around 5%. The Malian economy heavily depends on agriculture, with 80% of the labour force engaged in either farming or fishing. In 2015 the agricultural sector accounted for 41% of GDP. Mining, especially gold, is another major economic activity. Gold and cotton make up 80% of Malian exports. About 33% of all Malian land is devoted to agriculture, while 5.3% of land is arable. All land is owned by the state, and although land titles can be bought, these should be considered more as a lease than an actual purchase of property. The management of this land is decentralized to local governments which recognize customary land rights in which village chiefs play a central role. Within this system land rights are awarded on a family basis, leading to the migration of youth who are unable to gain individual access. In the Niger Delta the Malian state has been granting land to large scale farming enterprises, while land prices around urban areas have been rising steeply.

Incomes in Mali are relatively equal (GINI: 33.04) yet the distribution of wealth is relatively unequal (GINI: 0.75) suggesting the existence of an elite class. In 2009 43.6% of Malians lived below the national poverty line. Geographically, most of Mali's poor are located in the south where people rely on rain-fed agriculture. Contrary to what is often believed, these poor are not self-sufficient as they lack the resources to sufficiently cultivate the land they possess - making them dependent on casual labour. People in the northern agro-pastoral zones are relatively better off in terms of

absolute poverty, where livestock farming is combined with a strategy of local and regional migration that provides remittances in harsh times. With a total population of about 17.5 million Mali had an estimated 978,969 migrants in 2009, coming mainly from the northern regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu, and Gao. The capital Bamako hosts roughly 60% of these internal migrants.

Nationally, households spend almost 60% of their income on food, this reaches 70% in rural areas while it is 45% in urban areas. Food prices have remained stable in the past three years, yet 600.000 people are in need of food aid as of May 2017. These people are located mainly in the northeast of the country, which has a 'lean period' between harvests from May until August. Poor market access plays a key role here, as these regions rely on food imports which drives up the price of food.

Social/cultural

Mali received a net sum of 1.2 billion USD of ODA in 2014-2015 from bilateral and multilateral partners worldwide. In addition to being one of the poorest countries on earth, Mali also has one of the youngest populations. As of 2016 almost 70% of its population was under 24, while 47% is under 14. With a life expectancy of around 58 years, a literacy rate of 35% and secondary school enrolment of 41% the country is struggling to provide adequate services to its population.

Mali is witnessing a strong trend toward urbanization, with almost 40% living in urban areas in 2015. It's capital Bamako with nearly 2 million people is by far the largest city, followed by Sikasso with more than 200.000 people. Both cities are located in the south where the overwhelming majority of Mali's population lives. The south is also home to the majority Bambara speaking population, which accounts for 34% of Malians. The Fulani, Sarankole, Senufo, Dogon and Malinke are other major ethnic groups - of which the Dogon and Fulani mainly live in Mali's central regions. The Tuareg comprise about 0.9% of the population and live mainly in the north. Traditional social hierarchies still play an important role in Mali, which include tribal caste systems that designate some - such as the 'black' Tamasheqs (or Bellah) as former servants or slaves. Discrimination on the basis of gender is also commonplace, with women facing a 'very high' rate of discrimination according to the SIGI index.

Environmental

As a Sahelian country Mali is comprised of a range of climatic zones from tropical to desert. The country is feeling the impacts of climate change as annual temperature averages have increased by 0.7 degrees C since 1960. Rainfall in Mali and the region is unpredictable between years, however it has been decreasing overall since 2001. The Niger river has also seen a decrease in average flow from 1300 m3/s in 1978 to 895 m3/s in 2002. Mali is prone to droughts in its north, while it faces frequent torrential rains and floods in its south. Between 1980 and 2007 Mali experienced five major droughts and two major floods. Pressure on Mali's natural resources is also growing. In 2014 Mali had 3.5 million cubic meters of internal freshwater per capita, down from 11 million in 1965. Increased and changing land use has also encroached on forests and protected areas while putting additional pressure on water resources.

