



International
Labour
Organization

► Resilience in conflict situations :

A toolkit for employer and
business membership organizations
and enterprises



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Resilience in conflict situations: A toolkit for employer and business membership organizations and enterprises

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► Introduction

In today's increasingly interconnected world, conflict situations such as wars, ethnic conflicts, and civil unrest are not confined to isolated regions; they have profound global implications. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), conflict and violence have forced over 117 million people to flee their homes in 2023.¹ In 2019, the Institute for Economics and Peace estimates the economic impact of conflict and violence on the global economy to be US\$14.4 million, which is equivalent to 10.5 per cent of the global gross domestic product.²

For employers, the impact of such conflicts extends beyond the immediate loss of life and property. The disruption of supply chains, instability in labour markets, and challenges in maintaining operations in conflict zones create significant risks for businesses. As global trends indicate a rise in both the frequency and complexity of conflicts, it is imperative for employers to be proactive in managing these situations. Addressing conflict not only helps safeguard the wellbeing of employees and the continuity of business operations but also contributes to broader efforts toward peace and stability.

In response to the global challenges, the international development agenda, encapsulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognizes the following:

- **Emphasis on decent work** - SDG 8 explicitly highlights the importance of decent work as a foundation for supporting families and communities.
- **Promotion of positive peace** - SDG 16 focuses on actively building and promoting positive peace rather than merely containing conflict.
- **Crisis prevention and resilience** - An emphasis is placed on preventing crises and building resilience to withstand them, guiding the implementation of development strategies.
- **Role of the private sector** - The role of the private sector in achieving these objectives is more prominent, acknowledging its critical contribution to sustainable development.

These four aspects are intricately interconnected. Conflict, natural disasters, and other crises exacerbate poverty, unemployment, and informality, creating a vicious cycle that deepens fragility and instability. The deterioration of social conditions within states of fragility can destabilize neighbouring countries, leading to cross-border challenges such as refugee flows, human trafficking, and increased criminality.

In alignment with these developments and the SDG framework, the International Labour Office (ILO) has developed a toolkit which supports employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs) and their enterprise members to foster decent work and sustainable business practices in areas prone to conflict situations. The toolkit offers a range of resources designed to help EBMOs promote a conducive and stable business environment by identifying and addressing the collective concerns of enterprises and propose positive changes before, during or after situations of conflict while supporting enterprises manage operations in conflict-affected zones while creating safe and inclusive working environments.

¹ UNHCR, [Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2023](#).

² Institute for Economics & Peace, [Economic value of peace 2021: Measuring the global economic impact of violence and conflict](#).

The toolkit is structured around the following five pillars:

- ▶ Assess risks and vulnerabilities - Evaluate risks at the enterprise level.
- ▶ Manage and minimize risks - Identify which risks can be effectively managed or minimized.
- ▶ Develop a business continuity plan - Ensure enterprises have a plan to continue operations during crises.
- ▶ Identify overarching constraints - Recognize broader constraints affecting the private sector.
- ▶ Develop collective responses - Formulate and implement proposals to address these constraints collectively.

What is the toolkit about?

The toolkit offers set of resources for EBMOs and enterprises to help build resilience to risks and vulnerabilities posed by conflict or the threat of conflict.

All the tools and strategies provided are organized around five fundamental aspects of any enterprise: People (workers), Processes (means of production), Profits (sales and pricing), Partnerships (the broader environment in which the enterprise operates), and Planet (environmental sustainability).

The 5Ps framework

- ▶ Protecting people - Enhancing security and implementing safety measures to ensure the well-being of workers.
- ▶ Supporting processes - Strengthening supply chain management and logistical planning to maintain efficient production.
- ▶ Sustaining profits - Managing risks related to products and services to ensure consistent profitability.
- ▶ Managing partnerships - Identifying key stakeholders and developing strategies to address various scenarios effectively.
- ▶ Protecting the planet - Promoting environmental sustainability within business operations by reducing the enterprise carbon footprint, and minimizing waste and pollution.

Who should use the toolkit?

The main target is EBMOs, and enterprises and their workers. EBMOs can use the toolkit to assess enterprise members' priorities and needs, and to influence the direction of policy making. EBMOs can also use the toolkit to support and give guidance to their members.

Enterprises can use the tools directly. Smaller enterprises may only have the capacity to use the self-assessment tool and the specific tool developed for SMEs, both of which have been designed for quick and easy use. Medium-sized and larger enterprises may be able to use the wider suite of material in a more structured way.

What's in it?

There are two main sections to the toolkit.

- ▶ A package of tools to assist EBMOs in identifying the main issues or problems faced by the private sector (e.g. road closure, ports disrupted, arbitrary taxes levelled etc) and strategies on how to influence positive outcomes and change. Assess risks and vulnerabilities: Evaluate risks at the enterprise level.
- ▶ A package of easy-to-use tools to assist enterprises identify risk and vulnerabilities to their enterprise and their workers, and managing and minimizing those risks and vulnerabilities.

What do the tools do?

The toolkit provides EBMOs and enterprises with the ability to:

- ▶ Assess the level of risk and vulnerability from conflict and other types of crises to the private sector or enterprise.
- ▶ Map and assess the importance of key stakeholders to the private sector or enterprise and to develop a plan for dealing with them in the event of a change to the business environment.
- ▶ Develop a plan to manage threats to the private sector or enterprise.
- ▶ Develop and sustain a safe and neutral workplace.
- ▶ Build an effective risk and contingency system for the private sector or enterprise.

Are there different types of approaches for use?

The tools have been designed for use in a flexible way that can be adapted for specific circumstances and contexts. The tools are generic by definition. The toolkit has also been designed as a set of multipurpose resources for enterprises, EBMOs, and development professionals.

How are the tools deployed?

The tools are disseminated largely through EBMOs and other relevant stakeholders in an adaptable and flexible manner. There are five factors that can provide innovative impact when using the tool.

- ▶ Inclusivity - They are embedded in their communities with a variety of linkages to different social and political actors and they (can) cut across cultural, ethnic or religious lines.
- ▶ Influence - Business owners have an inherent interest in stability as a point of fundamental importance to business growth. Acting collectively, they present a key pressure point.
- ▶ Scalability - The representative nature and functioning as a trusted network provides enormous potential for wider footprint.
- ▶ Partnerships - Historical and deep partnerships with other stakeholders, including workers' organizations can provide a fulcrum in exerting joint pressure for a particular course of action or political direction.
- ▶ Key skills - Business leaders are often engaged in difficult negotiations with workers, buyers and suppliers, requiring key skills in deal-making. These are all skills acutely needed in a peace-making and peace-building process.

How do EBMOs use it?

EBMOs can disseminate the tools directly themselves or in partnership with other private sector organisations, workers organizations, non-governmental organizations, donors, local government

(if no risk); or other stakeholders. A support package of handouts, information, guides and other resources is available to support implementing partner EBMOs.

Tools for EBMOs in navigating conflict situations

Guidance for EBMOs : Responding to the needs of enterprises in conflict situations

Factsheet : Key terminology on conflict

Policy support tools for EBMOs

- ▶ Tool 1 - Identifying priorities for EBMO action in conflict situations
- ▶ Tool 2 - Stakeholder analysis in conflict situations
- ▶ Tool 3 - Assessing receptivity to an EBMO's change proposal in conflict situations
- ▶ Tool 4 - Creating an advocacy strategy in crisis situations
- ▶ Tool 5 - Using coalitions in conflict resolution
- ▶ Tool 6 - EBMO public statement: A strategic advocacy tool in conflict situations
- ▶ Tool 7 - Assess the needs of enterprises following conflict

Case studies on the role of EBMOs in conflict situations

- ▶ Case study 1 - Nepal
- ▶ Case study 2 - Sri Lanka

Training tools for EBMOs in conflict situations

- ▶ Training tool 1 - Strategic plan of action for EBMOs in emerging conflict situation
- ▶ Training tool 2 - Strategic plan of action for EBMOs in post conflict environment

Tools for enterprises in navigating conflict situations

Guidance for enterprises in navigating conflict situations

Assessing and monitoring risks and threats to enterprises in conflict-affected zones

Enterprise self-assessment tool: Vulnerability to conflict

Business continuity planning

- ▶ Tool 1 - Standard version
- ▶ Tool 2 - Simplified version (BCP in 8 easy steps)

Business continuity plan support tools

- ▶ Tool 1 -Developing a stakeholder assessment and management plan
- ▶ Tool 2 - Identifying internal threats to enterprises
- ▶ Tool 3 - Identifying external threats to enterprises

Training tool for enterprises on BCPs

- ▶ Training tool 1 - Business continuity planning for medium-sized enterprise (Afghanistan)
- ▶ Training tool 2 - Business continuity planning for small enterprise (Somalia)

Enterprise evaluation plan

Promoting a safe and inclusive work environment

- ▶ Tool 1 - Managing equality in the workplace in conflict situations
- ▶ Tool 2 - Recruitment practices that promote diversity, equality and inclusion in conflict situations
- ▶ Tool 3 - Dealing with discrimination-related complaints in conflict situations

► Tools for EBMOs to navigate conflict situations

► **Guidance for EBMOs: Responding to the needs of enterprises in conflict situations**

This overview highlights the key actions that the private sector can take, collectively through EBMOs to engage more effectively in conflict situations.

EBMOs have the potential to exert significant influence to support businesses to operate in conflict areas and support peacebuilding efforts in zones that have ineffective labour market actors. By responding to the needs of their enterprise members, EBMOs can help promote sustainable enterprises and decent work opportunities, which are crucial for addressing the economic vulnerabilities that often fuel conflict.

Despite the diversity of conflict situations globally, they are marked by certain common features. Often, trust in government is absent or severely diluted; poor infrastructure or utilities damages the efficiency of doing business; and informal payments are often required to access services or markets. These factors can severely hinder business growth.

By supporting a stable investment climate, EBMOs are able to support predictability and inspire the confidence needed for enterprises to operate. This in turn promotes increased commercial operations, profitability and enterprise and employment creation.

Business is better without conflict since:

- Stable environments support investment and business growth
- Local businesses can thrive and compete more effectively

Business growth creates jobs and trade linkages that:

- Provide alternatives to youths, who are more vulnerable to engaging in violence
- Provide incomes that foster hope and opportunities in communities
- Improve the positive interaction between different communities
- Reduce the isolation of communities

Communities need business support to:

- Reduce the level of poverty and unemployment
- Improve weak and ineffective institutions
- Reduce violence
- Reconstruct social and economic infrastructure

The ability of EBMOs to respond to the needs of enterprises is justified by their institutional structure, existing mandates and representation. Their diverse membership and strong outreach provide them with a high networking capacity as well as a presence within and outside conflict zones. They are one of the few actors who are regularly represented by a democratically elected representative body, giving them a high degree of legitimacy.

In many conflict zones, EBMOs represent numerous local business entities, which may suffer disproportionately more from conflict than large enterprises and thus collectively have significant incentives to support an end to destabilizing conflicts. EBMOs are embedded in communities with numerous linkages to government, businesses, workers' organizations, civil society and communities.

As independent entities, EBMOs are not direct parties to the conflict and may have access to conflicting sides that others do not. This enables them to exert collective pressure on decision-makers, address the economic costs of conflict, and mobilize resources to support peacebuilding initiatives. EBMOs understand the economic costs of conflict and are able to address economic issues, while at the same time mobilizing resources in support of peacebuilding initiatives, with direct access to decision-makers.

EBMOs can play three fundamental roles in conflict situations:

- ▶ Support enterprises to maintain commercial operations
- ▶ Support enterprises to grow and create jobs
- ▶ Promote inclusive workplaces

EBMOs may choose to adopt some or all of these roles depending on the context and mandate given by their members. Once a decision has been taken regarding roles, EBMOs should apply the key principles and actions for each role based on the context in which they operate.

The three overarching roles of EBMOs are detailed below, along with specific recommendations on actions that are geared to a diverse range of EBMOs.³

Role 1: Support enterprises to maintain commercial operations

Key action 1 - Addressing security concerns by:

- ▶ Facilitating businesses to understand and manage their risks
- ▶ Developing collaborative networks and forums to resolve conflicts
- ▶ Working with government, community and enterprises to conduct an analysis of the security situation
- ▶ Developing advocacy campaigns to reduce violence
- ▶ Providing information on security events in real time

Key action 2 - Liaising with authorities to:

- ▶ Reduce arbitrary taxation
- ▶ Reduce restrictions on movement
- ▶ Attain licenses and permits
- ▶ Support interaction between enterprises and regulating authorities

Key action 3 - Engaging with protagonists to:

- ▶ Facilitate the interface with arbitrary “tax collection” by rebel groups;
- ▶ Prevent kidnapping and sabotage
- ▶ Ensure safe delivery of supplies
- ▶ Prevent harm to workers.

Key action 4 - Connecting regions by:

- ▶ Speaking on behalf of regional businesses at national forums
- ▶ Catalysing investment for affected regions

³ The guide has been developed as an easy to use tool based on the publication “[Enterprise creation, employment and decent work for peace and resilience: The role of Employer and Business Membership Organizations in conflict zones in Asia](#)”, which elaborates on the roles outlined below and provides examples of EBMOs in each case.

- ▶ Developing skills of regional business leaders
- ▶ Including regional business growth in policy recommendations
- ▶ Facilitating inter-regional learning
- ▶ Supporting inter-regional business networks

Role 2: Support businesses to grow and create jobs

Key action 5 - Promoting employment and enterprise development by:

- ▶ Providing information on entrepreneurship
- ▶ Facilitating supply and value chains
- ▶ Developing management skills
- ▶ Developing communication and negotiating skills
- ▶ Mentoring young entrepreneurs

Key action 6 - Promoting training and skills development of young women and men by:

- ▶ Developing partnership agreements with government and private sector training providers
- ▶ Highlighting the opportunities available to youth
- ▶ Linking youth with job opportunities
- ▶ Developing public-private partnerships
- ▶ Designing programmes to focus on affected youth

Key action 7 - Supporting sectors important to the national and regional economy by:

- ▶ Advocating for relevant policies
- ▶ Facilitating supply and export linkages
- ▶ Cooperating and collaborating with media, foreign chambers and security providers

Key action 8 - Promoting investment by:

- ▶ Highlighting the differences between perceived and actual risks to investment
- ▶ Facilitating the provision of investment guarantees
- ▶ Developing information booklets and other information dissemination documents

Key action 9 - Strengthening the EBMO's social contract and building credibility with communities by:

- ▶ Providing some vital services normally provided by government
- ▶ Providing humanitarian supplies during emergencies
- ▶ Investing in social infrastructure

Role 3: Promote inclusive workplaces

Key action 10 - Promoting the workplace as a neutral and safe place by:

- ▶ Supporting enterprise members so that the workplace does not become a place to promote conflict, division or ethnic or religious tensions
- ▶ Supporting enterprises so that all political activity and discussion take place outside the work environment

Key action 11 - Promoting inclusivity in the workplace by:

- ▶ Conducting anti-discrimination training for enterprises
- ▶ Integrating multi-ethnic employment practices and support for marginalized groups
- ▶ Supporting merit-based and diversity promoting hiring practices
- ▶ Ensuring that young people, women, people with disabilities, returning migrants and former combatants are not neglected in business promoting efforts

Factsheet: Terminology on conflict

- ▶ **Business continuity** - the ability of organizations to maintain essential functions during and after disruptions.
- ▶ **Business continuity plan** - documented risk management procedures that guide organizations to prepare for, respond to and recover from disruptions and resume a pre-defined level of operation as quickly as possible.
- ▶ **Business impact analysis** - process to evaluate and quantify the potential impacts of an interruption to key enterprise operations.
- ▶ **CAZ** - Conflict-affected zone.
- ▶ **Emergency kit** - a kit that contains the supplies and documents to help enterprises keep operating at an alternative location following evacuation. The emergency kit should be safely stored and easy to access so that it can be easily carried off-site when required.
- ▶ **Employers' and business membership organizations (EBMOs)** - Any representative organization (member-based) of the private sector, namely employers' organizations (national, regional or provincial); chambers of commerce (national, regional or provincial); sectoral associations (representing enterprises in a specific sector of the economy); or any other formal established network of businesses that have come together to work for a collective interest. The membership of EBMOs often consists of small, medium and large indigenous enterprises.
- ▶ **Exposure** - people, property, systems or other elements located in conflict zones and thereby subject to potential harm.
- ▶ **Key operations** - operations to produce and/or deliver key products and/or services.
- ▶ **Key product and/or service** - product and/or service that enterprises consider essential due to the high share of income it generates and the high demand for it, or the cost an enterprise would incur if it failed to deliver it.
- ▶ **Key resources** - Resources required to conduct key operations.
- ▶ **Preparedness** - knowledge and capacities to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current conflict or related effects.
- ▶ **Resilience** - the ability to adapt to disruptions, maintaining enterprise operations and protecting people, assets and enterprise reputation.
- ▶ **Risk** - potential negative impacts associated with a conflict at a specific place and period of time, which can be defined in terms of adverse consequences and a given probability of occurrence.
- ▶ **Severity** - intensity or scale of conflict impacts.
- ▶ **Stakeholder** - a person or organization that is involved in or has influence on the business.
- ▶ **Tolerated downtime** - how long key operations can be out of action before it becomes highly damaging to the viability of the business.

