

Verian and CMC

Central Evaluation of Conflict Sensitivity in Sida's Development and Humanitarian Cooperation

Country case studies



Authors: André Kahlmeyer, Johanna Lindström, Samantha Smith, Maria Hrimech, Georgia Plank, Nahla Arif, Japhet Makongo, Filmon Hailu.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BRADEA	Basic Rights and Duties Enforcement Act (Tanzania)
CHRAGG	Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (Tanzania)
CMC	Conflict Management Consulting
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CP	Conflict Prevention
CS	Conflict Sensitivity
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EDI	Ethiopian Dialogue Initiative
EHRC	Ethiopian Human Rights Commission
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
EQ	Evaluation Question
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARM	Farm Africa (international NGO)
FFS	Funding Facility for Stabilization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HQ	Headquarters
HoAREC	Horn of Africa Regional Environment Centre and Network
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IHEC	Independent High Electoral Commission (Iraq)
ILPI	International Law and Policy Institute
IMS	International Media Support
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IS	Islamic State
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
IT	Information Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
KJP	Kigoma Joint Programme

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

LHRC	Legal and Human Rights Centre (Tanzania)
LIWAY	Labour Systems Programme in Ethiopia
LPI	Life & Peace Institute
LTSP	Land Tenure Support Programme
MDPA	Multi-Dimensional Poverty Analysis
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NEMC	National Environment Management Council (Tanzania)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIC-E	Opportunities Industrialization Center Ethiopia
PASS	Private Agricultural Sector Support
PINGOS	Pastoralist Indigenous Non-Governmental Organisations Forum
PO	Programme Officer
PSSN	Productive Social Safety Net
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TGNP	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme
TOC	Theory of Change
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDAP	United Nations Development Assistance Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VPO	Vice President's Office (Tanzania)
WB	World Bank
ZLSC	Zanzibar Legal Services Centre

1 Ethiopia

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings from the Ethiopia case study, conducted as part of the central evaluation of Sida's work with conflict sensitivity. The case study covers two strategy periods for the Swedish strategy for Ethiopia: 2016-2022 and 2022-2026.

A theory-based approach was used as an overarching analytical framework for the evaluation, and for the case study. The Theory of Change (ToC) presents a pathway for how conflict sensitivity related change is theorised to occur under the strategy for Ethiopia. It includes several outcome levels (short-term, medium-term, long-term outcomes) and assumptions, risks and other actors/initiatives and factors. This was developed in cooperation with the Sida team at the Embassy of Sweden in Ethiopia. The analysis of the empirical evidence gathered throughout the case study tested the narrative presented in the ToC and examines the causal links in the chain. The evidence on long-term outcomes and impacts draws on contribution analysis, which aims to assess Sida's contribution to long-term outcomes and impacts, was applied at the level of Sida contributions. Four rubrics were applied in the case studies. The main evaluation report presents this methodology in further detail.

This document is composed of four parts: 1) an introduction to the case study, the context and data collected, 2) the original ToC, followed by 3) the evidence against this ToC, and 3) answers to the three evaluation questions.

1.1.1 Context

The country context for Ethiopia has shifted between the two strategy periods. The 2016 strategy plan for Ethiopia indicated the country as a stabilizing factor in the Horn of Africa and was marked by optimism. However, the plan also identified political tension with several ongoing conflicts resulting in forced internal displacements and refugee flows, and the country was characterised by tensions minor violent disputes, and mass protests¹. As from 2017 until today, the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and its humanitarian partners have launched annual humanitarian and resilience appeals and action plans², addressing humanitarian consequences of conflicts, displacements and natural disasters in Ethiopia, requiring Sweden's sustained financial engagement in crisis management along a triple nexus approach; an approach which has increasingly influenced Sweden's development cooperation

¹ Sida. Årsplan för genomförandet av strategin för Etiopien 2016. 2015-12-01

² [Ethiopia | ReliefWeb](#)

strategy as well. The country's security context dramatically shifted with the conflict between the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigray state government which escalated into a military confrontation in 2020, with a permanent cessation of hostilities agreed between the parties in November 2022³. Ethiopia is still challenged by two armed insurgencies in Oromia and Amhara, and by the terrorist threats of Somalia's Al-Shabab.

Table 1: Indicators of levels of conflict and peacefulness ⁴

UCDP	WB-FCS (2023)	GPI	ACLED (2022-2023)
WAR	CONFLICT	LOW	VERY HIGH

1.1.2 Data collection and fieldwork

Twelve contributions were sampled for exploration in consultation with the Embassy team in Addis Ababa (see section 1.5). A desk-based review of 114 documents was undertaken, encompassing strategy and contribution level documentation, and external documentation. A series of remote interview were held with Sida staff and implementing partners, followed by in-person fieldwork in the w/c 7 and 14 April 2025. Fieldwork was conducted across 9 sites: Addis Ababa; Bahirdar (Amhara); Woldiya (Amhara); Hawassa (Sidama); Shashemene (Oromia); Jimma (Oromia); Dire Dawa (Dire Dawa); Batu (Oromia); and Mekelle (Tigray).

In total 57 interviews and focus groups were conducted, of which eight with Sida staff, 29 with implementing or downstream delivery partners, and 20 with beneficiaries. In addition, 13 focus groups were held with beneficiaries.

1.2 THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change is a simplified, yet comprehensive description of inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact of the integration of a conflict perspective in all work and financing, as well as the assumptions for those elements to be logically connected.

Inputs

For the **INPUTS**, suitable organisational resources (capacity building, methodological support, training, guidelines), financial resources and human resources (policy specialists/advisors), should be in place at Sida HQ, at the Embassy, and with partners. Specifically, in Ethiopia, this includes a programme officer who has the conflict perspective as part of his portfolio. A human security policy specialist in the Horn of Africa support team at the African department of Sida's headquarters can provide support upon request. The Embassy also has access to Sida's Helpdesk on Human Security and Humanitarian Assistance. The Embassy's political section

³ <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Download-the-signed-agreement-here.pdf>

⁴ Sida's analysis from 2023 on the on the type of context (conflict, non-conflict) in Ethiopia.

and the bilateral cooperation section work in synergy, compare notes and mutualise context analyses related to security and ongoing conflicts, in particular about key topics such as Transitional Justice, National Dialogue, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, human rights and humanitarian affairs. Such joint analyses guide the implementation of the bilateral cooperation strategy, Sida's contribution management, the political and development/humanitarian dialogue with authorities, stakeholders, and partners. Analyses are documented *inter alia* in the embassy's diplomatic posts (D-posts), separately from Sida's contribution management tools.

Outputs

These inputs would then lead to and be converted into **OUTPUTS**, at the strategy level which in the case of Ethiopia means that Embassy staff (bilateral and political section), and specifically the leadership (in this case the Ambassador, head of political section and Head of Development Cooperation) take steps to understand the Ethiopian context and conflict dynamics/tensions. This would be evidenced by the development of a Multi-Dimensional Poverty Analysis (MDPA), which includes an analysis of conflict and tensions, and that high-quality conflict analyses (some in collaboration with the political section) are conducted and updated regularly, which considers the drives of conflict and dividers and connectors. This includes taking steps to understand the shifting context for Ethiopia over the two strategy periods.

This is exemplified by the two MDPA (from 2019 and 2022)⁵ and the conflict analysis from 2022⁶, which shows an understanding of conflicts in Ethiopia to be complex, multi-layered and manifested in several ways and influenced by geographical, cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity in Ethiopia. The conflict analysis and MDPA summarise conflict drivers to be complex and overlapping⁷, but it can be said the underlying root causes of conflict in the country are related to politics and ethnic based federalism⁸. Examples of identified key dividers and connectors are⁹:

Dividers	Connectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marginalisation of ethnic communities - Land scarcity and boundary disputes - Unequal distribution of the proceeds of economic growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding space for dialogue at national, regional, and local levels. - More inclusive dialogue, including involvement of CSOs, including women's

⁵ Multi-dimensional poverty analysis in Ethiopia, Berhanu Denu Consultancy Service, 16 January 2019; Multi-dimensional poverty analysis update in Ethiopia, Berhanu Denu Consultancy Service, 19 September 2022.

⁶ SHD256. Ethiopia Conflict Analysis. 07 October 2022. We do not yet have access to any general conflict analysis from the strategy period 2016-2021, but the strategy plan from 2019 notes that such an analysis was undertaken.

⁷ SHD256. Ethiopia Conflict Analysis. 07 October 2022.

⁸ Multi-dimensional poverty analysis in Ethiopia, Berhanu Denu Consultancy Service, 16 January 2019

⁹ SHD256. Ethiopia Conflict Analysis. 07 October 2022, Multi-dimensional poverty analysis in Ethiopia, Berhanu Denu Consultancy Service, 16 January 2019

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political authoritarianism and weak accountability mechanisms - Violent extremism in cross-border regions - Patriarchal norms 	<p>groups, religious leaders, key public sector actors.</p>
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Input -> output level assumptions

Assumptions: All stakeholders demonstrate consistent leadership and sustained commitment and makes organisational, financial and human resources available, and ensure that there are incentives for staff to learn about the conflict perspective. Specifically, these needs to be sustained leadership at the Embassy, through the Head of Development Cooperation.

Access constraints and security risk management for Embassy's staff reduce however the bilateral section's ability to prioritise areas experiencing violent and active conflicts, like Amhara region presently. Not only monitoring of development interventions in the field would be hampered by access restrictions to many 'off-limit' hotspots of Ethiopia, but most partners of the bilateral section's development cooperation portfolio are in fact unable to access to and operate in these areas, even remotely. (The maps of OCHA for access and humanitarian partners' presence in the field (3Ws) show that hard-to-reach areas due to conflict are left as blind-spots even for humanitarian action despite considerable protection and assistance needs of populations who are de facto left behind there).

Short-term outcomes

A **SHORT-TERM OUTCOME** of this deepened understanding of Ethiopian context are that strategy level analysis, operationalisation, plan, implementation, monitoring and reporting that reflect the two-way interaction between Sweden's strategy and Ethiopian conflict dynamics/tensions and that identifies the main conflict drivers and details how to tackle these across the different three strategic objectives that were part of the earlier strategy period (Human rights, democracy and the rule of law; Environment, climate and sustainable use of natural resources; Inclusive economic development) by integrating the conflict perspective, and as part of targeted contributions under the fourth strategic objective of Peaceful and inclusive societies introduced in the new strategy from 2022. With this in place:

- Across the four strategic objectives (three until 2022), the conflict perspective is integrated. Various examples are mentioned in the annual strategy plans¹⁰ and in the report from a training on conflict sensitivity undertaken in 2021¹¹.
- Embassy staff (bilateral and political sections) take steps to maintain an updated understanding of the context and reflect on the understanding of the conflict

¹⁰ Strategy plans for Ethiopia from 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024.

¹¹ SHD230: Conflict sensitive training in Ethiopia Embassy, held 20 October 2021.

dynamics/tensions, and what this means for strategy level decisions such as portfolio composition¹².

- Bilateral section staff assesses and selects suitable partners.
- Partners analyse the two-way interaction between the contribution(s) and conflict dynamics/tensions and considers potential positive and negative resource transfers¹³.
- Bilateral section staffs' dialogue with partners emphasises the conflict perspective, including noting any concerns regarding partners' integration of conflict perspective in the risk register and taking these concerns up in an open dialogue¹⁴.
- Bilateral section staff monitors and evaluates the integration of the conflict perspective, at strategy level and at contribution level.
- Bilateral section staff correctly uses and embeds the conflict policy marker in the Sida strategy and contribution cycles.

Output -> short-term outcome level assumptions

Assumptions:

- Bilateral section staff are appropriately **trained, incentivised and supported** to ensure and verify that Sida's selected partners have adequate capacities to effectively integrate relevant and locally adapted conflict perspectives into the projects and programmes that they implement with the financial support of Sida. This includes access to sufficient resources, in terms of financial and human resources, and to appropriate method support (the peace and conflict toolbox, and

¹² This is reflected in the strategy plans for the two strategies.

¹³ "Resource transfers" in development aid refer to the allocation and distribution of financial, material, or technical resources from donors to recipients. When planning in a conflict-sensitive manner, these transfers must be managed carefully to ensure they do not exacerbate existing tensions or contribute to conflict but rather promote peace and stability. The main risks with resources transfers include: 1) **Exacerbating conflict**: If resources are distributed unevenly or perceived as biased, they can fuel existing tensions or create new conflicts among communities or groups; 2) **Corruption, misappropriation and theft**: Resources may be diverted by corrupt actors, reducing their effectiveness and potentially empowering conflict-prone groups or elites; 3) **Dependency**: Over-reliance on external resources can create dependencies, undermining local capacity and sustainability once the aid is withdrawn; 4) **Distortion of local economies**: Large inflows of resources can distort local markets, inflate prices, or disrupt local economies, leading to unintended negative consequences; 5) **Security risks**: In conflict zones, resource transfers can become targets for armed groups, leading to theft, violence, or further destabilisation; 6) **Legitimacy and power dynamics**: Transfers can inadvertently legitimize or empower certain groups, including those with a history of perpetuating conflict, shifting power dynamics in ways that might undermine peacebuilding efforts.

¹⁴ In the workshop, the Embassy gave the example of IFC, where there were concerns that the capacity for integration of conflict sensitivity was not sufficient, and additional analysis was undertaken and eventually escalated to Sida HQ and then including in dialogue between Sida and IFC at global level.

other learning resources) and advice from HQ and/or Human Security Helpdesk, making use of this support when required^{15, 16}.

- Partners are appropriately **trained, incentivised and supported** and **are willing** to effectively integrate relevant and locally adapted conflict perspectives into Sida funded projects and programmes.

Medium-term outcomes

These outputs would then lead to and be converted into **MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES at the level of partners**, meaning that:

- Partners continuously adapt contributions based on their understanding of the two-way dynamics between conflict dynamics/tensions and the contribution to prevent/minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts.
- Bilateral section staff and partners take steps to learn from monitoring and evaluation of the integration of the conflict perspective with learning taking place both downstream (from strategy to contribution level) and upstream (from contribution to strategy level).
- The bilateral section at the Embassy adapts the strategy and the strategy plan and its implementation, as and when required¹⁷

Short-term -> medium-term outcome level assumptions

Assumptions:

- The bilateral section and their partners have access to adequate information on the evolution of conflict dynamics to support ongoing analysis of the context¹⁸.
- Embassy staff (bilateral and political sections) and partners are able to safely monitor and visit ongoing contributions across all regions to understand what is happening on the ground¹⁹.
- The bilateral section is able to have a high level of flexibility in contribution management and open dialogue with partners to respond to changes in the context and to allow for learning from both success and failure²⁰.

Long-term outcomes

A **LONG-TERM OUTCOME** of this is that Sida's development cooperation in Ethiopia is relevant and responsive to peace and conflict dynamics, mitigates risks of

¹⁵ The embassy has been working closely with the human security expert of the Horn of Africa support team at the African department of Sida's headquarters.

¹⁶ Beyond a training and a conflict analysis, the Embassy has used the helpdesk for conflict analyses related to two programmes: SHD253 Conflict sensitivity assessment of LIWAY market systems development project in Ethiopia, 7 June 2022; SHD254: Review CSSP2 Conflict Peacebuilding Strategy, 20 June 2022.

¹⁷ This is reflected in the changes between the two strategy periods, including the inclusion of a specific strategic objective to work on inclusive and peaceful societies.

¹⁸ Mentioned during workshop on 21st of May.

¹⁹ Mentioned during workshop on 21st of May.

²⁰ Strategiplan för Etiopien 2024

harming and contributes to conflict prevention and peacebuilding beyond its targeted peacebuilding contributions at levels: strategy; portfolio and at the level of projects and programmes as well as at the local, national and regional levels.

Specifically, this means that the Embassy and their partners contribute to **positive change for peace** by weakening dividers and strengthening connectors, contributing to positive resource transfer and **avoiding potential negative resource transfers**:

Strategic objective	Outcomes	Assumptions (external)
Environment, climate and sustainable use of natural resources	<p>Strengthened conditions for sustainable management and use of natural resources and ecosystems (thereby weakening them as dividers), supporting reconciliation at grass-roots level²¹, without worsening existing conflicts and tensions, e.g. between ethnic groups or between land 'rights holders' and those without such rights²²</p> <p>This is achieved by strengthening the capacity of NGOs to work with the government, national and local on natural resource management, and thereby strengthening these as connectors.</p>	<p>The government continues to implement relevant strategies in the environmental area.</p>
Human rights, democracy and the rule of law	<p>Reduced harmful practices and changed discriminatory social and gender norms to reduce gender-based violence, including circumcision of women and girls, and conflict-related sexual violence, thereby reducing patriarchal norms and their effects as a divider.</p> <p>This is achieved by working with organisations that support women's rights and peace, but</p>	<p>Continued relatively good relations between Sweden and Ethiopia; willingness of the government to implement recommendations of the joint OHCHR/EHRC Human Rights Commission²⁴. Government commitment to have a legitimate implementation of the National Transitional Justice Policy.</p>

²¹ Strategiplan för Etiopien. 2020-2022, dated 2019-12-13.

²² SHD230: Conflict sensitive training in Ethiopia Embassy, held 20 October 2021.

²⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/OHCHR-EHRC-Tigray-Report.pdf>

	also by including men and boys to achieve transformative, positive change with regards to social and gender norms ²³ , and thereby strengthening these as connectors	
Human rights, democracy and the rule of law	<p>Reduced risk for a shrinking space for CSOs to prevent, monitor and report on human rights abuses and atrocities among religious, gender, ethnic groups and thereby reducing their effects as a divider.</p> <p>This is achieved by providing platforms for dialogue, strengthen CSOs and government institutional accountability and transitional justice and ensuring space for CSOs to work on human rights.</p>	
Inclusive economic development	<p>Improved conditions for productive employment and decent work, particularly for youth, women, children, people with disabilities, IDPs, returnees and ex-combatants, thereby weakening inequality and marginalisation among these groups as a divider²⁵.</p> <p>This is achieved by working with a variety of actors at different levels and strengthening their capacities as change agents to restore peace and stability.</p>	<p>The government continues with the reform package for macroeconomic stability.</p> <p>The government supports recovery and reconstruction in conflict areas. As well as availability of more resources for the recovery work.</p>
Inclusive economic development	Market effects: Avoiding distortion to local markets as part of market linkage programmes ²⁶ , e.g. cutting the 'middlemen' out of supply chains in market linkage	

²³ Strategiplan för Etiopien 2023.

²⁵ Strategiplan för Etiopien 2024, SHD230: Conflict sensitive training in Ethiopia Embassy, held 20 October 2021.

²⁶ Mentioned during workshop on 21st of May.

	<p>interventions²⁷, which may create tensions.</p>	
Peaceful and inclusive societies	<p>Strengthened conditions for prevention, management and resolution of conflicts by peaceful means.</p> <p>This is achieved by supporting local capacities for peace among civil society, including women's and youth organisations and networks, media, faith-based organisations, the private sector, and supporting their inclusion in the dialogue process, and thereby strengthening these as connectors</p>	<p>There is political willingness to uphold the cessation of hostilities and to solve ongoing conflicts in Amhara, Oromia and other parts of the country. There is legitimacy for the National Dialogue Process. There is a good coordination between the different national processes (the National Dialogue, Transitional Justice and National Demobilization and Rehabilitation Programme) with more space available for CSOs engagement.</p>
Across strategic objectives		
Distribution effects:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding worsening of tensions and conflicts by ensuring balance in geographical spread of the portfolio to avoid prioritising specific ethnic groups ²⁸ • Supporting social cohesion by supporting inter-communal relations or state-community relations by creating specific for a for these as part of specific contributions²⁹ 		
Theft and diversion of assistance: Conducting additional risk assessments and monitoring to avoid similar situations as the theft of food aid in 2023 ³⁰ .		
Substitution effects: Considering and acting to avoid the risks of the government focusing on ambitious, high-profile programmes while letting donors cover fundamental services such as education ³¹ .		
Other intended or unintended (negative and positive) outcomes: TBC		

Impact

These outcomes would then contribute to the overall **IMPACT** of the integration of the conflict perspective, means that Sweden's development cooperation in Ethiopia has prevented or mitigated negative impacts and maximised positive impacts by contributing to a peaceful and inclusive society and supporting people living in poverty and under oppression. The impact level is within the sphere of influence of

²⁷ SHD230: Conflict sensitive training in Ethiopia Embassy, held 20 October 2021.

²⁸ Mentioned during workshop on 21st of May.

²⁹ Mentioned in as part Growth for the Future (G4F) case study in SHD230: Conflict sensitive training in Ethiopia Embassy, held 20 October 2021.

³⁰ Mentioned during workshop on 21st of May. Other sources: Strategiplan 2024 <https://apnews.com/article/ethiopia-united-states-food-diverted-aid-33e7a66bf097dfad500b3a8471e62735>; <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jun/09/food-aid-suspended-in-ethiopia-after-widespread-and-coordinated-thievery>

³¹ Mentioned during workshop on 21st of May.

Sida, but its contribution is one of many other contributions; external and internal to Ethiopia.

1.3 EVIDENCE AGAINST THE THEORY OF CHANGE

1.3.1 Evidence on outputs:

Embassy staff and leadership take steps to understand the Ethiopian context and conflict dynamics/tensions:

- Sida staff and Embassy leadership have taken deliberate steps to understand the Ethiopian context and conflict dynamics. This has included conducting and drawing on conflict analysis, staying informed through multiple information sources, and actively integrating context-specific understanding into strategy and programme implementation:
- A conflict study was commissioned in 2021 to understand the broader Ethiopian context, and conflict analysis (MDPA) was used to guide strategy design and implementation. Sida staff highlighted that "the nexus approach [was] anchored in conflict and related analysis," and that conflict dynamics across different result areas, such as land, forest, and water disputes, were regularly assessed and addressed.³²
- Staff reported regular use of conflict analysis produced by Sida's Human Security Helpdesk during the strategy operationalisation phase. The embassy also consulted previous partners for input and validated analyses to ensure alignment with realities on the ground.³³
- Embassy teams relied on a range of formal and informal sources to stay updated on evolving tensions, including regular briefings from humanitarian and political partners, Sahan Research newsletters, OCHA reports, and field visits. They acknowledged the need to understand multiple conflict types across Ethiopia – describing the situation as one requiring not a single conflict analysis but "at least 4, maybe 20, 100" due to the highly localised and complex nature of conflicts.³⁴
- Staff reported strong internal collaboration between the embassy's political and bilateral sections, with the political section providing updates on security and conflict developments, which fed into Sida's programme planning.³⁵
- The former Head of Mission noted that Sida staff were well supported by HQ and highly knowledgeable on conflict issues. Regular internal updates and strategic engagement with donors and partners were described as central to understanding and responding to the evolving conflict landscape.³⁶

³² KIIs with Sida staff.

³³ KII with Sida staff member.

³⁴ KII with Sida staff member.

³⁵ KII with Sida staff member.

³⁶ KII with Sida staff member.

- The conflict adviser to Sida noted that Embassy staff in Ethiopia demonstrated strong awareness and ownership of conflict sensitivity, actively requesting support and integrating conflict assessments into programming. One Sida officer challenged the conflict sensitivity of an IFC programme and initiated high-level internal dialogue and accountability processes in response.³⁷

1.3.2 Evidence on input -> output level assumptions

There are incentives for staff to learn about conflict sensitivity: There is strong evidence that Sida and Embassy staff are encouraged and supported to learn about conflict sensitivity, primarily through formal requirements and internal guidance:

- Conflict sensitivity is embedded as a requirement in the appraisal and operationalisation of all contributions. Staff reported that conflict analysis is a mandatory component during appraisal, and that partners are expected to assess and report on conflict dynamics. This creates an institutional incentive for staff to understand and apply conflict sensitivity in programme design and management.³⁸
- Sida staff described conflict sensitivity as a recurring topic in annual planning and review processes, where it is treated as a standing item for dialogue and risk assessment. This regular integration reinforces the importance of the perspective and encourages staff to remain engaged and informed.³⁹
- Staff referred to Sida's internal systems and guidance documents that help assess and integrate the conflict perspective. For instance, country teams accessed Sida's intranet resources and tools for conducting conflict assessments and received guidance on integrating conflict sensitivity into programmes.⁴⁰
- Training and support have also played a role in incentivising learning. Staff referenced internal workshops, e-learning, and guidance provided by HQ and the conflict adviser. For example, the former Head of Mission confirmed that Sida provided support through field visits, training, and internal workshops on conflict sensitivity.⁴¹
- Sida's Conflict Adviser emphasised that embassy teams in Ethiopia are among those where conflict sensitivity "has sunk in" and where staff actively request support for integrating it. Officers are seen to "really incorporate" conflict sensitivity into their thinking and planning, and some have initiated high-level discussions with partners about their shortcomings in this area.⁴²
- While some gaps in formal training were acknowledged – particularly due to staff turnover and structural changes – there is a general recognition of the value of continuous learning. One programme officer suggested annual conflict sensitivity

³⁷ KII with Sida staff member.

³⁸ KII with Sida staff member.

³⁹ KII with Sida staff member.

⁴⁰ KII with Sida staff member.

⁴¹ KII with Sida staff member.

⁴² KII with Sida staff member.

training for all contribution managers and new starters to further institutionalise the knowledge base.⁴³

Access constraints and security risk management for Embassy's staff reduce:

This assumption has not held, but appropriate response and mitigation has been put in place. Security risks and access constraints, particularly early on in the Tigray war, reduced Sida and Embassy staff's ability to operate directly in conflict-affected areas, limiting oversight and field engagement.