Security

Mali is plagued by a range of security issues. The country has seen three major armed conflicts involving its army since 2007. Several terrorist groups are active in its north, of which the largest four are coordinating their efforts under the multi-ethnic Al-Qaida umbrella group Jamaat Nusrat-al-Islam wal-Muslimeen. In the same area two alliances comprised of various non-state armed groups, the independence-minded Coordination and the pro-government Platform, reluctantly work together under the terms of the peace process while striving to maintain their zones of influence. The Malian army is still barred from large parts of the north, unable to protect its citizens, and depends on the support of various international missions, like the peacekeeping mission MINUSMA and the French counterterrorism mission Barkhane. Attacks on Malian and international forces throughout the north and central areas happen nearly every week, while banditry is a common problem for the population. Small arms and light weapons are readily available in the area, which is hosts various smuggling hubs where organized criminal groups smuggle people, cigarettes, food, fuel, drugs and arms. Terrorist and non-state armed groups profit from control over areas in which such activities take place. Such groups also offer protection to communities, or have originated as self-defence groups, in an area where agro-pastoral conflicts - often along communal or ethnic lines - result in violence.:

2. Ethiopia

Political/governance

When it comes to democratic values and 'good governance', Ethiopia is not scoring very high. Ranked 124th out of 167 countries in the Democracy index and 108th out of 176 on the corruption perception index, the country can be characterized as both an authoritarian state as well as corrupt in the eyes of its citizens. Although officially a democracy, the extent of actual freedom of elections is questionable. In the lead-up to the 2015 elections for instance, opposition party members were intimidated, detained, beaten, and arrested, and people who do not actively support the government often face harassment and arbitrary detention. Consequently, Ethiopia is essentially a one-party state.

Ethiopia is divided into nine ethnically based regional states (kililoch). The Oromo and Amhara people make up the largest ethnic groups - 34.4% and 27% respectively - but the Tigray (6% of the population) have held central power since the 19th century. Other ethnicities, including the Oromo and Amhara, but also the Somali and other minorities living in Gambela and the Southern Nations, feel excluded from equal access to power at the central level of the nation-state's administration. The majority of these groups are Muslims or non-Orthodox Christians. Some political organizations (OLF and ONLF, and to some extent also the Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (ARDUF)) reject the current nation-state in favour of regional autonomy, and are seeking independence.

Adding to the limited democratic legitimacy in Ethiopia is the fact that the separation of powers is very weak, even though it is formally enshrined in the 1995 constitution. Decision-making takes a 'committee-style' form, usually involving small groups of well-connected individuals who, by and large, are not representative of the population at large, but rather voice the interests of the Tigray. Moreover, Ethiopia's judiciary is not independent, limiting its ability and autonomy to interpret, monitor and review existing laws, legislation and policies. The judiciary functions in ways that usually support the political stances and policies of the government. Access to fair and timely justice for citizens, at least as conventionally defined by legal experts, cannot be said to exist.

Economic

Despite its worrisome political situation, Ethiopia has generally been applauded for its economic performances. The country's economy has experienced strong and broad-based growth over the past decade, averaging 10.8% per year in 2003/04—2014/15, compared to the regional average of 5.4%. However, Ethiopia's HDI increased from 0.3 to 0.45 between 2000 and 2014 and by 2011 33.5% of the population was still living in extreme poverty. This suggests that the country's much-hyped 'double-digit economic growth' has not translated into sustainable nor inclusive development.

Despite an increase in exports in recent years, Ethiopia continues to run a significant trade deficit. Major exports are coffee, oilseeds, livestock and gold, but these are dwarfed by imports of fuel, construction materials and machinery, motor vehicles, cereals, fertilizer and textiles. Agriculture accounts for nearly half of Ethiopia's GDP, followed closely by services (41%), while industry represents only 10%. Economic growth and agricultural growth are therefore largely correlated. 36.25% of Ethiopia's land is used for agriculture and 15.12% of Ethiopia's land mass is arable. Farmers are legally allowed to acquire use rights over land free of charge for an unlimited period of time, including the right of protection against eviction from their land. However, the State maintains the right to appropriate land if it is needed for a 'public purpose' and may reallocate communal holdings to private holdings as "may be necessary", which weakens much of the tenure security given by the rights in the first place. In recent years the Ethiopian state has used its right to evict on a large scale, leading, for instance, to the forced displacement of 70,000 people from the fertile Gambella region to free up land for commercial agriculture.