Tool 1: Identifying priorities for EBMO action in conflict situations

Prioritizing efforts

In conflict-affected areas, EBMOs need to focus on the most pressing issues facing the private sector – those expected to have the largest impact. Assessing the nature and magnitude of the problems involves identifying:

- ▶ Affected sectors: Which sector(s) is or will be most affected?
- ▶ Enterprise size: Does the issue impact small or large enterprises?
- ▶ Impact nature: What is the nature of the impact on each sector?
- ▶ Extent of effects and duration: How extensive are these effects? How long will these effects persist?

For example, a main highway that serves as a vital artery between an area with large amounts of commercial activity and the main port suffers from increased closure. Because of security threats and actual explosions, the ability of enterprises to ship and receive goods has been greatly reduced.

Using the above example, what are the major priorities?

Affects all sectors	Yes
Impacts on most enterprises (large and small)	Yes
Has major impact on enterprise operations	Yes
The issue is a constant and ongoing concern for enterprises	Yes

Using criteria to prioritize issues

Establishing criteria for prioritizing the EBMO's agenda is a way of making choices more explicit. It also helps to distinguish between the issues that are more practical and achievable and those that are more necessary or strategic.

Possible criteria for prioritizing issues for action

- ▶ **Maximum impact** - Will the action create a sustainable and widespread impact on the operating environment for most or all enterprises? For example, influencing a change in the political environment that stabilizes the region.
- ▶ **Immediate impact** - Can the action create an immediate, tangible benefit for many enterprises? For example, improving the security environment to allow businesses to resume operations safely.
- ▶ **Resource efficiency** - Is the action something that can be achieved with limited resources? For instance, making public statements or engaging in media interviews to raise awareness might require fewer resources than large-scale infrastructure projects.
- ▶ **Leverage** - Will the action mobilize additional support from other stakeholders, such as the government or international organizations? For example, advocating for the opening of safe roads could garner widespread support.

- ▶ **Catalyst for change** - Could the action serve as a catalyst for broader positive changes in society? For example, promoting workplace tolerance and respect could improve social cohesion and reduce conflict-related tensions.
- ▶ **Small business perspective** - Will the action likely improve the operating environment specifically for small businesses? For example, ensuring access to essential public utilities could be particularly beneficial for small enterprises.
- ▶ **Employment impact** - Will the action have a positive impact on job maintenance or creation? For example, improving access to loans or finance could help businesses sustain operations and retain their workforce.

Selecting the right criteria for prioritizing EBMO actions

When identifying priorities for reform in conflict situations, it's crucial to select the appropriate criteria to guide decision-making. The choice of criteria significantly influences which issues are prioritized, but it's important to recognize that there is no definitive "right" or "wrong" criterion. Instead, the focus should be on ensuring that the chosen criteria are well-understood and align with the objectives of the EBMOs.

- ▶ Each criterion has its strengths and weaknesses – the emphasis should not be on whether it is right or wrong.
- ▶ Choosing which criterion to use will often be a trade-off between competing values and interests.
- ▶ To balance this trade-off, it may be useful to apply two or three criteria.

The assessment of the operating environment carried out by the EBMO will produce a list of issues that the EBMO will then refine and narrow further. Each of these concerns can be addressed by a recommended action. Below is an example chart that demonstrates how assessment findings can be translated into recommended actions.

Assessment findings	Recommended EBMO actions
People : Lives of staff and family members	
▶ Security concerns for staff going to and from work ▶ Extortion threats to staff ▶ Kidnapping of senior managers	▶ Identify alternatives (safer) routes and transport options ▶ Provide collective advice to enterprises on how to deal with extortion ▶ Identify lower-risk times and strategies to mitigate risks
Processes : Enterprise operations	
▶ Suppliers unwilling to meet demands due to hijacking of goods	▶ Identify alternatives routes ▶ Identify lower-risk times ▶ Negotiate through intermediaries

Profits : Revenue generation	
▶ Financial providers unwilling to maintain / increase credit lines	▶ Lobby for government guarantees to ensure the continuity of credit flows
Partnerships : Enabling environment for business operations	
▶ Key infrastructure continually damaged and inoperable (port/roads) ▶ Key utilities under threat	▶ Explore shared risk options with other enterprises, such as shared generators, water tanks etc
Planet : Impact on environmental sustainability	
▶ Damage to local ecosystems exacerbated by conflict ▶ Overexploitation of local natural resources due to supply chain disruptions	▶ Partner with environmental agencies to restore and protect local ecosystems ▶ Advocate for sustainable resource use and alternative material sourcing

Creating a chart such as the one above is the first step to undertaking a thorough assessment of the operating environment. It identifies the problems and concerns, as well as how these might be addressed.

The second step is to decide which recommended actions should be taken, i.e. which actions have priority.

Deciding on priority actions

There are two steps to perform when selecting which recommended actions should be taken. The first step is to choose the selection criteria. The second step is to score each recommended action using the criteria.

There are many different criteria that can be used, each with their own values and interests. Aim to choose no more than three criteria. For example:

- ▶ **Criterion 1**
Maximum impact: What will create the most lasting impact for enterprises and their workers?
- ▶ **Criterion 2**
Immediate impact: What will create an immediate positive impact for enterprises and their workers?
- ▶ **Criterion 3**
Limited resources : What can be done without much money/political capital?

The chart below shows how these criteria can be used to assess each recommended action. The higher the score the more favourable the option to pursue.

Sample criteria assessment chart

Recommended actions	Criterion 1 Score (1-10)	Criterion 2 Score (1-10)	Criterion 3 Score (1-10)	Total Score (1-30)
Improving security at the port	7	6	4	17

Establishing safe times for the transport of goods	9	9	10	28
Establishing stable electricity supply	9	9	2	20

The chart above illustrates how the three criteria chosen can be used together to determine where the priorities lie. In this case, it is clear that the top/most viable priority is: Establishing safe times for the transport of goods.

Assessing the importance of selected issues for the private sector

Finally, test that the priority for change is likely to impact on the largest number of enterprises across all sectors. The tool below can assist in this exercise.

Scenario: Establishing safe times for the transport of goods

Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 the impact on each category. In making this assessment, all the factors should be taken into consideration for determining the final score.

Major impact					
5	4	3	2	1	No impact at all

► Issue impact accessor

Sectors	Approx % of enterprises using affected roads by sector	Rank importance of roads to enterprises in each sectorprises in each sector	Mostly affects larger enterprises	Mostly affects SMEs	Mostly affects exporting enterprises	Mostly affects non-exporting enterprises	Score by sector
Basic metal production	20% score 1 40% score 2 60% score 3	Score 1-5	Score 1-5	Score 1-5	Score 1-5	Score 1-5	
Chemical industries							
Mechanical and electrical engineering							
Mining (coal, other mining)							
Oil and gas production, oil refining production, oil refining							
Textiles, clothing, leather, footwear							

Transport equipment manufacturing							
Agriculture, plantations, other rural sectors							
Construction							
Food, drink, tobacco							
Forestry, wood, pulp and paper							
Commerce							
Education							
Financial services, professional services							
Health services							
Hotels, tourism, catering							
Media, culture, graphic							
Postal and other communication services							
Public service							
Transport (including civil aviation, railways, road transport)							
Utilities (water, gas, electricity)							
Shipping, ports, fisheries, inland waterways							
Other (specify)							
Overall score							

Tool 2: Stakeholder Analysis In Conflict Situations

In conflict situations, understanding the various stakeholders involved is critical to developing effective strategies for business continuity. Stakeholders are individuals or groups who will be directly or indirectly affected by the EBMO's proposal for change, as well as those who may have interests in the proposal and/or the ability to influence its outcome, either positively or negatively. The stake that each of these different individuals or groups has in maintaining the status quo or supporting the EBMO's planned changes will vary.

- ▶ Primary stakeholders are those who are directly affected, either positively or negatively, by the EBMO's actions.
- ▶ Secondary stakeholders are the intermediaries – individuals or organizations who are indirectly affected by the EBMO's actions.

Step 1: Identify stakeholders

The first step for an EBMO is to identify who the relevant stakeholders for a given issue. In conflict situations, stakeholder dynamics can be more fluid, and actions may emerge or disappear based on the evolving context. Key questions for analysis include:

- ▶ What are the interests of each stakeholder group? (e.g. ensuring safety, maintaining operations, peacebuilding)
- ▶ How they will be affected by the EBMO's proposal? (e.g. will they benefit from resumed trade or be disrupted by security measures?)
- ▶ To what degree they will be affected? (e.g. are they the primary beneficiaries or marginally involved?)
- ▶ What influence do they have on the proposal's success? (e.g. can they sway public opinion, influence decision-makers or pose significant obstacles?)

This analysis will provide the basis from which to build the EBMO's stakeholder engagement strategy. Stakeholders on any given issue will fall broadly into the following categories:

Stakeholders



Stakeholders should be prioritized based on their relevance and influence. In conflict situations, it is essential to focus on those stakeholders who have the most power to impact the outcome or are the most affected by the issue.

The power analysis matrix (below) is useful not only for categorizing stakeholders but also for identifying the "key stakeholders" – those that the EBMO wishes to influence. The first category of the matrix specifies the "power" of this stakeholder (in terms of decision-making), the second category whether they are capable of supporting the proposal or not, and the third category, their influence on the proposal (for example a large respected religious group may provide substantial influence and credibility if they support a proposal).

Example

The issue: Major restrictions on freedom of movement been put in place due to spikes in violence. This includes curfews, road closures and public transport limitations. The results are:

- ▶ Commerce and trade is severely restricted
- ▶ Workers are prevented from getting to and from work
- ▶ Families have been separated
- ▶ Overall public morale is low

The conflict is easing, the threat is diminishing and business is anxious to return to normality. The power analysis matrix outlines the key stakeholders and allies that the EBMO should focus on in terms of supporting its agenda for action. Each is given a ranking in terms of their priority for the EBMO.

Very high	5	4	3	2	1	Very low
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Power analysis matrix				
Stakeholders	Power	Support	Influence	Score
Social, cultural and religious	medium	positive	high	4
Military	high	negative	high	5
Trade unions	medium	positive	medium	3
Civil society organizations	medium	positive	low	2
General public	medium	positive	high	4
Media	high	positive	high	5

In addition to the power matrix analysis, a separate analysis needs to be done for the decision-maker (usually the government). Governments are not a single entity but are made up of competing ministries with different agendas and interests. The matrix below can assist in assessing which entity to target for support and who needs to be convinced of the arguments for change.

The government-rating index (below) is a useful tool to aid the EBMO to map relevant ministries/agencies

Very high	5	4	3	2	1	Very low
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Matrix for government stakeholders							
Government entity	Contact with this ministry over the past 12 months	Seniority of engagement	Overall assessment of relationship	Power	Support	Influence	Score
President's Office	1 to 5	1 to 5	1 to 5	green amber red	green amber red	green amber red	
Defence Ministry							
Finance Ministry							

National Security Agency							
Planning Ministry							
Interior Ministry							
Department of Labour							

Step 2 : Assess relevant stakeholders

Allies and supporters

In conflict situations, assessing relevant stakeholders is critical for EBMOs to create effective strategies and coalitions. Start by identifying natural allies whose interests align with the EBMO's. These organizations or individuals can help build a coalition for change.

Key questions to identify allies:

- ▶ Which other organizations, groups and individuals are concerned about or already taking action on the same issue?
- ▶ Do existing coalitions need strengthening, or should new ones be formed?
- ▶ Is partnering with ongoing efforts more effective than creating a new initiative?
- ▶ What are the advantages and disadvantages of forming alliances or coalitions with each of them?
- ▶ Do other organizations see the EBMO as a value-adding partner/ally to their efforts?

The middle ground – “uncommitted stakeholders”

A complex picture of stakeholders is positive and provides many opportunities for the EBMO to build winning coalitions and explore common interests as part of the stakeholder management strategy – even with unlikely allies. This suggests that a successful stakeholder management strategy should not exclude the possibility of interest at a later stage from other groups who currently may not support the EBMOs proposal.

Opponents

It is important to keep in mind that not all stakeholders in a particular group or sub-group will necessarily share the same concerns or have unified opinions or priorities. An important part of refining an advocacy strategy is finding out who may oppose the EBMO's goal – a task that is just as important as identifying allies. The EBMO can be more effective if it understands its opponents' reasoning and why they might feel threatened by its proposed change on an issue.

Identify positions (and potential positions) of stakeholders

The “stakeholders grid” is a visual tool to map out key actors and assess their positions on specific issues. It helps to determine who should be prioritized for influence based on their power, support, and potential for movement.

- ▶ List the actors and stakeholders regarding a specific issue.

The aim is to identify opponents who are not unmovable, allies who may waver in their support, and stakeholders who are involved but uncommitted.

Successful advocacy is characterized by the continuous building of relationships with different groups of allies to change incentives, opportunities and capacities, and progressively bringing in additional stakeholders until a winning coalition is created.

- ▶ Assess the relative position of actors and stakeholders regarding the issue.

Are they for or against the issue? There could also be other stakeholders whose interests are unclear and remain neutral throughout the debate. A mark (x) is used to indicate the position of each actor in the grid.

- ▶ Determine how to influence the actors or stakeholders who are negative about a proposed solution.

A choice needs to be made on whether to apply incentives or pressure in order to neutralize opponents or to identify empathic arguments to change their opinions. The arrows represent the intended movement as a result of influence. The stakeholders grid is an example of how an “influencing chart” can be used to map out the positions of key actors and determine ways to influence specific parties.

▶ Stakeholders grid

Issue : Removing restrictions on freedom of movement					
Actors to influence	Support	Neutral	Negative	Arguments to influence	Assessment
Military			X1	Can free up personnel for other duties	Red
Prime Minister's office		X2 ←	X1	Shows goodwill to wider population	Amber
Finance Ministry	X2 ←	X1		Negative impact on jobs, economy	Green

- ▶ X1 = Fixed positions (difficult to influence)
- ▶ X2 = Positions that might be influenced with the right arguments
- ▶ Green - Good chances of positively influencing
- ▶ Amber - Worth pursuing
- ▶ Red - Unlikely to be swayed by EBMO's arguments

There are diverse groups that benefit from the status quo. Protection of each group's benefits produces resistance.

Stakeholder analysis should help prioritize who to influence by assessing the significance of the EBMO's proposal to each stakeholder group from their perspective, and vice versa. It is important to keep in mind that the situation is dynamic and that both stakeholders and their interests might change over time.

Tool 3: Assessing receptivity to an EBMO's change proposal in conflict situations

In conflict situations, the success of an EBMO's proposal for change largely depends on how receptive stakeholders are to the idea of change. This tool offers steps to assess the receptivity and create a pathway for meaningful change.

Step 1: Assessing the capacity for change

The first step is to assess whether an EBMO's proposal(s) are likely to receive wider support. For a logical assessment, the following issues should be explored:

- ▶ What is the level of dissatisfaction with the status quo?
- ▶ Does the EBMO have a clear vision of a "new future" or better alternative?
- ▶ What are the practical first steps towards this "new future"?
- ▶ How great is the resistance to changing the status quo?

If there is a high level of dissatisfaction and a vision for change with clear practical steps towards achieving it; and if these all outweigh opposing forces; then the possibility to bring about change is high.