- During the Tigray conflict, the Embassy was partially evacuated, and access to reliable information was severely limited. “Not much was coming from Tigray,” and only a few political staff remained in-country to monitor the situation.⁴⁴
- Embassy operations required adjustments to address heightened security risks, including implementing remote working arrangements, procuring additional equipment, and contracting security personnel. These measures were unplanned and incurred extra costs.⁴⁵
- Projects frequently reported volatile and unpredictable security situations that impeded field presence. OHCHR suspended field missions in Bahir Dar due to IED attacks targeting UN vehicles and later relocated their office from Gondar to Bahir Dar because of the Fano insurgency.⁴⁶
- Travel to certain areas was obstructed by road closures, territorial control by armed groups, and weak transportation infrastructure. For example, UNICEF required police escorts for cash delivery in conflict zones.⁴⁷
- In many cases, project activities had to be relocated to safer areas. Engender Health moved operations from western to eastern Amhara due to escalating violence, and Farm Africa relocated activities from Ziway Dugda Woreda after a prolonged security delay.⁴⁸
- When Sida staff could not access certain regions, they relied on implementing partners and local actors to provide real-time assessments and adapt programming. UNFPA, for example, used community-based agents to deliver services in areas controlled by armed groups, and OHCHR adopted remote monitoring in places like Metema.⁴⁹

1.3.3 Evidence on short and medium-term outcomes and assumptions

Embassy staff (bilateral and political sections) take steps to maintain an updated understanding of the context and reflect on the understanding of the conflict dynamics/tensions, and what this means for strategy level decisions such as

⁴³ KII with Sida staff member.

⁴⁴ KII with Sida staff member.

⁴⁵ KII with Sida staff member.

⁴⁶ KII with implementing partner.

⁴⁷ KII with implementing partner.

⁴⁸ KII with implementing partner.

⁴⁹ KIIs with implementing partner and beneficiary organisations.

portfolio composition: Embassy staff – across both bilateral and political sections – actively monitor the evolving conflict context in Ethiopia and use this understanding to inform strategic decisions, including portfolio design and composition:

- Embassy teams regularly draw on a range of information sources to maintain updated conflict analysis, including briefings from humanitarian and political partners, daily updates from local and international organisations, reports from UN agencies and OCHA, and analytical products like Sahan Research’s newsletters. The political section provides internal updates, and local staff contribute “very granular knowledge” on political and security developments.⁵⁰
- Embassy staff actively engage in coordination platforms, such as security meetings among EU embassies, and receive briefings from expert partners like the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), particularly ahead of high-level visits. These mechanisms contribute to a shared understanding across Embassy teams.⁵¹
- The former Head of Mission noted that conflict understanding was continually updated in close collaboration with the political section, particularly as the situation evolved in regions like Tigray, Amhara, and Afar. This continuous reflection was essential for shaping Sida’s strategy and determining where and how to operate.⁵²
- Conflict dynamics informed strategic decisions on portfolio composition. For example, Sida made a deliberate shift toward supporting larger INGOs and multilaterals with broader geographic coverage and flexibility to respond to volatility. The Embassy also emphasised a nexus-focused portfolio, blending development and humanitarian approaches in conflict-affected regions, with explicit attention to stability and peacebuilding.⁵³
- Embassy and Sida staff reviewed conflict analyses from partners to identify key tensions and inform programming. These analyses often included political and resource-based dynamics, such as land and park access disputes, or sensitivities in IDP communities (e.g., 15581, 14180), which directly influenced intervention design and location selection.
- Ongoing monitoring, community engagement, and structured feedback mechanisms – such as monthly forums, complaints systems, and partnerships with local actors – were used to maintain updated insights on conflict dynamics and ensure responsiveness to local tensions. This helped Embassy staff and partners remain contextually aware throughout implementation.⁵⁴

Sida staff assess and select suitable partners: Sida staff apply a structured and context-informed process to assess and select partners, with attention to local relevance and implementation capacity:

⁵⁰ KII with Sida staff member.

⁵¹ KII with Sida staff member.

⁵² KII with Sida staff member.

⁵³ KII with Sida staff member.

⁵⁴ KIIs with implementing partner and beneficiaries.

- Conflict sensitivity features in Sida's partner assessment and selection process. Partners are required to demonstrate their ability to integrate conflict sensitivity into their activities and adhere to "Do No Harm" principles. Sida has supported conflict sensitivity training for partners to strengthen their capacity to analyse conflict and adapt their interventions accordingly.⁵⁵
- In high-risk environments, Sida has prioritised partners with broader operational reach and adaptability. For example, Sida shifted from smaller NGOs to larger INGOs or multilateral agencies that could operate flexibly and manage security risks in volatile regions.⁵⁶
- Cultural and contextual appropriateness also informs selection of downstream partners by lead implementing partners. For example, in the Oromia–Sidama border region, Sida selected a Muslim organisation to work in the predominantly Muslim Oromia area, and a Protestant organisation for the Protestant-majority Sidama area, to reduce the risk of exacerbating local tensions.⁵⁷

Partners analyse the two-way interaction between projects and conflict dynamics/tensions and consider the positive and negative consequences that the transfer of resources (money, goods, services, training, etc.) may have: There is strong evidence across most contributions that partners have considered how their activities and resource transfers may influence local tensions and conflict dynamics, with several implementing adaptations to mitigate risks and promote cohesion:

- In interviews, several partners actively reflected on how resource transfers (e.g. cash, training, goods) might affect community tensions. For example, UNICEF explicitly considered the risk of exacerbating tensions between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities by ensuring both groups were included in cash transfer programming. They highlighted the importance of perceived fairness and transparency in targeting processes to prevent conflict. Social workers recruited from both IDP and host communities also helped manage local dynamics by offering psychosocial support and facilitating use of grievance mechanisms.⁵⁸
- Resource transfers are used deliberately to reduce drivers of conflict. UNICEF's integrated cash-plus approach (including health insurance) aimed to reduce negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage or joining armed groups, which are more likely in contexts of economic stress. This was seen as particularly impactful during the Northern Ethiopia conflict, when host communities were overwhelmed by displaced populations.⁵⁹
- Projects analyse conflict dynamics and design contributions so as to avoid exacerbating tensions. For example, Save the Children prioritised vulnerable

⁵⁵ KII with downstream partner.

⁵⁶ KII with Sida staff member.

⁵⁷ KII with downstream partner.

⁵⁸ KII with implementing partner.

⁵⁹ KII with implementing partner.

children, such as those with disabilities, while involving community members in transparent targeting processes (14180 Facilitators). Similarly, Farm Africa designed inclusive cooperatives and targeted youth employment initiatives to reduce dependence on park resources and prevent inter-community disputes.⁶⁰

- Community-led solutions and integrated services are also seen as mitigating risks. EDI's reconciliation efforts between youth groups improved inter-group relations (15544 EDI PO KII Transcript), and OHCHR used early warning information to prevent religious violence through interfaith dialogue (11223 KII OHCHR). EngenderHealth co-located legal, medical, and psychosocial services to provide holistic support and avoid service fragmentation that could create mistrust or duplication.⁶¹
- Resource transfer decisions consider both benefits and risks. Positive effects include strengthened trust through inclusive targeting and improved economic resilience through income-generating activities such as eco-tourism and fuel-saving stoves (15581 FGD Transcript 3). However, exclusion of some communities can generate resentment, as noted by Farm Africa in neighbouring areas not included in their interventions.⁶²

Bilateral section staffs' dialogue with partners emphasises the conflict

perspective: Partners reported that Sida staff consistently encourage consideration of the conflict perspective in their interactions, though the degree of emphasis varies across projects and over time:

- Several partners noted Sida's proactive engagement on conflict sensitivity. In particular, Sida staff were described as actively promoting the integration of conflict analysis into project design, especially during proposal development and review stages. For example, a partner described Sida as "always asking us to elaborate on how our programme responds to the conflict situation," with specific reference to adaptations following the escalation of violence in Amhara.⁶³ Sida's strategic guidance during partner meetings also reinforced conflict-sensitive design.⁶⁴
- Partners valued Sida's openness to adaptation and flexibility in response to conflict. Multiple partners highlighted that Sida staff supported real-time adjustments to programming in response to security concerns or changes in the conflict context. One partner said, "Sida were responsive when we proposed to shift to less volatile areas," suggesting a shared concern for conflict-sensitive operations.⁶⁵ Sida staff also reinforced conflict-sensitive approaches through site

⁶⁰ FGD with beneficiaries and KII with Abijata Park Manager.

⁶¹ KII with implementing partner.

⁶² KII with Abijata Park Manager.

⁶³ KII with implementing partner.

⁶⁴ KIIs with implementing partners.

⁶⁵ KII with implementing partner.

visits, for example engaging directly with local leaders to inform programme adaptations.⁶⁶

- Dialogue on conflict was stronger when Sida staff had contextual expertise. Implementing agencies observed that Sida staff based in Ethiopia, or with prior experience in the region, were more likely to ask relevant questions and engage deeply with conflict-related issues. In contrast, dialogue was sometimes described as “superficial” when led from HQ without regional familiarity.⁶⁷
- Some partners noted a shift over time in Sida’s emphasis. In earlier phases, especially pre-2021, Sida’s engagement on conflict issues was reportedly less pronounced. However, several partners noted an increased emphasis on conflict sensitivity following the outbreak of the Northern Ethiopia conflict, with Sida staff encouraging conflict analyses and risk mitigation strategies.⁶⁸
- There was more limited evidence from interviews with partners of structured or repeated dialogue on conflict issues during implementation. While conflict sensitivity was clearly raised at key design and funding stages, fewer partners mentioned structured check-ins or learning sessions with Sida staff to revisit conflict dynamics during implementation. This suggests that while conflict is present in dialogue, it may not be systematically revisited.
- Nevertheless, direct observation showed that Sida staff used field visits to raise detailed, context-specific recommendations on conflict sensitivity. During a monitoring visit to a project implemented by PMU, observed by the evaluation team, Sida raised a wide range of conflict sensitivity-related issues. These included the need for contingency planning at community level; better linkage between local peacebuilding and national dialogue; trauma healing components; skills building for conflict analysis; and the importance of targeting youth and avoiding reinforcement of patriarchal norms. Sida also emphasised meaningful participation of women and youth and the need to change meeting structures to allow them to speak more openly, suggesting they be in the majority to avoid tokenism and enable challenge to male elders. The downstream partner ECFE was identified as a potential link to the national peace process. PMU committed to reviewing and integrating Sida’s feedback at their next quarterly meeting and providing a response on implementation plans. Sida’s suggestions were supported by available budget underspend, demonstrating the tangible influence of their dialogue during implementation.⁶⁹

Bilateral section staff monitors and evaluates the integration of the conflict perspective:

- Conflict sensitivity is not always well integrated into results frameworks. Staff acknowledged that conflict sensitivity is not always well integrated into results

⁶⁶ KII with beneficiaries (community leaders).

⁶⁷ KII with implementing partner.

⁶⁸ KIIs with implementing partners.

⁶⁹ Fieldwork observation notes.

frameworks, which limits the ability to monitor it systematically. In some cases, conflict sensitivity is discussed in implementation but not explicitly reflected in indicators or formal reporting structures. For example, one Sida project manager noted that while conflict sensitivity was “in our DNA,” it was not clearly articulated in the programme logic or monitored as a distinct objective in the results framework.⁷⁰ Another interviewee reflected that conflict sensitivity was not always included in the logframes or sub-objectives, despite being a focus during implementation, creating discrepancies when applying DAC conflict prevention markers.⁷¹

- Review mechanisms are in place to revisit conflict risks and responses. Sida staff highlighted that annual review meetings serve as regular touchpoints to assess conflict sensitivity and surface newly emerging risks. These reviews include structured dialogue with partners, and conflict remains a standing item alongside other perspectives.⁷²
- Monitoring visits are used to assess inclusion and responsiveness. Sida staff conduct monitoring visits at least twice a year, using these opportunities to engage directly with partners on conflict sensitivity. Visits focus on identifying implementation gaps and agreeing on corrective actions. Staff specifically monitor factors such as the inclusivity of participant selection and the neutrality of chosen venues to avoid perceived bias.⁷³
- Conflict sensitivity is monitored through operational reporting and follow-up. For example, in the Save the Children contribution, Sida staff receive quarterly operational reports and annual updates that include conflict sensitivity considerations. These are used to assess whether implementation remains responsive to the evolving conflict landscape, such as activities in Tigray during periods of active conflict.⁷⁴
- Community-based and participatory monitoring tools reinforce conflict sensitivity. Sida contributions employ community-based monitoring structures, such as targeting and appeals committees including women and persons with disabilities, to enhance local accountability and ensure inclusion.⁷⁵ Feedback mechanisms such as FGDs, suggestion boxes, client exit interviews, and logbooks are also used to monitor potential tensions and adjust interventions accordingly.⁷⁶
- Accountability mechanisms support conflict-sensitive implementation. Sida requires partners to establish and maintain complaints mechanisms that are confidential, trusted, and responsive. These mechanisms are monitored to ensure

⁷⁰ KII with Sida staff member.

⁷¹ KII with Sida staff member.

⁷² KIIs with Sida staff members.

⁷³ KII with downstream partner.

⁷⁴ KII with Sida staff member.

⁷⁵ KII with government stakeholder.

⁷⁶ KII with implementing partner.

they can address operational issues as well as sensitive concerns like exclusion or abuse. For example, Norwegian Church Aid used these mechanisms to strengthen community trust.⁷⁷

- Monitoring incorporates learning from conflict advisers and external inputs. Sida's conflict adviser is routinely involved in contribution assessments, including joint reviews with bilateral section staff. They help interpret conflict analysis findings and advise on design and implementation adaptations. One example involved working with IFC to address concerns that their programme was inadvertently exacerbating tensions.⁷⁸
- Evaluation frameworks include conflict sensitivity as a key criterion. Consultants conducting evaluations are instructed to assess whether contributions meet conflict sensitivity standards. Indicators include community perceptions, reductions in tensions, and improved social cohesion, for example, reduced illegal activity in a national park in the Farm Africa contribution was used as an indicator of successful conflict-sensitive implementation.⁷⁹

Partners continuously adapt contributions based on their understanding of the two-way dynamics between conflict dynamics/tensions and the contribution:

Projects demonstrate operational flexibility in adapting to evolving conflict dynamics and local needs, though most documented adaptations relate specifically to security and access concerns, with limited evidence of adjustments in response to other types of implementation challenges:

- *Farm Africa* relocated activities from conflict-prone woredas, including moving out of Ziway Dugda due to security risks, to ensure safe and uninterrupted implementation.⁸⁰
- *Save the Children* adjusted in-kind distribution plans during a biscuit shortage by prioritising under-five children, helping to address community tensions and perceptions of unfairness.⁸¹
- *OHCHR* relocated offices from Gondar to Bahir Dar in response to deteriorating security conditions, maintaining operational continuity and safe access to stakeholders.⁸²
- *UNICEF* shifted from development-focused to humanitarian cash transfers in conflict-affected areas like Debark to reduce tensions between IDPs and host communities, and used university lecturers to verify beneficiary lists in inaccessible areas.⁸³

⁷⁷ KII with downstream partner.

⁷⁸ KII with Sida staff member.

⁷⁹ KII with implementing partner.

⁸⁰ KII with implementing partner.

⁸¹ KII with implementing partner.

⁸² KIIs with implementing partners.

⁸³ KII with implementing partner.

- *Mercy Corps* modified activity locations in consultation with Sida, shifting to less volatile areas in response to evolving security threats, while continuing to engage target populations.⁸⁴
- *EngenderHealth* adjusted service delivery in conflict-affected areas of Amhara by integrating GBV response with mental health and psychosocial support, and by deploying community volunteers to safely identify and refer survivors.⁸⁵
- *Life and Peace Institute* paused or modified activities in areas experiencing heightened tensions—such as ethnically mixed universities—redesigning group formats and facilitation methods to avoid retraumatisation and escalation.⁸⁶
- *UNFPA* reprogrammed activities in response to the northern conflict by rapidly shifting to lifesaving service delivery, including deploying midwives and working through local NGOs when government systems were no longer functional.⁸⁷
- *Mercy Corps* and their implementing partners adjusted interventions in real time to address risks of exclusion. For example, they worked with government institutions to ensure IDPs without documentation could still access labour market platforms, and promoted service expansion to marginalised groups such as people with disabilities or low literacy through inclusive design features like interactive voice messaging.⁸⁸
- *Mercy Corps* partners in the LIWAY programme revised interventions mid-way to ensure surrounding communities were not excluded from public services. Although not always possible due to space or resource constraints, efforts were made to co-create inclusive childcare models and embed sustainability through public sector investment.⁸⁹

Bilateral section staff and partners take steps to learn from monitoring and evaluation of the integration of the conflict perspective: While conflict sensitivity is not consistently embedded in formal results frameworks, there is some evidence that Sida staff and implementing partners draw on monitoring, review, and learning processes to reflect on conflict-related issues and adapt their interventions accordingly:

- *HoAREC* adapted implementation in response to community feedback gathered through local engagement platforms. For example, they used feedback from forest user groups and youth associations to shift awareness activities to areas where inter-ethnic tensions were rising, and engaged local peace committees to co-deliver interventions.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ KII with implementing partner.

⁸⁵ KII with implementing partner.

⁸⁶ KII with implementing partner.

⁸⁷ KII with implementing partner.

⁸⁸ KII with implementing partner.

⁸⁹ KII with implementing partner.

⁹⁰ KII with implementing partner.

- *UNFPA* used review meetings with health extension workers and implementing staff to identify challenges faced by women and girls displaced by conflict. These reviews led to changes in service hours and mobile outreach methods in insecure areas, ensuring greater access to GBV and reproductive health services.⁹¹
- *Mercy Corps* held quarterly learning sessions with implementation teams and local government to reflect on evolving risks. In the LIWAY programme, for instance, they identified that lack of childcare access excluded women from workforce interventions. As a result, Mercy Corps supported co-created childcare solutions with local partners and adjusted outreach messaging to improve inclusion.⁹² In another programme, they reviewed incidents of exclusion from livelihoods training and modified targeting to ensure conflict-affected populations were adequately reached.⁹³

Sida staff adapt the 'strategy' and 'strategy plan' and its implementation, as and when required: There is moderate but consistent evidence that Sida staff demonstrate strategic flexibility by approving changes to plans and activities in response to emerging conflict dynamics and implementation challenges:

- In the *Farm Africa* project, Sida approved the relocation of interventions from Ziway Dugda Woreda to safer areas in response to escalating security risks. This enabled continued project delivery while minimising the risk to staff and beneficiaries.⁹⁴
- In the *UNICEF* project, Sida permitted the reprogramming of development-focused funding to support humanitarian cash transfers in Debark and other conflict-affected areas. This shift addressed rising tensions between IDPs and host communities and allowed UNICEF to scale up support for basic needs and reduce protection risks.⁹⁵
- In the *OHCHR* contribution, Sida supported adjustments to operational approaches by allowing activities to be implemented only in UN-approved safe venues and accepting changes to timelines and modalities in light of insecurity in regions like Gondar. This flexibility enabled OHCHR to continue its engagement without compromising staff safety.⁹⁶
- Sida's responsiveness was also evident in the *EngenderHealth* project, where changes to activity focus and geographical targeting were discussed and accepted as the situation in Amhara escalated. Sida encouraged the implementer to shift

⁹¹ KII with implementing partner.

⁹² KII with implementing partner.

⁹³ KII with implementing partner.

⁹⁴ KII with implementing partner.

⁹⁵ KII with implementing partner (field office).

⁹⁶ KII with implementing partner.

focus to areas with greater operational feasibility while maintaining the core objectives of the programme.⁹⁷

Partners are trained, incentivised and supported and are willing to effectively integrate conflict sensitivity into projects: There is evidence that Sida supports partners to integrate conflict sensitivity into their projects through training, dialogue, and flexible support. Willingness among partners to adopt conflict-sensitive approaches is also evident, although the extent of formal incentives or systematic support varies:

- Sida has provided conflict sensitivity training to partners, particularly in earlier phases of programming. For example, Norwegian Church Aid noted that Sida required evidence of Do No Harm principles in partner proposals and supported training to help operationalise conflict-sensitive approaches.⁹⁸
- Sida's collaborative approach and openness to adaptation has been seen as a form of support that enables conflict-sensitive programming. Several partners, including EngenderHealth and Mercy Corps, described Sida as "flexible" and "responsive" when project plans needed to shift due to conflict dynamics. This willingness to adjust scope or location was viewed as a practical form of backing for conflict-aware implementation.⁹⁹
- Sida staff actively encouraged partners to integrate conflict considerations during the proposal development and review stages. Partners reported that Sida routinely asked how projects addressed the conflict context and sometimes suggested specific adaptations. For instance, EngenderHealth recalled Sida asking for greater emphasis on community engagement in light of escalating conflict.¹⁰⁰ Partners were aware that demonstrating conflict sensitivity was part of Sida's due diligence and assessment processes.
- Sida-supported forums and field visits were used to reinforce good practices. For example, Sida used monitoring visits to provide practical feedback on conflict-sensitive approaches, including inclusive targeting and reducing barriers to participation.¹⁰¹
- Willingness among partners to integrate conflict sensitivity was generally high, especially among those with long-term presence and local networks. Life & Peace Institute and HoAREC both described conflict sensitivity as central to their models and welcomed Sida's alignment with this approach.¹⁰²

Sida and partners have access to adequate information on the evolution of conflict dynamics to support ongoing analysis of the context: There is strong

⁹⁷ KII with implementing partner.

⁹⁸ KII with downstream partner.

⁹⁹ KIIs with implementing partners.

¹⁰⁰ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁰¹ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁰² KIIs with implementing partners.

evidence that both Sida and its implementing partners draw on a range of information sources to monitor and analyse the evolving conflict context, although access and use vary by location and capacity:

- Sida staff in Ethiopia routinely access daily updates, UN agency reports (e.g., OCHA), briefings from diplomatic and humanitarian coordination forums, and analytical bulletins such as those from Sahan Research. Political section staff provide internal updates, while local staff contribute granular, real-time insights based on their networks.¹⁰³
- Embassy teams participate in external coordination mechanisms, such as EU and donor security meetings, which enable regular updates and shared situational awareness across actors. These briefings are used to inform high-level visits and shape strategic reflections.¹⁰⁴
- Implementing partners also rely on structured monitoring and conflict scans. For example, Mercy Corps held quarterly learning sessions where implementation teams reviewed context updates from government, civil society, and media sources, adjusting programming accordingly.¹⁰⁵
- Partners with deep local presence, such as HoAREC and Life & Peace Institute, generate their own analysis through community-based structures. These include forest user associations, youth groups, and peace committees that share insights on local tensions and shifting risks.¹⁰⁶
- UNFPA gathered conflict-related information through feedback from health extension workers and mobile outreach teams. These insights informed service delivery in areas affected by displacement or insecurity.¹⁰⁷
- OHCHR adjusted implementation plans in real time based on early warning data and risk assessments. For instance, when risks increased in Gondar, operations were relocated to Bahir Dar based on security intelligence and incident reports shared through the UN system.¹⁰⁸
- While most partners reported having sufficient information to remain responsive, one noted that HQ-based staff were less familiar with local context, highlighting the importance of field-level networks and continuous engagement.¹⁰⁹

Sida staff and partners are able to safely monitor and visit projects in different regions to understand what is happening on the ground: There is evidence that both Sida staff and implementing partners take steps to maintain field presence and monitor projects in person, though insecurity in some regions limits safe access and requires alternative approaches:

¹⁰³ KII with Sida staff member.

¹⁰⁴ KII with Sida staff member.

¹⁰⁵ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁰⁶ KIIs with implementing partners.

¹⁰⁷ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁰⁸ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁰⁹ KII with implementing partner.

- Sida staff conduct monitoring visits at least twice a year, using them to assess implementation and discuss conflict sensitivity. Visits are carefully planned to ensure staff safety, with restrictions applied in high-risk areas. Inaccessible areas are sometimes monitored through phone follow-up or reports from trusted local actors.¹¹⁰
- In conflict-affected regions, partners reported having to adjust monitoring modalities. OHCHR, for instance, restricted activities to UN-approved venues and relied on coordination with UN security services to ensure safe delivery of programming and visits.¹¹¹
- UNICEF used innovative strategies to overcome access constraints. For example, they engaged university lecturers based in inaccessible areas to assist with verification and beneficiary monitoring, ensuring independent feedback despite travel limitations.¹¹²
- Mercy Corps reported using local staff and community-based structures to continue monitoring during periods when international staff could not travel. In the LIWAY programme, market actors and cooperatives were key sources of information on the ground.¹¹³
- Field-based Sida staff were perceived as more responsive to contextual changes, in part due to their ability to undertake regular monitoring and engage directly with communities. In contrast, HQ-based monitoring was seen as more distant and less attuned to ground realities.¹¹⁴
- While some areas remain difficult to reach due to ongoing conflict or insecurity, the combination of local networks, adaptive modalities, and collaboration with security-cleared actors has allowed for continued, if constrained, field-level monitoring by Sida and its partners.

The bilateral section is able to have a high level of flexibility in contribution management and open dialogue with partners to respond to changes in the context and to allow for learning from both success and failure: There is strong evidence that Sida's bilateral section maintains a high degree of flexibility in contribution management and fosters open dialogue with partners, which supports timely adaptation and learning:

- Sida was consistently described by partners as flexible and supportive, particularly when projects faced implementation challenges due to conflict. Mercy Corps noted that Sida allowed scope, location, and activity changes mid-programme, and that Sida staff were open to discussing and approving revisions when contextual shifts occurred.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ KII with downstream partner.

¹¹¹ KII with implementing partner.