In 2000, Ethiopia received US$687.8 million in ODA. By 2015, it had risen to over four times this with US$3.23 billion in ODA, mostly for social infrastructure and humanitarian aid, making it the world's 5th largest recipient of humanitarian aid. An estimated 5.6 million people in Ethiopia require relief food assistance in 2017, according to the Ethiopia Humanitarian Requirements Document (HRD). This is in addition to 8 million chronically food insecure people who receive food or cash assistance through the Government of Ethiopia (GoE)-led Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP). This situated is not helped by food prices, which saw an inflation of 39% in 2011 and an estimated 10% in 2015.

The migration rate in Ethiopia is low compared with most developing countries - migrants (counting any individual who resides in a different location to the one of their birth) comprise 13.7%

and 16.2% of the male and female population, respectively. Contrary to what many believe, rural to urban migration makes up only 25% of movement, while rural to rural migration accounts for 50%. As of July 2015, IDMC estimates that there were over 413,400 internally displaced people in Ethiopia due to inter-communal and cross-border violence, most of them living in protracted displacement situations. Additionally Ethiopia harbours a lot of refugees, mostly from Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea.

Social/cultural

In terms of health and sanitation, the situation in Ethiopia has improved tremendously over the last few years. In 2015 57% of all Ethiopians had access to an improved water source, compared to 28.9% in 2000. In rural areas the percentage of the population with access to safe drinking water increased from 3.5% in 1990 to nearly half (49%) in 2015. The percentage of the rural population using improved sanitation facilities grew from 0% to 28%. Testifying to this positive trend is the development of Ethiopians' life expectancy at birth, which was 64.6 years on average in 2015 - a significant improvement compared to 2000, when life expectancy averaged 51.9. Like most other Sub Saharan African countries, Ethiopia has a so-called youth-bulge, with 63.7% of the population between the ages of 0 and 24.

In terms of school enrolment, Ethiopia is also witnessing an upward trend, with almost everyone receiving a primary education and school enrolment in secondary school now reaching 37.7% (35.76% female / 39.6% male). In terms of gender equality however, development is falling behind: Ethiopia ranks 121st out of 151 countries in the Gender Inequality Index.

Social and political liberties and freedoms have eroded in recent years, with opposition leaders being overtly attacked and many journalists imprisoned. Through the passage of restrictive laws governing the media, civil society and political funding, the government has gradually constricted available civic space. It has begun to employ a broad definition of "terrorist" groups that encompasses even the non-violent opposition as well as foreign-funded NGOs.

Environmental

One of the most pressing problems Ethiopia faces when it comes to its environment is extreme drought. The availability of internal fresh water has been declining steadily for the past 2 decades and since 1950, 12 major drought-induced food security crises have occurred. Currently, the southern regions of Ethiopia are suffering from an extended period of extreme drought again, starting with El Niño-induced drought in 2015/2016, extremely low levels of rainfall in the 2016 short rain season (October to December) and continuing drought in 2017. Consequently, another food security crisis is imminent.

12.46% of Ethiopia's landmass is forest. After decades of decline (15.2% in 1990 and reaching all-time low in 2010 with 12.3%) the amount of forest area has risen a little in the last few years. Its natural resources include small reserves of gold, platinum, copper, potash and natural gas.