Example

The province of Etatlandi has traditionally been very popular with tourists due to its beautiful beaches and warm weather. Current political (separatist) tensions in the province, which is populated by a different ethnic majority than the rest of the country, are spilling over into violence. Efforts are underway to contain the longstanding tensions between Etatlandi and the national government. A new (national) government introduced a 9 per cent increase in tax that all hotels and restaurants must pay.

Dissatisfaction with the status quo - High, as local businesses are seeing a decline in tourists and trade.

Clear vision of the "new future" proposed by the EBMO - By reducing or abolishing the tax, tourism could recover, jobs would be preserved, and economic activity would improve.

Practical first steps towards changing the status quo - The EBMO has commissioned a survey to ascertain the impact of the tax on tourism in the province. The EBMO's airline members provided data showing decreased passenger numbers, since the tax came into effect. Data attained from the Tourist Board also showed a reduction in tourist numbers since the tax was established (although this could also be related to other factors). Incidents of violence have also been reported to be on the increase.

Resistance to change - High, as the national government wants to take an aggressive stance towards the separatist movement in the region.

To determine the possibility for change and whether the EBMO should pursue a proposal for change, some essential questions need to be addressed:

Assessment summary

- ▶ Q. Are the "changes" that the EBMO wants to implement a realistic proposition?

A. The proposed agenda for change is capable of attaining broad support. Other stakeholders will be supportive of the EBMO's proposal or key elements of it.

► **Q.** To what extent is there dissatisfaction with the status quo?

A. Sufficient interest groups will support the proposal for change. Other stakeholders such as the general public or media, if shown a "new future", would also be supportive. Dissatisfaction with the status quo is growing.

► **Q.** Has the EBMO articulated a clear vision of what a "new future" could look like?

A. The EBMO can genuinely show that the benefits of change outweigh the costs. What the EBMO is proposing is shown to be practical and realistic in terms of implementation and application. The proposal has been shown to have a positive impact on jobs and peoples' lives.

► **Q.** How great will the resistance to change be?

A. Opposition to the proposal can be divided or split. The balance of power between winners and losers affected by the changed status quo is favourable. There are identifiable sub-groups that can be targeted to support certain elements of the proposal.

Step 2: Assessing the government's receptiveness to the EBMO's proposed changes

Having established that there is a "capacity for change", the EBMO needs to broadly assess how its proposed changes are likely to be received, both favourably and otherwise. Viewpoints that are formed by a wide variety of influences are more likely to shift perceptions about the benefits and costs of change. These "exogenous factors" are part of the larger political and economic picture that provides the context for or against the EBMO's proposal for change.

Reasons why the EBMO's proposed changes may be challenged include the following:

Scepticism about the EBMO's proposal

The proposal might be compared to the existing system, or the capacity of the government to implement change. This skepticism is sometimes justified by previous failures, or even by a narrow view of what is possible.

Personal interest in maintaining the status quo

Concerns and opposition to change can sometimes be a smokescreen to protect specific self-serving interests, but generally can be beneficial in structuring a public debate about the pros and cons of a proposal. It is not uncommon to encounter opposition to changes in the status quo. Many different interests obtain financial, professional or political advantage from upholding and maintaining the existing situation. They can be threatened by the EBMO's proposal to bring about change.

Managing opposition

The EBMO should consider strategies to provide more information, reduce opportunities for resistance, and highlight the self-serving nature of some opponents' arguments.

Step 3: Assessing key factors for realizing change

The final step involves systematically analyzing all factors that could influence the EBMO's chances of success or failure in implementing change. The following matrix provides a guide for this analysis:

Assessment summary

- ▶ Are the opponents' arguments relevant or justified? Yes / No
- ▶ The situation has changed to be more favourable? Yes / No
- ▶ Is the proposal better researched than previous efforts? Yes / No
- ▶ Is there potential for coalition building? Yes / No
- ▶ Will the proposal alienate key stakeholders? Yes / No
- ▶ Have stakeholders' interests shifted recently? Yes / No
- ▶ Are previous opponents less active or relevant now? Yes / No
- ▶ Are upcoming reports or events favourable to the proposal? Yes / No
- ▶ Does the proposal address current economic concerns? Yes / No
- ▶ Can it be linked to security concerns in the public domain? Yes / No
- ▶ Does the proposal benefit job creation/maintenance? Yes / No
- ▶ Will the proposal be perceived as socially beneficial? Yes / No
- ▶ The proposal will not be portrayed as having negative and
unnecessary security consequences Yes / No
- ▶ Is there room for compromise in the proposal? Yes / No

Tool 4: Creating an advocacy strategy in conflict situations

Advocacy and the role of EBMOs

In conflict situations, effective advocacy requires a nuanced approach that considers the unique challenges posed by the environment. The three basic components of advocacy—understanding the issue, identifying the key players, and proposing solutions—become even more critical in these contexts. For EBMOs operating in conflict environments, advocacy is not only about promoting change but also ensuring stability and security for their enterprise members. The role of advocacy involves:

- ▶ **Building a case for change** : Developing a compelling narrative that highlights the need for stability, economic resilience, and peace as foundational for business continuity and growth.
- ▶ **Presenting the case with strategic pressure** : Engaging with decision-makers, including governmental officials, military authorities, and other influential players, using varying degrees of pressure to secure their support while maintaining safety and neutrality.
- ▶ **Controlling the process** : Carefully managing the advocacy process to avoid escalating tensions, ensuring that actions taken do not exacerbate conflict but rather contribute to resolution and peacebuilding.
- ▶ **Evaluating the impact** : Continuously assessing the benefits and risks associated with advocacy efforts, particularly in how they affect both the conflict situation and the business environment.
- ▶ **Communicating the results**: Transparently sharing outcomes with stakeholders, emphasizing the positive impacts on stability and economic recovery, and maintaining trust.

An effective advocacy strategy will involve:

- ▶ **Disseminating information**: Share accurate and relevant information about the conflict-related issues affecting businesses, ensuring that all stakeholders understand the impact on economic stability and livelihoods.
- ▶ **Influencing the course of potential solution**: Advocate for peacebuilding and conflict resolution strategies that consider the economic implications and promote a stable environment for businesses to operate.
- ▶ **Making proposals to target and remedies** : Offer practical solutions that address the specific challenges businesses face in conflict zones, such as security, infrastructure damage, and access to markets.
- ▶ **Providing a channel for organized access to decision-makers** : Facilitate dialogue between business leaders and key decision-makers, creating channels to influence peace processes and reconstruction efforts.

Initiating the advocacy process in conflict situations

The success of advocacy in conflict situations depends on careful planning and execution of the following steps.

- ▶ **Identifying and stating the issue** : Clearly define the conflict-related challenges impacting enterprises and articulate the need for action.
- ▶ **Collecting the relevant information** : Gather detailed information on the conflict, its economic impacts, and potential pathways to resolution.
- ▶ **Mobilizing interest** : Engage stakeholders, including enterprise members, community leaders, and international partners, to build a coalition of support for advocacy efforts.

- ▶ **Raising and managing resources** : Secure necessary resources, including financial and human capital, to sustain advocacy activities in a conflict environment.
- ▶ **Networking and forming alliances** : Build alliances with other organizations, including other business associations, international agencies, NGOs, and peacebuilding entities to strengthen advocacy efforts.
- ▶ **Forming and sustaining coalitions** : Maintain strong coalitions that can collectively advocate for stability and economic recovery, leveraging the power of a unified voice.
- ▶ **Involving media** : Using media strategically to raise awareness and shape public opinion in favour of business sustainability and overall peace.
- ▶ **Identifying decision-makers** : Identify and prioritize engagement with key decision-makers who have the authority and influence to effect change in the conflict situation.

Advocacy stages

There are three key stages of an advocacy campaign:

Stage 1 : Unfreezing – creating a desire for change in the status quo

In conflict situations, the need for change must be strongly communicated, emphasizing the costs of inaction and the benefits of peace and stability for economic growth. Awareness of the status quo and the desired future state should be raised among all stakeholders, creating a collective desire for change.

Stage 2 : Moving – developing new ideas and proposals based on a vision

Advocacy should focus on developing practical and realistic proposals that address the immediate and long-term needs of enterprises in conflict zones while contributing to long-term peace and stability. These proposals must be clear, achievable and supported by a broad range of stakeholders.

Stage 3 : Refreezing – integrating the changes made through advocacy

Once advocacy efforts have led to change, it is crucial to integrate these changes into the broader peace and reconstruction process. This may involve ongoing support for businesses, continued engagement with decision-makers, and ensuring that changes are sustainable and beneficial in the long term.

Identify target audiences

There are two kinds of target audiences in EBMO's advocacy efforts: primary and secondary.

- ▶ **Primary audiences** have the direct authority to make changes (e.g. government ministries, military authorities, security agencies, political figures). Informing or persuading the primary audience about an issue is the centerpiece of any advocacy strategy.
- ▶ **Secondary audiences** can influence the decisions of the primary audience. Secondary audiences may include the general public, the media, etc.

What needs to be known about the target audiences

In conflict situations, it is essential to understand the perspectives, motivations and concerns of target audiences.

- ▶ **Existing knowledge**: Determine how much the target audience knows about the issue and the EBMO's position.
- ▶ **Opinions and objections**: Understand their opinions and anticipate objections to the EBMO's proposals.

- ▶ **Misconceptions and arguments:** Address any misconceptions and prepare to counter opposing arguments effectively.
- ▶ **Risks and incentives:** Consider what the target audience stands to lose or gain from supporting the EBMO's advocacy efforts and tailor the message accordingly.

Identify key messages

Advocacy messages in conflict situations must be clear, compelling and focused on actionable outcomes.

Essential elements of an advocacy message:

- ▶ **Objective:** Clearly state what the EBMO aims to achieve and why it is crucial in the context of the conflict.
- ▶ **Justification:** Explain why others, including the target audience, should support the EBMO's goals.
- ▶ **Actionable steps:** Provide specific, realistic actions that the target audience can take to support the advocacy effort.
- ▶ **Steps for an EBMO advocacy strategy**
- ▶ **Message clarity:** Ensure the message is simple, direct and capable of being delivered effectively in a conflict-sensitive manner.

Steps for an EBMO advocacy strategy

Step 1: Identify the problem the EBMO wants to change	
What is the problem?	Outline in detail what the issue is and its negative impact
Why does it deserve attention?	Is it new? Has something changed which has highlighted the issue?
Which conditions led to it?	Were there other contributing factors? What were other stakeholders seeking to maintain/change?
Step 2: Identify the stakeholders	
Whose behaviour is affected or whose concerns are relevant?	Which types of enterprises? Large or small or both? Which sectors? Enterprises in certain geographical locations?
Who are the target beneficiaries of the EBMO's solution to the problem?	Outline wider beneficiaries: workers and their families
What stake does each (affected group, target beneficiary) have in the problem?	Outline who potentially wins and who loses from the issue as it is/as it would be under the EBMO's proposal
How does each stakeholder define the problem?	Examine how fundamental the issue is to each of the identified stakeholders. How committed will they be to changing/preserving the status quo?

Step 3: Specify alternative solutions and relevant criteria for evaluating them

What are the goals/objectives of the EBMO's proposal?	Are these realistic in a given timeframe?
What tools should the EBMO use to advance its proposal?	For example, survey of businesses impacted, information campaign in media
Describe at least one (alternative) remedy that might also serve to rectify the problem	Provide "next best" options

Tool 5: Using Coalitions In Conflict Situations

In conflict situations, coalitions serve as a critical structure for formal collaboration, uniting diverse actors around a common goal. These coalitions can be either time-bound or open-ended partnerships, enabling private sector entities and like-minded groups to share information, organize joint activities, and combine efforts to address the complex challenges posed by conflict. By working together, these groups can more effectively pursue their common objectives, even in the most challenging environments.

In conflict environments, coalitions provide a shared platform for committed individuals and organizations to pool their resources, amplify their voices, and leverage the collective power of their members and influential allies. This united front can focus attention on critical advocacy issues, apply pressure on leaders, and influence decision-making processes within bureaucratic environments and the broader public sphere, leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes.

How are coalitions formed?

In conflict situations, structured and formal collaboration allows different actors to combine resources and increase the power of their voice in the public sphere in order to effect positive change. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, key steps to coalition building include:

- ▶ **Identifying and specifying issues** : Clearly articulate and deeply analyze the problems that need to be addressed, considering the unique challenges posed by the conflict situation.
- ▶ **Mapping of actors/stakeholders** : Identify key actors, including those directly affected by the conflict and those with influence over the situation. Clarify their positions and potential contributions in relation to the issues.
- ▶ **Forming the core membership** : Build the coalition around key actors who are invested in achieving the desired change. Early leaders and champions, who can navigate the conflict environment, should be identified and organized to form the foundation of a joint agenda..
- ▶ **Demonstrating credibility** : The coalition must establish itself as knowledgeable about the relevant issues, capable of acting effectively, and worthy of support from stakeholders, particularly in a conflict setting where trust and credibility are paramount.

Why enter a coalition?

In conflict situations, coalitions offer several strategic advantages.

- ▶ **Protection for members** : In a volatile environment, some coalition members may face higher risks from active advocacy. A coalition structure allows certain members to take the lead while others can maintain a lower profile, providing a layer of protection.
- ▶ **Unified positioning** : By allowing members to agree on their positions in private, coalitions can present a united front to decision-makers. This is especially important in conflict situations where discordant or conflicting messages could lead to inaction or further destabilization.
- ▶ **Resource and knowledge pooling** : Coalitions can mobilize additional resources, experience, and expertise from diverse organizations. This is crucial in conflict settings where resources are often scarce, and knowledge of the local context is critical.
- ▶ **Safety in numbers** : A coalition offers an element of protection or “safety in numbers,” making it harder for adversaries to target individual organizations. This collective strength is particularly valuable in conflict situations where individual entities may be vulnerable.
- ▶ **Increased visibility and influence** : Coalitions can attract greater attention and exert more influence than individual actors, making it easier to mobilize support and apply pressure on decision-makers.

While coalitions offer many benefits, they also present unique challenges in conflict environments. They can fail because there is a lack of consensus on what needs to be done to rectify an issue, or on how to share credit (and blame) for the coalition's actions. Finally, coalitions generally require solid leadership. Without leadership, coalitions can fall apart.

- ▶ **Difficulty in reaching consensus** : The more voices and opinions involved, the harder it may be to reach agreement. This is particularly true in conflict situations where stakes are high, and interests may diverge.
- ▶ **Reputational risk** : If one member of the coalition behaves inappropriately or contrary to the coalition's values, all members may suffer reputational damage. This risk is heightened in conflict situations where actions are closely scrutinized.
- ▶ **Credit and blame sharing** : Both the positive outcomes and any negative consequences of the coalition's actions must be shared among all members, which can lead to internal tension.
- ▶ **Variable strengths** : The effectiveness of a coalition is often determined by its weakest link. In conflict situations, some members may have fewer resources, less experience, or more severe internal challenges, which can strain the coalition.
- ▶ **Balancing interests** : Different coalition partners may have vastly different approaches or priorities, making it difficult to align strategies, particularly in the complex and rapidly changing environment of a conflict.

Coalition communication strategies

Effective communication efforts in support of coalition building help to secure, strengthen and sustain political will at various bureaucratic levels. Effective communication takes into account the needs and different stages of coalition building.

Coalition checklist

- ▶ Is there strong consensus on the purpose, advocacy strategy and approach among the different actors?
- ▶ What should be the major message communicated to potential coalition partners?
- ▶ What would be the role of the most influential personalities (from the different actors)? What implications would this have for the overall approach? Are there individuals who could distort the core message through conflicts of interest or association with other (negative) issues?
- ▶ Has the EBMO assessed the reliability of potential new partners?
- ▶ Do potential coalition partners have a good reputation? Will association with any of them diminish the chances of meeting objectives?
- ▶ Do the different coalition partners have good working relationships? Is there a history of solid collaboration?
- ▶ Does the coalition have the resources it needs to carry out its agenda?
- ▶ What role would the EBMO assume in the coalition?
- ▶ How will information be distributed to coalition members?
- ▶ In some countries, other business associations (e.g. chambers of commerce) are under the direct or indirect control of the government. Will including such organizations affect the "independent image" of the EBMO's campaign?

Tool 6: EBMO public statement: a strategic advocacy tool in conflict situations

In conflict situations, it is crucial for EBMOs to assert a clear, compelling position to influence decision-makers and other stakeholders. A well-crafted public statement is an essential advocacy tool that articulates the private sector's priorities and recommendations, advocating for actions that will lead to positive change in these challenging environments.