¹¹² KII with implementing partner (field office).

¹¹³ KII with implementing partner.

¹¹⁴ KII with implementing partner.

¹¹⁵ KII with implementing partner.

- EngenderHealth described Sida as one of the most adaptable donors, highlighting a constructive relationship that encouraged honest dialogue about implementation barriers. When project sites became inaccessible or community dynamics shifted, Sida was willing to reallocate activities or approve design changes without bureaucratic delay.¹¹⁶
- Sida staff actively encouraged discussion of what was not working as well as what was successful. Life & Peace Institute and UNFPA reported that Sida welcomed learning discussions during monitoring visits and review meetings, which helped identify unintended consequences or risks early.¹¹⁷
- Sida's adaptive management approach was evident in its acceptance of reprogramming requests, such as UNICEF's shift from development-focused to humanitarian programming in conflict-affected areas. This supported relevance and responsiveness while reducing operational delays.¹¹⁸
- The flexibility extended to financial management as well. Partners such as OHCHR noted that Sida facilitated budget reallocations within contributions, enabling timely responses to security threats, including relocation of staff and activities.¹¹⁹
- Sida's openness was also seen in its support for participatory and iterative learning processes. For example, Mercy Corps used quarterly reviews to surface lessons and refine targeting strategies, with Sida staff actively engaging in these learning cycles.¹²⁰

1.3.4 Evidence on long-term outcomes and assumptions

Outcomes from contributions with primary focus on conflict prevention/response and/or peacebuilding:

Strengthened prevention, management and resolution of conflicts by peaceful means: Projects supported by Sida have contributed to peaceful conflict resolution at local levels by enhancing the capacity of civil society actors, building inclusive local peace structures, and facilitating inter-community dialogue. These interventions have resulted in tangible outcomes, including reduced violent incidents, increased local ownership of conflict resolution processes, and improved relationships between conflicting groups.

Life & Peace Institute (LPI)-led project:

- The Life & Peace Institute (LPI) contributed to reducing youth violence and improving community cohesion in Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz. Under project 15544, LPI supported inclusive dialogue and joint livelihood initiatives in conflict-affected areas. Community members, including youth, elders, women,

¹¹⁶ KII with implementing partner.

¹¹⁷ KIIs with implementing partners.

¹¹⁸ KII with implementing partner (field office).

¹¹⁹ KII with implementing partner.

¹²⁰ KII with implementing partner.

and local authorities, engaged in structured dialogue processes that led to tangible reconciliation outcomes. In Benishangul-Gumuz, for example, participants reported a significant drop in violent incidents and improvements in relationships between historically divided ethnic groups.¹²¹

- In Dire Dawa, the EDI project implemented under LPI's programme significantly improved social cohesion and prevented violent conflict across five kebeles. Structured inter- and intra-group dialogues restored relations between Oromo and Somali youth groups and between segregated villages. Youths who had previously disrupted religious ceremonies began volunteering during interfaith events, while violent football rivalries were transformed into peaceful cooperation following community-drafted codes of conduct. Women Peace Ambassadors gained community trust and actively mediated local tensions, including domestic and neighbourhood disputes.¹²²
- LPI's partnership with the Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Council also helped local CSOs become more involved in peacebuilding. Through the Peacebuilding Resource Hub and mentoring of local organisations, the project improved the capacity of CSOs to mediate conflict and support reconciliation processes.¹²³

PMU-led Project (16345):

- Project 16345, led by PMU, successfully strengthened community-based peace infrastructure in conflict-prone areas. With support from Sida and implemented by partners such as Norwegian Church Aid and the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia, the project established Peace Taskforces across multiple communities. These taskforces were trained in conflict analysis, early warning, and non-violent conflict resolution, and played a key role in addressing inter-group tensions. According to field visit interviews, the Peace Taskforces facilitated dialogue during local disputes, including land and resource-related conflicts, and were credited with preventing escalation into violence.
 - In one example, Peace Taskforce members intervened to resolve a violent dispute between two youth groups in a market area. The taskforce organised a facilitated dialogue, which resulted in both groups publicly declaring peace and agreeing to regular meetings.¹²⁴
 - In another instance, taskforce members responded to a brewing conflict between Muslim and Christian residents over access to land for religious gatherings. Through mediation involving elders from both groups, they were able to de-escalate tensions and broker a shared use agreement.¹²⁵

¹²¹ KII with implementing partner.

¹²² KII with implementing partner.

¹²³ KII with Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Council (beneficiary).

¹²⁴ Focus groups with Peace Taskforce Members (beneficiaries).

¹²⁵ Focus groups with Peace Taskforce Members (beneficiaries).

- Taskforce members also addressed intra-faith conflicts, such as disputes between factions of the same religious group over leadership and doctrinal issues. For example, they resolved a conflict between competing congregations that had previously led to physical confrontations, by facilitating meetings and building consensus on joint worship arrangements.¹²⁶
- Downstream partners under PMU reported increased inter-faith cooperation as a result of joint peacebuilding activities. The Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia facilitated community dialogues between religious groups, while also engaging local government authorities. As a result, there was greater willingness among different denominations and sects to participate in joint peace efforts, which previously would not have occurred due to mistrust and polarisation.¹²⁷
- Norwegian Church Aid also worked through faith-based structures to mediate local tensions and promote peace education. Youth-focused peace education sessions and participatory theatre helped foster trust among young people from diverse backgrounds, which contributed to reduced incidents of inter-group violence in targeted communities.¹²⁸
- Sida-supported peacebuilding efforts were seen as locally owned and culturally embedded. For example, the Peace Taskforces under PMU's leadership often worked with elders and local councils to issue community declarations against violence and support local by-laws promoting tolerance and dialogue. These bottom-up approaches aligned with traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, strengthening their acceptance and sustainability.¹²⁹

Strengthened conditions for sustainable management and use of natural resources and ecosystems (thereby weakening them as dividers), supporting reconciliation at grass-roots level: This long-term outcome is well evidenced, supported primarily by projects whose core objective was supporting grassroots reconciliation related to management and use of natural resources (i.e. contributions for whom conflict prevention and peacebuilding were the primary aim):

- In the Farm Africa project, the implementing partner relocated planned activities from insecure areas such as Ziway Dugda to more stable locations, and adjusted activities based on evolving risks and feedback from the ground. These adaptive measures enabled the resolution of longstanding resource-based conflicts between park authorities and surrounding communities in Abijata-Shalla and Senkelle. Park staff were initially resistant to community collaboration, but eventually endorsed joint management as tensions subsided. Over 2,850 hectares of degraded land were rehabilitated and are now jointly managed by six community cooperatives representing different ethnic and social groups, including returnees and internally displaced people. These cooperatives also engaged in rotational

¹²⁶ Focus groups with Peace Taskforce Members (beneficiaries).

¹²⁷ KII with downstream partner.

¹²⁸ KII with downstream partner.

¹²⁹ Focus groups with Peace Taskforce Members (beneficiaries).

savings and income-generating activities such as honey production and eco-tourism. One cooperative, chaired by a woman refugee, earned 1.5 million birr in income, demonstrating the project's success in linking peacebuilding to sustainable livelihoods and increasing community ownership over natural resource protection.

- Strategic adaptations by Farm Africa led to increased trust and reduced grievances between stakeholders. For example, changes in seed sourcing to match local preferences enhanced community satisfaction, while seasonal adjustments to activity timelines minimised disruption to traditional farming practices. Conflict resolution training and community dialogue platforms contributed to more peaceful resolution of disputes, with elders and youth actively participating in conflict resolution committees. These structures helped de-escalate tensions before they became entrenched, reducing inter-group confrontations and strengthening perceptions of fairness.
- In the HoAREC-supported Jama Urgi project, conflict-sensitive approaches contributed to greater cooperation between previously adversarial kebeles. Participatory mapping and inclusive land demarcation created a shared sense of ownership over forest boundaries, reducing mistrust. While a dispute between Korebeti and Alegarima escalated to litigation, project-facilitated mediation efforts delayed confrontation and fostered a climate for future cooperation. By promoting joint stewardship of forest resources, the project contributed to a shift away from zero-sum perceptions of land control, with elders and officials acknowledging reduced hostility and increased collaboration.¹³⁰
- Environmental rehabilitation underpinned social cohesion. In Jama Urgi, reforestation and flood control initiatives directly benefited both upstream and downstream communities, which led to improved inter-kebele relations. By addressing shared environmental vulnerabilities, the project incentivised collective action and helped reduce resentment among groups that previously blamed each other for environmental degradation. Shared maintenance responsibilities and coordinated planning reduced inter-community tensions, while targeted livelihood support reduced pressures on natural resources and provided tangible benefits to conflict-affected households, especially women and youth.¹³¹

Outcomes from contributions whose primary focus is not conflict prevention/response and/or peacebuilding:

Reduced harmful practices and changed discriminatory social and gender norms to reduce gender-based violence, including circumcision of women and girls, and conflict-related sexual violence: While long-term behavioural and attitudinal change remains a work in progress, projects demonstrated measurable intermediate

¹³⁰ KII with implementing partner.

¹³¹ KII with implementing partner.

outcomes. Again, results are not necessarily directly related to conflict sensitivity inasmuch as this outcome was a central focus of the projects in question:

- In the EngenderHealth project, the establishment of Women’s Resource Centres led to increased reporting and service uptake among survivors of GBV. These centres provided a safe, stigma-free environment where clients could access legal, medical, and psychosocial support. As a result, more survivors felt empowered to seek help and engage with formal services, reducing the prevalence of underreporting and fostering trust in the GBV response system.¹³²
- Community dialogues and male engagement initiatives facilitated by EngenderHealth led to documented shifts in community attitudes. Male participants expressed increased support for women’s leadership and denounced violence, and traditional and religious leaders began publicly opposing FGM/C and child marriage. These changes reflect a growing acceptance of alternative social norms that reject GBV.¹³³
- UNFPA-supported services during conflict—delivered through trusted, women-led local NGOs—enabled sustained access to GBV and SRH care in hard-to-reach areas. This approach increased visibility and normalised discussions around GBV, contributing to greater openness among women and girls to seek care and challenge harmful norms. Community attitudes began to shift, with more individuals engaging in conversations about rights and protection.¹³⁴
- UNFPA’s outreach efforts, including mobile clinics and peer group sessions, reached young men and women with peace and GBV prevention messaging. These activities reduced acceptance of violence and reinforced non-violent masculinities, with increased youth participation in peacebuilding and education forums as a result.¹³⁵
- Both projects contributed to the emergence of grassroots leadership in GBV prevention. Trained women and adolescent girls took on visible community roles, including running watch groups and leading sensitisation efforts. This led to increased community ownership of prevention initiatives and broader dissemination of gender-equitable messages.¹³⁶
- Among women with disabilities in Hawassa supported by UNFPA, peer groups and tea/coffee sessions provided safe forums for survivors to share experiences, build solidarity, and access training on conflict resolution, SRHR, and life skills. Participants reported improved knowledge of their rights, increased service use (e.g. family planning, GBV response), and the confidence to intervene in community disputes. One woman described how training empowered her to take

¹³² KII with implementing partner.

¹³³ KII with implementing partner.

¹³⁴ KII with implementing partner.

¹³⁵ KII with implementing partner.

¹³⁶ KII with implementing partner.

collective action to resolve an accessibility-related conflict involving a disabled child, ultimately resulting in government-led infrastructural changes.¹³⁷

Reduced risk for a shrinking space for CSOs to prevent, monitor and report on human rights abuses and atrocities: Despite an increasingly restrictive operating environment, one project in the evaluation sample – led by OHCHR – contributed to preserving space for civil society organisations (CSOs) and human rights defenders to document, monitor, and report on abuses. Note that these findings are less well triangulated than other outcome areas due to limited engagement with OHCHR stakeholders in the field during the evaluation:

- Early warning networks of CSOs established and sustained: OHCHR's country programme built a robust early warning system by training a network of local CSOs and community-based organisations in conflict zones. These groups received regular training in human rights monitoring, documentation, and advocacy. Over time, these organisations improved the quality of their reporting, contributing verified data on rights violations—including disaggregated casualty figures—which fed into OHCHR's national and international documentation and advocacy efforts.¹³⁸
- Ongoing engagement and protection of rights defenders: Quarterly meetings and refresher trainings maintained engagement despite risks, helping CSOs navigate the political context and continue their work safely. The system enabled timely early warning reporting and served as a mechanism for community-based monitoring of incidents, particularly during periods of intense conflict and civilian displacement.¹³⁹
- Use of structured partnerships and legal networks to reinforce accountability: OHCHR partnered with law schools and legal aid clinics (e.g. Bahir Dar and Gondar universities) to support legal representation for arbitrarily detained individuals, many of whom were human rights defenders or civil society actors. Their involvement led to specific cases being reviewed in court, preventing indefinite detention without charge and supporting procedural justice.¹⁴⁰
- Parliamentary engagement built political awareness: OHCHR conducted capacity-building sessions for regional parliamentarians, increasing understanding of human rights and accountability among legislative actors. This strengthened the institutional legitimacy of CSO work and created a buffer against government efforts to silence dissenting voices. The programme's engagement was credited with enabling later advocacy efforts on mass arrests of judges and civil society actors.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ KII with beneficiary (service user).

¹³⁸ KII with implementing partner.

¹³⁹ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁴⁰ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁴¹ KII with implementing partner.

Improved access to productive employment and decent work: Several projects in the evaluation sample contributed to enhanced access to employment, especially for women, youth, and other marginalised groups. These contributions were achieved by addressing barriers to labour market participation and tailoring support to the needs of vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas. These results were not only a reflection of effective economic programming but also of deliberate efforts to reduce exclusion, mitigate social tensions, and navigate sensitivities around resource access and employment priorities:

- Expanded access to wage employment through systemic labour market interventions: Under the Li-Way programme, the labour systems component (implemented by Mercy Corps) contributed to the creation of employment opportunities by strengthening labour exchange infrastructure, supporting digital and physical job matching platforms, and offering services to disadvantaged groups such as internally displaced persons (IDPs) and youth. A conflict-sensitive approach informed the selection of intervention sites and target groups to avoid exacerbating resource tensions. For example, platforms were adapted to include local language options and support access to documentation to prevent exclusion of rural migrants and IDPs from job opportunities.¹⁴²
- Tailored vocational training and placement for youth in conflict-affected areas: As a downstream partner in the Li-Way programme, Opportunities Industrialization Centers Ethiopia (OIC-E) implemented technical and vocational training for youth and women in low-income and conflict-affected neighbourhoods, targeting those with low educational attainment and limited prior work experience. The training was closely aligned with labour market demands, and many beneficiaries were placed in formal employment or supported to start small businesses. One participant who had previously been unemployed reported that she was able to find a job with an IT services company after completing OIC-E's training in basic ICT skills.¹⁴³
- Improved childcare access to support women's participation in the workforce: The programme co-financed the initial costs of childcare facilities within public institutions, enabling women—especially those from poor households—to participate in the labour market. The design explicitly considered the exclusion risks posed by limited access to childcare and responded to local government capacity gaps by providing short-term funding for trained caregivers. The intervention's visibility encouraged government investment, resulting in wider adoption of childcare provision policies.¹⁴⁴
- Increased self-employment opportunities through sustainable natural resource management: In the FARM Africa project, interventions around forest-based livelihoods (e.g. beekeeping, forest coffee production) led to increased and more

¹⁴² KII with implementing partner.

¹⁴³ KII with downstream partner.

¹⁴⁴ KII with implementing partner.

diversified incomes. Project participants reported improved employment outcomes due to market linkages and value-addition training. By building local forest cooperatives' capacity to manage resources sustainably and equitably, the project helped mitigate local tensions over forest use while creating viable income streams.¹⁴⁵

- Equitable benefit-sharing from natural resource use supported job creation: The HoAREC project enabled job creation in ecotourism, sustainable charcoal, and climate-resilient agricultural practices in biosphere reserves. These activities were designed to benefit multiple ethnic and social groups and were paired with consensus-building processes that reduced conflict over land and resource access. Community feedback mechanisms ensured that programme benefits were distributed transparently and equitably.¹⁴⁶

Assumptions:

The government continues to work in sectors supported by Sida funded projects e.g. environment, implementing recommendations of the joint OHCHR/EHRC Human Rights Commission, implementing National Transitional Justice Policy, recovery and reconstruction in conflict areas: Due to time constraints on data collection, evaluation evidence on the work of national authorities in Sida-supported sectors is fairly limited. However, there is evidence that Sida-supported contributions often complement government priorities and sometimes influence local practice:

- Environment and natural resource management: Projects such as FARM Africa and HoAREC report constructive engagement with government counterparts, including woreda and regional environmental authorities. These interactions reportedly led to increased local buy-in and in some cases, formal adoption of environmental management plans. For example, HoAREC worked with zonal and regional governments to secure formal support for biosphere reserve activities.¹⁴⁷
- Support to transitional justice and human rights implementation: The OHCHR project contributed to awareness-raising and capacity building around transitional justice, but interviews did not provide strong evidence of government follow-through on the OHCHR/EHRC recommendations or on implementation of the National Transitional Justice Policy. Some key informants highlighted ongoing challenges in maintaining government commitment in politically sensitive areas.¹⁴⁸
- Recovery and reconstruction in conflict areas: Some implementing partners, such as UNFPA and Save the Children, report that regional government actors played key roles in co-delivering services in conflict-affected areas. However, the

¹⁴⁵ KII with downstream partner.

¹⁴⁶ KII with downstream partner.

¹⁴⁷ KII with downstream partner.

¹⁴⁸ KII with implementing partner.

evidence mostly relates to project-specific collaboration rather than systematic government uptake or replication of recovery approaches.¹⁴⁹

Political commitment to peacebuilding, dialogue, and coordination: Evidence from the evaluation sample provides only limited insight into national-level political willingness to uphold the cessation of hostilities, address ongoing conflicts in Amhara and Oromia, or advance coordination across key peace and justice processes. Most interviews focused on the local or regional levels and offer little visibility into government actions at the national level:

- Indirect engagement in conflict mitigation: OHCHR noted that early warning information from civil society was used by government media to de-escalate tensions during Christian-Muslim clashes in Gondar. Additionally, police conduct during Fano protests reportedly improved following targeted training on proportional use of force.¹⁵⁰
- Support for national dialogue and peace processes: The Life and Peace Institute supported the preparatory phase of the National Dialogue by facilitating inclusive consultations involving civil society and academic actors. They worked with the Ethiopian Council of Civil Society Organisations and relevant ministries to build legitimacy for the process.¹⁵¹ However, other sources, such as OHCHR, referenced the National Dialogue only in relation to conflict dynamics, without offering assessments of its legitimacy.¹⁵²
- Challenges to civil society space and inclusion: While some partners reported improved CSO-government collaboration at local levels, broader civic space remains constrained. Interviews indicate ongoing sensitivity around human rights advocacy, with unclear prospects for CSO engagement in transitional justice and demobilisation processes at scale (11223 Transcript KII Implementing Partner.docx). For example, although EngenderHealth collaborated with youth- and women-led CSOs to support transitional justice initiatives such as a justice bench in Amhara, it is unclear how this connects to national processes.¹⁵³
- Limited evidence of coordinated implementation: There is no explicit evidence of coordination between national-level processes such as the National Dialogue, Transitional Justice, and the National Demobilization and Rehabilitation Programme. While UNFPA referenced coordination with government and other stakeholders for service delivery, this was not explicitly linked to the three national processes.¹⁵⁴
- Local efforts in peacebuilding and conflict prevention: Projects like those implemented by LPI and EngenderHealth contribute to local peacebuilding and

¹⁴⁹ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁵⁰ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁵¹ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁵² KII with implementing partner.

¹⁵³ Focus group with government stakeholders.

¹⁵⁴ KII with downstream partner.

community reconciliation, with indirect contributions to national stability. However, these efforts do not provide sufficient evidence of political willingness to resolve broader national conflicts. LPI reported a lack of interest in peacebuilding among local government officials, including peace and security offices and community police.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, EngenderHealth noted that lawlessness and a weakened justice system in Amhara were significant challenges, with no indication of concerted government action to address them.¹⁵⁶

1.3.5 Evidence on impact

Sweden's development cooperation in Ethiopia has prevented or mitigated negative impacts and maximised positive impacts by contributing to a peaceful and inclusive society

Evidence of preventing or mitigating negative impacts: Across the contributions reviewed, Sida staff and implementers (including downstream implementers) demonstrated awareness of potential negative impacts of their work and were able to point to related mitigation strategies (e.g. managing community expectations around speed of results from early warning systems, need for inclusive selection of participants in dialogue processes etc.). In most cases, no evidence was identified that these risks had come to fruition. In select instances, particularly for projects relating to natural resource management, there was some evidence that territorial disputes may have flared up subsequent to project interventions. This was attributed in part to the relatively small scale of project areas compared to the total size of disputed areas. Nevertheless, there is significant evidence of steps taken to mitigate negative impacts:

- *Avoidance of do no harm risks in volatile contexts:* Across several contributions, Sida and partners adjusted targeting strategies, relocated activities, or altered implementation modalities which may have avoided exacerbating conflict. For instance:
 - **UNICEF** modified cash assistance targeting to avoid tensions between IDPs and host communities and verified inclusion fairness through local actors during access restrictions.
 - **Farm Africa** and **EngenderHealth** moved operations out of insecure areas and adjusted programming (e.g., seed sourcing, mental health integration) to avoid stoking grievances.
 - **Save the Children** altered distributions during shortages to reduce perceptions of exclusion and local tensions.
- *Strengthened resilience in communities at risk of conflict escalation:* Conflict-sensitive implementation (e.g., by UNFPA, Farm Africa, HoAREC) sought to address key dividers such as marginalisation, exclusion, and environmental

¹⁵⁵ KII with implementing partner.

¹⁵⁶ KII with implementing partner.

degradation. These efforts may have contributed to more stable relationships between groups and avoided escalating latent tensions, as seen in:

- Joint cooperative management of natural resources across ethnic and social lines.
- Community-level peace dialogues and complaint mechanisms to surface and defuse conflict early.
- *Flexible and adaptive contribution management reduced disruption risks:* Sida demonstrated flexibility in managing implementation during periods of insecurity, allowing partners to pause, reprogramme, or relocate activities quickly. This appears to have prevented exposure of staff and communities to violence and enabled continuity of essential services, such as GBV and SRH support during the Northern Ethiopia conflict.
- Evidence of maximising positive impacts on peace and inclusion:
- *Support to locally led peace infrastructure:* Contributions by **PMU, Life & Peace Institute**, and others created or strengthened local peace structures such as taskforces, interfaith platforms, and reconciliation committees. These are reported to have:
 - Resolved or de-escalated tensions related to land, religious practices, or youth violence.
 - Fostered inter-group trust and long-term collaboration.
 - Enhanced local ownership and sustainability of peace efforts, using culturally embedded mechanisms like community declarations.
- *Increased social cohesion and inclusion through economic and environmental programming:*

Sida's support contributed to more inclusive economic development and environmental peacebuilding:

 - Joint environmental resource management was reported to have reduced long-standing inter-group disputes (Farm Africa, HoAREC).
 - Income-generating activities across community cooperatives provided alternatives to conflict-linked coping strategies and improved inter-communal relations.
 - The Li-Way programme reduced exclusion from employment by adapting platforms and services for IDPs, women, and people with disabilities, contributing to the creation of a more inclusive labour system.
- *Empowered marginalised groups to lead change for peace and inclusion:*

Sida-supported interventions promoted active participation of women, youth, and people with disabilities in conflict prevention and community development. For example:

 - Women-led peer groups under **UNFPA** built collective agency to advocate for their rights and intervene in disputes.
 - Youth dialogues under **LPI** aimed to support transition of rivalries into cooperation, with women peace ambassadors mediating domestic and neighbourhood conflicts.
 - Community-based accountability mechanisms are reported to have enhanced trust in service delivery and defused resentment over perceived bias.

1.3.6 Caveats and considerations:

- *Attribution vs. contribution:* These changes cannot be solely attributed to Sweden's development cooperation. They reflect Sida's contributions in concert with national and local actors, other donors, and endogenous processes.
- *Geographic and strategic concentration:* The strongest evidence of impact relates to local-level changes, particularly in areas where peacebuilding or conflict sensitivity was an explicit focus. There is less evidence of influence on national-level peace processes or systemic inclusion outcomes.
- *Measurement limitations:* Impact-level changes are not consistently captured in results frameworks or evaluations. While qualitative and partner-reported evidence is strong, there are gaps in formal measurement of how interventions influence peaceful and inclusive societal change over time.
- *Challenges in aggregating results to a strategic level:* While it is difficult to aggregate diverse program outcomes into a clear, country-level picture of peace and inclusion, there is some evidence of a coherent approach – particularly in how Sida and partners adapted programming in response to the evolving conflict context.

1.4 RESPONSES TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1.4.1 EQ 1: To what extent did/does the Ethiopia strategy respond to peace and conflict dynamics in the context and continue to do so if circumstances change?

Rubric – Level of adaptation: High

Rubric – Strength of evidence: Good

The Ethiopia strategy has demonstrated a strong and continuously updated understanding of the country's complex and evolving peace and conflict dynamics. Over the two strategy periods, Embassy staff have taken deliberate and sustained steps to understand the multifaceted nature of conflict in Ethiopia, drawing on internal conflict analyses (including two MDPAs and a 2022 conflict analysis), external intelligence (such as OCHA reports and partner briefings), and continuous collaboration between the Embassy's political and bilateral sections.