Security

The last 'real' armed conflict was the Eritrean-Ethiopian war (1998-2000), but brief outbreaks of violence continue at the border regions. Additionally, security forces have often used violence against minority groups. In 2016 uprisings broke out in the Oromia and Amhara regions, home to the two largest ethnic groups in Ethiopia who demand more political power and equality. These large-scale protests, which swept through Ethiopia throughout 2016, were violently beaten down by government forces, killing more than 500 people and arresting tens of thousands. In response to the massive demonstrations, in late 2016 Ethiopia's government announced a far-reaching six-month countrywide state of emergency, which further undermined free expression, association, and peaceful assembly. Additionally, torture and ill-treatment of (political) detainees occurs on a large scale, whilst the responsible security personnel remains unpunished.

In contrast to most other nations in the region, Ethiopian Muslims have generally not been receptive to Islamic fundamentalism and Ethiopia seems highly successful in its counterterrorism strategy. There is a growing threat from terrorist group Al-Shabaab however, which has its roots in neighbouring country Somalia where Ethiopian forces are actively engaged in the fight against this group. Yet, the Ethiopian state has recently reported to start pulling out their troops gradually.

While inter-confessional tensions remain, they appear to have been largely superseded in recent years by tensions between the government and ethnic as well as religious communities. Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and Muslims alike have accused the state of undue interference in their internal religious affairs, whereas the government sees itself as holding the secular line against politicisation and extremism.

3. Burundi

Political/governance

Democracy is widely supported by 86% of Burundians, who also overwhelmingly reject one party rule and presidential dictatorship. However, a political crisis has been unfolding over the past years in which President Nkurunziza ran for a disputed third term, parts of the army attempted to depose him in a failed coup, and he has been cracking down on those who oppose him since. In February 2017 the UN Secretary-General reported to the UN Security Council that many Burundians live in fear as a result of widespread repression and intimidation, with 200 reported forced disappearances since October 2016. As a result of an election boycott by the opposition, the current government as well as parliamentary politics is dominated by the ruling CNDD-FDD party, which has initiated a process to amend the constitution to do away with Presidential term limits, among other reforms.

Critics claim these reforms will be the end of the Arusha agreements which brought an end to Burundi's civil war in 2006 and introduced extensive checks and balances to make sure no political party or ethnic group could dominate the Burundian state. Yet, such domination is increasingly happening as the CNDD-FDD not only dominates national politics but also the local councils, side-lining Burundi's traditional leaders. Home to a 'big man' culture among local

administrators, this clientelist system makes the CNDD-FDD a dominant force at every level of society. Ranking low on the World Bank indicators for rule-based governance, transparency and accountability, combined with a climate of impunity among public officeholders means this significantly impacts Burundians. Burundi ranks 159 out of 176 on the corruption perceptions index 2017, with respondents naming police (41%), judges and magistrates (40%), tax officials (35%), traditional leaders (22%) and government officials (21%) as most corrupt. Religious leaders (4%) were seen as least corrupt, followed by members of parliament (14%).

Economic

Burundi achieved an annual growth rate of 4% between 2010 and 2014 which dropped to -3.9% in 2015 due to the political crisis and the resulting partial freeze in aid from its main donors. In reaction, the government drastically cut public expenses in this period while making up for the resulting shortfall by borrowing. As a result there was a considerable decline in government services for the general public. Economic sectors most affected were hotels, tourism, construction and infrastructure.

At the start of 2017 (March) food price inflation was very high: 31%. This is mainly the result of a poor harvest due to rainfall deficits and population movements due to insecurity, which meant that fields could not be planted optimally. Harvests further in the year are projected to improve and stabilize the situation, but according to UNOCHA 900.000 people were severely food insecure in March 2017 while a further 2.1 million were moderately food insecure. As one of the world's least developed countries, 64.6% of Burundians lived below the poverty line in 2014 with an agricultural economy that sees 87% of Burundi's arable land under food crops - of which 80% is consumed by households. Rural households depend for a large part on subsistence farming yet the majority of these households grow inadequate food supplies. On average two thirds of family income is spend on food.

7% of arable land is planted with cash crops such as coffee, cotton, tea and palm oil which accounts for 90% of Burundian exports. Coffee is Burundi's most important export crop, accounting for 69% of export income in 2011. Most production is done by small scale (family) farmers and artisans and there are few large processing companies present. Burundi's agricultural sector has not attracted much foreign investment.