Introduction

Public statements in conflict situations should be succinct, incisive, and persuasive. Given the urgency and complexity of issues in such environments, the statement should focus sharply on key points and be no longer than four to six pages. The dual objectives of these statements are to communicate the EBMO's stance clearly and to effectively influence decision-makers in a volatile and rapidly changing context.

Preparation

Clarity of purpose

The EBMO must clearly define its end goal, particularly considering the immediate and long-term impacts of conflict. The objectives should be realistic within the given timeframe and conflict dynamics. The EBMO's recommendations should outline a sustainable solution that considers alternative approaches and presents benefits for all stakeholders, including those directly affected by the conflict.

Issues analysis

In conflict situations, every factor impacting business operations should be scrutinized, including security concerns and humanitarian needs. The public statement should address the multifaceted costs of inaction, such as prolonged instability or economic collapse, alongside the time and resources required for proposed actions.

Understand opposing perspectives

Acknowledge that conflict situations often polarize stakeholders, making consensus challenging. The EBMO should anticipate counterarguments and present a balanced, fact-based case that considers the viewpoints of various interest groups, including those who may oppose the EBMO's stance.

Shaping the message

The statement must resonate with decision-makers, military actors, humanitarian organizations and international agencies. It should demonstrate the EBMO's understanding of their positions and concerns, while clearly advocating for the private sector's needs and contributions to stability and recovery.

Evaluating the proposal's impact

To increase the impact, the EBMO needs to know the benefits and disadvantages of different solutions:

- ▶ How many enterprises and workers are affected by the problem?
- ▶ How many enterprises and workers will be helped by the solution the EBMO is proposing?
- ▶ Does the solution have a plausible chance of being adopted?
- ▶ Who will be helped (or potentially harmed) by the proposal?
- ▶ How much does it cost?
- ▶ How does it compare with the status quo?
- ▶ Who are the principal beneficiaries/losers?

Message and audience

The following needs to be clearly articulated in the public statement:

- ▶ What is the EBMO's central message?
- ▶ How does its message differ from others on the same topic?
- ▶ Who is the public statement aimed at?

The EBMO needs to ask:

- ▶ What will decision-makers and others know after reading the EBMO's public statement?
- ▶ What will users of its information do?
- ▶ What is likely to happen as a consequence of the communication?

Structure to follow in drafting a public statement

Summary

- ▶ Opening paragraph summarizing the conflict issue and the EBMO's main recommendation(s).
- ▶ Include key and compelling messages that can win over target audiences. Consider the audience's current knowledge and the new insights or solutions the EBMO is offering.

Statement of the issue

- ▶ Explanation of the conflict, including financial, social, military, environmental and political aspects.
- ▶ Describe the main components of the conflict and the specific challenges it presents.
- ▶ Discuss the conditions that led to the conflict and identify other contributing factors.

History

- ▶ Explain what has brought the conflict to the forefront. Is it a new development or has a recent event highlighted an ongoing issue? Discuss any changes or triggers that have intensified the situation.

International comparison

- ▶ Draw on international or regional examples of how similar conflicts have been addressed successfully. Highlight good practices that can support the EBMO's recommendations.

Impact

- ▶ Describe the impact of the current situation on enterprises, particularly which types of enterprises (enterprise size, specific sectors or geography) are most impacted.
- ▶ Show the positive impact of the EBMO's recommendations can lead to changes both for enterprises and the broader community.
- ▶ Discuss the anticipated outcomes if the EBMO's proposals are implemented, including improvements in stability, economic recovery and social well-being.

Policy options

- ▶ List the possible policy options put forward by EBMO to address the conflict. Consider each option (or explain why some options have been omitted) in terms of costs and benefits, and the implications for business, particularly small businesses. If there are constraints on the choice of options, including political constraints, these should be explained.

Policy recommendation(s)

- ▶ State the goals/objectives of the EBMO's proposed solutions to resolve the conflict or mitigate its effects.

Justification

- ▶ Make the case to support the EBMO's recommendation(s) including financial, technical and political aspects.
- ▶ Identify who will benefit from the proposed measures, emphasizing the importance of supporting businesses and communities affected by the conflict.

Implementation

- ▶ If necessary, provide a plan, or a timescale to identify the responsible actors for successful implementation of the EBMO proposals.
- ▶ Describe the conditions (political, organizational) upon which successful implementation of the proposal depend on (e.g. government buy-in, other stakeholder acceptance).

Monitoring and evaluation

- ▶ Depending on the nature of the conflict and the proposed solutions, suggest the need for monitoring and review mechanisms to track progress and ensure accountability.

Checklist on EBMO public statement / position

- | | |
|---|----------|
| ▶ Focused – purpose of the paper is clear and easily understood | Yes / No |
| ▶ Short – the ideal is no more than four to six A4 pages | Yes / No |
| ▶ Logical – conclusions flow logically from the evidence | Yes / No |
| ▶ Accurate – policy proposals flow logically from the evidence | Yes / No |
| ▶ Engaging – it holds attention throughout | Yes / No |
| ▶ Qualitative in presentation – everything makes sense | Yes / No |

Example of an EBMO public statement

Background

Nerland has been embroiled in an almost three-decade-long ethnic conflict, primarily driven by perceived social and economic injustices, particularly concerning language and employment issues. The conflict's roots can be traced to linguistic differences between two of Nerland's largest ethnic groups, the Surta and the Bengas. However, the situation was significantly aggravated by state policies that favored the majority Surta, leading to widespread discrimination against the Benga community. This prolonged war has been the most significant barrier to the establishment and growth of private sector investment in the country.

The business community has long regarded the conflict as unwinnable through military means and has previously made substantial efforts to promote a negotiated, non-military resolution. However, violence has escalated in recent months, culminating in two devastating attacks on key economic centers—the

central business district of the capital, Herringtown, and the largest airport, a crucial tourist hub in the south. These attacks have crippled the economy, halting tourism and inward investment.

In response to the escalating conflict, the six largest business organizations in Nerland convened an emergency session. These organizations, which include five key trade and commerce chambers and one employers' organization, previously formed a coalition called "Biz4Peace" two years ago. Given the current crisis, Biz4Peace has decided to launch a concerted intervention in the political process to seek a peaceful resolution.

Summary

Like businesses everywhere, those in Nerland need a stable investment environment and consistent policies to maintain investor confidence, grow enterprises, and create jobs. After nearly three decades of military conflict and repeated ceasefire violations, the Nerland business community believes that sustainable peace can only be achieved through dialogue that addresses the root causes of the conflict. To this end, Biz4Peace, representing the six major business and employer organizations, is taking the initiative to lead a political discussion on resolving the ethnic conflict. We propose the following four key actions:

- ▶ **Formation of a national unity government:** Given the escalating crisis and the divisive nature of recent elections, we urge the two main political parties to immediately form a national unity government.
- ▶ **National conference on conflict resolution:** We propose convening a national conference to develop a time-bound roadmap addressing the four main issues fuelling the conflict: discrimination and language, cultural recognition, regional autonomy, and economic opportunity.
- ▶ **Immediate reopening of main highways:** We call for the immediate reopening of the main highways connecting the east and north of the country to restore trade, commerce, and family connections.
- ▶ **Targeted investment plan for the North and East:** We propose a specific investment plan to revitalize the traditionally neglected northern and eastern regions, promoting economic and social development.

Statement of the issue

Nerland has been trapped in an almost three-decade-long ethnic war driven by social and economic injustices, particularly affecting the Benga ethnic group in terms of language and employment. This conflict has been the most significant obstacle to private sector investment and has stunted the country's overall economic and social growth, depriving our children of a future.

History

Ethnic tensions escalated significantly when Surta was declared the official language in 1961. Subsequent policies, including state-aided Surta colonization of northern and eastern provinces, controversial citizenship laws affecting the Benga community, and low economic investment in Benga-dominated regions, further exacerbated hostilities.

International comparison

We believe that solutions can be informed by looking at how other conflicts in the region have been successfully resolved. We call on experts involved in the peaceful resolution of the civil conflict in Nerland to assist us in finding a similar path forward.

Impact on business and people's lives

The ongoing conflict has devastated key sectors of our economy. The tourism sector, once thriving, has been crippled, with thousands of jobs lost. The textile industry, while not directly located in conflict zones, has suffered from lost opportunities and increased costs. The coffee sector, specifically targeted during the conflict, is now operating at half its capacity compared to a decade ago, despite the global coffee market's growth.

Policy recommendation(s)

Our proposals are four-fold:

First, the formation of a national unity government. Such is the level of crisis that we call on the two main political parties to form a national government with immediate effect.

Biz4peace believes that the political short-termism of recent electoral cycles has only exacerbated the conflict. It has also raised the levels of political violence in the run-up to elections. The last two elections were notable for the high level of vitriol and increased violence, all of which have only led to greater divisions.

We believe that a government of national unity that is inclusionary and dedicated to resolving the conflict is the only long-term sustainable solution to the conflict.

Second, we propose a national conference that will discuss and lay out a time-bound roadmap for resolution of what we understand to be the four main causes of the conflict:

- ▶ Discrimination and language
- ▶ Cultural recognition
- ▶ Regional autonomy
- ▶ Economy opportunity

We have had major national dialogues in the past, which resulted in failure. The reasons for failure has primarily been the mistrust and suspicion of the selection process, as well as misunderstanding of who and how it was controlled. We strongly believe that if the underlying conditions for such a dialogue are in place then a successful resolution is possible.

In order to achieve trust on all sides, Biz4Peace calls for this dialogue process to be organized and controlled by a trusted and neutral external party. All parties are agreed that the previous efforts by the Government of Scandwegia were balanced and fair. Biz4Peace suggest that the process be led and controlled by the former foreign minister of Scandwegia, Anna-Brit Nippierd. We suggest that she and her well-resourced team set out the parameters and agenda. She will be the ultimate arbitrator of the process.

Third, we call for the immediate opening of the main highways linking the east and north of the country.

Closure of the highways have not only cut off parts of the country from trade and commerce but has also divided and broken up families. We suggest using a phased approach. We know there is goodwill on both sides to open the main north-east (N7) highway. This is in the public domain. We suggest a phased day-time opening for one month, to be followed by the opening of the N9, N12 and N6 highways in the subsequent three months.

We suggest that a multiparty group of stakeholders (comprised of members of the business community, trade unions, community groups and media) monitors the openings for the three-month period and provides a report on and any violations of the agreed openings at that time.

Fourth, we call for a specific and targeted investment plan for the north and east of the country that will enable this traditionally neglected region to flourish economically.

This strategy will be put in place following a peace agreement but Biz4Peace firmly believes that a concrete agreement for a massive investment plan in the north and east, backed by international donors, will be a critical confidence building measure.

We, the combined business community of Nerland as represented by Biz4Peace, believe this is a viable and tangible roadmap to peace in our country.

Tool 7: Assess the needs of enterprises following conflict

This tool aims, using a post-conflict needs assessment survey, aims to support EBMOs assess the needs of enterprises following conflict.

The post-conflict needs assessment survey aims to conduct an initial scan of the impact of conflict on staff and the enterprise. This survey asks questions the 5Ps framework: **People, Processes, Profits, Partnerships, and Planet**.

- ▶ People: lives of staff and family members
- ▶ Processes: enterprise operations
- ▶ Profits: revenue generation
- ▶ Partnership: enabling environment to carry out business operations
- ▶ Planet: environmental sustainability within enterprise operations

EBMOs should decide whether it is safest to conduct the post-conflict needs assessment survey with enterprises in person, on the phone, or online, depending on the particular context of the conflict. The post-conflict needs assessment survey helps EBMOs better understand the following issues:

- ▶ Which types of enterprises were worst hit by the conflict (small, medium, large)?
- ▶ Are specific sectors particularly affected by the conflict?
- ▶ Are specific geographical locations particularly affected by the conflict?
- ▶ Are most businesses currently operating?
- ▶ Are most employers and workers safe and accounted for?
- ▶ Are enterprises facing electricity and/or water disruptions?
- ▶ What are the most pressing challenges faced by enterprises following conflict (e.g. financial impact, limited cash, staff dealing with injuries or traumatic responses, damaged inventory, supply chain disruptions, lower demand)?
- ▶ Can any of these challenges create impediments to doing business over the short- and/or long-term?
- ▶ Can enterprises access loans or grants to support business recovery?
- ▶ Are business owners considering closing their enterprises?

The information collected using the post-conflict needs assessment survey can be used to identify the type of support and professionals (e.g. lawyers, business advisers, insurance brokers, psychologists, human resource advisors, among others) that enterprises may need. The EBMO should keep an organized record of survey responses from the post-conflict needs assessment survey.

The post-conflict enterprise needs assessment is flexible and EBMOs can modify it depending on their objectives, enterprises' needs and specific conflict-related challenges.

Post-conflict needs assessment

Number of workers _____	Sector of operation _____
Type of conflict _____	Geographic location _____

People : Lives of staff and family members	
1. Are all your workers physically safe and accounted for?	Y ☐ N ☐

2. Have any workers been injured or died due to the conflict situation?	Y ☐ N ☐
2.1. If your answer was positive, please indicate whether workers died or were injured, or both (with a X) and number of workers: Injured _____ Dead _____	
3. Are your workers currently working?	Y ☐ N ☐
4. Have you noticed emotional responses (e.g. hyper-alertness, anxiety, stress, depression, distraction, etc.) among your workers following a single catastrophic experience associated with or resulting from the conflict? Y ☐ N ☐	
4.1. If your answer was positive to any of the above questions, do you assess that you will need external professional assistance to support your workers and their well-being? Y ☐ N ☐	
Processes : Enterprise operations	
5. Is your enterprise currently operating? Fully ☐ Partially ☐ Not operating ☐	
6. Has the conflict negatively impacted the demand for your products and/or services? If it has, please indicate the level of negative impact: High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐	
7. What are the main challenges that your enterprise currently faces? Y ☐ N ☐	
7.1 Weak financial situation and limited cash flow to operate Y ☐ N ☐	
7.2 Workers are absent from work and/or leaving the area of operation due to the conflict Y ☐ N ☐	
7.3 Premises were badly damaged Y ☐ N ☐	
7.4 Key machinery was badly damaged? Y ☐ N ☐	
7.5 Inventory was damaged or stolen and operations have or will be disrupted Y ☐ N ☐	
7.6 Key documents (e.g. property records, mortgage documents, insurance policies, tax records, etc.) were damaged, stolen or lost Y ☐ N ☐	
7.7 Suppliers are unable to work due to the conflict Y ☐ N ☐	
7.8 Demand for products and/or services is lower than normal Y ☐ N ☐	
7.9 Others (please specify) _____	
8. Indicate which of the challenges mentioned in question 7 can create impediments to doing business over the short (one to three months) and/ or long term (more than six months) Short term _____ Long term _____	
Profits : Revenue generation	
9. Do you have an insurance policy that covers for conflict situations that impact on business? Y ☐ N ☐	
10. Do you currently have your own funding (e.g. cash, savings) to help business recovery/restart operations? Y ☐ N ☐	
10.1. If yes, is this funding a sufficient amount? Y ☐ N ☐	
11. Are you able to access finance to support your business recovery (e.g. loans or grants)? Y ☐ N ☐	
12. How long would it take your enterprise to recover from the conflict and restore operations? ☐ ___ days ☐ ___ weeks ☐ ___ months ☐ ___ I am considering closing temporarily or permanently	
Partnerships : Enabling environment to carry out business operations	
13. Has the conflict disrupted your supply chain, particularly in accessing key materials or products necessary for your business Y ☐ N ☐	
13.1. If yes, please describe the disruptions and their impact _____	
14. Are transport and communication networks (e.g. roads, bridges, ports, telecommunications) in your area functional and accessible? Y ☐ N ☐	
14.1. If no, how has this affected your business operations? _____	

15. Have you been able to maintain or restore communication with your key partners (e.g., suppliers, clients, service providers) following the conflict?	Y ☐ N ☐
16. Is there a need for collaborative efforts with other businesses or organizations to address common challenges arising from the conflict (e.g., joint supply chain solutions, shared infrastructure repairs)?	Y ☐ N ☐
16.1. If yes, please describe any initiatives or support you would like to see	
Planet: Environmental impact and sustainability	
17. Has the conflict led to environmental damage (e.g. pollution, deforestation or contamination) in your area of operation?	Y ☐ N ☐
18. Are there any environmental regulations or requirements that your enterprise now finds challenging to comply with due to the conflict?	
18.1. If yes, please describe the challenges	
19. Have there been disruptions in your access to natural resources (e.g. timber, water, minerals) necessary for your business operations due to the conflict?	Y ☐ N ☐
20. Do you have additional comments regarding your most pressing needs? Please let us know and we will take immediate action to support your recovery	
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.....	