This conflict understanding has informed the operationalisation of the strategy, the composition of the portfolio, and day-to-day contribution management. The conflict perspective has been integrated across all four strategic objectives, with particular emphasis under the objective of Peaceful and Inclusive Societies. Embassy staff have used flexible and adaptive management practices to respond to contextual changes, including conflict-related access constraints and security threats. Contributions have been reprogrammed in response to emerging tensions, partner capacity, or risks of exacerbating conflict, for example, the relocation of activities in Farm Africa and OHCHR contributions, and the shift from development to humanitarian assistance in the UNICEF programme.

The strategy has also been supported by robust internal systems and incentives for learning. Conflict sensitivity is a standing requirement in contribution appraisals, and Embassy and Sida staff receive guidance and training through Sida HQ and its Helpdesk. Staff have promoted the integration of conflict perspectives through dialogue with partners, strategic guidance during reviews, and participatory monitoring visits. This has helped ensure that strategy implementation remains conflict-aware, even in the face of severe operational constraints.

However, challenges remain. While conflict sensitivity is embedded in strategic thinking and contribution management, it is not consistently reflected in results frameworks or formal monitoring systems, limiting systematic assessment and learning. There is also uneven emphasis on conflict sensitivity in dialogue with partners over time, and evidence of adaptation at the strategy level—while present—is concentrated in certain contributions rather than across the full portfolio.

1.4.2 EQ 2: To what extent is the integration of conflict sensitivity in the implementation of the strategies contributing to outcomes? And if so/not, why?¹⁵⁷

Rubric – Significance of change: High

Rubric – Strength of evidence: Medium

There is clear evidence that the integration of conflict sensitivity in the implementation of the Ethiopia strategy has contributed to positive outcomes at the project, portfolio, and, in some cases, strategic objective levels. Embassy staff and implementing partners have gone beyond formal compliance to embed conflict sensitivity into programme design, management, and adaptation processes. This integration has supported more inclusive and context-aware interventions, strengthened local ownership, and mitigated risks of doing harm.

Partners have analysed and adapted to the two-way interaction between their interventions and local conflict dynamics. Examples include inclusive targeting to reduce tension between host communities and IDPs (UNICEF), conflict-sensitive livelihood and land use approaches (Farm Africa, HoAREC), and interfaith and youth peacebuilding efforts (Life & Peace Institute, PMU). These adaptations have often been driven by real-time contextual analysis and learning, supported by open dialogue and flexible contribution management by Sida staff.

In several cases, these efforts have helped reduce local tensions, improve social cohesion, and support reconciliation at community level. For instance, joint resource management structures have contributed to decreased conflict over natural resources, and local peace taskforces have prevented the escalation of inter-group violence.

¹⁵⁷ Independent evaluation reports reviewed include: Annex 12. Summarised Summative Evaluation Report of West Arsi Project; Annex 4 Peace Programme Evaluation Report 2023-01-27 (003); Annex 9. Final Evaluation Report - SD Project; Eth Summative Evaluation - Final Report; Evaluation of Country Programme Support to UNFPA Unicef and UN Women_Niras 2022_Final report; Evaluation-OHCHR-Programme-Ethiopia-with Mgmt Response.

Contributions have also supported shifts in discriminatory norms through GBV prevention work, and increased access to livelihoods in conflict-affected areas in ways that deliberately avoid exacerbating inequality or exclusion.

However, while conflict sensitivity has clearly influenced many of the positive changes observed, the extent to which it can be directly linked to broader strategic outcomes is harder to assess. This is in part due to the absence of conflict sensitivity indicators in results frameworks and limited systematic reporting on how conflict dynamics have influenced outcomes over time. As a result, learning from implementation is often anecdotal or contribution-specific, with less evidence of consistent aggregation and reflection at the strategy level.

1.4.3 EQ 3: What is the overall impact of the integration of conflict sensitivity by Sida, Embassies of Sweden, and Sida's cooperation partners? What has Sida contributed to?

Rubric – Significance of change: Medium to moderately high (in certain thematic areas)

Rubric – Contribution to impact: Medium (with pockets of higher contribution where Sida's role was catalytic)

Rubric - Strength of evidence: Medium

Sida has embedding conflict sensitivity across its portfolio, supporting partners to design and deliver more context-responsive, inclusive, and conflict-aware interventions. The overall impact of this integration has been to improve the relevance and resilience of development cooperation in a highly dynamic and conflict-affected environment – preventing harm, strengthening local cohesion, and enabling inclusive access to essential services and livelihood opportunities.

The integration of conflict sensitivity has helped ensure that Sida-supported interventions are better adapted to the realities of conflict on the ground. This has included tailoring programme approaches to local power dynamics, ethnic tensions, and patterns of displacement; building conflict resolution capacity at the community level; and empowering women, youth, and marginalised groups to participate in peacebuilding and inclusive development processes. Through its bilateral and humanitarian contributions, Sida has enabled community-led conflict resolution, promoted inter-group collaboration over shared resources, and ensured that assistance reaches those most affected by violence and exclusion.

Sida's distinctive contribution lies in its sustained commitment to conflict sensitivity as a strategic and operational priority. This has been reflected in Sida's support to partner capacity development, adaptive contribution management, and the consistent use of flexible instruments that enable real-time adjustments in response to changing conditions. Sida and the Embassy have also worked to mainstream conflict sensitivity through appraisal processes, monitoring visits, and dialogue with partners, even in contexts of insecurity, displacement, and restricted access.

The result has been a portfolio of interventions that not only avoid exacerbating conflict, but also actively contribute to peace and inclusion, particularly at the local level. While not all contributions explicitly target peacebuilding outcomes, the

widespread integration of conflict sensitivity has increased the conflict-responsiveness of the strategy as a whole. The cumulative effect is visible in greater local trust, reduced tensions in target communities, and improved pathways for inclusive development in conflict-affected settings.

However, gaps remain in the measurement and aggregation of these impacts. The absence of conflict sensitivity indicators and outcome tracking in results frameworks limits the ability to assess impact systematically across the portfolio. To fully capture the value of Sida's contribution, future efforts could further strengthen evidence systems and create more structured opportunities for cross-programme learning.

1.5 SAMPLED CONTRIBUTIONS

Table 2 includes the sampled contributions for the case study.

Table 2. Sampled contributions for Ethiopia

Contribution nr.	Title of the contribution	Partner	Strategic areas	Conflict Prevention Marker	Locations of implementation	Comment re selection
Sweden's development cooperation strategy 2022-2026 for Ethiopia through Sida						
15731	Economic Recovery for Conflict Affected People - Exploring Innovative Financing	Mercy Corps/DRC/First Consults	areas #2, #3 and #4	2	Tigray (Mekelle), Afar (Abaala), Amhara (Weldiya)	Livelihoods, resilience-building, Integrated conflict perspective
16345	Peaceful and resilient communities in Ethiopia 2023-2026	PMU	area #2 and #4	2	conflict-affected locations in Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella, Oromia, Somali, ex-SNNP and Tigray regions	Peace- and resilience-building, integrated conflict perspective
15544 –	Ethiopia Programme 2023 to 2026 - Sowing the Seeds of Peace in Ethiopia	Life and Peace Institute	area #4	2	Sidama, Amhara, ex-SNNP, Oromia	Peacebuilding, integrated conflict perspective
15581 –	2023-2026: Nature-Based Solutions for Sustainable Development	Farm Africa	areas #2 and #3	1	Somali: Dollo-Ado, Bokolmaya, Dolobay	Livelihoods, Resilience-building, Integrated conflict perspective
12629	Country programme 2021-2025	UNFPA	areas #1 and #4	0	Federal, including Tigray and Somali	SRHR, SGBV
16460	SRHR 2023-2028	EngenderHealth	areas #1 and #4	0	Addis Ababa, Amhara, Somali	SRHR, SGBV
Sweden's development cooperation strategy 2016-2020/2021 for Ethiopia through Sida						
10288	2016-2021: Gambella integrated land development plan (phase I & II)	HoAREC	area #2	1	Gambella	Housing, Land and Properties, peacebuilding, integrated conflict perspective
10382	2017-2022, The Ethiopia Program	Life and Peace Institute	area #1	2	Sidama, Amhara, SNNP, Oromia	Peacebuilding, integrated conflict perspective
10698	Social protection 2017-2023	UNICEF	area #3	0	Amhara, Addis Ababa, Oromia	Resilience-building
13519	Peace building in Ethiopia	Church of Sweden	area #1	2	Sidama, Amhara, ex-SNNP, Oromia	Peacebuilding, integrated conflict perspective
11223	Country programme 2019-2023	OHCHR	area #1	1	Federal	Protection of IHL, HR, refugee/IDP-rights
14180	Advancing Democracy & Accountability Ensure Children's Rights in Ethiopia 2020-2024	Save the Children	area #1	0	Sidama, Addis Ababa, Amhara, Tigray, Oromia	Children in armed conflicts, child protection

2 Iraq

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings from the Iraq case study, conducted as part of the central evaluation of Sida's work with conflict sensitivity. The case study covers two strategy periods for the Swedish strategy for Iraq: 2017-2021 and 2022-2026¹⁵⁸.

A theory-based approach was used as an overarching analytical framework for the evaluation, and for the case study. The Theory of Change (ToC) presents a pathway for how conflict sensitivity related change is theorised to occur under the strategy for Iraq. It includes several outcome levels (short-term, medium-term, long-term outcomes) and assumptions, risks and other actors/initiatives and factors. This was developed in cooperation with the Iraq unit prior to data collection for this evaluation. The analysis of the empirical evidence gathered throughout the case study tested the narrative presented in the ToC and examines the causal links in the chain. The evidence on long-term outcomes and impacts draws on contribution analysis, which aims to assess Sida's contribution to long-term outcomes and impacts, was applied at the level of Sida contributions. Four rubrics were applied in the case studies. The main evaluation report presents this methodology in further detail.

This document is composed of four parts: 1) this introduction, 2) the original ToC, followed by 3) the evidence against this ToC, and 3) answers to the three evaluation questions. Section 2.5 presents the sampled contributions and the data collection for the case study. Annex 2.5 is an example for a contribution story for one of the contributions, which was produced internally within the evaluation team for the purpose of this evaluation.

2.1.1 Context

Iraq is in a post-conflict phase with a residual risk for newly emerging conflicts, according to the current Iraq strategy. The 2022-26 strategy for Iraq has three strategic objectives: 1) peaceful and inclusive societies, 2) Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality, and 3) environment, climate and sustainable development.¹⁵⁹ Noting that many efforts under objectives 1 and 2 are mutually fulfilling, and that 3 is a new objective for this strategy.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore activities under objective 3 may contribute to objective 1 by preventing/mitigating climate

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¹⁵⁹ Government Offices of Sweden, *Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Iraq 2022–2026*, 17 03 2022.

¹⁶⁰ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021.

crisis related conflict.¹⁶¹ The composition of Iraq's portfolio during the period 2022-2026 according to the conflict prevention policy marker is 17% of disbursements have conflict prevention marker 0, 36% marker 1 and 46% marker 2 in 2023.

Table 3: Indicators of levels of conflict and peacefulness

UCDP	WB-FCS (2023)	GPI	ACLED (2022-2023)
State-based armed conflict (IS)	Conflict	Very low	High

2.1.2 Geographic focus

The focus on the particularly vulnerable areas after IS has meant a focus on northern Iraq during the previous strategy period - Sida estimates that around 75% of disbursed funds since 2017 have been programmed north of Baghdad. The portfolio still has a heavy northern focus; however, it has been broadened in this strategy period to gain more national coverage and reaches southern Iraq particularly environment and climate contributions.¹⁶²

2.1.3 The role of Sida and Sweden

Sida is a small donor to Iraq, represents only 2.7% of development assistance. The four biggest donors are the USA, Germany, Japan, and the EU.¹⁶³ Overall, international development assistance, is outstripped by other sources of income to GDP – such as oil revenues, which lessens the influence of the diplomatic community. Given the security situation, Sida's role as a smaller donor, and the recent deterioration of relations between Iraq and Sweden in summer 2023, the majority of Sida funding is channelled via multilaterals and international NGOs and CSOs. Nevertheless, Sida positions itself as an important voice in the donor community and seeks to fulfils its objective, including in relation to conflict sensitivity, via dialogue in the donor funds and by taking leadership roles in donor steering committees.

It should be noted that during the evaluation period the Embassy/Unit was operating under abnormal circumstances due to the closure of the Embassy and relocation of posted Swedish staff to Stockholm in July 2023.

Partners also worked under abnormal conditions as the Swedish government decided in 2024 to phase out Sweden's strategy for development cooperation with Iraq, and Sida is ending operations by 30 June 2025. This could have affected their willingness to interact with the evaluation.

At the time of the evaluation, developments in Sweden, such as incidents of Qur'an burnings and similar events, may also have negatively affected the reputation of Sweden among Iraqi partners and target groups. This could have affected the

¹⁶¹ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2023. p.8.

¹⁶² Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021.

¹⁶³ Sida, *Strategirapport för Strategi för Sveriges utvecklingssamarbete med Irak 2022–2026 (år 1)*. p.8.

security of the partners, their willingness to engage with Sida, and it could also negatively affect partners' interaction with the target groups.

2.1.4 Data collection, fieldwork and analysis

Twelve contributions were sampled in consultation with the Sida Iraq team. A desk-based review of 88 documents was undertaken, covering strategy and contribution-level material, both internal and external. Data collection included a combination of remote interviews and fieldwork conducted in Iraq by two evaluation team members between March and April 2025 in eight locations in Baghdad, Erbil, Mosul, Basra, and al-Muthanna Governorates. In total, six Sida staff and twelve implementing partners were interviewed. Beneficiary engagement included 19 male and 11 female key informant interviews, in addition to two focus group discussions including 10 men and 5 women. Access constraints related to the early closure of Sweden's development cooperation limited the depth of data collection for five out of twelve.

In Iraq, ultimately only seven out of the 12 selected contributions were scrutinised in detail, as implementing partners were not collaborating for the other ones, which limited their evaluation to a review of (mainly) Sida project documents (appraisals, reports etc.). For those scrutinised in more detail, a desk review of project documents was conducted; interviews with Sida project staff were conducted, as well as with implementing partners (e.g. project managers or heads of organisations).

Assumptions about the project's logic and intended impact were discussed and largely confirmed by implementing partners, but also by final beneficiaries (such as journalists that benefitted from training and mentoring support). During the field work in Iraq, direct beneficiaries were also met and interviewed and provided tangible examples of how the project's activities were beneficial for them (e.g. owners of land that had been de-mined outside Mosul through the UNMAS project confirmed that the de-mining allowed them to resume agriculture and economic activities). Journalists trained through the project made published articles available, e.g. products of investigative journalism, and said those would not have been produced without the project. The evaluation also tried to consider the counterfactual, were possible. For example, multiple questions were asked about owners of land, which were not included in the project and whose land might still be de-mined. However, those questions led to meaningful answers. The security situation did not allow the evaluators to conduct any kind of independent travel or interviews.

For all projects reviewed, the evaluation also tried to corroborate the project's intended effects, especially the long-term outcomes and impact, through independent, external resources. For example, for the media support-related projects, the evaluation tried to find reports that would speak to the intended higher-level project effects, such as increased trust in media, strengthened resilience against disinformation. For the de-mining project, external information was thought about the potential intransparency of the governmental selection process of de-mining priorities. However, none of the external material found or available allowed for triangulation with the reporting of the project and its beneficiaries, as the breadth and depth was often different and could not be attributed to a project's activities (studies about trust in media, for example, are

too broad and unspecific to be linked in any meaningful way to a Sida media support project).

2.2 THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE INTEGRATION OF CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IN IRAQ

The Theory of Change is a simplified, yet comprehensive description of inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact of the integration of a conflict perspective in all work and financing, as well as the assumptions for those elements to be logically connected.

For the **INPUTS**, suitable organisational resources, human resources, training, and financial resources need to be in place at Sida HQ, and within partners. Specifically, for Iraq, this includes one Head of Unit and two senior programme managers that supports the integration of the conflict perspective in the Iraq unit (currently based in Stockholm due to security concerns).¹⁶⁴ The Unit has also requested support from the Helpdesk on Human Security and Humanitarian Assistance and the Peace and Security Policy Specialist with geographic responsibility for MENA at Sida HQ.

These inputs would then lead to and be converted into **OUTPUTS**. In the case of the Iraq strategy, this means that Unit staff recognise the importance of understanding the context and take steps to understand Iraqi context by analysing the peace and conflict dynamics and potential triggers on a regular basis. This would be evidenced by the development of a MDPA as part of the strategy operationalisation process, and separate conflict analysis(es), and an ongoing assessment by the unit of the peace and conflict dynamics. The conflict analysis should capture the conflict profile, identify potential dividers and connectors, and actor mapping.

According to the MDPA and conflict analyses commissioned by Sida during the strategy period, conflict is pervasive in society and occurs at all levels, the current overarching conflict drivers at the national level include¹⁶⁵:

- Muhasasa political system¹⁶⁶ and identity politics (including divides based on religious/sectarian,¹⁶⁷ anti/pro-Western, anti/pro-Iran, anti/pro-reform identities etc),

¹⁶⁴ In October 2024, the Iraq unit will be merged into the MENA unit due to a reorganisation of Sida. The term "Iraq unit" will be used in this document as it was the Iraq unit during the time period under evaluation and to avoid confusion.

¹⁶⁵ Sida, *Analysis of multidimensional poverty in Iraq*, 02 2017; Sida Helpdesk on Human Security and Humanitarian Assistance, *Desk-based conflict analysis of Iraq and recommendations for conflict-sensitivity in the Swedish Cooperation Strategy with Iraq (2017-2021)*, 02 2017; Sida, *Underlag för utarbetande av strategi för utvecklingssamarbete med Irak för perioden 2017-2021*, 31 03 2017; Sida, *Multidimensional Poverty Analysis Iraq 2020*, 09 09 2022; Sida Helpdesk on Human Security and Humanitarian Assistance, *Validation of Iraq systems analysis*, 25 11 2021; Sida, *Multidimensional Poverty Analysis Iraq 2022*, 13 04 2022.

¹⁶⁶ SIPRI Policy Paper 61, 2021. Reform within the System: Governance in Iraq and Lebanon; UNDP, Reimagining the Social Contract in Iraq, 2022.

¹⁶⁷ Sherko Kirmanj, "The Clash of Identities in Iraq" In *Iraq Between Occupations: Perspectives from 1920 to the Present*. 2010. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.p.52.

- Corruption,¹⁶⁸
- Fragmentation of formal security structures,
- Level of legitimacy of the state,¹⁶⁹
- Poverty¹⁷⁰ and unequal access to resources and economic opportunities,¹⁷¹
- International and regional influence.

Climate change already feeds into these drivers and stands to exacerbate them further.¹⁷²

Assumptions: All stakeholders demonstrate consistent leadership and sustained commitment to the integration of the conflict perspective and make organisational, financial and human resources available for implementation. Specifically, there needs to be sustained leadership at the Unit, through the Head of Unit and environment that incentivizes staff to integrate the perspective. We note that when this strategy was operationalised there was an assumption that there would be staff based in Iraq.

The **SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES** are that the Unit staff reflect on their understanding of the conflict and peace dynamics and the potential two-way interaction between the Swedish government's strategy objectives and the Iraqi context to tailor the strategy plan, and strategy operationalisation accordingly. The Iraqi unit integrates the conflict perspective in all of the three strategic objectives (*2 Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality, and 3 Environment, climate and sustainable development*) to prevent and mitigate unintentionally exacerbating tensions and conflict whilst also maximising opportunities to do-good. The team also work directly on the peace and conflict dynamics under objective *1 Peaceful and inclusive societies*.

Against this background:

- Unit staff takes steps to maintain an up to date understanding of and reflect on the understanding of the conflict dynamics, and what this means for strategy level decisions such as portfolio composition and geographic and sectoral distribution.
- The Unit and their partners have a common understanding of the conflict perspective.
- Unit staff assess and select partners that have the willingness and a high capacity to integrate the conflict perspective in the implementation of the contributions under the three strategic objectives.
- Partners analyse the two-way interaction between the contribution(s) and conflict and peace dynamics, considering potential positive and negative effects (including resource transfers).

¹⁶⁸ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2023. p.2.

¹⁶⁹ SIPRI Policy Paper 61, 2021. Reform within the System: Governance in Iraq and Lebanon; UNDP 2022 Reimagining the Social Contract in Iraq.

¹⁷⁰ According to Sida (2022) Multidimensional Poverty Analysis Iraq, extreme resource poverty has increased from 20 % in 2012 to nearly 30% in 2022.

¹⁷¹ Women face extensive challenges in relation to right to land and ownership. See NRC, 2020, Broken Home, Women's Housing Land and Property Rights in post-conflict Iraq.

¹⁷² Sida's Helpdesk for Environment and Climate Change, *Environmental and Climate Change Policy Brief Iraq*, 02 2017.

- Unit staffs' dialogue with partners emphasises the conflict perspective, including noting any concerns regarding partners' capacity to integrate the conflict perspective in the risk register and taking these concerns up in an open dialogue.
- Unit staff monitor and evaluate the integration of the conflict perspective, at strategy level, and at contribution level.
- Unit staff correctly use and embed the conflict prevention policy marker in the Sida strategy and contribution cycles. The conflict prevention policy marker is used as a tool to monitor the integration of the perspective.

Assumptions

- The Unit and partners have sufficient resources, in terms of financial and human resources, to integrate the conflict perspective as is relevant to their work.
- Unit staff make use of the peace and conflict toolbox, and other learning resources, such as the e-learning modules to support their work as relevant.
- Unit staff make use of the Helpdesk on Human Security and Humanitarian Assistance as needed.
- Unit staff request advice from the Peace and Human Security policy advisors as needed.
- Unit staff are incentivised and held accountable for the integration of the conflict perspective as is relevant.
- Partners are willing, able, and have access to appropriate guidelines to integrate the conflict perspective.
- Guidelines are applied and meaningfully tailored to the Iraqi context.

This would then lead to and be converted into **MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES at the level of partners**, meaning that:

- Partners continuously adapt implementation of contributions to prevent/minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts based on their ongoing understanding of the conflict dynamics.
- Sida Iraq Unit staff follow up on any conflict perspective capacity issues identified in the appraisal, through dialogue with partners.
- Embassy staff and partners take steps to learn from monitoring and evaluation of the integration of the conflict perspective with learning taking place both downstream (flowing from strategy to contribution level) and upstream (flowing from contribution to strategy level) as is relevant to their work.
- The Embassy adapts the strategy plan and its implementation in response to positive and negative changes in the peace and conflict dynamics.

Assumptions

- The Unit and partners have appropriate MEL systems to allow for systematic follow-up of the integration of the conflict perspective.
- The Unit and partners have appropriate processes and culture for adaptive management (this includes an open discussion on learning from failure and success).

The **LONG-TERM OUTCOMES** of this is that Sida's development cooperation with Iraq is relevant and responsive to peace and conflict dynamics,

prevents/mitigates risks of unintentionally exacerbating conflict and maximises opportunities for peace. Specifically, Sida and Sida's partners':

Strategic objective	Outcome	Assumptions (external)
Across all objectives	Across outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security situation permits access.¹⁷³ • Third-party MEL is sufficient to adequately monitor success and failure and to adapt quickly.¹⁷⁴ • Regional actors (not specifically identified) play at least a benign role, if not a constructive in relation to Iraq's development.¹⁷⁵ • Regional conflict spillovers do not substantially de-stabilise Iraq.¹⁷⁶
1: Peaceful and inclusive societies	<p>Without unintentionally exacerbating conflicts, efforts contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved conditions for sustainable peace, social cohesion and inclusive governance, • Improved and equal access to basic services, • Sustainable solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities, and strengthened conditions for safe, orderly and regular migration, including return and reintegration in a way that contributes to development.¹⁷⁷ <p>Achieved by strengthening the capacity of the Iraqi government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sida is able to transition to a stronger focus on traditional development cooperation as the Iraqi government has capacity to and takes ownership for delivering basic services¹⁷⁹, especially in relation to vulnerable groups (women, youth, IDPs and refugees¹⁸⁰).¹⁸¹ • Positive cooperation and coordination within the donor community, for example: in relation to the UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilisation that has been the main instrument for this objective, the World Bank's 13RF fund that is the central platform for reform work with the Iraqi state,¹⁸¹ and in relation to the framework for Global

¹⁷³ UNDP FFS årsrapport notes that there have been more than 600 Islamic State related security incidents documented in Iraq's territory during 2021.

¹⁷⁴ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021. Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.12.

¹⁷⁵ Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.5-6.

¹⁷⁶ Sida, *Strategirapport för Strategi för Sveriges utvecklingssamarbete med Irak 2022–2026, 2023*.p.25.

¹⁷⁷ Government Offices of Sweden, *Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Iraq 2022–2026*, 17 03 2022.

¹⁷⁹ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021. p.2-3.

¹⁸⁰ Sida, *Strategirapport för Strategi för Sveriges utvecklingssamarbete med Irak 2022–2026 (år 1)*. p.8.

¹⁸¹ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021. p.2-3.

	<p>and civil society via partners, as well as supporting reform and decentralisation at both national and local levels.¹⁷⁸</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compact on Migration where a Team Europe Initiative is pursued.¹⁸² Political will of the Iraqi government to engage in decentralisation and reform processes (including reform of the Muhasasa system ¹⁸³). Willingness of affected parties to engage and commit to non-violent conflict resolution. Regional actors (not specifically identified) play at least a benign role, if not a constructive in relation to Iraq's development.¹⁸⁴
<p>2: Human rights, democracy, rule of law, gender equality</p>	<p>Without unintentionally exacerbating existing tensions and conflicts, efforts contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, including reduced corruption. Increased gender equality and respect for women's and girls' full enjoyment of their human rights.¹⁸⁵ <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthening the capacity of the Iraqi government, particularly the parliament and capacity to hold free and fair elections.¹⁸⁶ strengthening the capacity of the independent media, and civil society to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive cooperation and coordination within the donor community, for example: in relation to the UN Women and UNFPA, particularly under the framework of SCR 1325, 'Iraqi Second National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security" (INAP II).¹⁸⁸ Political will of the Iraqi government to engage in reform and address corruption.¹⁸⁹ Commitment and will of women and marginalised groups to participate in peace processes (especially given the climate of violence and harassment).¹⁹⁰ Commitment and will within the Iraqi population to organise and demand responsibility.¹⁹¹

¹⁷⁸ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021. p.2-3. Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.4.