Social/cultural

In 2015 the net ODA received by Burundi was 366.5 million USD, of which parts were suspended later due to the political crisis. Burundi is a densely populated country with 435 persons per square kilometre. Its population of 11.2 million, growing at 3.2%, is mostly rural with only 12.1% living in urban areas. Life expectancy is 57.1 years, while Burundi has a literacy rate of 85.5% and a secondary education enrolment rate of 42 %. Primary school enrolment is at 123% due to early and late school entrance and grade repetition. It is a relatively young country, where almost 65% is under the age of 24 while only 6.5% is over 55. Roughly 75% of Burundians has access to an improved water source and almost 50% to improved sanitation facilities.

There are three main ethnic groups in Burundi: the Hutu (85%), Tutsi (14%) and Twa (1-2%) of which 86% are Christians and 2.5% are Muslim. The country has a history of ethnic strife and genocide and although this is not a prime cause of the current political crisis, the ruling party has used discriminatory language deriding critical media and human rights defenders as 'Tutsi-dominated'. Tutsis in general are viewed by the government as supporting the opposition.

Discrimination on the basis of gender is pervasive although Burundi scores higher than the Sub-Saharan African average on gender equality indicators. This is likely due to quotas introduced as part of the Arusha peace agreement. Customary law deprives women of the right to property and inheritance of land. A further rural-urban divide exists as the ruling party and government dignitaries have largely ignored the citizens of Burundi's capital Bujumbura in favour of rural areas where its voter base is located. Burundi had 149.028 Internally Displaced Persons as of March 2017.

Environmental

According to the World Bank 46% of Burundian land was arable as of 2014. With 94% of Burundians employed in the agricultural sector, the majority as subsistence farmers, land degradation and soil erosion are real problems for Burundi. Traditionally Burundi has a land tenure system that favours plot division among siblings which, combined with high population growth, has led to a chronic shortage of land. Moreover, large numbers of returning refugees also have a right to land that was often occupied, which also needs to be accommodated. Trying to cope with these circumstances, households have expanded into conservation areas, cultivate steep slopes of Burundi's hilly landscapes, and drain swamps. Land is not left fallow and is overused as well as overgrazed while cultivation on the hillsides and expansion into marginal lands causes soil erosion. Burundi has experienced severe droughts between 1998-2005 and severe floods in 2006-2007. Climate models predict that in the future rainfall will increase during the rainy season, while the dry season is prolonged. An increase in temperature is highly likely as well which may have significant implications for crop cultivation. Coffee in particular is highly sensitive to such environmental change. Burundi also has mineral reserves such as cobalt and gold but its mining sector is dominated by small-scale artisanal miners.

Security

Burundi experienced a civil war between 1993 and 2006. The then (minority) Tutsi-dominated army committed mass killings of Hutus, while Hutus committed mass killings of Tutsi's with both amounting to genocide. The main Hutu militia taking part in this civil war is currently transformed into the main and ruling political party CNDD-FDD. The current conflict taking place in Burundi is not communal or ethnic in nature but political, between supporters and (perceived) critics of the regime. Human Rights Watch reports that the youth wing of the ruling party, Imbonerakure, and the intelligence services are responsible for killings, disappearances, abductions, torture, rape and arbitrary arrests while critical journalists and civil society are persecuted. As a result 387.000 Burundians have fled the country.

With an attempted coup in 2015 the army has become a contested institution. It is

composed of various segments due to historical reasons as well as the Arusha agreements which set ethnic quotas the old army, left over from the Tutsi dominated regime, and former members of different Hutu rebel groups being the most important divisions. The ranks of the army are currently plagued by a series of tit-for-tat assassinations of soldiers and officers, while the government is trying to reform it into a loyalist institution in response to the failed coup. In 2014 90% of Burundians surveyed trusted the army, 74% trusted the police. 68% reported that it was easy to get help from the police, while 28% reported paying them a bribe. In the beginning of 2016 feelings of safety were increasing, following the political crisis of 2015. 79% of people reported feeling safe when going about daily activities, where it earlier was 59%. 70% had a positive perception of ethnic relations, which dropped from 78% a year before, while 14% believed they were worsening, down from an earlier 31%.