Case studies: The role of EBMOs in conflict situations

the two case studies available in this section provide insightful examples of how EBMOs contribute to economic stability and peacebuilding. Both case studies highlight how EBMOs can foster dialogue, build coalitions, and engage in conflict resolution and peace efforts, demonstrating the potential of the business representative organizations and the private sector to drive social and economic transformation in conflict situations.

Case study 1 : Nepal

The Maoist Rebellion was a decade-long armed conflict against the Government of Nepal. The rebellion was launched by the Communist Party of Nepal on 13 February 1996, with the primary aim of overthrowing the Nepalese monarchy and establishing a “People’s Republic”. Throughout war, the Government controlled the main cities and towns while the Maoists dominated the rural areas.

The conflict ended with the Comprehensive Peace Accord signed on 21 November 2006.

In Nepal, business leaders avoided direct contact and engagement with the Maoists for a long time. Direct negotiations would have meant challenging the state authority of specific actors such as the army and would have resulted in repercussions, including imprisonment.

However, when the Maoists announced on 17 August 2004 the closure of 12 enterprises, a tipping point was reached. A week later, the Maoists announced the closure of a further 35 companies, threatening the collapse of the entire industrial sector. The Maoists switched their focus to local industries rather than foreign subsidiaries in order to force a sense of urgency on the business community. A list of demands regarding working conditions was issued, which also included political demands, leaving businesses in the uncomfortable position of having to mediate between the Government of Nepal and the Maoists.

To address these threats the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), along with other EBMOs such as the Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI) and the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN), set up a task force to begin collective discussions with the affected industries, the Government, and legal trade unions, without initially making direct contact with the Maoists. After consultations with civil society, the FNCCI contacted three well-known human rights activists. Thanks to the endorsement of the Government and personal access to decision-makers in the Communist Party of Nepal, these activists agreed to mediate between the business community, the Government, and the Maoists.

After receiving government approval, the mediators brought together business people and leaders of the Maoist trade union. Following a lengthy process of negotiations, an agreement was finally reached on 30 September 2004. The Government agreed to release two Maoist trade union leaders and make public the whereabouts of others who had been detained. The FNCCI agreed that its members would negotiate with trade unions regarding workers’ welfare issues. As a result, the Maoists withdrew their threat to force the closure of the 47 factories.

These efforts ultimately led to the formation of the National Business Initiative for Peace (NBI), which comprised 14 national business organizations. The NBI included EBMOs such as the FNCCI, the NCCI and the HAN.

The NBI’s initial aim was to invest resources in three areas: social capital; infrastructure; and the creation of safe spaces for peace talks and genuine peacebuilding efforts. The motivations for selecting these areas were clearly stated in the NBI (2005) information booklet:

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The conflict is aggravated by unjust socio-economic development and political failings. Poverty, disparities, poor governance, corruption and the failure to adequately deliver essential social services and infrastructure to rural communities and marginalized groups are the other underlying causes of the conflict. Therefore, for a lasting solution, the nexus of poverty, poor governance and marginalization needs to be urgently broken.

The NBI outlined its principles, targeted specific goals and set timeframes for their achievement based on the idea that businesses' success is directly tied society's success, and vice versa. Initial aims included the introduction of socially responsible business practices, organization of peacebuilding activities with community outreach, and raising awareness among businesses about their leading role in societal transformation. After seven years of sustained operations, the NBI redefined its four areas of work as: peacebuilding and constitution-making; promotion of sustainable business practices; enabling the business environment; and fostering inclusive growth and economic opportunities.

The NBI developed a range of initiatives that included the following:

- ▶ In 2013, the NBI developed a national code of conduct on ethical business practices in Nepal, which also had sectoral components (dairy, leather footwear and construction).
- ▶ NBI developed a "peace certificate" that indicates that the holder (enterprise) was part of the peace-making initiative and has signed up to the NBI's principles.

In 2013, in response to threats to businesses to make forced donations to political parties and trade unions, the FNCCI and the NBI developed a "Basket Fund for Elections". This basket approach asked that enterprises voluntarily contribute to a fund opened at NBI or one of its member business organizations whereby the contribution would be officially and transparently recorded. Money collected through this basket fund was distributed to political parties on the basis of a formula, according to the percentage of their votes in the previous election and the percentage of seats contested in the current election. Each enterprise was then in a position to show any group trying to force donations from them that they had already contributed. Actual implementation of the project was mixed for a variety of reasons, but conceptually it was well received and demonstrated private sector support for the democratic process.

Case study 2 : Sri Lanka

The conflict in Sri Lanka was the single biggest impediment to the development and expansion of business operations in the country's private sector. However, through its EBMOs, Sri Lanka has been involved in various peace-making roles both through advocacy and influencing of policies. At times, some business leaders with direct access to policy-makers actively called for a negotiated settlement to the war. It was also noted that there were occasions when the private sector garnered the support of the public, to deliver a categorical message urging for peace. While the EBMOs achieved mixed results in their peace advocacy work, the lessons learned are insightful.

In 1998, two years after the Central Bank bombing, and 15 years since the start of the war, six EBMOs (the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, the Ceylon National Chamber of Commerce, the National Chamber of Industries, the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industries of Sri Lanka, the Employers'

Federation of Ceylon, and the Exporters Association of Sri Lanka) invited all political parties for an All Party Conference. This marked the first time that these large EBMOs collectively initiated a political discussion to achieve consensus on how to solve the ethnic conflict. While the EBMOs considered that economic reforms, such as improvement to labour laws, were essential, the ethnic conflict had become the single most important factor affecting their members. They pressed for equality in Sri Lanka along with security, and promoted English as the language to be used to build bridges between communities. The conference agenda also highlighted the need to have a common policy framework to enhance the investment environment for the private sector and thereby improve livelihoods. Despite the significance of this event, the main opposition party, the United National Party (UNP), did not attend, rendering the possibility of reaching a consensus impossible.

In 2001, after the bombing of the capital's international airport, the apex EBMOs stepped up their pressure on the authorities to achieve an end to the conflict through peaceful means. The bombing had brought the economy to a standstill and dealt a heavy blow to the popularity of the Kumaratunga Government. Despite these pressures, the two main political parties saw no need to form a national government. The apex EBMOs held regular meetings focused on the common cause of ending the war. As part of a bipartisan initiative, they developed a ten-point document signed by all chambers and employers' organizations and lobbied the President and the opposition leader, stating that the political parties could not expect support from large businesses unless they made cessation of the war a priority. They insisted on a national unity regime and the resumption of peace talks. The Sri Lankan public and the international community were also applying pressure on the Government to urgently find a solution to the conflict.

Unlike their lobbying efforts in the late 1990s, the apex EBMOs in 2001 showed strong unity, creating the J-Biz. All advocacy efforts with the political leadership were henceforth directed through this new entity with the primary mandate of influencing an end to the war.

Given that there remained citizens and political groups who still supported a military solution, advocacy was also required to influence public opinion towards a peaceful solution. A key component of private sector advocacy was the Sri Lanka First initiative. The apex EBMOs were instrumental in supporting several influential business leaders run a series of advertisements to rally 1 million people onto the streets to call for a stop to the war. The central message of the campaign, called "Sri Lanka First – It's Now or Never", was that the cost of war was much higher than the cost of peace, and that the campaign would continue until peace talks resumed. At the national event in September 2001, an estimated 1 million people held hands in a chain for 15 minutes, voicing this message. In addition to running this campaign, the J-Biz demanded a national unity government comprised of the two main political parties.

Not long afterwards, parliament was dissolved and parliamentary elections were called. With multiple pressures for peace, the UNP came to power, pledging a unilateral ceasefire with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Despite the success of peace advocates, however, there remained an uneasy marriage of governance between the then President and Prime Minister of different political parties. The J-Biz issued press releases advocating for all political parties to work together for a peaceful and prosperous future and placed itself firmly behind peace-supporting civil society. Regional EBMOs also played a crucial role in peacebuilding, with one EBMO in particular being instrumental in facilitating the ceasefire accord by meeting with both parties and advising them on actions necessary to reach an agreement.

Peace talks were held between the Government and the LTTE and a ceasefire came into effect in 2002.

This was viewed by the EBMOs as an opportunity to work towards a sustainable peace. Over the following two years key leaders within the chamber community visited South Africa and Northern Ireland to learn about how the private sector in each country had supported a peaceful end to conflict. Delegations from the two countries also visited Sri Lanka to provide advice. During the ceasefire, EBMOs attended donor

conferences in Tokyo and New York, where their presence helped establish credibility amongst the donor community on the appropriate use of funds.

Delegations also visited the CAZ, whose business potential appeared to be poor despite the active interest in supporting its development. The presence of peace was simply not enough to attract investment.

Parallel to these national initiatives, the heads of the 15 regional chambers created an organization, the BPA, to work towards business development and peace within the conflict-affected regions. Crucially, the leadership of the BPA represented all three of Sri Lanka's ethnic groups and its membership drew from all regions of the country. The BPA enjoyed significant leverage among regional business and its lobbying efforts demonstrated to national leaders that its call for peace was as strong as that of the larger Colombo-based entities.

Drawing investment to the north and east, to support peace was clearly a challenge. One of the most important initiatives was the "Invest in Peace" project led by the United Nations Development Programme and supported by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. The key objective of the project was to bring private sector enterprises from the north and south together to build networks and business-to-business linkages. It supported meetings of the regional chambers of commerce by facilitating discussions between regional enterprises and policy-makers and developing the skills of regional business leaders. Although the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami diverted funds away from core activities, the project enjoyed some success and was instrumental in highlighting the fact that it takes years to change attitudes and build trusting relationships.

As the gulf between the President and Prime Minister widened, the J-Biz, in consultation with religious groups and NGOs, decided to issue an ultimatum to the political leaders in January 2005 that they must cooperate or else face repercussions. However, by early 2005 the President had dissolved parliament and fresh elections were called, leaving the EBMOs unable to progress on their planned efforts to prevent an election and bring the political parties together.

The breakdown of the ceasefire, the change of administration with a new President and the renewal of conflict affected the apex EBMOs' peace efforts, pushing them to explore new avenues towards a solution. It became clear through dialogue with influential members of the Government and the opposition as well as with those who changed alliances from the LTTE to mainstream civil society that peace and the claims of the LTTE were beyond what the administration could accede to.

The LTTE had consistently violated the ceasefire agreement, and public support was increasingly shifting towards a military solution to ending the war. In 2005-2006, the EBMOs that had worked towards a negotiated peace continued to insist that this was the necessary approach. Although the EBMOs knew that the LTTE was not genuinely interested in meeting its ceasefire obligations, their peacebuilding efforts over the years had also impressed upon them that continuation of the war was also not the answer. Thus, their search for a peaceful negotiated end continued. The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, for example, established a separate steering committee to help achieve a negotiated settlement through multiple stakeholder consultations. However, events that unfolded once hostilities recommenced were difficult to overcome. Peace advocates in business and civil society, were being called traitors by war promoting civil groups and government-backed propaganda groups, and found themselves in a weakened position. From 2006, the regime adopted a policy of ending the conflict while also using psychological operations to boost the morale of those supporting the war and demoralize those who were against a military solution. As a result of threats, intimidation, as well as direct influence on the business operations of those actively voicing opinions against the Government, members of the business community who, during the previous years had been key peace advocates, withdrew and became silent.

As the war appeared to be drawing to an end, the EBMOs had to change their roles so as not to be perceived as delaying its end. When the end did finally come in 2009, the nature of peace efforts shifted

towards attracting investment and cementing long-term peace. However, some chambers found themselves side-lined by the Government, and the close interaction between the Government and EBMOs, seen only a few years earlier, had morphed into what was to become a period of very little influence. Several apex EBMOs that had committees dedicated to peace-related issues saw no need to continue with such activities.

With the return of a new government in 2015, there was a greater possibility for advocacy and influencing. However, with the end of the war firmly consolidated, priorities shifted to purely economic issues.

Training tools for EBMOs in conflict situations

Training tool 1: Strategic plan of action for EBMOs in emerging conflict situation

This tool is designed to support EBMOs create a strategic action plan when conflict is emerging. Participants are given a scenario in which a region is experiencing political instability, rising inequality and economic decline. The scenario below highlights how ethnic and religious tensions can escalate to conflict, particularly when the economic situation worsens, and provides insights into the risks faced by local enterprises, especially SMEs.

EBMO representatives are tasked with developing strategies to help enterprises remain commercially viable in the face of growing conflict. The tool emphasizes the importance of engaging with stakeholders, maintaining neutrality and providing essential services to enterprises such as navigating permits and liaising with government authorities. The exercise challenges participants to prioritize sectors at risk, maintain relations with various actors, and manage the EBMO's role as a neutral, influential player amid escalating tensions.

Scenario

You are the President of the local chamber of commerce in one of the regions in a developing country. The economic growth rate of the country, and consequently, the region is slowing down, having fallen from 7 per cent to 5.5 per cent in the last 3 years. Unemployment, especially youth unemployment, is rampant, and social inequality is on the rise. The country is also witnessing political instability, with this being the third change in government in the last 5 years. Typically, the constitutional provisions allows the government to hold office for 5 years.

The area you operate in is mainly a Muslim one, which is a minority religion in the country. There was a Muslim separatist movement engaging in low-level activities in the region for over 20 years. However, these activities were only political in nature, and did not have a major bearing on the daily lives of people and the commercial activity in the region. However, the government's decision to adopt English as the national language, make it compulsory for all education to be conducted in English, and prohibit religious/faith-based education has led to an escalation in the separatist activities. It now poses a serious threat to life and commercial activity in the region. In addition to this, the escalation of the separatist movement also has an economic dimension, with the Muslim population in this regions being one of the poorest sections of the society. On average, Muslim youths spend fewer years at school, and thus, are relatively less employable as compared to their counterparts, leading to a perpetuation of the vicious circle of poverty.

70 percent of the members of the chamber of commerce are SMEs, whereas the other 30 per cent consists of large enterprises, and sectoral business associations. The activities of the chamber of commerce are limited, with most enterprises in the region choosing to be a part of the organization for certification of licensing requirements. The chamber of commerce does not provide much services like training sessions, discussion forums and seminars. It does, however, organize an annual trade fair, and distribute a monthly newsletter focusing on the activities of its members. The sectoral business associations, such as the Rubber Producers Association, are stronger and more active in this region. You are aware that some Muslim members of the chamber of commerce are directly involved in the separatist movement, or indirectly supporting it from outside by providing financial aid.

In addition to being the President of the local chamber of commerce, you are also an industrialist and the largest employer in the region. You own a rubber plantation which employs 350 people, and have recently branched out into the hospitality industry, starting 4 hotels and many restaurants across the region. Your core business activity is processing rubber, which accounts for 65 per cent of your revenues,

with the rest coming from your interests in the hospitality industry. Both these branches of your business are being affected by the separatist movement, requiring you to invest heavily in security and monitoring facilities. In addition to this, the region has also witnessed a fall in the number of tourists and business travelers, a factor which adversely affects your interests in the hospitality industry.

The other industries in your region are equally divided between asset-heavy and asset-light businesses in terms of number. In terms of revenue, the asset-heavy businesses like rubber plantations, palm-oil plantations, and other agro-based industries are more important, account for 60 per cent of the regional GDP. While the asset-light industries include, hospitality industry, healthcare, government and entertainment.

Exercise

Develop a plan of action for the Chamber of Commerce based on the above information.

Group 1

What are the three things that the chamber can focus on to help enterprises maintain commercial viability?

Guiding questions

- ▶ Which economic sectors will face greater risks due to the emerging conflict?
- ▶ How can the chamber assist enterprises in dealing with stakeholders involved in the conflict (directly/indirectly)?
- ▶ Identify activities that would allow enterprises to maintain stability within their organizations and in their local communities?
- ▶ How can the chamber assist enterprises to deal with the authorities to obtain permits and other such necessary services?