¹⁸² Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.5.

¹⁸³ The so-called Muhasasa system is understood by Sida to be where key positions in the Iraqi public administration and political governance is distributed based on religious and ethnic affiliation, which as per *Strategiplan för Irak 2023* (2022) has cemented sectarian identities. p.2.

¹⁸⁴ Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.5-6.

¹⁸⁵ Government Offices of Sweden, *Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Iraq 2022–2026*, 17 03 2022.

¹⁸⁶ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021. p.4-5.

¹⁸⁸ Sida, *Strategiplan för Irak 2022*, 30 11 2021. p.4-5.

¹⁸⁹ Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.7.

¹⁹⁰ Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.7.

¹⁹¹ Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.7.

	<p>demand rights fulfilment from duty-bearers, particularly women's organisations.¹⁸⁷</p> <p>A.</p> <p>Via support to multilateral and international NGOs and CSOs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment and will of the Iraqi population to participate in elections, particularly the youth that represent low voter turnout due to disenfranchisement with the political system.¹⁹²
3: Environment, climate and sustainable development	<p>Without unintentionally exacerbating existing tensions and conflicts, efforts contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved adaptability and resilience to climate change, including protection of ecosystems. • Sustainable development and a green transition, including through the sustainable use of natural resources and increased access to renewable energy.¹⁹³ <p>Achieved by working with Iraqi actors around the framework of the Paris agreement and NDC,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political will to implement a green transition, considering Iraq's large oil resources and income stemming from these resources.¹⁹⁴ • Continued access to water assumes that border countries do not enact dams or industry projects along the Euphrates that would reduce access and worsen prospects for contributions focused on water or agriculture.¹⁹⁵ • Resource related tensions/conflict at the local and national level are addressed via non-violent pathways. • Positive cooperation and coordination within the donor community, for example: in relation to the FAO, WFP and IUCN initiatives in southern Iraq.¹⁹⁶
Across strategic objectives, outcomes, and assumptions.		
Absence of unintentional harm caused.		
Other unintended (negative and positive) outcomes, such as:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legitimisation effects, • Market effects, • Substitution effects, • theft/diversion. 		
Missed opportunities.		

These outcomes would then lead to the overall **IMPACT** of the integration of the conflict perspective, which means that Sweden's development cooperation in Iraq prevents or mitigates negative impacts and maximises positive impacts.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. p.4-5.

¹⁹² Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.7.

¹⁹³ Government Offices of Sweden, *Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Iraq 2022–2026*, 17 03 2022.

¹⁹⁴ Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.8.

¹⁹⁵ Sida, 'Assumptions and risks' i *Strategiplan för Irak 2023*, 09 01 2022. p.8.

¹⁹⁶ Sida, *Strategirapport för Strategi för Sveriges utvecklingssamarbete med Irak 2022–2026 (år 2)*. p.24.

The main overarching goal of Sweden's international development cooperation with Iraq is to create conditions to improve the lives of people living in poverty and oppression. The impact level is within the sphere of influence of Sida, but its contribution is one of many other contributions, external and internal to Iraq.

2.3 EVIDENCE AGAINST THE TOC

2.3.1 Evidence on the TOC – Strategy Level

The Iraq strategy for 2022–2026 includes explicit commitments to integrate the conflict perspective in all three strategic objectives: (1) Peaceful and inclusive societies, (2) Human rights, democracy, rule of law and gender equality, and (3) Environment, climate and sustainable development. The Theory of Change describes the progression from institutional inputs to conflict-sensitive implementation, followed by adaptation and impact.

In practice, the integration of the conflict perspective was partially achieved. Sida's Iraq Unit invested in MDPA and conflict analysis early in the strategy cycle. These documents captured conflict drivers, such as identity politics, corruption, fragmentation of security, low state legitimacy, regional influences, and climate stress. The documents were available for staff and partner use. Several contributions (e.g. UNMAS, IMS, Internews) showed that these analyses informed project/contribution design.

But implementation was uneven, especially after 2023. The strategy was disrupted by the security-driven relocation of embassy staff to Stockholm and the early closure decision in 2024. The assumption that Sida staff would be based in-country, did not hold for much of the period. The strategy team worked remotely and under transition constraints, which limited structured follow-up, monitoring, and adaptive management.

The portfolio included several contributions that embedded the conflict perspective strongly:

- IMS and Internews demonstrated deep contextual awareness and implemented robust Do No Harm and security protocols.
- UNAMI/IHEC integrated risk analysis, women's protection, and electoral violence mitigation into capacity-building and public engagement efforts.
- FFS and UNMAS targeted post-conflict stabilisation and risk awareness, with specific local impacts on return and recovery.

But learning and adaptation mechanisms between strategy and contribution levels were unclear and not formulated in a strong way. While partners adapted their implementation to conflict dynamics, there is little evidence that these experiences were systematically channelled back to inform portfolio-level shifts or changes in geographic or sectoral focus. For example, the shift toward Southern Iraq under Objective 3 (e.g., FAO) was not clearly linked to real-time conflict monitoring and did not include explicit CS reasoning.

Sida's use of the conflict prevention marker (e.g. 46% of disbursements marked "2" in 2023) suggests recognition of conflict relevance at contribution level. But marker scores were not consistently monitored or discussed strategically.

Dialogue with partners on CS was reported as open and constructive, and Sida was described as a flexible donor and by some as the one donor most interested and involved in projects. But Sida's ability to influence conflict sensitivity beyond trusted partners was limited, especially in pooled or UN-managed funds (e.g. UNMAS clearance priorities), where national decision-making constrained conflict-sensitive implementation.

Sida's departure from Iraq in 2024, the premature ending of ongoing projects, and the way it was communicated to implementers was mentioned as a negative point by many interviewees. Projects had, for example, promised and communicated activities to beneficiaries and communities and now had to inform them that the plans have changed and activities will not take place. Many interviewees agreed that the exit could have been organized in a smarter way. Suggestions included giving implementing partners earlier pre-warning time, discussing implications with implementing partners and how best to communicate them to beneficiaries and preventing implementing partners from exposing or blaming "Sweden" for the premature ending or disruption of planned activities. For example, some of the journalists and media agencies supported through Sida's funding were 100% dependent on it and it could have been useful e.g. to support those in accessing other funding, for example, through recommending them to other donors for funding.

To summarize, Sida's Iraq strategy was conceptually well-aligned with the conflict perspective and supported several high-quality contributions. But the withdrawal of the in-country presence, lack of strategic recalibration, and weak institutionalisation of learning limited the realization of the strategy's full potential. Integration of the conflict perspective was uneven across objectives and did not systematically shape the direction of the portfolio as the situation developed or changed.

2.3.2 Evidence on Inputs

The ToC identifies key inputs as organisational, financial, and human resources within Sida and its partners, alongside technical support structures (e.g., conflict analysis, MDPA, Helpdesk) to support conflict-sensitive programming. These inputs are essential for translating Sweden's commitment to conflict sensitivity into practical action in the volatile and politically fragmented environment Iraq.

The Sida Iraq unit was initially intended to be based in Baghdad, providing closer context insight. But since the embassy relocation to Stockholm in mid-2023, programme managers have operated remotely. The unit has maintained access to internal expertise on conflict and peace issues. Interviews and documents confirm the unit engaged the Sida Helpdesk on Human Security and made use of peace and conflict policy advisors at HQ during the early strategy period.

The unit consists of a Head of Unit and two senior programme managers, who are expected to lead on integrating the conflict perspective. But the relocation and early ending of the strategy in 2024–2025 limited the full institutionalisation. The

assumption that the unit would be based in-country was central to the original Strategy, and its absence is a key limiting factor acknowledged in the documents.

Sida's investment in foundational analysis is relatively strong. A MDPA and conflict analyses were conducted and made available during strategy development. The MDPA identifies key conflict drivers (corruption, sectarian identity politics, fragmentation of security forces, climate stress) and was meant to guide both sectoral choices and risk mitigation. But the degree to which this analysis was continuously used to inform strategy implementation appears uneven across the portfolio.

Sida also relies heavily on partner capacity. Several contributions, e.g., IMS, Internews, UNMAS, FAO, include their own conflict analyses, risk matrices, and Do No Harm frameworks. For example, IMS has an internal security and CS framework and provides psycho-social and legal support for journalists. Internews conducted extensive consultation and maintained a formal Do No Harm policy. UNMAS likewise included conflict risks in its prioritisation of land clearance and has helped national NGOs professionalize mine action.

In interviews and documentation, Sida staff confirmed that partner CS capacity is assessed in appraisals and partner selection. Several contributions (e.g., UNAMI, IMS) include Sida's role in insisting on conflict risk identification from the outset. But follow-up and monitoring of these inputs is inconsistent. Many partners were not asked to report on conflict sensitivity in implementation, and some contributions did not systematically revisit conflict analyses over time (e.g., UNMAS, FFS).

Sida's conflict prevention marker is in principle applied across contributions, but it is not always updated or linked to strategic dialogue. In the Iraq portfolio, around 46% of disbursements in 2023 had marker 2, with the rest split between 0 and 1. This suggests a relatively high integration on paper, but documentation does not consistently link marker assignment to structured analysis or institutional incentives.

To summarize, Sida had the basic organisational inputs and analytical frameworks in place, but key assumptions, such as in-country presence and sustained management support, were disrupted. Sida's ability to activate internal resources (e.g. the Helpdesk), assess partner capacity, and support early-stage conflict sensitivity was relatively strong. But limited follow-up, inconsistent use of the marker system, and the early end of the Iraq engagement mean that input-level commitments were partially achieved rather than fully institutionalised.

2.3.3 Evidence on Outputs

According to the ToC, outputs of the Iraq strategy include Sida staff recognizing the importance of conflict dynamics, undertaking analysis (e.g. MDPA), integrating the conflict perspective across all three strategic objectives, embedding it in partner dialogue and risk assessments, and applying the conflict prevention marker consistently across the portfolio.

Conflict awareness among Sida staff in the Iraq Unit was high, especially in the early and middle years of the strategy period. Staff and internal documentation confirm that a MDPA and strategy-specific conflict analyses were developed and used in contribution planning across several sectors. The analyses identified the core conflict drivers, including identity-based politics, corruption, legitimacy of the state,

and climate-linked grievances, and these were widely referenced in appraisals, especially under Strategic Objective 1.

But outputs were unevenly institutionalised across the portfolio. For example, in the UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS), Sida supported efforts to move beyond infrastructure delivery and integrate social cohesion and reintegration as core programmatic areas. This was an output aligned with the strategy's peace objective. Similarly, Sida worked with FAO to ensure conflict-aware beneficiary selection and community engagement practices in climate-affected areas of southern Iraq. That said, the FAO project lacked an explicit conflict analysis and was vulnerable to perception risks due to poor communication with non-beneficiaries. Sida's premature exit from Iraq likely caused harm, especially a negative perception of Sida and FAO.

Sida's partner selection processes increasingly considered conflict sensitivity, especially for politically sensitive areas such as independent media (IMS, Internews) or electoral support (UNAMI/IHEC). Sida's engagement helped shape conflict-risk components in project design. The Internews and IMS contributions both included strong Do No Harm principles, risk mitigation for politically charged issues, and organisational support for journalist safety and well-being.

In terms of risk analysis and dialogue, some contributions included conflict perspective explicitly in their risk logs (e.g., the electoral support program with UNAMI), and Sida flagged the reputational risks of international presence in politically sensitive processes. In others, like UNMAS, while initial analysis was strong, Sida's follow-up on how conflict risks evolved over time was more limited. Field visits and interviews confirmed that prioritisation of demining zones by national authorities was not transparent and may have introduced conflict risks due to unequal access to land and services.

The use of the conflict prevention marker was consistent, with 46% of disbursements in 2023 marked as "2" (principal objective). But interviews and contribution reports show that marker updates were rarely done after appraisal, and the marker was not used as an active monitoring tool. In several cases, CS was assumed to be covered via protection, access, or impartiality frameworks, but not revisited as the context evolved or partners shifted activities.

Dialogue with partners on conflict sensitivity happened regularly, but often informally. Sida's flexibility and trust-based approach was appreciated by partners. For example, IMS praised Sida for allowing adaptation and showing openness in discussing CS during annual reviews. But the absence of a standardized framework for follow-up meant that CS discussions relied heavily on individual programme officers and the strength of personal relationships with partners.

While some Sida staff embedded CS into their day-to-day assessments, there was limited cross-programmatic learning or use of feedback loops to adjust the portfolio. Internal documents acknowledge that strategy operationalisation depended on assumptions, like an in-country presence, that no longer held after mid-2023. The Iraq team's remote working setup, combined with the decision to end the strategy early, hindered efforts to sustain output-level practices and integrate learning across contributions.

To summarize, Sida produced several important outputs aligned with the ToC: analysis was conducted, partners were selected for their CS capacities, and the conflict perspective was embedded in several contribution designs. But follow-up was inconsistent, monitoring tools underutilized, and dialogue not formalized, meaning that outputs were partially achieved, with quality and consistency varying across sectors and timeframes.

2.3.4 Evidence on Outcomes

Short-Term Outcomes

The ToC identifies short-term outcomes as Sida staff and partners maintaining an up-to-date understanding of conflict dynamics, integrating this understanding into contribution design and dialogue, and applying the conflict perspective across all three strategic objectives. These outcomes also include proper use of the conflict prevention marker and ongoing monitoring of peace/conflict interactions.

Evaluation evidence indicates that short-term outcomes were partially achieved. Sida staff consistently recognised the need to follow conflict dynamics and referred to them during appraisals and partner dialogue. Conflict analysis was widely used in early strategy implementation, especially in the design of contributions under Strategic Objective 1 (peaceful and inclusive societies), such as FFS, UNMAS, and UNAMI. Programmes like Internews and IMS explicitly linked their design and operational practices to conflict risks such as media politicization, journalist safety, and the exclusion of marginalised groups.

In terms of monitoring, however, outcomes were inconsistent. The conflict prevention marker was widely assigned but not systematically used to guide portfolio reviews or track change. Staff rarely updated marker scores or used them for strategy-level reflection.

Dialogue with partners on conflict sensitivity was more structured in politically sensitive sectors. For example, IMS reported regular check-ins with Sida on the security environment, women's safety, and editorial risk in independent journalism. But this level of engagement was not consistent across contributions. In agriculture (e.g. FAO), while local engagement and beneficiary targeting were sensitive to community dynamics, there was no formal conflict sensitivity framework, and risks related to community exclusion or funding withdrawal were not fully anticipated.

Overall, Sida and its partners generally reflected on context and designed with CS in mind, but formal systems for tracking conflict sensitivity and revisiting analysis were weak. The departure of staff from Iraq in 2023 and early phase-out of the strategy cut opportunities to consolidate learning or institutionalise short-term outcomes.

Medium-Term Outcomes

The ToC sets out that partners should continuously adapt implementation based on conflict dynamics, that Sida should follow up on capacity gaps, and that learning should move both downstream (from strategy to contribution) and upstream (from contributions to strategic planning).

Evidence from contribution stories shows occasional but useful adaptation at partner level, especially where contributions were implemented by international NGOs or UN agencies with internal CS frameworks. For example:

- Internews and IMS both adapted content and methods to avoid political targeting, enhance gender safety, and preserve independence under pressure.
- FAO adapted its approach after community concerns over water tanks in Najaf and modified its planning to include local consultation, thereby preventing local tensions.

But not all contributions demonstrated the same level of responsiveness. In UNMAS, despite a shift to local partners and increased national capacity, the process for prioritising demining zones remained opaque and centrally determined by the Iraqi government. Sida and UNMAS had no influence on area selection, limiting the ability to ensure equitable or conflict-sensitive outcomes.

There is limited evidence that learning at the contribution level informed strategy-level adaptation. While individual programme officers followed up with partners on CS, this did not translate into portfolio-level adjustments or strategic shifts. For example, no geographic redistribution or sectoral reprioritisation appears to have taken place based on contribution-level insights. This was further weakened by the embassy's closure and remote working setup after 2023, as well as the early exit decision announced in 2024.

Sida staff and partners learned locally and adjusted at contribution level, but feedback mechanisms to strategy implementation were informal, under-documented, and not sustained after the strategy's phase-out announcement.

Long-Term Outcomes

The long-term outcome is for Sida's Iraq portfolio to be relevant and responsive to conflict dynamics, mitigating risks of harm and maximising opportunities for peace. Contributions should strengthen inclusive governance, service delivery, resilience, and civic trust.

Evidence shows that no harm was found, and several contributions showed potential for positive long-term change:

- FFS supported conditions for return and reintegration, including psychosocial support and job training, contributing to post-ISIS stabilisation. However, long-term sustainability is threatened by the exit of major donors, and institutional handover remains weak.
- UNMAS enabled the clearance of millions of m² of land and inclusion of mine risk education in school curricula. Still, the lack of transparency in clearance prioritisation poses long-term risks of perceived injustice and political capture.
- UNAMI/IHEC helped reduce violence against women in elections and institutionalised a Women's Support Team, but institutional capacity gaps remain, and political trust is fragile.
- IMS and Internews supported pluralistic journalism, resilience against disinformation, and women's leadership in media, with significant reach and documented adaptation. However, funding cuts jeopardize sustainability and risk undoing progress.

Across the portfolio, positive peace contributions were modest but credible, especially in governance, media, and reintegration. But the early strategy end, loss of field presence, and limited systemic follow-up mean that long-term conflict responsiveness was not institutionalised. Gains were often project-specific, not strategy-wide.

2.3.5 Evidence on Impact

The ToC defines impact as Sida's ability to prevent or mitigate harm and to maximise positive contributions to peace and social cohesion through development cooperation. This must be understood in a context where Sweden is a small donor (approx. 2.7% of ODA to Iraq) and where political volatility and constrained state legitimacy pose ongoing risks to peace and development.

The evaluation found no evidence of Sida-funded contributions having caused harm. All major partners demonstrated awareness of context and included risk mitigation. For example:

- UNMAS mitigated risks from explosive remnants of war and integrated EORE into national curricula.
- UNAMI's electoral work reduced violence against women in elections and built institutional support for future electoral integrity.
- Internews and IMS supported independent media in a sector dominated by politicized outlets, bolstering pluralism and protecting journalists under threat.

But Sida's contributions were also constrained by structural risks and funding decisions that limited their long-term peace impact. For example:

- In FFS, the withdrawal of Sida and USAID funding cut short key reintegration and psycho-social support components, raising risks of secondary displacement.
- In FAO, premature Sida exit created uncertainty and potential reputational harm in communities where activities were left incomplete, possibly undermining trust in local authorities and future donors.
- In UNMAS, political prioritisation of demining zones by Iraqi authorities introduced risks of perceived injustice and exclusion, which UNMAS and Sida were unable to influence.

The clearest positive impact contributions were in areas of media pluralism, governance support, and conflict-sensitive community engagement. IMS's network-based approach supported women journalists and addressed disinformation. Internews enabled dialogue on climate and gender-sensitive reporting. FAO, despite lacking a CS framework, integrated feedback loops that reduced friction around agricultural infrastructure. UNAMI helped institutionalise women's participation mechanisms in IHEC.

These impacts were often localised and not scaled, and the end of Swedish engagement limits their potential sustainability. The lack of a clear exit strategy across contributions, itself a conflict sensitivity issue, reduces the certainty that positive impacts will be sustainable.

In terms of strategic impact, Sida made a meaningful difference in select domains, especially media and electoral capacity. But the overall influence on national conflict

dynamics is necessarily limited, given Sida's funding scale and the structural dominance of political economy and regional dynamics. Sida's ability to maximise its impact depended largely on partner quality, its convening power in donor coordination, and early flexibility, all of which were limited during the strategy's final phase.

2.4 RESPONSE TO EVALUATION QUESTIONS

2.4.1 EQ 1: To what extent did/does the Iraq strategy respond to peace and conflict dynamics in the context and continue to do so if circumstances change?

The Iraq strategy 2022–2026 was grounded in a well-informed early conflict analysis (MDPA and dedicated studies), showing Sida's strategic intention to respond to Iraq's complex peace and conflict dynamics. Contributions were selected with explicit attention to context and sectoral relevance, and many incorporated a clear conflict sensitivity approach, particularly under Strategic Objective 1.

Adaptation occurred at the contribution level. Sida and its partners integrated conflict risks into programme design, notably in media, electoral reform, and mine action. Dialogue with partners was consistent and flexible. Contributions such as IMS, Internews, and UNAMI/IHEC adapted to emerging risks, and partners such as FAO demonstrated responsive community engagement.

But the strategy's overall ability to adapt was undermined by external and institutional constraints. The relocation of staff from Baghdad to Stockholm in 2023 and the 2024 decision to phase out the strategy early significantly weakened the ability to respond to changes in context. Portfolio-level adaptation (e.g., shifting geographic or sectoral focus, revisiting assumptions) was limited. Learning from contribution-level implementation was not systematically used to adjust strategy execution.

The conflict prevention marker was widely applied but not used for monitoring or strategic adaptation. While Sida remained engaged and informed, formal learning loops between contribution and strategy levels were not institutionalised.

Thus, while the Iraq strategy demonstrated responsiveness in design and early implementation, its capacity to adapt as circumstances changed was limited by operational constraints, making the overall level of adaptation medium.

2.4.2 EQ 2: To what extent is the integration of conflict sensitivity in the implementation of the strategy contributing to outcomes? And if so/not, why?

The integration of conflict sensitivity has contributed to meaningful, if modest, outcomes in several contributions. Projects in governance, media, and post-conflict recovery have shown that when the conflict perspective is applied seriously, with partner capacity, monitoring, and community engagement, it supports inclusion, avoids harm, and enhances resilience.

Examples include:

- UNMAS enabling access to land and services through mine clearance and risk education.

- IMS and Internews strengthening independent journalism and protecting media actors.
- UNAMI/IHEC reducing violence against women in elections and building institutional safeguards.
- FFS improving conditions for return, though with uneven social cohesion integration.

In these cases, conflict sensitivity helped manage reputational, operational, and political risks, and in some cases contributed to improved governance, inclusion, or local trust. But the contributions were mostly localised and short- to medium-term in nature. Sustainability was weakened by funding withdrawals and the absence of strategy-wide monitoring of conflict-sensitive outcomes.

There is limited evidence of conflict sensitivity enabling systemic or large-scale peace dividends. Several contributions were constrained by external factors (e.g. national prioritisation of demining zones, political restrictions on media), which limited outcome-level influence. Sida's internal follow-up on conflict sensitivity, including updating conflict markers, revisiting assumptions, and aggregating learning, was weak.

Overall, the integration of conflict sensitivity contributed to relevant and positive outcomes in multiple contributions, but without scaling, formal tracking, or long-term continuity.

2.4.3 EQ 3: What is the overall impact of the integration of the conflict perspective by Sida, Embassies of Sweden, and Sida's cooperation partners? What has Sida contributed to?

Assessing the impact of Sida's integration of the conflict perspective in Iraq is difficult, given the modest scale of Sida's funding (2.7% of total ODA), the deep structural nature of Iraq's conflict dynamics, and the early end of the strategy and support in 2024. Nevertheless, evidence from multiple contributions suggests that Sida-supported activities contributed meaningfully to mitigating risks and fostering conditions that align with peacebuilding and conflict prevention, particularly at the local and institutional level.

Across the Iraq portfolio, Sida-supported contributions avoided harm and occasionally contributed to positive peace and conflict-related effects, especially in areas of return and reintegration (FFS), demining and risk education (UNMAS), electoral integrity and inclusion (UNAMI/IHEC), and independent media and civil society support (IMS, Internews). These are credible achievements, achieved despite political volatility and operational constraints.

Sida's conflict perspective was not treated as a rhetorical add-on but was often embedded in partner selection, dialogue, and in some cases programme design. Contributions with high CS integration, such as IMS and Internews, tried to prevent exacerbation of identity-based tensions, amplify marginalised voices, and protect media actors in a polarized environment and shrinking civic space. Sida's influence on these results was indirect but existent: through flexible funding, responsive dialogue, and trust in conflict-sensitive partner models.

At the same time, the strategy lacked a system to aggregate, measure, or systematically learn from conflict-related outcomes of contributions. Markers were not monitored, conflict analyses were not regularly updated, and learning was not routinely fed back into strategy decision-making. The early exit of Sida and USAID from key programmes (e.g. FFS, IMS), and how it was communicated, introduced risks of reversals, highlighting the fragility of impact in volatile environments.

Sida's contribution to impact is therefore assessed as medium: its funding enabled key contributions that mattered for peace and conflict dynamics in specific sectors, but these did not scale to national impact or strategic transformation. Many of the assumptions in the ToC held at the level of partner competence and contribution design, but not at the level of institutional learning, adaptive management, or sustained strategic presence. The impact seen would not likely have occurred in the same way without Sida's contribution, especially in politically sensitive and rights-based sectors, but external factors (donor exits, political volatility, capacity limits) played a larger role in shaping what was ultimately possible.