Conflict over land remained the most significant source of violence, followed by domestic disputes. More than half of all court cases in Burundi deals with land issues, and these conflicts are often the most important factors relating to crimes. Perceptions of security differed greatly over regions. Bujumbura and its surrounding rural province saw 36-45% of people reporting a negative perception of security in the beginning of 2016 while in all other provinces included this was 0-15%.

Annex 3. Interviews

3.1 Overview of respondents

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Jan Hijkoop

Frits van der Wal

Embassy level

Moumouni Damango

Gerrit Noordam

Jan Willem Nibbering

Hans Raadschilders

Programme level

David Betge

Erik Slingerland

Remko Vonk

3.2 Interview questions

(In Dutch)

Introductie: We zijn in dit project op zoek naar manieren waarop conflictsensitiviteit reeds haar weg vindt in het Nederlandse beleidsinstrumentarium t.a.v. voedselzekerheid. Het MJSP van [land] besteedt [wel/geen] aandacht aan conflict factoren en de relatie tussen stabiliteit en voedselzekerheidsprogramma's. Naast deze 'officiële / formele' integratie van conflictsensitiviteit willen we ook kijken naar de níet geformaliseerde wegen.

1. Beleidsproces en huidig instrumentarium

[NB: Hier kort tijd aan besteden - slechts voor onszelf om beeld te krijgen voor kern interview]

- Wat is uw functie op de ambassade van [land]? En wat is in die positie uw rol in het beleidsproces voor voedselzekerheidsprogramma's in [land]? Zou u dit proces even kort stapsgewijs kunnen omschrijven – hoe gaat een programma van 'call' tot implementatie?
- Welke beleidsinstrumenten zijn op dit moment aanwezig ter bevordering van voedselzekerheid in [land]? En in hoeverre worden deze beheerd door Den Haag of door de ambassade zelf?

2. Conflictsensitiviteit in de praktijk. Welke factoren worden gezien als potentiële drivers van conflict en instabiliteit en hoe ziet men de interactie van deze factoren met beleid en programma's?

[NB: Dit is de kern van het interview - sectie 3 gaat over formeel beleid; deze vragen meenemen als er ruimte voor is]

Naast de 'officiële' conflictsensitieve componenten van het Nederlandse voedselzekerheidsbeleid, zijn we met name op zoek naar manieren waarop niet geformaliseerde vormen van conflictsensitiviteit wél hun weg vinden in de dagelijkse praktijk van ministerie, ambassades en programma's. Op deze manier hopen we te achterhalen wat er reeds gedaan wordt, want onze hypothese is dat dit veel meer is dan het papieren bewijs doet vermoeden

- Wat zijn in uw ervaring u de belangrijkste factoren van (potentiële) instabiliteit in [land]?
- Hoe zijn in uw ervaring voedselzekerheidsprogramma's van invloed op deze factoren? En andersom: Kunt u een voorbeeld noemen van een voedselzekerheidsprogramma dat door de ambassade ondersteund werd/wordt waarop conflict impact had?
- De relatie tussen voedselzekerheid en stabiliteit en vrede is niet bewezen. In het MJSP voor [land] zien we dat de connectie [wel/niet] gemaakt wordt. Bent u in uw ervaring in [land] voorbeelden tegengekomen waar voedselzekerheidsprogramma's inderdaad hebben bijgedragen aan vrede en stabiliteit? Was dit het gevolg van bewuste beleids-besluitvorming, of een onverwachte positieve uitkomst van een programma? Kent u voorbeelden van negatieve impact?
- Kunt u zich vinden in onze assumptie dat conflict sensitiviteit verder gaat dan 'officiële'/geformaliseerde processen? Zo ja, zou u voorbeelden kunnen noemen van hoe dit in de praktijk wordt toegepast (in aanloop naar, tijdens, en na de implementatie van voedselzekerheidsprogramma's)?