Group 2

What are the three main concerns/issues for the private sector that should guide the chamber's strategy?

Guiding questions

- ▶ What are the main risks for the chamber as an independent organization?
- ▶ How will the chamber manage relations with its key stakeholders?
- ▶ How can the chamber remain an influential interlocutor?
- ▶ How can the chamber ensure it is perceived as a neutral stakeholder?
- ▶ What are the different scenarios that the escalating tensions could lead to in the short, medium and longer term and how can the chamber prepare of them?

Training tool 2 : Strategic plan of action for the EBMO in a post-conflict environment

This tool focuses on creating a strategic plan for EBMOs in the aftermath of a conflict. The scenario set in a country recovering from an ethnically driven conflict, where the economy has suffered extensive damage, foreign investors have withdrawn, and infrastructure is in disrepair. As representatives of EBMOs, participants are tasked with developing short and long-term strategies to contribute to economic development and attract investment while rebuilding damaged enterprises.

The exercise emphasizes the role of the chamber in advocating for policy reforms, promoting stability, and ensuring that recovery efforts include ethical investment. Participants must identify ways to communicate business needs to policymakers, encourage investment in key sectors, and reduce risks while positioning the chamber as a neutral, reliable partner in the rebuilding process.

Scenario

Your country has recently emerged from an ethnically-driven conflict between the Muslim separatists, a minority in the region, and the local Christian population. The conflict also has its roots in economic repression, with the Muslim population being much poorer, and having limited access to facilities like healthcare, sanitation, education and housing, as compared to the local Christian population. The conflict, that lasted over ten years, has now ended with a peace agreement between the two parties. The middle years, the conflict was extremely violent in nature. Prior to the crisis, the country was in the initial stages of evolving from a natural-resources driven economy, with the local private sector and the foreign investors investing in industries like ancillary automobile parts, and iron and steel. However, due to the conflict, most businesses suffered, many shut down, and the majority of foreign investors have taken their capital out of the country. Additionally, infrastructural facilities like roads, highways, ports, electricity generation and supply, and water supply, have been severely damaged. The war has taken a heavy toll on human capital, not only in terms of reducing the labour force through deaths and disabilities, but also in terms of skills and productivity.

As people are gradually rehabilitated from refugee camps, there will be a tremendous upsurge in the demand for productive employment and opportunities to upgrade skills and education. The absence of such opportunities and essential services could contribute to public frustration, which could threaten to blow over in the form of continuing conflicts in the region.

The government, which is formed by the elected representatives of the two parties, Muslim National League (MNL) and National Union of Christians (NUC), appear to be committed to maintaining peace and enacting reforms in order to spur economic development in this region. International agencies, NGOs and country governments are eager to support the recovery process, not only through monetary assistance and aid, but also through technical assistance and capacity building. However, due to recent widespread criticism about the corrupt and ineffective channels of providing development assistance, international agencies and bilateral governments are allowing the government to have a say in the way in which they want the aid to be structured. As the President of the National Chamber of Commerce, and as a leading industrialist in the region, you are responsible for assisting the government in developing a short-term (5-year) and long-term (10-year) plan of economic development, and the contribution of official development assistance to this process.

In addition to being the President of the local chamber of commerce, you are also an industrialist and the largest employer in the region. You own a rubber plantation which employs 350 people, and have recently branched out into the hospitality industry, starting 4 hotels and many restaurants across the region. Your core business activity is processing of rubber, which accounts for 65 per cent of your revenues, with the rest coming from your interests in the hospitality industry. Your businesses have also borne the brunt of the unstable economic environment, with a part of your rubber plantations being destroyed, and your interests in the hospitality industry being badly affected due to poor inflow of tourists and

business travelers. Most of your member enterprises in region have witnessed similar damages, and are in agreement about the importance of stability for long-term sustainability and profitability.

Exercise

Develop a plan of action for the Chamber of Commerce based on the above information.

Group 1

What are the three things that the chamber can focus on to help enterprises in developing their businesses?

Guiding questions

- ▶ How will you communicate the concerns and needs of enterprises to policy makers?
- ▶ How will you advocate for the policy environment necessary to help grow and develop enterprises and jobs, in a post conflict situation?
- ▶ How could the chamber assist enterprises in dealing with the authorities to obtain permits and other such services?

Group 2

What are the three things that the chamber can do to promote ethical investment?

Guiding questions

- ▶ Which economic sectors can be targeted for investment? Outline the risks/opportunities?
- ▶ What measures can be put in place to reduce those risks/increase opportunities?
- ▶ Can the chamber position itself as a neutral connector and provider of intelligence to potential investors?

► Tools for enterprises to navigate conflict situations

Guidance for enterprises: navigating conflict situations

This guidance outlines key actions enterprises can take to sustain operations and support peace-building efforts in conflict zones. Businesses operating in these environments face a range of challenges, from security threats to infrastructural damage. However, with strategic planning and collaboration, enterprises can continue to operate and contribute to stability.

Responding to conflict situations

Conflict often disrupts the business environment, leading to uncertainty, reduced access to markets, and safety concerns for employees. Despite these challenges, businesses can play a pivotal role in mitigating conflict by promoting economic opportunities and fostering social cohesion. Enterprises, particularly in high-risk areas, must adopt proactive strategies to ensure their survival and maintain commercial viability.

Key challenges in conflict zones include:

- **Damaged infrastructure** - Poor roads, electricity, and water supply can reduce operational efficiency.
- **Lack of trust in governance** - Weak institutions can make it difficult for businesses to secure permits, licenses, and protection.
- **Security risks** - Threats to staff, facilities, and supply chains are common, requiring investments in safety and protection.
- **Informal payments** - Businesses may face demands from conflicting parties or groups for informal payments to ensure safety or operational continuity.

Why stability matters for enterprises

Stable environments allow businesses to thrive by fostering investment and reducing the risks of operational disruption. Business growth in turn helps create jobs and opportunities that reduce the drivers of conflict, such as unemployment and poverty. Enterprises in conflict zones can make a significant contribution to peace by offering economic alternatives, particularly to vulnerable groups like youth.

Role 1: maintain operations

Key action 1 : Manage security concerns

- Assess and mitigate risks by conducting regular risks assessments to understand the security concerns. This includes analysing potential threats to staff, assets and supply chains;
- Invest and implement security measures such as surveillance, hiring security personnel, or collaborating with local security providers to ensure the safety of business operations and personnel
- Develop and update contingency plans, including evaluation procedures and safe supply chain routes to respond quickly to incidents.

Key action 2 : Liaise with authorities

- ▶ Establish relationships with local government and regulatory bodies, including through EBMOs, to ensure the enterprise is aware of and compliant with any new regulations, curfews or restrictions that may arise
- ▶ Through EBMOs, work with at authorities to secure permits and licenses necessary to keep the business running and negotiate to minimize disruptions like road closures or utility outages.

Key action 3 : Build supply chain resilience

- ▶ Avoid over-reliance on a single supplier by diversifying supply chains across different regions or suppliers
- ▶ Explore and secure alternative transportation routes for goods and services in case primary routes are affected by conflict-related disruptions
- ▶ Build relationships with local communities to support the safe transport of goods and ensure mutual benefits, which can create goodwill and lower the risk of disruptions.

Role 2: Business Growth And Job Creation

Key action 4 : Promote entrepreneurship and employment

- ▶ Identifying and nurturing local entrepreneurs by providing guidance, mentorship and resources
- ▶ Invest in training and developing programmes for employees to improve their skills and productivity
- ▶ Through EBMOs, collaborate with other enterprises, particularly SMEs to build local supply chains, share knowledge and create value in the local economy.

Key action 5: Invest in training and skills development

- ▶ Develop programmes that focus on training youth, particularly young women and men who are often most affected by conflict. Providing vocational training and internships can improve their employability and reduce the likelihood of them engaging in negative activities
- ▶ Partner with educational institutions or NGOs to provide technical and skills training that aligns with enterprise needs.

Key action 6 : Encourage ethical investment

- ▶ Promote the enterprise as a stable and ethical partner for investors by adopting transparent and responsible business practices
- ▶ Work with local stakeholders, including government and international organizations, to secure investment guarantees or incentives that encourage long-term investments for the business
- ▶ Explore new business opportunities that can reduce reliance on a single sector and allow the enterprise to remain flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances.

Role 3: Foster inclusive workplaces

Key action 7 : Ensure neutral workplaces

- ▶ Prevent the workplace from becoming a site for political or ethnic divisions, ensuring that the enterprise remains a neutral zone focused on productivity and inclusivity.

Key action 8 : Promote diversity and inclusion

- ▶ Implement merit-based hiring practices that emphasize diversity, ensuring that marginalized groups, such as youth and former combatants have equal opportunities and treatment.

Assessing and monitoring risks and threats to enterprises in conflict-affected zones

In conflict-affected zones, enterprises face five primary categories of risk.



Economic risk - The most significant risk identified by many enterprises is economic risk. This encompasses more than just profit and loss. Key concerns include access to local finance, clarity in tax rates, the stability of local and global financial markets, tariffs and exchange rates, and the challenges of moving money across borders.

Economic risk categories: Finance, regulatory environment, stability of governance, taxation regime, stability of financial institutions



Infrastructure risk - The second major concern for enterprises is the risk related to infrastructure. This includes limited or no access to essential infrastructure such as roads, railways, ports, and electricity. Additionally, poor maintenance or destruction of existing infrastructure poses a significant threat, particularly to industries like extractive and export manufacturing.

Infrastructure risk categories: Roads, rail, ports, electricity providers, water utilities



Institutional risk - The third significant risk is institutional. This involves issues such as the independence of the judiciary, corruption, investment policies, the risk of expropriation, and political stability. Land ownership laws and the availability of proper documentation are also critical factors.

Institutional risk categories: Independence of judiciary, corruption, rule of law, risk of expropriation, political stability, land ownership laws, media freedom



Reputational risk - The fourth major risk is reputational damage, which can arise from conflicts affecting the enterprise. This includes issues like forced labour, child labour, and other human rights violations.

Reputational risk categories: Forced labour, child labour, discrimination, freedom of association, indigenous land rights, environmental impacts



Explicit conflict risk - The final risk is related to direct threats from conflict, such as harm to facilities or workers through violent actions, including kidnappings and bombings. This category includes risks from traditional warfare, guerrilla tactics, insurgencies, and terrorism.

Explicit conflict risk categories: Kidnappings, extortion, direct violence and bombings

Risks by sector

The level and types of risks will differ between enterprises and economic sectors. For example in the manufacturing sector: Enterprises in this sector are highly dependent on large workforces, multiple suppliers and close connectivity with governance and regulatory institutions, services and processes – their risks cut across all variables. For enterprises operating in the oil and gas sector, risks may be more centered on institutional or reputational risk variables.



Economic risk rating - A risk rating is based on how much an industry would be impacted by economic volatility, or even all-out economic collapse. Risks are lower in the agricultural, oil and gas, and forestry and mining sectors due to the availability of natural resources.



Infrastructure risk rating - The level of infrastructure risk generally varies, as it is based on the demand for export commodities. Manufacturing, which includes textiles, food and beverage processing and other consumer goods, tends to have a high rating due to the dependence of enterprise exports on commonly used infrastructure. The oil and gas industry has a low rating since companies in this sector are generally more willing to cover costs to build up infrastructure in the region. In the services sector although there is less demand for access to ports, there may be a greater requirement for access to cities and a large labour force, and there is certainly a need for reliable internet service and utilities.



Institutional risk rating - Although agriculture, oil and gas, and forestry and mining benefit from a low economic risk rating due to natural resources, these industries are most likely to face high institutional risk. Regions with natural resources are likely to face challenges concerning government oversight and disputes of land ownership. Manufacturing, however, is more nuanced, as enterprises seeking to build large manufacturing plants could technically still face the same issues of land ownership but have the option of locating to areas designed to accommodate businesses, such as industrial parks. Also, because business services typically employ locals, this too carries a low risk rating.



Reputational risk rating - For oil and gas and forestry and mining, reputational risk is high due to the potential for human rights and labour rights violations.



Explicit conflict risk rating - While the level of explicit risk of conflict is likely to shift as active conflict arises, agriculture, oil and gas, and forestry and mining are rated higher for risk than other industries. Operations in these sectors are often located far from city centres and are thus removed from central government and military influence, making them more prone to threats of explicit conflict.



Employment risk - An additional component of risk that is often overlooked is the risk to employment. This particular risk does not only affect the enterprise but society as a whole. For example, if employment is threatened, this is likely to have financial implications for large segments of the local population, which can, in turn, exacerbate social tensions. The risk to employment can have direct implications for conflicts or the potential for a conflict.

The matrix below highlights the various weightings for different risk variables depending on the sector of economic activity.

► Risk Variables and Weighting by Industry Sector

Industry	Manufacturing	Business services	Agriculture	Forestry and Mining	Oil & Gas
 Employment Effect	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
 Economic	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low
 Infrastructure	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
 Institutional	Medium	Low	High	High	High
 Reputational	Medium	Low	Low	High	High
 Explicit Conflict	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High

Checklist: Monitoring risks and threats

Monitoring risk and threats is an ongoing and dynamic process that can assist in:

- Anticipating the likelihood and severity of a crisis
- Developing a strategic response that can mitigate any adverse consequences to the private sector
- There are two main causes of conflict
- Structural factors
- Proximate or immediate factors

Structural factors are those that are endemic or systematic in a society. These are the root causes – long-term factors that have existed over a period of time. Examples of root causes are poverty, unemployment, lack of education and historical exclusion of key cohorts of the population.

Proximate or immediate factors have occurred more recently and usually consist of a series of recent events that have interacted with structural causes to initiate a conflict situation. For example, a major act of violence, a social or political upheaval such as mass unemployment, or the election of a radical political agenda.

The early warning matrix below can assist in assessing emerging threats. Use the rating structure below to work through the matrix:

Very high	5	4	3	2	1	Very low
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	----------

Early warning matrix		
Cause : Economic		Ranking
Structural	Geographical neglect	
	Unequal access to resources	
	Employment discrimination	
	Sector dependence	
Proximate	Rising unemployment rates	
	Devaluation of currency	
	Policy change leads to decrease in benefits	
	Economic shocks or financial crises	
Cause : Political		Ranking
Structural	Unpopular government	
	Exclusionary political systems	
	Corruption	
Proximate	State arrests	
	Exile of public figures	
	Assassination of political leader(s)	
	Martial law	
	Electoral fraud	
	Contentious political referenda	
	Media driven hate speech/propaganda	
	Increase in demonstrations or rallies	
Cause : Human rights		Ranking
Structural	Freedom of speech limited	
	Freedom of movement limited	
	Freedom of association limited	
	Rights denied to groups (e.g. access to education)	
Proximate	Spike in violence	
	Increase in coercion by authorities	
	Arrests of leaders	
	Strikes	
	Destruction of cultural or religious landmarks	

Cause : Military		Ranking
Structural	Military-political accords	
	Military build-up	
	Growth of illicit arms trade	
Proximate	Deployment of armed forces	
	Increased viability of armed personnel	
	Forced military recruitment	
	Retaliatory attacks	
	Paramilitary incidents	
Cause : Health		Ranking
Structural	Poor access to health services	
	Weak health infrastructure	
	Increasing evidence of poor nutrition	
	Sanitation issues	
	Poor access to key public utilities, e.g. water	
Proximate	Health epidemic	
	Natural disaster	
Cause : Infrastructure		Ranking
Structural	Weak public utilities/services	
	Weak road/rail/port infrastructure	
	Communities cut off	
Proximate	Energy outages	
	Strikes in key utilities/public services	
Cause : External		Ranking
Structural	Arbitrary national borders	
	External economic interests	
	Ethnic diaspora	
Proximate	Regional conflict spill-over	
	Influx of refugees	
	Foreign intervention	

Enterprise self-assessment tool: Vulnerability to conflict

This self-assessment tool allows the enterprises to complete a rapid assessment to identify the level of risk and vulnerability to conflict across the 5Ps - **People, Processes, Profits, Partnerships and Planet**.