The significance of change is also assessed as medium. Sida's contributions mattered in specific localities, institutions, and communities, e.g. re-enabling access to cleared land, reducing electoral violence against women, or safeguarding independent journalism. But the overall effects remain limited. There is no evidence of large-scale transformation of peace and conflict dynamics at the national level. Strength of evidence is sufficient, based on triangulation across multiple contributions and interviews. But weaknesses in conflict sensitivity reporting, limited outcome tracking, and disrupted strategy implementation reduce the power of any aggregated impact claims.

2.5 SAMPLED CONTRIBUTIONS

Table 4: Sample of contributions for Iraq and data collection

Contribution	Name – partner	Data collection
13497	ESMAP 2021-2024 – World Bank	Several attempts to be put in contact with a WB responsible for this project led to no results.
16047	FAO Iraq 2022-26: Resilience in Southern Iraq	The contribution was included in the evaluation. FAO staff was interviewed (2 male), DOA (1 male, 2 female), as well as community leaders (2 male) in al-Muthanna.
14271	UNMAS – Humanitarian De-mining	The contribution was included in the evaluation. UNMAS staff was interviewed (2 male), implementing partners (about 20 staff, 50% female). FGD conducted with beneficiaries (9 male) in Mosul.
14384	Oxfam: Promoting Gender Equality, Resilience and Social Cohesion Iraq 2020-2022	Initially all available contacts had left the organisation. In the end, one call took place with staff not directly involved in the programme.
14616	UNDP/UNAMI Support to Iraq's electoral process	The contribution was included in the evaluation. UNAMI's responsible was interviewed (1 male), one representative of IF (1 female), Lotus organization (2

		female) and staff of the Parliamentary Office in Basra (1 male, 1 female)
11829	UNDP FFS Iraq 2018 – 2023	The contribution was included in the evaluation. UNDP staff, project managers and management were interviewed (3 male, 3 female), project beneficiaries (5 female, 9 male), FGD conducted with community groups (4 female, 1 male) in Mosul.
14376	World Bank -Iraq Reform and Reconstruction Fund	One interview took place with a WB responsible. Promised follow-up interviews, e.g. with Iraqi government, did not take place. Sida's request letter was ignored.
11976	Water and Energy for Food (WE4F) 2019-2025	It was not possible to include the contribution in the evaluation.
16493	Independent Media Development Programme in Iraq 2023-2026	The contribution was included in the evaluation. Implementing partner was interviewed (1 male) and project beneficiaries/partners were met and interviewed (4 male, 3 female) in Erbil and in Basra.
14267	UN Women, Iraq National Action Plan for 1325 (INAPII), 2021-23	Several attempts to interview UN Women staff were ultimately not successful.
12796	Mediaprogram för Irak perioden 2019-2023	The contribution was included in the evaluation. Implementing partner was interviewed (1 male) and project beneficiaries/partners were met and interviewed (4 male, 3 female) in Ninewa.
12527	Mercy Corps, Promoting Resilience for returnees and host communities in Ninewa	Initially all available contacts had left the organisation. In the end, one call took place with staff not directly involved in the programme.

2.6 EXAMPLE CONTRIBUTION STORY

The evaluators wrote detailed contribution stories during/after data collection for the internal analysis. In the case of Iraq, a total of seven out of 12 contributions resulted in contribution stories. One example is included here for illustration purposes.

Contribution title

11829 – UNDP Iraq 2015–2023: Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS)

Agreement partner

UNDP

Commitment amount

Approx. 1.4 billion USD+ (Sida contributed multiple tranches)

Time period

2015–2023

Strategy objective

To contribute to the safe, voluntary, and sustainable return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to liberated areas through the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, restoration of basic services, immediate livelihoods, and support to social cohesion.

Contribution description

The Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) is UNDP Iraq's large stabilization mechanism. It is a multi-donor “project”, in which Sweden is one of the donors, but not the biggest one. Operating in 31 locations in five governorates liberated from ISIS (Anbar, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Kirkuk, and Diyala), the FFS addressed urgent needs through four thematic “windows”: (1) public works and infrastructure rehabilitation; (2) livelihood support; (3) local government capacity building; and (4) social cohesion. Sida had a specific focus on (4) social cohesion.

Initially focused on immediate stabilisation, the FFS expanded in volume and scope to include more medium-term infrastructure rehabilitation and began adding elements of sustainability, gender equality, and environmental safeguards from 2017 onward.

Potential negative contribution/risks

- Risk of exacerbating social tensions if aid distribution was perceived as unfair.
- Limited integration of a systematic conflict-sensitive approach during early phases.
- Inadequate consultation with some communities during project identification.
- Sustainability risks due to weak local institutional capacity and fiscal constraints.
- Sida's premature end of support to the FFS, and then the sudden end of USAID support to FFS risks major setbacks in the planned activities of the FFS. Without reintegration efforts and psycho-social support, relapse to violent extremism (for former ISIS fighters or other radicalised returnees) is elevated.

Potential positive contributions

- Enabled the return of more than four million IDPs by rebuilding schools, health clinics, and homes.
- Established or restored more than 3,500 infrastructure projects.
- Supported over 9,000 public officials with capacity development to deal with situation and needs.
- Women and vulnerable groups were increasingly integrated from 2017 onward.

How was this investigated?

- Document review (final evaluation, performance reports, financial summaries)
- Meetings and interviews with UNDP staff (online and in-person in Erbil and Mosul)
- Mission to Erbil and Mosul in March 2025:
 - Visit to project sites, e.g. a psycho-social support centre in Mosul. Interviews with clinic director and psychologist.

- Interviews and focus group with youth club community members (six, five women, one man) supported by UNDP.
- Meetings and interviews with two returnees (both male) that had been to al-Hol camp and went through the FFS reintegration “cycle”, including psycho-social support and vocational and small business training.
- Visit to (partially) reconstructed and repaired homes outside Mosul, including a house where a final door painting could not be finished because of the end of Sida funding.

Any limitations to the data available?

- The selection of returnees to visit and to houses and families that benefitted from reconstruction was ultimately done by UNDP and did not allow for a broad impression of returnees’ opinions.
- A visit to a health clinic did not allow for a deeper understanding or scrutinizing of psycho-social support needs. The information obtained seemed rather simple, such as “finding employment”, but not deeper in terms of psychological support needs.

Contribution story (Narrative)

The FFS was started at a time of an urgent crisis following the reconquering/liberation of Iraqi territory from ISIS. Its objective was to create the minimum conditions necessary for displaced populations to return. UNDP implemented the project in close coordination with Iraqi authorities at different levels, gradually expanding its geographical coverage based on the liberation timeline and access.

The early years of the FFS focused heavily on the “speed and scale” of delivering visible infrastructure, which was also a counter-insurgency measure to win hearts and minds. While this contributed to short-term stabilisation, the FFS mid-term evaluation noted the relatively weak integration of social cohesion and conflict sensitivity components in the early phase.

From 2017, FFS adopted a more structured approach to gender and social inclusion, components and approaches also specifically supported and requested by Sida. Gender-disaggregated data collection, targeted livelihood interventions for women, and attention to accessibility (particularly in housing and education facilities) became operating standards. Capacity-building efforts were scaled up in 2022, exceeding the annual targets and offering 9000+ trainings to civil servants and others.

Project and context risks remained high, e.g. the risk of secondary displacement for the most vulnerable, but the FFS still managed to institutionalise stabilisation processes. Social cohesion programming expanded especially after 2018 but remained limited in scale compared to the infrastructure work, such as rehabilitation of damaged houses.

Sida’s financial contribution to the pooled FFS funding allowed for the reconstruction of critical infrastructure and institutions in priority areas. There was limited visibility (though logos were observed on products and project sites) specifically for Sida’s contribution to the large FFS, but interviewees and UNDP staff appreciated Sida’s specific contribution.

What was the outcome – expected/unexpected?

Outcomes seem to be mostly as expected. The FFS supported large-scale returns from Syria and from IDPs, and improved access to basic services. But on a more aggregated level, FFS did not yet achieve sustainable handover or mitigate longer-term fragility post-ISIS.

Negative outcome

- Social cohesion work was underfunded and under-scaled, compared to the other windows.
- Limited Government of Iraq financial commitment threatened and threatens the sustainability of infrastructure, especially that USAID and Sida are no longer funding FFS today.
- Lack of long-term job opportunities hinders reintegration and resilience. A vocational training is only useful if the labour market can absorb new capacities and skills.
- Some returnees already began secondary displacement due to lack of livelihoods.

Positive outcome

- Return of over 4.8 million beneficiaries supported.
- 3500+ projects completed in infrastructure, livelihoods, and governance.
- Major infrastructure rehabilitated, including hospitals, power stations, and schools.
- The FFS flexibility and adaptability allowed for responses to emerging priorities such as COVID-19 and IDP camp closures.
- FFS Municipal Stabilization Advisors improved local capacities to deal with the post-ISIS situation.

Integration of the conflict perspective

- FFS mainstreamed conflict sensitivity in the social cohesion “window” especially post-2018.
- Conflict risks were listed, discussed and understood in risk registers, but mitigation was often reactive.
- An evaluation noted that conflict sensitivity should be more systematically strengthened at both programmatic and operational levels.

How significant was the outcome?

Score: High

Narrative: The FFS made an important contribution to Iraq’s post-ISIS recovery. It enabled especially physical (and to a lesser degree psychological) conditions necessary for return, restored trust in public services, and set a foundation for more complex peacebuilding. Despite the uneven integration of conflict sensitivity, the project’s scope and responsiveness make it one of the more relevant and impactful interventions in Iraq’s post-conflict recovery.

What was Sida’s contribution?

Score: Medium

Narrative: Sida was one of the more consistent donors to FFS, enabling both infrastructure and livelihoods work through its contributions. But Sida likely did not play a prominent role in shaping the implementation strategy or exit planning. Its influence was indirect, primarily through flexible funding and trust in UNDP mechanisms. Visibility remained limited at the community level, though UNDP reports acknowledge Sida's role. UNDP also mentioned Sida being one of the more active and involved donors, in comparison to others.

3 Tanzania

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings from the Tanzania case study, conducted as part of the central evaluation of Sida's work with conflict sensitivity. The case study covers two strategy periods for the Swedish strategy for Tanzania: 2013-2019 and 2020-2024.

A theory-based approach was used as an overarching analytical framework for the evaluation, and for the case study. The Theory of Change (ToC) presents a pathway for how conflict sensitivity related change is theorised to occur under the strategy for Tanzania. It includes several outcome levels (short-term, medium-term, long-term outcomes) and assumptions, risks and other actors/initiatives and factors. This was developed in cooperation with the Sida team at the Embassy of Sweden in Ethiopia. The analysis of the empirical evidence gathered throughout the case study tested the narrative presented in the ToC and examines the causal links in the chain. The evidence on long-term outcomes and impacts draws on contribution analysis, which aims to assess Sida's contribution to long-term outcomes and impacts, was applied at the level of Sida contributions. Four rubrics were applied in the case studies. The main evaluation report presents this methodology in further detail.

This document is composed of four parts: 1) an introduction to the case study, the context, data collected and limitations, 2) the original ToC, followed by 3) the evidence against this ToC, and 3) answers to the three evaluation questions.

3.1.1 Context

Tanzania has generally enjoyed long term peace and relative political stability with no significant armed conflict. Still, it is recorded as having a state-based conflict in UCDP. Since 2020 southern Tanzania has experienced spill over attacks from the Islamic State (IS), which is engaging in an insurgency in neighbouring Mozambique.¹⁹⁷ Tanzanian government forces joined the multinational mission against IS in Mozambique in 2022.

Table 5: Indicators of levels of conflict and peacefulness

UCDP	WB-FCS (2023)	GPI	ACLED (2022-2023)
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¹⁹⁷ See Tanzania: Islamic State for more information at <https://ucdp.uu.se/conflict/15183>.

State-based armed conflict (IS)	NO	MEDIUM	LOW
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However, the context is not without its challenges. Sida has had to adapt to changes in refugee influxes, authoritarian tendencies, shrinking space for civil society, and ongoing natural resources disputes during the strategy period.

- **Refugee influxes** – the Kigoma region in Tanzania has historically experienced significant refugee flows, primarily from neighbouring Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The IRC estimates that there are currently 350, 000 refugees in Tanzania. During the strategy period increased influxes of refugees led to resource-based tensions between host communities and refugees in Kigoma.¹⁹⁸
- **Authoritarianism and shrinking space for civil society** - the country experienced a deterioration to 20.2% in 2021 from 30% in 2012 in civic space according to the V-Dem index.¹⁹⁹ This trend is manifested in several new laws and amendments that limit the activities of human rights and advocacy NGOs and CSOs, such as the NGOs Act 2002 (re. 2019), the Statistics Act, 2015; Basic Rights and Duties Enforcement Act, 1995 (BRADEA) and its 2020 amendments; Media Services Act, 2016; Cyber Crimes Act, 2015; Online Content Regulations, 2018; and Access to Information Act, 2016. Imprisonment, confiscation of NGO and CSO tools, freezing NGO and CSO accounts, confiscating NGO and CSO leaders' travel passports, and naming and labelling NGO and CSO officials are practices that were experienced by civil society during the strategy period.²⁰⁰
- **Natural resources-based conflicts** - Natural resource conflicts in Tanzania primarily revolve around land, water, and grazing areas. A major source of conflict involves the competition for land between farmers who cultivate crops and pastoralists who rely on grazing land for their livestock. Communities living near mining areas have experienced conflicts with mining companies due to issues such as land displacement, environmental damage, and inadequate compensation. The increasing incidence of climate change impacts, including droughts and floods, have exacerbated resource scarcity and intensified conflicts.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ International Rescue Committee. *Surrounded by conflict: Tanzania*. 2025.

<https://www.rescue.org/country/tanzania#:~:text=As%20of%20January%202025%2C%20Tanzania,health%20services%20and%20poor%20sanitation>.

¹⁹⁹ V-DEM. (2023). Democracy Report 2023: Defiance in The Face of Autocratization. https://www.v-dem.net/documents/29/Vdem_democracyreport2023_lowres.pdf

²⁰⁰ Nguyahambi, A. M., & Rugeiyamu, R. 2025. "It is not shrinking; NGOs need unlimited freedom": Government Stance on the Perceived Shrinkage of Civic Space in Tanzania. *Journal of Social Innovation and Knowledge*, 2(1); Rugeiyamu, R., and A. M. Nguyahambi. 2024. "Civic Space and its Effects on Advocacy Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Tanzania." *International Social Science Journal*.

²⁰¹ Shemdoe, R., & Mwanyoka, I. 2015. "Natural Resources Based Conflicts and Their Gender Impacts in the Selected Farming and Pastoral Communities in Tanzania." *International Journal of African and Asian Studies* (15).

3.1.2 Sweden's approach

Neither the current²⁰² nor the previous Sida strategy have a specific strategy objective for peaceful and inclusive societies (or its equivalent predecessor). The composition of Tanzania's portfolio during the period 2020-2024 according to the conflict policy marker is that an average of 97% of disbursements have conflict marker 0, 3% conflict policy marker 1, and 0% conflict policy marker 2.

3.1.3 Data collection for the case study

Type of data	Tanzania
Contributions reviewed	12 contributions
Internal documents	66 documents
External documents	41 documents
Survey – Sida staff	3 individual staff responses
Survey – partners	6 partners, 9 individual responses
Interviews – Sida staff	8 people
Interviews – partners (agreement partners and local partners)	47 people
Interviews – independent experts	1 expert
Fieldwork – locations visited	5 locations visited
Fieldwork – interviews with members of the affected communities	9 males, 1 female Total = 10 people
Field work – focus groups	7 focus groups conducted. 19 males, 17 females. Total = 35 people

3.1.4 Field work

Of the larger sample of 12 contributions (see Annex 1), five were selected for field work, based on their potential to provide useful evidence, the availability of potential interviewees (in some cases the efforts occurred 7-10 years ago and it was assessed as unlikely that interviewees with sufficient recall would be available in the location), and the responsiveness of partners (this was a key criteria as we needed a degree of facilitation from partners for the field visit, several otherwise potentially interesting contributions were not visited as partners did not respond to repeated attempts for contact). Interviews with partners consisted of a mix of those with a direct agreement with Sida, and local partners, and other types of project stakeholders, e.g. local government officials,

Dates of field work: Field work took place between February 2025 to June 2025.

Locations visited:

- Multiple contributions – interviews in Dar es Salaam and surrounding areas.

²⁰² Government Offices of Sweden. 2020. Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Tanzania 2020–2024.

- Parallel CSO Support to the Land Tenure Support Programme (LTSP) in Tanzania - Involved field visit to Mlimba, in Morogoro region.
- UN Kigoma Joint Programme II as part of United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP II) – Kigoma region.
- Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) Core Support 2019-2024 – Dar es salaam and Arusha.
- Twaweza strategy 2019-2002 - Pangani district, Tanga.
- Tanzania Gender Networking Programme strategy – Majohi ward in Dar es Salaam

3.1.5 Limitations

The data collection had several key limitations. First, limitations to the Sida perspective. The Embassy record management system went through a change during the strategy period, which meant that some historical documentation related to the contributions was not available or had to be downloaded directly from internal systems. As is typical for an Embassy, there was turnover in Swedish-posted staff. In some cases, we were able to speak to staff that were still within Sida but in new position. However, others had left the agency completely. This particularly effected data on assigning the conflict prevention marker rating and contribution design as this occurs at the beginning of the contribution process and new programme officers did not have knowledge of how it was determined.

Second, partner level information generally faced less institutional memory issues as they tended to retain staff for longer periods. However, in terms of field work the evaluation team was to some extent dependent on partners to show and connect us with relevant recipients and affected communities. The partners were instructed that the selection of field visits should meet the key criteria that there should be evidence of how the conflicts sensitivity approach manifested both positive and negative outcomes. During the field visits the team were shown both positive and negative outcomes. In addition to this, the team sought to speak with community and faith leaders, independent experts, and others that could comment more broadly to offset the risk of positive selection bias. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the partners did have a role in evidence selection.

We note that the Embassy was operating under abnormal circumstances due to the relocation of posted Swedish staff from November 2023 – August 2024.

3.2 THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change is a simplified, yet comprehensive description of how change is to occur with the integration of the conflict perspective throughout all Sida's work and financing throughout the strategy and contributions cycles. It is presented sequentially from Sida's inputs, outputs, outcomes, to desired impact, including the assumptions that underpin how these elements are logically connected.

Inputs

For the **INPUTS**, suitable organisational resources, human resources, training, and financial resources need to be in place at Sida HQ, at the Embassy and within

partners. Specifically, in Tanzania, this includes one senior programme manager and two programme officers, focused on Democratic Governance and Human Rights, that supports the integration of the conflict perspective at the Embassy. The Embassy has also requested support from the Human Security Help Desk and the Peace and Security Policy Specialist with geographic responsibility for Africa at Sida HQ.

Outputs

These inputs would then lead to and be converted into **OUTPUTS**. In the case of Tanzanian strategy, this means that Embassy staff recognise the importance of understanding the context and take steps to understand the Tanzanian context by analysing the context, conflict dynamics, tensions, and potential triggers on a regular basis. This would be evidenced by the development of a MDPA as part of the strategy design process, and if needed a separate conflict analysis, updates to the MDPA, and an ongoing assessment by the embassy of the context. The conflict analysis (whether integrated in the MDPA or separate) should capture the conflict profile, identify potential dividers and connectors, and the possible positive and negative effects (including resource transfers). According to MDPAAs conducted by Sida during the strategy period, the current conflict drivers include **land use disputes and unsustainable management of natural resources (predominantly land, forests, and water)** in parts of the country.²⁰³

Assumptions:

All stakeholders demonstrate consistent leadership and sustained commitment and makes organisational, financial and human resources available, and ensure that there are incentives for staff to learn about the conflict perspective. Specifically, these needs to be sustained leadership at the Embassy, through the Head of Development Cooperation.

Short term outcomes

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES are that the embassy staff reflect on their understanding of the context and the potential two-way interaction between Sweden's strategy objectives and the Tanzanian conflict dynamics/tensions to tailor the strategy proposal, and strategy operationalisation accordingly. Embassy staff assess that a specific strategic objective for peacebuilding is not warranted for Tanzania. They integrate the conflict perspective throughout the four strategic objectives to mitigate and prevent unintentionally exacerbating tensions and conflict, while specific opportunities to 'do good' are maximised with contributions under strategic objective 1 – human rights, democracy, rule of law, and gender equality, and 4 - environment and climate seeking to address conflict drivers related to natural resource management, and under strategic objective 2 - inclusive economic development in relation to potential conflict drivers. In the 2020 strategy proposal to the Swedish

²⁰³ Sida, *MDPA Tanzania*, November 2023. Chronic Poverty Advisory Network, Overseas Development Institute, 'Tanzania – Reflection on Multi-dimensional Poverty Analysis', 4 February 2021.

government offices, the “deterioration of the economy” was identified as the main risk factor that could lead to a reaction from the population and possible conflict.²⁰⁴

Against this background:

- Embassy takes steps to maintain up to date understanding of and reflect on the understanding of the conflict dynamics/tensions, and what this means for strategy level decisions such as portfolio composition and geographic and sectoral distribution.
- Embassy staff assess and select partners that have the willingness capacity to integrate the conflict perspective to implement the contributions under the four strategic objectives if relevant to the contributions.
- The Embassy and their partners have a common understanding of the conflict perspective if relevant to the contributions they work with.
- Partners analyse the two-way interaction between the contribution(s) and conflict dynamics/tensions and considers potential positive and negative resource transfers.
- Embassy staffs’ dialogue with partners emphasises the conflict perspective if relevant, including noting any concerns regarding partners’ capacity to integrate the conflict perspective, in the risk register and taking these concerns up in an open dialogue.
- Embassy staff monitor and evaluate the integration of the conflict perspective, at strategy level, and at contribution level.
- Embassy staff correctly use and embed the conflict policy marker in the Sida strategy and contribution cycles.

Assumptions

- The Embassy and partners have sufficient resources, in terms of financial and human resources, to integrate the conflict perspective as is relevant to their work.
- Embassy staff make use of the peace and conflict toolbox, and other learning resources, such as the e-learning modules to support their work if relevant.
- Embassy staff make use of the Human Security Helpdesk if relevant.
- Embassy staff request advice from the Human Security policy advisors as needed.
- Embassy staff are incentivised and held accountable for the integration of the conflict perspective as is relevant.
- Partners are willing, able, and have access to appropriate guidelines to integrate the conflict perspective, if relevant.
- Guidelines are applied and meaningfully tailored to the Tanzanian context.

Medium term outcomes

These short-term outcomes would then lead to and be converted into **MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES**, meaning that:

²⁰⁴ Sida, *Underlag till strategi för Sveriges utvecklingssamarbete med Tanzania*, 12 09 2019. p.9.

- Partners continuously adapt implementation of contributions to prevent/minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts (such as resource transfers) based on their ongoing understanding of the conflict dynamics/tensions, if relevant.
- Embassy staff follow up on conflict perspective issues identified in the appraisal, through dialogue with partners.
- Embassy staff and partners take steps to learn from monitoring and evaluation of the integration of the conflict perspective with learning taking place both downstream (from strategy to contribution level) and upstream (from contribution to strategy level) as is relevant to their work.
- The Embassy adapts the strategy plan and its implementation in response to positive and negative changes in the context.

Assumptions

- Embassy and partners have appropriate MEL systems to allow for systematic follow up on the integration of the conflict perspective, if relevant.
- Embassy and partners have appropriate processes and culture for adaptive management (this includes an open discussion on learning from failure and success).

Long term outcomes

A **LONG-TERM OUTCOME** of this is that Sida's development cooperation with Tanzania is relevant and responsive to peace and conflict dynamics/tensions context, prevents/mitigates risks of unintentionally exacerbating tensions and conflict and maximises opportunities for positive impacts on peace and conflict dynamics. Specifically, Sida and Sida's partners':

Strategic objective	Outcome	Assumption (external)
1: Human rights, democracy, rule of law, gender equality	Efforts contribute to marginalised individuals and groups' ability to defend their rights non-violently, as well as strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to respect human rights without unintentionally exacerbating existing tensions and conflicts.	Willingness of affected parties to engage in commitment to conflict resolution.
2: Inclusive economic development	Efforts contribute to addressing political and economic inequality of marginalised groups, particularly women and youth in the agricultural sector, without unintentionally exacerbating existing tensions and conflicts or creating new tensions or conflicts.	Willingness and ability of informal workforce and farmers to adopt hereto 'innovative/appropriate' agricultural methods. Tanzania Horticultural Association's (a private membership organisation) commitment and ability to develop and implement sustainable and

	<p>Achieved by working with state and non-state actors (civil society and private sector) to increase knowledge of productive and sustainable agricultural methods, especially for small scale farmers.²⁰⁵</p>	<p>inclusive growth in the horticultural industry.</p> <p>Equitable availability and accessibility of financial services necessary to transition to 'innovative/appropriate' agricultural methods. Both for potentially purchasing new equipment and enduring temporary losses.</p> <p>Equitable availability and accessibility of education necessary to upskill to innovative/appropriate agricultural methods.</p> <p>Proposed agricultural methods are also aligned with/can be reconciled with land use needs of other non-agricultural groups (Pastoralists, fishers, industry investors etc.)</p>
<p>3: Inclusive economic development</p>	<p>Efforts contribute to increased social security for the most marginalised (specifically implementing the national social security system Productive Social Safety Net (PSSN)).</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chairing (with the World Bank) the donor group for the PSSN, • working with state actors. 	<p>Willingness and capacity of government authorities to implement the PSSN.</p> <p>Continued support and participation of other donors, including the World Bank.</p> <p>PSSN prevents conflict being triggered by providing a buffer/social net against changes in the economic climate (particularly in relation to youth).</p>
<p>4: Environment and climate</p>	<p>Efforts contribute to improving management of natural resources and thereby removing it as a conflict driver, without unintentionally exacerbating conflicts and tensions related to the management of natural resources in parts of the country.</p> <p>Achieved by working with Tanzanian state and non-state actors (civil society</p>	<p>National Environment Management Council (NEMC) and Vice President's Office commitment to the development and implement environment related regulations and legislation.</p> <p>Quality and appropriateness of Naturvårdsverket's advice to NEMC and Vice President's Office on</p>

²⁰⁵ Sida, 'Strategiplan för Tanzania 2021-2023, 12 november 2020.