3. Risico-management en conflictsensitiviteit in beleidsinstrumenten voedselzekerheid – formele/officiële elementen van conflictsensitiviteit.

Om een idee te krijgen hoe de verhouding ligt tussen officiële en niet-officiële processen gericht op conflict sensitiviteit in beleid en programma's willen wij tenslotte graag inzicht krijgen in welke overwegingen met betrekking tot conflict meegenomen worden in het ontwerp en de uitvoering van beleid en programma's.
[NB: Let op de tijd, vraag eventueel hoeveel tijd we nog over is; Bij weinig tijd neem dan vragen 1, 5 en 6 als prioriteit.]

- Voedselzekerheidsprogramma's in [land] focussen zich op [wel/geen focus op stabiliteit]. Dit impliceert dat in het formele beleid een link wordt gelegd tussen voedselzekerheid en stabiliteit. Is dit ook vertaald naar het beleid in praktijk? Zijn voedselzekerheidsprogramma's in [land] ook specifiek gericht op het bevorderen van stabiliteit en vrede, bijv. door bepaalde doelstellingen, criteria voor programma's etc?
- Kunt u iets zeggen over de mate waarin conflict sensitiviteit expliciet wordt meegenomen in besluitvormingsprocessen die ten grondslag liggen aan voedselzekerheidsprogramma's in [land]?
- Zijn er elementen van risico analyse/management of conflict sensitiviteit onderdeel van de aanvraagcriteria. Zo ja, welke elementen zijn dit?
    - Zijn elementen van risicomanagement of conflict sensitiviteit opgenomen in de Theory of Change van programma's?
    - En wanneer we verder het proces doorlopen: zijn elementen van risico management ook elders in de programma's terug te vinden, bijvoorbeeld in monitoring/evaluatie?
    - Zijn hier specifieke go/no-go momenten voor ingebouwd bij projecten?
    - Wordt er prioriteit gegeven aan het managen van bepaalde risico's (omdat ze uitzonderlijk prangend zijn / ze meer haalbaar zijn / in lijn met beleid / andere reden?)

- Worden context-specifieke gevoeligheden meegenomen in de selectie van:
    - De plaats of het gebied van een interventie?
    - Uitvoerende partners?
    - Begunstigden/'ontvangers'/degenen op wie een interventie gericht is?
- Bestaan er mechanismen waardoor gesignaleerde dynamieken van conflicten of instabiliteit vanuit lokale of implementerende partijen worden teruggekoppeld aan de ambassades? Hoe wordt de ontvangen informatie gebruikt?
- Zijn er momenten, bijvoorbeeld voortgangsgesprekken van programma's met implementerende partners, waarop conflict sensitiviteit makkelijk meegenomen wordt / zou kunnen worden binnen bestaande processen? Op wat voor manier zou dit kunnen?
- Kent u voorbeelden waar instrumenten van voedselzekerheidsbeleid of voedselzekerheidsprogramma's zijn aangepast, veranderd of gestopt in reactie op plotselinge uitbraken van geweld of signalen van vergrootte instabiliteit? Wat was de gelegenheid?

4. Optionele vragen

- Kijkend naar het beleid van BZ en de ambassades: In hoeverre hebben zij een eenduidige aanpak waar het gaat om conflict sensitiviteit?
- Zijn uitvoerende partners bewust van de verschillende dimensies van conflict en wat hun rol hierbinnen is?
- Kijkend naar het doel van ons onderzoek, de tacit processen en kennis van conflictsensitiviteit naar boven halen, heeft u nog tips om dit in het vervolg van dit onderzoek anders of beter te benaderen?
- U heeft net het voorbeeld van [interessant programma] genoemd. Wij willen ook graag een aantal mensen bij uitvoerende organisaties interviewen. Zou u mij in contact kunnen brengen met iemand die hier een coördinerende rol bij heeft gehad?