- ▶ People: lives of staff and family members
- ▶ Processes: enterprise operations
- ▶ Profits: revenue generation
- ▶ Partnerships: enabling environment to carry out business operations
- ▶ Planet: environmental sustainability within enterprise operations

The self-assessment tool is divided into two parts:

- ▶ Identify internal and external threats that could lead to conflict in the enterprise
- ▶ Assess the level of enterprise vulnerability to conflict

The following icons will be used throughout the self-assessment tool:



Important information



Enterprise example

Before using the self-assessment tool

Enterprises need to decide who will conduct the self-assessment. This person or team of people should:

- ▶ Conduct the self-assessment to identify hazards and the level of risk and vulnerability the enterprise faces
- ▶ Use the results of the self-assessment to improve resilience across all processes of the enterprise

I. Identify internal and external threats that could lead to conflict in the enterprise



Conflict is a prolonged struggle between two or more parties at the local, regional, national or international levels, as well as other more general situations of violence that destabilize enterprises and societies.

In enterprises, conflict can materialize through internal and external threats.

Internal threats are those risks to a business that can be managed or controlled, while external threats refer to risks that originate outside the business and are beyond its control.



Fresh Inc. is a medium sized pomegranate processing enterprise which employs 30 workers, and operates in an area affected by religious and political conflict.

In the past, religious extremist groups have conducted terrorist attacks in the form of kidnapping, crossfire with authorities, and bombings. Prolonged exposure to conflict has also resulted in the circulation of weapons among civilians. There have also been reports of increased thefts and violence, often targeted at business owners and their families. Other enterprises in the region have reported religious radicalization among workers, resulting in violence and harassment at the workplace.

Fresh Inc.'s most likely external threats are: kidnapping, crossfire, bombing, theft, physical violence and extortion. The most likely internal threats are: religious motivated violence and harassment at work.

1. Rank the **likelihood** of occurrence of internal and external threats that could impact enterprise operations from 1 to 5, where 1 is the least likely threat and 5 is the most likely threat.

Internal threat	Likelihood of occurrence
Theft	
Physical damage on premises	
Gender-based violence and harassment at work	
Ethnic-based violence and harassment	
Religion-based violence and harassment	
Political-based violence and harassment	
Discrimination	
Promotion of conflict	
Blackmail	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	

External threat	Likelihood of occurrence
Conflict-related unrest	
Military action	
Crossfire	
Violence and harassment in society	
Detention by armed rebel groups	
Kidnapping	
Bombing	
Theft	
Extortion	
Blackmail	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	

2. Rank the **likely impact** of the most likely internal and external threats on enterprise operations. Consider how the internal and external threats that were ranked highly in the previous section (with a score over 4), could impact the enterprise. Assess the likelihood of these threat affecting the enterprise on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is the least likely impact and 5 is the most likely impact.

Impact on the 5Ps at the enterprise level	Likelihood of occurrence
Affect the physical safety of staff	
Affect the emotional wellbeing of staff (e.g. reduce motivation, lead to depression, increase stress, result in absenteeism)	
Lead to workplace accidents	
Damage infrastructure and premises (office, desks, equipment, computers, etc.)	
Damage documentation and data	
Reduce the demand for products or services	
Have negative impacts on suppliers and partners	
Drive the enterprise out of business	
Result in significant economic losses	
Damage the reputation of the enterprise	
Reduce access to natural resources	
Cause environmental degradation	
Other:	
Other:	

II. Assess the level of enterprise vulnerability to conflict

3. Indicate responses to the yes/no questions below by marking an X. There are four questionnaires composed of a total of 50 questions structured around the “5Ps” ‘People, Processes, Profits, Partnerships, and Planet’. The level of vulnerability can be estimated by counting the number of “yes” responses in each questionnaire.

(Answer “No” if you are not sure or don’t know)

Vulnerability of people

Personal safety	Yes	No
Have staff experienced personal trauma such as death or injury of family members; damage to the family home/property, as a result of conflict/social disturbances?		
Is it physically unsafe for staff to come and go from the workplace?		

Are there current personal safety risks (e.g. physical harm, verbal abuse, aggression and harassment, etc.) to staff when they are at the workplace?		
Is there only one exit to leave in the premises?		
Are workers leaving the enterprise because they seek greater physical security?		
Are staff members visibly associated with a political party or political movement?		
Safe and inclusive working environment	Yes	No
Are workers less motivated due to a stressful working environment?		
Are workers leaving their jobs because of potential or actual security concerns and/or incidents?		
Has the current political environment negatively influenced the working environment?		
Has discriminatory behaviour among workers led to threats and intimidation of fellow workers?		
Does the enterprise face high staff turnover due to workplace issues including violence and harassment at work?		
Does the enterprise have difficulty in recruiting workers from certain ethnicities, religious backgrounds, races, gender etc.?		
Do recruitment practices indirectly or directly favour specific groups or individuals over others (i.e. one ethnic group over another)?		
Total	_____ / 13	

Vulnerability of processes

Buildings	Yes	No
Has there been any physical damage to the premises due to external violence, associated with political, terrorist or military activity?		
Are there increasing conflict-related disruptions to public utilities which the enterprise relies on, such as electricity or water?		
Is there an increase in actual criminal activity, or increased risk of criminal activity directed at the enterprise as a result of conflict-related incidents?		
Has the enterprise been negatively impacted by increased security demands, for example increased security checks delaying delivery of products coming/going from the premise?		
Equipment and machinery	Yes	No
Has the enterprise faced difficulties accessing the necessary equipment and machinery to run your business?		

Has there been any disruption or significant delays to any support services that the enterprise may need for maintenance of key equipment and machinery?		
Is equipment and machinery uninsured (i.e. the enterprise does have an insurance policy to cover in case of theft and damage resulting from conflict)?		
Stock and raw materials	Yes	No
Has the enterprise experienced difficulties in securing key stock and raw materials from theft and/or damage caused by external violence?		
Are electronic files and data stored in only one location (i.e. not backed up outside the premises)?		
Are main stocks and/or raw materials located in only one location?		
Total	_____ / 10	

Vulnerability of profits

Economic environment	Yes	No
Has there been a recent economic shock(s) or financial crises that directly impacted the enterprise or the markets of operation?		
Are unemployment rates rising in the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Has there been any significant outward displacement/migration of people from the locations the enterprise sells goods/services?		
Has there been a sudden increase in the price of inputs and other goods required to conduct business operations?		
Suppliers	Yes	No
Is violence negatively impacting on main suppliers and their ability to supply inputs to the enterprise?		
Has the enterprise experienced any disruptions in supplies due to increased violence or military/security activity?		
Are suppliers visibly associated with a political party or movement?		
Third parties (costumers, competitors and financial providers)	Yes	No
Is violence negatively impacting competitors and their ability to remain competitive?		
Is violence negatively impacting clients and their ability to buy products or services?		
Has there been a negative change in access to finance or the behaviour of financial services providers (e.g. increased lending obligations, less choice of providers, etc.) that could negatively impact enterprise operations?		

Society	Yes	No
Has there been a rise in “societal” intolerance and prejudice as evidenced in the media, street demonstrations and political discourse, among others?		
Are there increased restrictions on “freedom of movement” which may negatively impact on the enterprise ability to sell goods or services?		
Total	____ / 12	

Vulnerability of partnerships

Public utilities (water, electricity, health, sanitation)	Yes	No
Has there been any significant or ongoing disruptions of key public utilities (water, electricity, health and sanitation) that has negatively impacted the business or the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Has there been any significant or ongoing disruptions of key public utilities (water, electricity, health and sanitation) that has negatively impacted key suppliers?		
Has there been any negative or sudden change of costs related to public utilities?		
Has there been an increase in corruptive practices for access to public utilities or public infrastructure that affects the enterprise?		
Public infrastructure (telecommunications, roads, ports)	Yes	No
Have restrictions to accessing public infrastructure been put in place that negatively impacts the enterprise or the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Is there increased costs of using key public infrastructure that negatively impacts the enterprise or the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Political and regulatory environment	Yes	No
Has there been any negative or sudden change of regulations (i.e. laws and regulations) that negatively impacts the enterprise or the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Is there an increased uncertainty in policy/regulatory environment that could negatively impact the enterprise or the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Is the political situation in the geographical area the enterprise operates in increasingly unsettled?		
Have restrictions on freedom of expression been put in place?		
Has there been an increase in political demonstrations or rallies associated with corruption, inefficient governance or sudden increases in the price of commodities?		

Overall security	Yes	No
Has there been an increase in security/military activity that negatively impacts the enterprise or the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Have measures such as martial law or major restrictions on freedom of movement been put in place or threatened to be put in place?		
Have restrictions on freedom of movement associated with increased security/military activity negatively impacted the enterprise or the markets the enterprise operates in?		
Total	_____ / 15	

Vulnerability of the planet

The wider environment	Yes	No
Has conflict led to environmental damage near the enterprise, such as pollution or destruction of natural resources?		
Are there risks of hazardous materials being released or mishandled due to conflict?		
Have disruptions caused by conflict led to unsustainable practices, such as overexploitation of local resources?		
The enterprise's sustainability commitments	Yes	No
Has the conflict affected the enterprise's ability to implement environmentally-friendly practices?		
Is the enterprise facing increased costs or difficulties in sourcing sustainable materials due to environmental damage from conflict?		
Have conflicts led to environmental degradation that could disrupt supply chains or production processes?		
Total	_____ / 6	

From this exercise, the most vulnerable areas within the 5Ps (people, processes, profits, partnerships, and planet) of the enterprise will have been identified, along with specific aspects or variables that contribute to this vulnerability. To determine the total level of vulnerability, add up the number of times “yes” was answered in the four vulnerability self-assessments. Insert this sum in the cell below.

Total sum (Vulnerability to conflict of the enterprise)	_____ / 56
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Interpretation of the total score

This score does not rate whether the enterprise is good or bad. It is simply a benchmark of the enterprise and its vulnerability to conflict that helps in the identification of areas where the enterprises' overall resilience to conflict could improve.

- 1 - 14 The enterprise is highly vulnerable to conflict. The enterprise is quite likely to be severely impacted, which may cause long-term disruption in the event of a deterioration of the security situation. The next plan of action should be to identify whether the enterprise is most vulnerable to internal or external threats and take measures to reduce risk and vulnerability to conflict.

- 15 - 27 Despite having taken some action to increase preparedness the your enterprise remains vulnerable to conflict. Understand whether the threats are internal or external and make sure to prioritize elements of vulnerability when establishing business continuity plan.

- 28 - 39 The enterprise is on the right path towards becoming more resilient, but there are still some areas where the vulnerability to conflict could be reduced. Make sure to establish a business continuity plan in a way to manage the risk of internal and external threats.

- 40 - 56 Congratulations! The vulnerability to conflict of the enterprise is quite low, but there might be a few aspects to improve in order to become more resilient. Establish the business continuity plan to continue enhancing preparedness and respond effectively to internal and external threats.

Business continuity plan

Tool 1: Standard version

This standardized business continuity plan (BCP) tool is designed to strengthen the preparedness for and resilience of enterprises and their workers in the face of conflict. For the purposes of this toolkit, conflict is a prolonged struggle between two or more parties at the local, regional, national or international levels, as well as other situations of violence that destabilize enterprises and societies more generally.⁴

This toolkit provides guidance for the collection of information to conduct a BCP for the enterprise. Implementing the BCP will help the enterprise and its workers become better prepared for and more resilient to conflict. A more simplified version for smaller enterprises is available in Tool 2: Simplified version.

The following icons will be used throughout the tool:



Important information



Enterprise example

Before using the tool

The enterprise should designate an individual or group responsible for developing the BCP. This person or group should:

- ▶ Develop a BCP that enables the enterprise to prepare for, respond to, recover from and resume operations as quickly as possible following disruptions associated with conflict
- ▶ Ensure that the BCP prioritizes the physical and emotional safety of all workers
- ▶ Have the time to implement, review and improve the BCP
- ▶ Integrate the BCP into the overall processes of the enterprise

Business continuity plan tool

Step 1: Identify the key products and/or services



Naomi has a small shop that sells home ware. Her three main products are bedding (sheets, blankets and pillow cases), lamps and cushions. Of total revenue, bedding represents about 50 per cent, lamps 30 per cent and cushions 20 per cent.

Naomi's most important product is bedding, followed by lamps and cushions.

What are the three most important products or services? Consider the:

- ▶ The share of income they generate;
- ▶ The number of clients demanding them; and
- ▶ The cost of non-delivery, including negative financial, productivity and reputational consequences.

⁴ Definition of conflict adapted from ILO Guide Employment and Decent Work (2016).

Key products and/or services
1.
2.
3.

Step 2: Establish the objective of the BCP



Naomi lives and works in a conflict-affected city. Insurgent groups engage in politically motivated violence and kidnapping. Two years ago, crossfire with authorities resulted in human displacement, casualties and injuries. This conflict escalated to the point where most of the local businesses were forced to cease operations for some days.

Naomi knows that conflict can escalate quickly, so she has decided to create a BCP to:

“Ensure workers’ safety and minimize the risk of conflict-related disruptions”

What does the enterprise aim to achieve by establishing the BCP?

Step 3: Evaluate the potential impact of disruptions to the enterprise and workers (two tasks)

This evaluation helps determine, evaluate and quantify the potential effects of disruptions to key operations.

Task 1: Assess the impact of disruptions to key operations of the enterprise



Naomi assessed “what operations were required to produce and deliver her key products?” and “what would the impact be of not conducting her key operations?” To produce and deliver her key products, Naomi requires:

- ▶ A key supplier - Naomi buys her products from a large home ware factory. **Impact of not supplying:** Naomi would run out of stock within three weeks, and go bankrupt within five weeks.
- ▶ Roads through which Naomi’s supplier and clients can access her shop. **Impact of inaccessible roads:** If roads are not accessible, Naomi’s revenue would be reduced by more than half, and according to her estimates, she could go bankrupt within four weeks.

Key terms

- ▶ **Key operations** - Operations required to produce/deliver key products and/or services.
- ▶ **Tolerated downtime** - How long key operations can be out of action before it becomes highly damaging to the viability of the business.

Key operations (name and description)	Impact of not conducting key operations	Estimated downtime	tolerated
			days
			weeks
			months
			days
			weeks
			months
			days
			weeks
			months
			days
			weeks
			months
			days
			weeks
			months

Task 2: Identify required resources, services and external parties to conduct key operations



Naomi employs three people who work as clerks in her shop, she has two computers, five tables and relies on operational cash flow. She does not use any machines, as she buys finished products from her key supplier.

She requires electricity, water and mobile phones to run her business; and roads through which suppliers and clients to reach her shop.

Naomi has decided to increase the number of key suppliers she buys the home ware from one to three. The additional two suppliers work in nearby cities, so this is a good way to minimize risk of financial losses due to conflict.

Resources	Required?	Alternative resources
Building / Office	Y ☐ N ☐	
Equipment / Machinery	Y ☐ N ☐	
Inventory	Y ☐ N ☐	
IT system	Y ☐ N ☐	

Workers	Y ☐ N ☐	
Cash flow	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Public services	Required?	Alternative public services
Electricity	Y ☐ N ☐	
Gas	Y ☐ N ☐	
Water	Y ☐ N ☐	
Telecommunications(phone, mobile phones, radios)	Y ☐ N ☐	
Roads	Y ☐ N ☐	
Public transport	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
External parties	Required?	Alternative third parties
Partners	Y ☐ N ☐	
Suppliers	Y ☐ N ☐	
Contractors	Y ☐ N ☐	
Clients	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	

Note : The letters Y and N stand for yes and no, respectively.

Step 4: Identify internal and external threats that could lead to conflict in the enterprise

Task 1: Identify internal and external threats and assess their likelihood



While **internal threats** are threats to business that can be controlled by the enterprise, **external threats** are threats to business that are not within the enterprise control.



Naomi's country is ethnically and culturally diverse. Most people descend from five racial groups and cultural differences are significant. Ethnic discrimination and violence and harassment are common. In fact, one year ago, Naomi dismissed one worker who discriminated and bullied another.

The city has been affected by armed conflict and violence. Two years ago, conflict escalated resulting in crossfire with authorities, causing human displacement, casualties, and injuries, which disrupted enterprise operations.

Internal threats - Ethnic-based violence and harassment, and discrimination are very likely (ranked between 4 and 5), other less likely internal threats include promotion of conflict at the workplace.

External threats - Crossfire, kidnapping and conflict-related unrest are very likely (ranked between 4 and 5), detention by leftist insurgent groups is likely (ranked at 3).