	<p>and private sector), and other Swedish actors to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regulations and mechanisms for conflict resolution. • management models for a sustainable use of <p>B. natural resources that ensure livelihood opportunities and development.²⁰⁶</p>	<p>environment related regulations and legislation, and the Tanzanian authorities' receptiveness to advice.</p> <p>Willingness and capacity of public and government authorities to engage in sustainable management of natural resources.</p> <p>Accessibility, effectiveness, and trust in developed regulations and mechanisms for conflict resolution.</p> <p>Willingness of affected parties to engage in conflict resolution.</p> <p>Willingness of targeted groups to engage with sustainable use of natural resources.</p>
4: Environment and climate	<p>Efforts contribute to increased access to renewable energy and improved energy efficiency whereby alleviating pressure on natural resources and removing it as a conflict driver, without exacerbating conflicts and tensions. Achieved by working with state and non-state actors (civil society and private sector) to develop and adopt use of renewable energy options.</p>	<p>Willingness and capacity of public and government authorities to engage in development and adopt use of renewable energy options.</p> <p>Benefits of renewable energy options can be distributed/are experienced equitably and do not create new winners and losers that lead to conflict.</p> <p>C.</p>
Across strategic objectives		
Absence of unintentional harm caused.		
Other unintended (negative and positive) outcomes, such as:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legitimisation effects, • market effects, • substitution effects, • theft/diversion. 		
Missed opportunities.		
Contributions to peace or social cohesion.		

Impact

²⁰⁶ Sida, 'Strategiplan för Tanzania 2021-2023, 12 November 2020.

These outcomes would then lead to the overall **IMPACT** of the integration of the conflict perspective. As a result, Sweden's development cooperation with Tanzanian prevents and or mitigates unintended negative impacts and maximises positive impacts on peace and conflict dynamics:

- contributes to alleviating political and economic inequality as potential conflict drivers.
- contributes to alleviating land and water use disputes as a conflict driver.

The main goal for this strategy is poverty reduction and primary target group is women, children, and youth. The impact level is within the sphere of influence of Sida, but its contribution is one of many other contributions, external and internal to Tanzania. Sida is one of the biggest donors to Tanzania and plays an important role in the donor community in Tanzania. It is active in two high level dialogues with the Tanzania government, one as part of the EU and one as part of a broader donor configuration.

3.3 EVIDENCE AGAINST THEORY OF CHANGE

3.3.1 Evidence on inputs

The relevant inputs were largely in place however there was a gap in an in-country presence for Swedish-posted staff during November 2023 – August 2024. They were recalled to Stockholm due to security concerns. The Embassy was still open and there were still local staff working, nevertheless the in-country presence was weakened and ability to visit contributions during the period.

3.3.2 Evidence on outputs

A conflict analysis was not conducted for Tanzania at the strategic as it was not perceived to be necessary. The main analytical foundation for the Embassy's work was the MDPA, which identified conflict drivers such as land disputes, competition over natural resources (particularly energy and water), tensions between host communities and refugee populations in the Kigoma region, and structural violence in relation to changing gender dynamics.²⁰⁷ This is consistent with the approach of other donors and partners that have conducted context analyses but have not seen the need to conduct conflict analyses. For example neither the UN nor WB have seen the need for one.²⁰⁸ A review of other donor analytical tools, partner analyses and independent analyses substantiate that the main conflict drivers, connectors and dividers were identified in the MDPA.²⁰⁹ Interviews with Sida staff, partners, and independent experts support the conclusion that the use of the MDPA is a sufficient foundation for integrating conflict sensitivity.

²⁰⁷ Sida, *MDPA Tanzania*, November 2023. Chronic Poverty Advisory Network, Overseas Development Institute, 'Tanzania – Reflection on Multi-dimensional Poverty Analysis', 4 February 2021.

²⁰⁸ Interviews with Sida staff and UN staff.

²⁰⁹ UN Tanzania, Situation Analysis Tanzania for UNDAP II, UN Tanzania, Kigoma Joint Programme document.

3.3.3 Evidence on assumptions

- **Leadership:** Leadership has changed during the strategy period as is usual for an Embassy, there was a gap in leadership during November 2023 – August 2024, as Swedish-posted staff were recalled to Stockholm due to security concerns. There seems to be an appropriate level of leadership on this issue, with leadership recognising that the conflict perspective should be integrated throughout the portfolio. However, interviews with Sida staff (both leadership and programme officers) noted the conflict perspective is not seen as a priority perspective given Tanzania is viewed as stable context.
- **Human resources:** The knowledge of the concept and terminology ‘conflict sensitivity’ varied across staff. Those working with the themes of democracy and human rights, social cohesion, etc had responsibility for integrating conflict sensitivity and therefore to be tended more familiar with conflict sensitivity, than those working on other themes such as electricity or the environment. The team have also received support from the Human Security Helpdesk, for example in support of the MDPA process.²¹⁰
- **Incentives:** There is little evidence that there were incentives either formal or informal. There is mandatory reporting in the appraisal of each contribution that support the integration of conflict sensitivity but there are limited other mechanisms that incentivise staff to systematically consider its integration. According to staff interviews, it is just one of many perspectives to integrate and not viewed as a priority perspective.²¹¹

3.3.4 Evidence on short and medium terms outcomes and assumptions

Strategy level

At the strategy level there is some evidence from Sida’s internal documents and interviews with nine Sida staff that the conflict perspective was integrated across strategic planning, operationalisation and implementation.

- Explicit reference to the conflict perspective in both planning and reporting was not consistent, as it was mentioned in some strategy plans and reports,²¹² and not in others.²¹³ There is a general trend that reporting on the conflict perspective has improved since it was first introduced.

²¹⁰ Chronic Poverty Advisory Network, Overseas Development Institute, ‘Tanzania – Reflection on Multi-dimensional Poverty Analysis’, 4 February 2021.

²¹¹ Interviews with 9 Sida staff.

²¹² Explicitly considered in 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 reports. Sida. 2018. Internal document – Strategy report for 2018. p.8; Sida. 2019. Internal document – Strategy report for 2019. p.9. Sida. 2022. Internal document – Strategy report for 2021. p.6. Sida. 2023. Strategy report for development cooperation with Tanzania 2020-2024. p.9.

²¹³ Not mentioned in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 plans, or 2020 report. Sida. 2016. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2017; Sida. 2017. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2018; Sida. 2018. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2019; Sida. 2020. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2021-23; Sida. 2021. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2022-24; Sida. 2021. Internal document – Strategy report for 2020.

- There is also evidence that harm and negative effects were considered at the strategy level, to the extent that changes in the political context that may require adaptations in programming to avoid harm were identified, including turbulence in relation to the elections, shrinking democratic space for civil society and media.²¹⁴
- However, in general negative effects and harm were not reported on at the strategy level even if there is evidence they were experienced in individual contributions. This may be because they were generally resolved during the lifecycle of the contribution.
- Even where the perspective itself was not noted, plans and reports at the strategy level did identify conflict drivers such as conflict over natural resources,²¹⁵ over access to energy between host and refugee communities in the Kigoma region,²¹⁶.
- There was also evidence strategic level reporting on efforts to address conflict drivers, such as several complementary contributions (LTSP, Parallel CSO support, LHRC, and PINGOS Forum) on land rights disputes.²¹⁷

Sida staff maintain an **updated understanding of the context** in Tanzania by through a variety of sources, including Embassy process such as the MDPA, local news, dialogue and regular visits with partners, partner analyses, expert analyses, and meetings with other donors.²¹⁸ Partners reported in interviews and the survey view Sida as having a good understanding of the Tanzanian context, both in relation to the national level and contributions.

Sida staff and partners interviewed show an **understanding of the concept of the conflict perspective** but to varying degree and not always fully in line with the Sida understanding, where both potential positive and negative effects are considered.

- Amongst both Sida staff and partners, those working with the themes of democracy and human rights, social cohesion, etc tended to be more familiar with conflict sensitivity, than those working on other themes such as electricity or the environment.
- Many partners, as noted in interviews, were not familiar with the terminology of ‘conflict sensitivity’ even if they were implementing many of its principles. The majority if not all were familiar with the principle of ‘do no harm’ and avoiding negative effects and consequently were actively implemented it. However, there was less awareness of the positive aspects e.g. to maximise opportunities for peace and social cohesion.

²¹⁴ Sida. 2016. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2016; Sida. 2017. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2017.

²¹⁵ Sida. 2021. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2022-24; Sida. 2022. Internal document - Strategy plan for development cooperation with Tanzania 2020-24.

²¹⁶ Sida. 2018. Internal document - Strategy plan for 2018.

²¹⁷ Sida. 2015. Internal document – Strategy report for 2015; Sida. 2017. Internal document – In-depth strategy report 2016 for the strategy for development cooperation with Tanzania 2013-2019. Sida. 2023. Strategy report for development cooperation with Tanzania 2020-2024. p.9.

²¹⁸ Based on interviews with Sida staff and review of internal documents.

- Many Sida staff and partners did not see the conflict perspectives as a priority for Tanzania in comparison to other countries, because Tanzania is viewed as a stable country and have armed conflict. However further discussion, particularly with partners, revealed that they found the tenants of conflict sensitivity to be very relevant. Even though there is not a nationwide conflict and incidence of armed conflict is low in Tanzania there are tensions and conflicts at various levels of society (household, community and regional) and partners noted that they engaged with these as part of their work. For example, Sida's work on human rights often challenges existing power structures/the status quo and this social change process can initiate/exacerbate tensions.
- Possible that there were missed opportunities in terms of conflict prevention and maximising social cohesion due to lack of awareness (e.g. in one contribution that dealt with the environment, there has been an increase in effects of climate change/landslides etc leading to displacement and movements of populations/resource tensions. Partner reflected that they were focusing on the environment technical aspect but in hindsight could have included something on community cohesion.)

In terms of **partner selection**, the capacity to implement the conflict sensitivity is neither the strongest nor a strong determinant for the selection of Sida partners in Tanzania. The conflict perspective is considered to the extent that it is a mandatory section in some of the appraisal of interventions.²¹⁹ However given the difficulty with the terminology of conflict sensitivity, it is instructive to note that the do-harm-aspect seems to have been accepted as a precondition for approving all contributions, while the assessments in the project appraisals tend to discuss if the contribution will work on a conflict driver or if there is a peacebuilding goal identified.²²⁰ It is not viewed as a priority perspective for Sida, it is more often partners' ability to achieve results under the strategy objective areas and other aspects that determines whether they are selected as a Sida partner.²²¹ Though it is important to note that the partner's understanding of the context and ability to work on a specific topic in an effective manner, both of which are essential for conflict sensitivity, are prioritised.

According to interviews with Sida staff, there is significant confusion around the use of the **conflict prevention marker**. Sida assign it as part of the initial entry of the contribution into the system and in general seem to view it as indication of whether the contribution has a peacebuilding goal, rather than reflect integration of the conflict perspective. Many of the staff interviewed had not assigned the CP marker value and had not specifically considered it since taking over management of the contribution.

There is evidence of strategy level adaptations, including:

²¹⁹ Review of Sida appraisal of interventions for 12 contributions.

²²⁰ Review of Sida appraisal of interventions for 12 contributions.

²²¹ Interviews with Sida staff.

- Introduction of supporting contributions to address conflict sensitivity positive and negative effects encountered in existing contributions, for example the Parallel Land Tenure Support to CSOs was introduced both to address potential negative effects of the LTSP such as further marginalisation of certain groups, and because CSOs were better placed to foster/implement community level resolution of land disputes.
- Discontinuing or reframing of certain human rights projects, in light of the shrinking space for this work in Tanzania.

Contribution level

Partners have a strong understanding of the local context and in particular in relation to the themes they are working with, such as land management or gender equality. Partners generally did not conduct project level conflict analyses or other formal analyses processes but relied on more informal avenues, their location in and long-term connections to the communities in which they worked. The exception to this was the WB and UN that did conduct both national and project level analyses as required by their own internal procedures, they tended to also have much larger projects in terms of scope and expenditure.²²²

There is some evidence that Sida and partners **monitor and adapt** contribution implementation in relation to conflict sensitivity or change in context. However, the lack of a specific section on the conflict perspective in the conclusion on performance or completion memo, make it difficult to know. Presently the emphasis on conflict sensitivity is at the beginning of the process, where there is mandatory reporting on all of the perspectives. However, there is no specific section or requirement for reporting conflict sensitivity in the completion memo or confusion on performance. Partners and Sida POs reported that monitoring and CS related adaptations were usually taken up as part of the partner dialogue.

Many partners did not have well-developed formal systems and procedures for recording and monitoring conflict sensitivity but instead, relied on informal processes where partners received information during regular interaction with the effected communities and then the context and potential adaptations were discussed on an ad-hoc needs-basis amongst colleagues.²²³ There are examples of more formal processes, such as the UN joint Kigoma project where complaints boxes, regular meetings with community leaders and other mechanism are used. The UN resident coordinators office also offers regular reporting on conflict sensitivity that donors can opt to receive. Or the World Bank's Grievance Mechanism.

3.3.5 Evidence on long-term outcomes

1: Human rights, democracy, rule of law, gender equality

Negative outcomes

²²² Interviews with Sida POs, UN staff, and internal documentation from UN and WB.

²²³ Review on partner internal documentation and interviews with partners.

ZLSC	Potential harm by association The decision by the ZLSC to continue to work on the re-run of the 2015 election in 2016 despite the fact that the opposition chose to boycott the election, led to allegations of political bias. ²²⁴ This had the potential for reputational risk, compromising ZLSC's other activities, and harm by association with them for organisations and individuals they work with. The ZLSC were mindful of this and took steps to address it – the most concrete being the decision to provide human rights awareness and training to both major political parties to dispel the notion that they favour one over the other. ²²⁵
ZLSC	Potential harm by association The decision to assist children in conflict with the law led to allegations that the Centre protects 'criminals'). This is a problem that all organisations providing support to those accused of crime face that can only be partly addressed through increased public awareness. ²²⁶
14693 - Twaweza Tanzania Program Support 2021-2024	Risk of individual level harm There are indications of risks of physical or psychological harm to community monitors or Waraghibishi due to retaliation from authorities or powerholders who felt threatened by accountability initiatives. One community mobilizer, in Pangani stated, "We were summoned several times by the ward executive officer for allegedly inciting citizens, but once we clarified our role, they understood." ²²⁷
14693 - Twaweza Tanzania Program Support 2021-2024	Temporary community/regional level negative effects Programs that stimulated political debate or scrutiny of local officials ran the risk of instigating backlash from political actors. The initial rollout of Sauti za Wananchi drew negative attention from authorities and led to temporary withholding of funding in select regions. ²²⁸
15725 - TGNP STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 -2025	Risk of individual harm According to interviews with partners and recipients there was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of backlash or intimidation against women entering political leadership in male-dominated spaces.²²⁹ • Political resistance from entrenched patriarchal norms and structures. Internalized gender bias among their communities.²³⁰
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	The establishment of the Mvugwe AMCOS aggregation centre triggered tensions Initially the planned location and planning process for the warehouse for selling and storing crops caused tension between the Nyamidau and Mvugwe villages. During

²²⁴ Sida. 2018. Internal document – Completion Memo. p.2-3.

²²⁵ Moran, Greg., Clarence Kipobota and Johanna Lindgren Garcia. 2017. End of Strategy Evaluation of the Zanzibar Legal Services Centre. Sida. p.47.

²²⁶ Sida. 2018. Internal document – Completion Memo. p.2-3.

²²⁷ VIJO Pangani Report, 2023

²²⁸ Evaluation of Twaweza, Sida 2021.

²²⁹ Interviews with Morogoro DC and Majohje Ward Councillors. 2025.

²³⁰ Majohje Ward Interview, 2025.

	<p>the planning phase, most activities and meetings were held at Mvugwe's village office. This made it difficult for Nyamidau residents to attend or feel represented. As a result, there were tensions over the warehouse's location and feelings of exclusion. This led to construction-related disputes, where guards were attacked and materials stolen.²³¹</p>
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	<p>Early backlash against the participation of women in the aggregation centre</p> <p>The cooperative structure of the aggregation centre and training empowered women to own property, manage income, and lead agricultural activities. The operators of the Mvugwe AMCOS aggregation centre highlighted however, that despite efforts, female participation faced early resistance. Some women were discouraged from attending meetings or storing food in the warehouse without permission from their spouses. For many women increased voice and visibility came with family tensions. For instance, some men accused their wives of hiding income, or suspected affairs when women attended training in town. Although this still persists, members of the community noted that for some households it has also opened new dialogues on equality and mutual respect, while women's participation is becoming more acceptable at a community level as they see women own land and co-manage harvests.²³²</p>
Positive outcomes	
ZLSC	<p>Reduced violence</p> <p>ZLSC training of police officers in particular was cited as a contributing factor to low levels of violence by the police during the 2015 election and an increase in reporting of cases of violence against women and children to the police.²³³</p>
ZLSC	<p>Reduced violence</p> <p>The partner reported in an interview that awareness training for the community and leaders on election legislation, principle of tolerance, and importance of peaceful elections in relation to the 2015 elections reduced/prevented election related violence. An evaluation of ZLSC confirms that the training took place and partially supports that it improved tolerance.²³⁴</p>
ZLSC	<p>Avoided harm by association</p> <p>According to an interview with the partner, they ensure that individuals and organisations are not in harm/experience negative effects due to affiliation with them by taking a non-partisan stance and collaborating with a variety of stakeholders across the political spectrum: religious leaders, traditional leaders, government, opposition.</p>
ZLSC	<p>Community and leadership awareness of human rights increases tolerance</p>

²³¹ Focus group T44

²³² Focus group T44.

²³³ Based on anecdotal evidence cited in Moran, Greg., Clarence Kipobota and Johanna Lindgren Garcia. 2017. End of Strategy Evaluation of the Zanzibar Legal Services Centre. Sida. p.49. Also mentioned in interview with partner.

²³⁴ Moran, Greg., Clarence Kipobota and Johanna Lindgren Garcia. 2017. End of Strategy Evaluation of the Zanzibar Legal Services Centre. Sida. p.47-49.

	<p>In addition to other legal activities, ZLSC also conducts awareness raising on individuals' rights and leaders' duties. According to an interview with the partner they observed change in attitudes and behaviour at the community level as a result of awareness raising. Individuals, groups, and leaders were more tolerant of each other as they became aware of their rights and options for having them addressed (e.g via alternate dispute resolution, courts, taking the issue to the Sheha, organising to support particular legislation or reform). As a result, there was less tension or tendency to resort to negative measures (harassment or violence) when they knew other non-violent channels were available. Leaders were also more responsive (evidenced by their behaviour or legal reform) as they became better aware of human rights and their obligations.²³⁵</p>
ZLSC	<p>Potentially decreased tensions</p> <p>In an interview with ZLSC, they stated that the provision of legal assistance to opposition figures and journalists in prevented violence as opposition followers did not have to resort to violent protests to communicate their views.²³⁶ Eventually the incumbent and the opposition came to an agreement and formed a unity government. We were not able to validate this with Sida or fieldwork as the contribution was more than years old.</p>
CHRAGG via ILPI	<p>Potentially mitigate conflict</p> <p>The International law and policy institute identified the Commission on Human Rights and Good Governance as being able to play an important role before, during and after the elections with a range of conflict prevention and mitigation efforts in an extremely politically complex environment.</p> <p>The conclusion on performance notes that the project "delivered what it set out to do" and that the CHRAGG conducted observation missions during campaign, elections, and results periods, and that it was the only institution to criticize the annulment of the elections on Zanzibar. However, it doesn't state whether it prevented conflict.²³⁷</p>
14693 - Twaweza Tanzania Program Support 2021-2024	<p>Addressing root causes of conflict through inclusive platforms</p> <p>The project addressed exclusion, poor governance, and mistrust through inclusive platforms that facilitated communication between citizens and duty-bearers. Communities used interface meetings to resolve service delivery delays collaboratively.²³⁸</p>
14693 - Twaweza Tanzania Program	<p>Strengthened social cohesion</p> <p>Twaweza reported that dialogue sessions helped foster respect across political and gender divides, while Waraghibishi bridged divides between communities and leaders. This was validated by interviews with recipients in Mwera "After the dialogue, the councilor visited our village for the first time in three years."²³⁹</p>

²³⁵ Anecdotal evidence from interview with partner.

²³⁶ Anecdotal evidence from interview with partner.

²³⁷ Sida. 2016. Internal document – Completion memo.

²³⁸ Twaweza Outcome Journal, 2022.

²³⁹ Interviews with direct recipients, 2025.

Support 2021-2024	
14693 - Twaweza Tanzania Program Support 2021-2024	Strengthening inclusivity and governance contributes to social cohesion The project empowered previously marginalised groups, such as women and youth, to participate in local decision-making. Local leaders confirmed that youth councils and women's groups increasingly tabled development priorities in ward meetings. ²⁴⁰
12829 - Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) Core Support 2019-2024	LHRC supported communities to advocate for their rights peacefully and prevented escalation of tensions in relation to land grabs for luxury hunting tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Maasai communities in Loliondo faced land tenure insecurity due to government plans to evict residents out of the game reserves leased to private companies, who had acquired the land for luxury hunting tourism.²⁴¹ • Public owned Conservation Authorities — Tanzania National Park Authority (TANAPA), Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA), and Tanzania Forest Service (TFS) were implicated in forced evictions of local residents, livestock confiscation, and violence against communities living near protected areas. LHRC supported communities to address these issues via peaceful means. They took actions by organizing, demanding their rights in the new land use survey processes, taking up peaceful protests and where needed filing petitions to government authorities in Loliondo Division, Ngorongoro District (Arusha Region). ²⁴²
12829 - Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) Core Support 2019-2024	LHRC supported communities to advocate for their rights peacefully and prevented escalation of tensions in relation to alleged abuses by North Mara Gold Mine Company security personnel of the North Mara Gold Mine, operated by Acacia Mining (now taken over by Barrick Gold), are alleged to have engaged in frequent abuses: including killings, injuries, and forced displacements. Villagers in North Mara, Tarime District (Mara Region), affected by mining operations at the North Mara Gold Mine and facing displacement threats and human rights abuses have been supported by LHRC to build capacity to document abuses and seek redress through the courts and public advocacy. This has contributed to improved monitoring of company practices and opened up room for discussions not only on abused victims but also on more equitable benefit sharing.
12829 - Legal and Human Rights Centre	In Mwanza and Shinyanga Regions, cases of pastoralist and farming communities experienced pressure from land grabbing and encroachment were minimized through peaceful means.

²⁴⁰ Twaweza Midterm Report, 2022.²⁴¹ Otterlo Business Corporation (OBC)²⁴² Interview with partner.

(LHRC) Core Support 2019-2024	LHRC supported communities to use formal ways of redressing the challenges by filing formal complaints with local authorities and the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance, which has helped to halt some unlawful land acquisitions.
12829 - Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) Core Support 2019-2024	In Kilosa District (Morogoro Region) conflicts emerging between large-scale agricultural investors and smallholder farmers, threatening customary landholdings have been eliminated. Disputes over land between local communities and commercial agricultural investors had previously led to violent clashes in the past, fueled by misinformation, personal interests and lack of legal literacy. LHRC have assisted in empowering communities to actively engage in village council meetings and voice their concerns over land-use planning processes as a peaceful means to assert their rights.
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	Sida and partners adapted in response to the changes in the context and learned from monitoring and evaluation The KJP II itself is an example of learning whereby UN Tanzania and Sida realised that programming only for the refugee community had the potential exacerbate tensions in the region and designed a more inclusive programme for the second phase that emphasised inclusive planning (with quotas for host communities), and balanced resource sharing. ²⁴³
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	Sida and partners were flexible and willing to adapt to the context One partner noted that Sida-funded vocational centres received support to improve feedback systems, build staff capacity on gender and conflict sensitivity, and test new adaptive management tools to support responsive implementation. ²⁴⁴ There are also many examples of adaptations made throughout the life cycle of the programme, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sida support enabled the Danish Refugee Council to introduce alternative energy solutions, such as briquette production and improved stoves following community grievances over firewood.²⁴⁵ • Sida facilitated the inclusion of modern skills such as digital literacy and entrepreneurship as youth interests shifted,²⁴⁶ or supported expanding into kitchen gardening and integrated poultry-fish farming when new needs emerged to ensure vocational training remained impactful and relevant.²⁴⁷ • When conflict arose around selection bias for training programs (participants were suggested by local leaders and it was perceived that favoured family members and friends), Sida supported the shift towards transparent enrolment methods such as public announcements.²⁴⁸

²⁴³ United Nations Tanzania. 2017. UN Kigoma Joint Programme. Interviewee T31.

²⁴⁴ Interviewee 43.

²⁴⁵ Interviewee T42.

²⁴⁶ Interviewee T42.

²⁴⁷ Interviewee T43.

²⁴⁸ Interviewee T43.

	<p>"They listened when we said things weren't working. And they supported us to try new things instead of insisting we stick to plan A."²⁴⁹</p>
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	<p>Responding to and mitigating conflict between the Mvugwe and Nyamidau villages in relation to the Mvugwe aggregation centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following initial conflict over the Mvugwe aggregation centre efforts were taken • to mitigate conflict and in particular address the concerns and exclusion felt by • the Nyamidau village. Individuals operating the centre stated that this was • achieved by; taking the decision to build the warehouse at the border between • Mvugwe and Nyamidau to be equidistant, including various social groups, and • introducing transparent processes to reduce some inequalities. There were also awareness sessions for youth, women, and people with disabilities. Despite the initial resistance, the policy of open access eased tensions and created common economic incentives. Now the aggregation centre is a neutral, shared space for residents from Mvugwe and Nyamidau.²⁵⁰
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	<p>Conflict mitigation by integrating local farmers into the refugee food provision</p> <p>In the past, food insecurity in refugee camps led to theft and field raids, creating hostilities between refugees and host communities (in this case farmers). The project mitigated conflict by integrating local farmers into the World Food Programme's supply chain, meaning host communities now provide food directly to the camps. The refugees buy food from the farmers via the WFP. This shift not only increased farmer income but also reduced resentment and fear.²⁵¹</p>
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	<p>Refugee-host community peacebuilding through collaborative approaches to energy</p> <p>One notable intervention addressed tensions over firewood collection. In response to community grievances, DRC introduced alternative energy solutions, such as briquette production and improved stoves. The initiative has a collaborative approach with host communities supplying raw materials and refugees handling briquette production. These activities strengthened interdependence, providing mutual economic benefit and reducing environmental pressure. This helped shift the narrative from competition and conflict over resources to joint problem-solving and trust-building.²⁵²</p>
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	<p>Fostering social cohesion through shared education</p> <p>A key strategy for fostering social cohesion has been the joint participation of refugees and host community members in vocational training, according to a representative from the Danish Refugee Council.²⁵³ The inclusive structure of Multipurpose Community Centres encourages cooperation beyond formal learning, leading to shared business ventures, exchange of goods, and mutual support networks. In some cases, former trainees have started joint enterprises and</p>

²⁴⁹ Interviewee T43.

²⁵⁰ Focus group T44.

²⁵¹ Focus group T44.

²⁵² Interviewee T42.

²⁵³ Interviewee T42.

	<p>maintained strong interpersonal relationships that extend into daily life. Also, kitchen gardening and small-scale agriculture taught at these centres promote economic interdependence, as people exchange vegetables and surplus produce, between host community and refugees.²⁵⁴ Shared educational experiences have enhanced interpersonal bonds, enabled constructive, income-generating outlets and fostered informal social integration.</p> <p><i>“We used to see them as different. Now we learn together and support each other’s businesses. We even attend each other’s weddings.” Vocational beneficiary as quoted by DRC.</i>²⁵⁵</p> <p>The positive effects of these centres are substantiated by members of the host community, who noted in a focus group that:</p> <p><i>“Refugees built schools, clinics, and our kids now learn alongside theirs. We now have a good-neighbour relationship.”</i>²⁵⁶</p>
UNDAP II – Kigoma Joint Project	<p>Conflict prevention and mitigation via participative planning and programming</p> <p>A representative of UNHCR stated that tensions between refugee and host communities were mitigated by structured systems and regular inclusive meetings where both communities’ interests were represented. Structured systems included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fixed beneficiary quotas for refugees and host communities for vocational training to ensure inclusive opportunities, • controlled distribution systems whereby firewood is rationed to prevent resource conflicts, as well as deforestation and encroachment, • participatory needs assessments are conducted annually to ensure training services reflect real priorities from both populations. <p>In addition, UNHCR facilitate Quarterly Peaceful Coexistence Forums, which gather leaders from both refugee and host communities to discuss issues openly, review program impact, and find joint solutions.²⁵⁷ The representatives from UNHCR and DRC noted that these measures had markedly decreased tensions and fostered social cohesion. Statements from members of the community during a focus group supported these findings.</p>
3: Inclusive economic development	
Negative outcomes	
PSSN II	<p>Potential harm related to mistargeting of programme participants</p> <p>Potential harm related to mistargeting of programme participants according to the Sida PO and WB reporting,²⁵⁸ but not validated as partners did not respond to requests for interview.</p>
Positive outcomes	
None recorded.	
4: Environment and climate	

²⁵⁴ Interviewee T43.

²⁵⁵ Interviewee T42.

²⁵⁶ Focus group T44.

²⁵⁷ Interviewee T43.

²⁵⁸ Interview with

T17. World Bank. 2019. Project Appraisal.

Negative outcomes	
11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure Support Programme	<p>Temporary harm experienced at individual and community level due to changing gender dynamics</p> <p>WeEffect and TAWLA recognised that formalizing land rights in the Tanzania's patriarchal society, especially in rural areas, could worsen tensions if gender and cultural dynamics were not addressed. For example, it flagged that mapping and documentation without inclusive, community-sensitive processes can trigger resentment or exacerbate unresolved disputes.²⁵⁹</p> <p>Specific risks included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Individual level:</i> Physical or psychological backlash for women asserting land rights.²⁶⁰ • <i>Household level:</i> Family tensions due to women's land claims or joint titling disrupting traditional norms.²⁶¹ <p>These negative effects did occur, with harm experienced at the individual and household level. However, through TAWLA's community mediation and education, most of these tensions were resolved.²⁶²</p>
Positive outcomes	
11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure Support Programme	<p>Increased social cohesion by engaging with faith leaders on gender dynamics</p> <p>Collaboration with religious leaders helped reduce community-level resistance to gender equity, leading to stronger community trust and inclusive decision-making (Mkangawalo Case) - Mkangawalo Case – Mkangawalo village initially resisted women's land rights. TAWLA engaged faith leaders using scripture, shifting attitudes. Religious leaders began preaching land justice, promoting acceptance of women's land ownership.²⁶³</p>
11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure Support Programme	<p>Prevented exacerbating tensions by excluding specific villages from the initial programme</p> <p>Sida documents and partner consultations identified risks of escalating inter-village tensions due to unresolved land boundaries, overlapping borders, and contested demarcation processes.²⁶⁴ Villages such as Ikule and Signal were flagged early by TAWLA for exclusion to prevent exacerbating conflict.²⁶⁵ Interviews with local government authorities collaborate that this was an effective approach.²⁶⁶</p>

²⁵⁹ Interviews with partners.

²⁶⁰ Interviews with partners. Field Interviews with community Champions in Mlimba district.

²⁶¹ Interviews with partners. Field Interviews with community Champions in Mlimba district.

²⁶² Interviews with partners. Field Interviews with community Champions in Mlimba district.

²⁶³ Interviews in Mlimba 2025; confirmed in TAWLA Final Report, 2019 (pp. 15–17, 21–23).

²⁶⁴ Sida. 2017. Internal document - Appraisal of Intervention.

²⁶⁵ Interviews with TAWLA.

²⁶⁶ Interview with local government authorities, Mlimba district 2025.

11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure Support Programme	<p>Participative approaches to establishing legal infrastructure encouraged acceptance of non-violent dispute resolution.</p> <p>The formulation of village-level bylaws was a cornerstone of TAWLA's intervention. As noted by the District Land Officer, TAWLA facilitated participatory drafting and approval of these bylaws, providing each village with six copies — including for paralegals — to strengthen local governance structures. "We didn't have the budget for this as a council," he said. "TAWLA filled that gap, giving villages legal tools for fair land decisions."²⁶⁷ The village bylaws are an important component of the legal framework necessary for land governance and thereby provide legal avenues for dispute resolution.²⁶⁸</p>
11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure Support Programme	<p>Conflict reduction</p> <p>A clear positive effect was the dramatic decline in land disputes. The Ward Tribunal Chairman in Itongowa explained that "after the formalisation of land, cases have significantly decreased — I can say disputes have dropped by about 95%." Prior to the project, tribunals handled up to 20 land cases daily. Today, land conflicts are nearly non-existent, with most remaining disputes involving marriage or inheritance.²⁶⁹ This is supported by an article published in IIED that noted Reports of land-related conflicts have decreased in the Kisarawe, Kilombero and Ulanga districts, as villagers and local government actors now better understand the rules governing land and avenues for resolution.²⁷⁰</p>
11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure Support Programme	<p>Peace and social cohesion</p> <p>Perhaps the most powerful testament came from the communities themselves. Before the project, "relations between farmers and pastoralists were like cats and dogs," said the Ifakara Paralegal Centre. After education and land use zoning, "they now live together peacefully" stated an Ifakara paralegal. The zoning process involved all groups — women, elders, youth, farmers, and pastoralists — and helped reduce tensions through clear demarcation and designated land use.</p>
11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure	<p>Potential positive effects for sustainable development</p> <p>Land value increased dramatically after demarcation and registration. In Mkangawalo village, a paralegal reported that an acre of land that previously sold for TZS 150,000–300,000 now sells for TZS 1–4 million due to surveying, access roads, and land use planning.²⁷¹ Some individuals used title deeds as collateral to access loans through local government lending schemes — a key pathway for economic growth, especially among women and youth.²⁷²</p>

²⁶⁷ Interview with local government authorities in Mlimba.

²⁶⁸ Interviews with champions and local government authorities in Mlimba.

²⁶⁹ Interview with Ward Tribunal Chairmen in Mblimba District.

²⁷⁰ Philipine Sutz, Amaelle Seigneret, and Mary Richard. August 2019. How local rules can promote inclusive land governance, in International Institute for Environment and Development: London. p.3.

²⁷¹ Interview with TAWLA-trained paralegal.

²⁷² Interviews with local government authorities.

3.3.6 Evidence of impact

The impact level is defined as changes at the national or whole of strategic area objective level. There is no evidence of harm or negative effects on peace and conflict dynamics from Sweden's development cooperation with Tanzania and as result, it appears that Sida and partners were able to prevent and mitigate negative impacts. The impact of contributions to maximising positive effects on peace and conflicts is more difficult to discern, as Sida strategy level reporting does not aggregate to this level, nor are partners able monitor effects beyond their own projects. In addition, although Sweden is one of the bigger donors in Tanzania and has a more influential role in Tanzania than in other contexts, but it is still only one of several actors working to address the numerous development concerns. There are two examples of potential impact level change:

1. Supporting refugee-host community relations in the Kigoma region

The impact of the integration of the conflict perspective in the KJP II is that:

- it has prevented and or mitigated negative impacts in the locations of implementation. In general, the programme foresaw and prevented, or responded to and mitigated harm/, tensions/ conflict that were experienced in the community as part of programme implementation. These were largely short-term and overcome (participant selection processes for training, location of aggregation centre) however, the change in women's roles and gender relations in the community is a complex social process that will continue to be an important consideration for programming.
- It has maximised positive impacts on peace and conflict dynamics in the region by: seeking to address some of the root causes of conflict (alternative sources to firewood as an energy source, lack of/unequal access to livelihood opportunities), and fostering a shared, participative approach to common challenges that encourage refugee-host communities, and intra-host communities to work together to find shared solutions rather than to compete with each other.

As such, Sida has contributed to alleviating political and economic inequality between refugees and host communities, and resource disputes as potential conflict drivers in the region through its support of the KJP. This support has consisted of both flexible funding and as a responsive and constructive donor that appreciates the importance of conflict sensitive and peacebuilding programming, even in other themes/sectors of programming.

The influx of refugees from neighbouring Burundi and DRC is a contentious issue in Tanzania. By supporting initiatives to address tensions and to improve peace between refugee and host communities in the Kigoma region, is not only beneficial for this region but ensures that disputes in this region do not escalate to national level tensions over the presence of refugees in Tanzania.

2. Addressing land disputes as a conflict driver

Sida supported several contributions that worked on land disputes as a conflict driver from various entry points across the country, together they had the potential for impact level change to reduce violence related to land disputes and institutionalise these conflicts with them being resolved by peaceful means. However, the Tanzanian government initiative that they were structured around, the land formalisation process, was discontinued and these initiatives have therefore also lost momentum.

3.4 ANSWERS TO EVALUATION QUESTIONS

3.4.1 EQ 1: To what extent did/does the Tanzania strategy respond to peace and conflict dynamics in the context and continue to do so if circumstances change?

Rubric – Level of adaptation: Sufficient

Rubric – Strength of evidence: Good

Strategy level

At the strategy level, the Tanzanian strategy team had a good understanding of the context and made sufficient efforts (drew on analytical tools such as MDPA, consultations with partners, review of external reliable sources) to inform their work at key points throughout the strategy lifecycle. Given the country's generally stable context, it appears that Sida's efforts were of an appropriate level of effort and in keeping with other donor practices. For example, the decision that the MDPA was sufficient to understand the context and a conflict analysis was not necessary.

Partners interviewed as part of the sample of contributions reported in interviews that they perceived Sida to have a good understanding of the context.

In terms of conflict sensitivity there appears to have been a good understanding of the concept at the strategy level. Both an understanding of the context and conflict sensitivity can be seen in the operationalisation and implementation of the strategy, evidenced by the composition of the portfolio, geographic spread, and to some degree in selection of partners. Conflict sensitivity capacity was considered in the selection of partners, but it was not a main focus. Even though the strategy does not have an explicit strategic objective area for conflict resolution or peacebuilding work usually expressed “peaceful and inclusive societies”, contributions addressed key conflict drivers identified in the MDPA and were targeted geographic areas where there were such issues, including natural resource-based conflicts, and tensions between refugee and host communities.

During this and the former strategy period changes were made at the strategy level to adapt to developments in the context. The most significant adaptations were made to the work under strategic area objective ‘1: Human rights, democracy, rule of law, gender equality’ as authoritarian tendencies manifested in repressive laws and practices towards the operation of NGOs and civil society increased the risks for many Sida partners both in terms of the physical safety and psychological wellbeing of staff and those associated with the partners, and their ability to fulfil the goals of the contribution. As a result, work had to be reframed, and goals adjusted to the

changing context. Other adaptations include adjusting several contributions to address concerns in relation to upcoming elections and tensions in Zanzibar, and in relation to refugee influxes.

Contribution level

At the contribution level, Sida staff generally maintained an understanding of the context through following media, analyses from partners who conducted research on different issues in Tanzania, consultations with partners and other donors, and field visits. Knowledge of the concept of conflict sensitivity varies across staff and tends to be higher among those that work on human rights and democracy or social protection or have worked on other contexts that were fragile or conflict-affected/post-conflict. In general, the do-no-harm of conflict sensitivity has been institutionalised at Sida and the “conflict perspective” part of contribution appraisals were usually written from a do-no-harm-perspective without consideration of the “do-good” aspects of conflict sensitivity.

It is possible that there were missed opportunities in terms of conflict prevention, conflict reduction, and seizing opportunities to maximise social cohesion due to the different levels of understanding amongst Sida staff of conflict sensitivity. For instance, in one contribution that dealt with environmental and climate change issues, an increase in the incidences of landslides led to internal displacement that heightened resource-related tensions in neighbouring communities. In an interview with the partner, they reflected that they could have included an activity on community cohesion as part of the contribution instead of focusing solely on the technical aspects. It is not clear whether it would have been appropriate or useful to include an additional activity in this particular contribution, but it was an interesting reflection. In terms of processes for Sida the integration of conflict sensitivity is front-end focused as consideration of it is a mandatory part of the contribution appraisal documentation, however with no formal place or requirement for it to be reported on in the conclusion on performance or completion memo, monitoring and evaluation is ad hoc. It can occur as part of the partner dialogue but tends to be reactive to issues as they arise.

Overall partners had a good understanding of the context and some degree of understanding of the concept of conflict sensitivity. Generally, there wasn’t a formal context analysis process conducted as part of contribution design, the exception to this was the UN and World Bank, that both conducted national level and contribution level analyses. In regard to conflict sensitivity processes, it was typically dependent on the partner’s institutional context, for example larger multilateral partners (who also tended to receive larger funding) had more formal processes, policies, and regular feedback mechanisms for programme participants and the community, such as complaints boxes etc. Smaller NGOs and CSOs had fewer formal processes but were embedded in the community context and had well-established informal connections. Partners that were not familiar with the terminology of conflict sensitivity were nevertheless implementing the do-no-harm aspect. Several commented in interviews that the conflict sensitivity lens was useful and relevant to their work, as even though

there wasn't an armed conflict underway, there were community-level and household tensions to consider.

Sida and partners were found to be adaptive at contribution level and partners reported that Sida was a flexible and supportive donor. For example, supporting the inclusion of a new activity in an existing contribution to foster refugee-host community integration and cohesion in response to tension caused by increased refugee influxes. Or, adjusting a contribution to include engagement with community and faith leaders to address backlashes resulting from Sida-supported work on gender equality.

The main weakness in the processes for conflict sensitivity aside from a lack of formal reporting requirements for Sida and partners, is that information is largely partner dependent. Sida's ability to know if negative effects are occurring or positive effects are being achieved, is largely dependent on the partner's ability to identify these effects and their willingness to report them. Both Sida and partner staff reported in interviews that they felt they had a trust-based partnership that fostered open and honest dialogue, but it is nevertheless worth noting that monitoring and evaluation could be improved. A safeguard to this is Sida field visits with downstream partners and the community leaders and members where staff may be able to notice/receive feedback in relation to conflict sensitivity effects directly. Though there was no evidence that this has been an effective avenue for receiving information during the case study.

The conflict prevention marker was not implemented in accordance with the peace and security handbook. Most programme officers were unsure how it should be assigned. It was not used to monitor the integration of the conflict perspective at either the strategy nor the contribution level.

3.4.2 EQ 2: To what extent is the integration of conflict sensitivity in the implementation of the strategy contributing to outcomes? And if so/not, why?

Rubric – Significance of change: High

Rubric – Strength of evidence: Medium to high

There is evidence that the integration of conflict sensitivity in the implementation of the strategy contributes to both negative and positive outcomes.

There is evidence of negative effects. Harm and negative effects were generally short-term and addressed by adaptations in programming to some extent, for example:

- Complaints about programme participant selection processes due to perceptions of favouritism in UN KJP II. The UN responded to this by having calls/announcements for participants and a transparent selection process rather than referrals from the community.
- Short-term negative effects due to not adapting fast enough to change in the context, specifically the repressive legislation and practices towards NGOs and CSOs meant that programming needed to be reframed, and, in some cases, activities were phased out for organisations to able to continue to operate. There were incidences where this did not occur quickly enough or where certain

organisations took a more assertive approach, and their activities were halted with risks for their staff and those associated with them

- Harm associated with working to advance gender equality. Advancing gender equality is an important part of Sida's work in Tanzania, advancements in women's economic and land rights were often met with backlash by parts of the community, and at household level. These risks and eventual harm were often borne by individual women who faced harassment, isolation, and in one incidence was driven from their home. There were examples of countermeasures such as working with community leaders to normalise women owning land etc or working across contributions, with other organisations intervening/working complementarily on the issue. Nevertheless, the gains must be balanced consciously against the risks of harm.

There is evidence of prevention and mitigation of conflict at the contribution level.

Such as:

- Provision of alternate energy resources diffused conflicts between refugee and host communities in the Kigoma region in the short-term.
- Participative livelihood opportunities for refugee and host communities that reduced tensions between these communities.
- Provision of legal support enabled individual and communities, to address their grievances related to land, human rights abuses, election issues, via peaceful means instead of violence.

There is evidence of contributions to maximise opportunities for peace and social cohesion at contribution level.

- Land title formalisation processes, accompanied by engagement with community leaders, and or the creation of forums where people could have their frustrations heard contributed to social cohesion in the short-term.
- Support to create and use participative and inclusive governance and legal processes contributed to social cohesion between refugees and host communities, agriculturalists and pastoralists, communities and corporations, marginalised groups and the broader community.

Overall, there was some evidence of negative effects that were mainly short-term and addressed during the contribution cycle by adaptations to the implementation to the contribution. There was also evidence of preventing and mitigating conflict, and maximising opportunities for peace and social cohesion, despite the strategy not having a specific peacebuilding goal.

The **significance** of observed changes is assessed as **high**, with evidence that CS integration has improved local legitimacy, community acceptance, and reduced grievances in specific interventions. However, given the weak monitoring and lack of formal requirements for systematic follow up processes for reporting conflict sensitivity specific outcomes in both Sida and partner processes it is possible that both negative and positive effects. This limited potential for portfolio wide learning and maximising positive practices at scale.

The **evidence base** is assessed as **medium to high**, drawing on interviews, fieldwork, and internal and external documentation.

3.4.3 EQ 3: What is the overall impact of the integration of the conflict perspective by Sida, Embassies of Sweden, and Sida's cooperation partners? What has Sida contributed to?

Rubric - Significance of change: Medium

Rubric – Level of contribution: Medium

Rubric - Strength of evidence: Medium

Impact level refers to effects that occur beyond the contribution level, they either have a larger scale effect (across multiple parts of the country) or across a specific sector. Assessing the impact of Sida's integration of the conflict sensitivity in Tanzania is difficult, given the size of the country, complicated nature of economic, political and social dynamics, and the multitude of donors and other actors active in the context. In addition, neither Sida nor partner reporting seeks to ascertain if there have been effects at the impact level. There is nevertheless evidence of impact level contributions to peace and social cohesion across multiple contributions in relation to host community and refugee relations, and regarding land rights disputes.

Positive effects for peace and social cohesion generally occurred when contributions addressed identified conflict drivers. This directly links to the strategy operationalisation process, where a sound analysis and integration of the conflict sensitivity in relation to portfolio-wide choices meant that contributions were well-positioned for positive effects. Having multiple contributions working on various aspects of land rights disputes worked together complementarily to produce results beyond those individual contributions. Partners found Sida to be a context-aware, flexible and adaptive donor that was open and responsive to designing and adapting contributions with conflict sensitivity in mind. At the same time, weak and partner-dependent monitoring systems for learning at contribution level and the lack of a strategy level system to systematically aggregate, measure or learn from cross-contribution lessons regarding negative and positive outcomes undermined the potential for further impacts at scale.

The **significance of change is assessed as medium**. Sida's funding and support to contributions targeting conflict drivers contributed positively to peace and social cohesion on those issues. These outcomes were important for peace and conflict dynamics in the given communities and thematic areas. Simultaneously, negative outcomes were short-term and localised and did not exacerbate conflict or cause harm to the extent that it overshadowed positive gains. However, the overall level of impact remains limited in scale and strategic significance. There is limited evidence of positive effects on peace and conflict dynamics at the national or strategic objective level.

Sida's **contribution to impact** is assessed as medium. Sida's contribution made a difference to the achievement of impact, but it was not the only factor. Sida's contribution was particularly strong for NGOs and CSOs that appreciated Sida's funding modality that enabled them to build-up institutional capacity, including in relation to conflict sensitivity, as well as implement projects. Sida's partnership style was also appreciated in the multi-donor funds where Sida was viewed as more flexible and willing to adapt contributions as a result of conflict sensitivity concerns,

and to draw attention to gender-related risks. Sida was often also a larger/the largest donor on specific themes such as gender equality and human rights. Many of the assumptions in the ToC held true to some extent in relation to strategy operationalisation, staff and partner capacity and contribution design, but not at the level of institutional monitoring and learning. Nevertheless, Sida was not the only donor or actor active in Tanzania or a specific sector during the strategy period and external factors also played an important role. For example, the sustainability of the work on land rights disputes is undermined by the current government's abandonment of the land formalisation process.

Strength of evidence is medium, based on triangulation across multiple reliable external sources including partners, affected-community leaders and community members, direct recipients, and expert interview and documentation. Nevertheless, weaknesses in conflict sensitivity reporting at impact level and availability of individuals that can speak to this level and have knowledge of Sida conflict sensitivity efforts limit the validity of aggregated impact claims.

3.5 SAMPLE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TANZANIA

1. 51170055 - Zanzibar Legal Services Centre (ZLSC) Core support for Strategic plan 2013-2017
2. 51170000 - Rural Electrification Tanzania
3. 11708 - Parallel CSO support (We Effect) to the Land Tenure Support Programme
4. 51170082 - Human Rights election conflict mitigation - CHRAGG via ILPI
5. 51170096 - Agricultural Markets Development Trust 2016-2025
6. 10154 - Private Agriculture Sector Support (PASS)
7. 51170098 - Tanzania UNDAP II
8. 12829 - Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) Core Support 2019-2024
9. 11235 - NEMC and VPO Environment Capacity Building Program (2019 - 2025)
10. 14350 - Productive Social Safety Net (PSSN) phase two
11. 14693 - Twaweza Tanzania Program Support 2021-2024
12. 15725 - TGNP STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 -2025

Central Evaluation of Conflict Sensitivity in Sida's Development and Humanitarian Cooperation

Purpose and use

This evaluation examines how Sida integrates conflict sensitivity across its strategies and operations, with the purpose of strengthening learning and improving how Sida's work affects peace and conflict dynamics.

Conclusion

It finds that conflict sensitivity is increasingly embedded in Sida's portfolio but applied unevenly across contexts. Stronger results emerge where analysis is continuous, partner capacity is high, and adaptation is proactive. Weak monitoring systems and inconsistent feedback loops limit learning and the ability to track outcomes or anticipate risks.

Recommendation

The evaluation recommends establishing minimum standards for conflict sensitivity across all strategies, ensuring regular context updates, strengthening monitoring, evaluation and learning systems with simple indicators, and proactively addressing recurring risks such as gender backlash, unequal targeting, and challenges linked to country exits.

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Visiting address: Rissneleden 110, 174 57 Sundbyberg
Postal address: Box 2025, SE-174 02 Sundbyberg, Sweden
Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64
E-mail: sida@sida.se Web: sida.se/en