Rank the likelihood of occurrence of internal and external threats that could impact the enterprise on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the least likely threat and 5 is the most likely threat.

Internal threat	Likelihood of occurrence
Theft	
Physical damage on premises	
Gender-based violence and harassment at work	
Ethnic-based violence and harassment	
Religion-based violence and harassment	
Political-based violence and harassment	
Discrimination	
Promotion of conflict	
Blackmail	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	

External threat	Likelihood of occurrence
Conflict-related unrest	
Military action	
Crossfire	
Violence and harassment in society	
Detention by armed rebel groups	
Kidnapping	
Bombing	
Theft	
Extortion	

Blackmail	
Conflict-related unrest	
Military action	
Other:	

Task 2: Indicate which internal and external parties could be involved in the three most likely internal and external threats



Internal threats generally involve **internal parties** such as workers, supervisors, managers, investors, partners, owners and board of directors, etc. and occur within the enterprise in the workplace, manufacturing facilities, etc.

External threats are generally triggered by external parties including consumers, suppliers, government, military, financial institutions, security providers, illegal groups, local communities, cooperatives, among others.



For Naomi, internal parties possibly involved in internal threats are her workers; and external parties possibly involved in external threats include leftist insurgent groups, military, government, and local communities.

List up to five of the most likely internal and external threats for the enterprise and mention possible internal and external parties involved in them.

Internal threat	Internal party involved	External threat	External party involved
1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
4.		4.	
5.		5.	

Step 5: Take action to minimize risk of internal threats

Take the following actions to minimize the risk of internal threats that could create conflict in the enterprise.



Discrimination involves any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation. **Violence and harassment** in the world of work refers to a range of unacceptable behaviours or practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment. These practices could cause fear, stress, anxiety and physical sickness, and can lead to absenteeism, poor performance and resignation, among others.

Action 1. Prevent discrimination and address violence and harassment at work

- ▶ Promote respect and a world of work free from violence and harassment, and discrimination
- ▶ Establish a clear written workplace policies to prevent and address violence and harassment and discrimination
- ▶ Identify hazards and assess the risks of violence and harassment, including discrimination-based violence and harassment, with the participation of workers and their representatives as appropriate, and take measures to prevent and control them
- ▶ Provide workers and other persons concerned with information and training, in accessible formats, on the identified hazards and risks of violence and harassment and the associated prevention and protection measures, including on the rights and responsibilities of worker
- ▶ Establish a clear written internal grievance procedure to resolve discrimination and violence and harassment-related complaints, with clear disciplinary sanctions for offenders (e.g. counselling, suspensions or contract termination, etc.)

Action 2. Ensure that recruitment practices are fair and free from discrimination

- ▶ Prepare clear job descriptions before initiating the recruitment process, describing main tasks and responsibilities, specific skills and experience needed to perform the job
- ▶ Do not include personal characteristics such as sex, age, ethnicity and religion, among others, in job descriptions and advertisements
- ▶ Use gender-neutral language in job titles and job-advertisements (e.g. “camera operator” instead of “cameraman”, and “sales person” instead of salesman/saleswoman, etc.)
- ▶ Conduct shortlisting based on the objective selection criteria outlined for the post
- ▶ During job interviews, focus on abilities, knowledge, experience and qualifications needed in the job, and do not ask personal questions (e.g. religion, political views, etc.)
- ▶ Ensure that hiring managers understand that discrimination in any shape or form is unacceptable

Action 3. Promote an inclusive and gender-sensitive workplace

- ▶ Adjust workplace practices to facilitate religious and/or cultural practices where possible
- ▶ Train staff to understand cultural, gender, religious and ethnic differences
- ▶ Establish guidelines to ensure that politics stays out of the working environment
- ▶ Promote a respectful, diverse and welcoming environment among all workers regardless of race, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ethnicity, etc
- ▶ Make a conscious effort to increase diversity at all levels by involving under-represented groups in the workforce, and having a gender balanced workforce
- ▶ Ensure that your recruitment practices are fair and unbiased
- ▶ Ensure equal pay for work of equal value between women and men

Step 6: Assess the possible impact of external threats and take action to minimize risk

Assess whether the possible impact of external threats on people, processes, profits, partnerships and the planet (the 5Ps) are an existing risk for the enterprise. Identify actions to be taken to minimize this risk so as to protect key operations.

1. Possible impact on people	Existing risk	Actions to be taken to minimize risk
Increase in situations that endanger workers and their families	Y ☐ N ☐	
Increased stress and trauma at home and at work due to dangerous incidents (e.g. crime, violence, terrorist attack, etc.)	Y ☐ N ☐	
Workers experience physical danger going and returning from work	Y ☐ N ☐	
Workers leave because they seek jobs that can offer greater physical security	Y ☐ N ☐	
Workers have reduced motivation due to a stressful environment	Y ☐ N ☐	
Workers are associated with political groups, the military or rebel groups	Y ☐ N ☐	
Increased trauma and stress among workers due to external conflict	Y ☐ N ☐	
Potential injury or death of workers due to external violence	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
2. Possible impact on processes	Existing risk	Actions to be taken to minimize risk
Premises suffer significant damage	Y ☐ N ☐	
Equipment and machinery are destroyed or damaged	Y ☐ N ☐	
Equipment and machinery are stolen	Y ☐ N ☐	
Contractors and/or partners are not able to continue working	Y ☐ N ☐	
Internet stops working properly	Y ☐ N ☐	

Communication systems stop working properly	Y ☐ N ☐	
Electricity becomes sporadic or unreliable	Y ☐ N ☐	
Water supply becomes sporadic or unreliable	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
3. Possible impact on profits	Existing risk	Actions to be taken to minimize risk
Less demand for products and/or services	Y ☐ N ☐	
Delay in payment for products and/or services	Y ☐ N ☐	
Cost of inputs and raw material increases	Y ☐ N ☐	
Suppliers are not able to meet commitments in a timely manner	Y ☐ N ☐	
Suppliers stop operating or close down their businesses	Y ☐ N ☐	
Number of financial providers able to provide loans decreases	Y ☐ N ☐	
Interest rates to borrow money increases	Y ☐ N ☐	
Reputational damages (e.g. enterprise is perceived to be associated with crime, human rights violations, etc.)	Y ☐ N ☐	
Competitors use unfair practices	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
4. Possible impact on profits	Existing risk	Actions to be taken to minimize risk
Public utilities (water, electricity, and gas) stop functioning properly	Y ☐ N ☐	
Roads are closed and/or damaged	Y ☐ N ☐	
Ports and airports are not functioning	Y ☐ N ☐	

Health and/or sanitation infrastructure is damaged	Y ☐ N ☐	
Communications infrastructure is damaged	Y ☐ N ☐	
Internet provision is intermittent	Y ☐ N ☐	
Government services are ineffective	Y ☐ N ☐	
Corruption increases	Y ☐ N ☐	
Fuel shortages	Y ☐ N ☐	
Vehicles or other means of transportation are stolen	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	
5. Possible risks on the planet	Existing risk	Actions to be taken to minimize risk
Environmental degradation due to conflict	Y ☐ N ☐	
Increased pollution from disrupted operations	Y ☐ N ☐	
Depletion of natural resources due to over-reliance during conflict	Y ☐ N ☐	
Other:	Y ☐ N ☐	

Step 7: Develop a security plan (nine tasks)

Task 1: Appoint a Security Focal Point

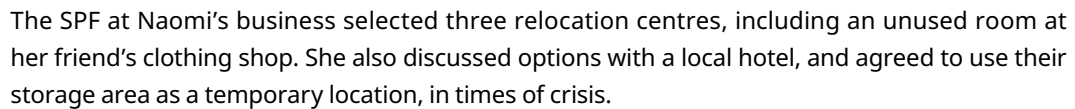
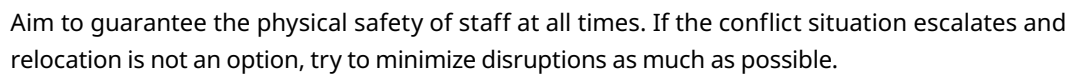
Appoint a Security Focal Point (SFP), a trusted and responsible worker who in cooperation with the BCP team, will make decisions on the safety of the business, workers and their families. The SPF will also be responsible for receiving security-related updates from different sources and informing workers about the security situation regularly.

Task 2: Create emergency contact list

During emergencies, everyone must know where to meet and be aware of key information. Fill in and distribute this form to workers to help them manage the impact of conflict.

Meeting point	
Alternative meeting point	
Name of SPF	
Mobile phone of SPF	

Relocation centres are alternative sites to continue enterprise operations from when external threats create unsafe situations in the premises. Rank them according to order of preference – choosing one priority site and two backup locations. Relocation will be activated when the physical wellbeing of staff is compromised if they stay in the premises.



Task 4: Prepare a staff contact list of workers so that they can be contacted at all times

[illegible]



In addition to phone calls and emails, establish alternative mechanisms to communicate during emergencies. For example, social media platforms or WhatsApp groups could be used to check that workers are safe.

Task 5: Prepare a list of external contacts to communicate with clients, partners, contractors, suppliers and relevant government agencies when operations have been interrupted

Last date updated: / /

Contact name	Organization	Contact details (mobile phone and email address)	Address

Task 6: Prepare emergency supplies for staff

The SPF will be responsible for collecting and stocking the following list of supplies in the premises.

This list of supplies helps ensure staff's physical wellbeing in case of emergencies that force staff to stay in the premises during a crisis due to conflict or violence.

Last date updated: / /

Food / Water	Number of items	Checked?	Last update
Drinking water	3 litres/person for 3 days	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Emergency food (canned food, dried fruit, dry cereal)	3-day supply/person	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Living supplies	Number of items	Checked?	Last update
Sanitation supplies (tissues, wet tissues, toilet paper)	Sufficient for 3 days	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Plastic bags, tape	Equal to the number of people	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Blankets, sleeping bags	Equal to the number of people	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Portable gas and stoves	Sufficient for 3 days	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Pots and kettles	3 per person	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Oil heaters, oil	Sufficient fuel for 3 days	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /

Medical supplies	Number of items	Checked?	Last update
First aid kits	1 per every 10 people	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Communication and others	Number of items	Checked?	Last update
Radios and spare batteries	1 per every 5 people	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /
Generators, generator fuel	2 units of fuel for 3 days	Y ☐ N ☐	/ /

Note : The letters Y and N stand for yes and no, respectively.

Task 7: Ensure that premises are secure



The SPF at Naomi's shop uses the checklist below to conduct daily and monthly check-ups of the security situation in the shop. Daily check-ups occur twice, at 9am when the shop opens and at 8pm when it closes. Monthly checks happen the first day of every month.

The SPF will use the following checklist to conduct regular assessments of the premises to ensure safety is as high as possible.

Last date updated: / /

Checklist	Yes / No	Actions required to maximize safety
Daily check-ups		
Lighting in and around the premises is adequate	Y ☐ N ☐	
Doors and windows in the premises can be securely locked	Y ☐ N ☐	
Alarm systems in place and running within the premises	Y ☐ N ☐	
Staff use identification badges or other forms to access the premises	Y ☐ N ☐	
Premises and perimeter are adequately protected (e.g. by walls, reinforced doors, meshing, and/or other protective equipment)	Y ☐ N ☐	
Entry and exit routes to the premises cannot be easily breached	Y ☐ N ☐	
Monthly check-ups		
There are multiple means of communication that can be accessed during emergencies	Y ☐ N ☐	

Emergency supplies such as first aid kits, torch lights, emergency batteries, are available within the premises	Y ☐ N ☐	
Emergency supplies (e.g. dry food and water) are available for a three-day period	Y ☐ N ☐	

Note : The letters Y and N stand for yes and no, respectively.

Task 8: Ensure that workers travelling to and from work are safe

Follow the recommendations below to ensure that that workers travelling to and from the premises are safe.



Naomi does not engage much in transportation, given that both clients and suppliers travel to her shop to buy and supply her products, respectively. However, her staff travel every day from their homes to the shop. Therefore, the SPF focuses on conducting periodic security briefings with staff, every two months, providing latest security updates and reminders of what to do and avoid to stay safe.



Work-related travel could involve transportation of your staff to provide services to a different geographical location and/or delivery of products.

- ▶ Provide staff with latest information on security-related issues to inform their travel and make sure they use the safest routes of travel to get to and from work
- ▶ Request staff not to share travel movements and routes with external parties
- ▶ Schedule periodic maintenance of work vehicles, to keep them up-to-date
- ▶ Ensure that road vehicles are equipped with emergency kits and effective communication systems (and backups)
- ▶ Check that the state of roads to be travelled is safe before each trip

Task 9: Reduce the risk of financial incidents

- ▶ Use secure banking facilities (both online and in-person)
- ▶ Avoid developing predictable patterns to go from and to the bank (i.e. vary these times and routes as needed)
- ▶ Have a secure way to transport cash from the bank
- ▶ Keep a small amount of cash in a safe place in your premises in case of emergencies
- ▶ Naomi does not engage much in transportation, given that both clients and suppliers travel to her shop to buy and supply her products, respectively. However, her staff travel every day from their homes to the shop. Therefore, the SPF focuses on conducting periodic security briefings with staff, every two months, providing latest security updates and reminders of what to do and avoid to stay safe
- ▶ Work-related travel could involve transportation of your staff to provide services to a different geographical location and/or delivery of products

- ▶ Be discreet about financial transactions (both online and in-person)
- ▶ Keep the cost of large purchases confidential (i.e. reveal this information to staff; handling finance and/or administration only)
- ▶ Be clear with workers about financial aspects of the enterprise that should remain confidential
- ▶ Have alternative access sources of funds in case your own funds cannot be accessed due to crisis situations
- ▶ Keep enterprise savings and cash flow in different accounts.

Step 8: Maintain, review and continuously improve the BCP

The final step in establishing a BCP involves its continuous review and improvement to ensure it remains adequate and effective. Regular reviews should consider changes in key products, operations, workers, suppliers, and legislation; feedback from stakeholders; results from previous BCP evaluations; and lessons learned from past conflicts or incidents. These reviews help update the BCP's objectives and leadership, ensuring ongoing improvement. Additionally, supporting staff in protecting their homes and families fosters a culture of safety.

Tool 2: Simplified version (BCP in 8 easy steps)

Step 1: Identify key products or services

Determine the three most important products or services of the enterprise. Consider the following criteria:

- ▶ The share of income they generate
- ▶ The number of clients demanding them
- ▶ The cost of non-delivery, including negative financial, productivity and reputational consequences

Step 2: Establish the objective of the BCP

Define what the enterprise aims to achieve by establishing the BCP.

Step 3: Evaluate the potential impact of disruptions to the enterprise and workers

Assess how long interruptions can last before becoming unacceptable. Identify the resources required, along with the suppliers, partners, and contractors needed to maintain key operations.

Step 4: Identify internal and external threats that could lead to conflict

Identify the most likely threats that could lead to conflict within the enterprise. Consider which internal and external parties may be directly or indirectly involved in these threats.

Step 5: Take action to minimize risk of internal threats

Determine the actions necessary to minimize the risk of internal threats affecting the enterprise.

Step 6: Assess the possible impact of external threats and take action to minimize risk

Identify which external threats pose the highest risk to the enterprise's people, processes, profits, and partnerships. Plan actions to minimize these risks and protect key operations.

Step 7: Develop a security plan

Establish the most crucial measures to enhance the security within the enterprise. Consider the following:

- ▶ Setting up a security monitoring system
- ▶ Establishing a meeting point and alternative locations to operate during crisis;
- ▶ Communicating with staff, clients, suppliers and partners
- ▶ Gathering supplies to ensure staff's wellbeing during crisis
- ▶ Ensuring that premises are secure, work-related travel is safe and risk of financial incidents is minimal.

Step 8: Maintain, review and continuously improve the BCP

Update the BCP objective and leadership, and continuously improve the BCP.

Business continuity plan support tools

Tool 1: Developing a stakeholder assessment and management plan

This tool will help enterprises to deal effectively with customers, suppliers and other institutions, collectively referred to as “stakeholders”. It will assist enterprises to manage the stakeholders that are directly or indirectly associated with an enterprise. In order to perform optimally, the enterprise depends not only on how well its own risks and vulnerabilities are managed, but also how it handles the different external stakeholders. This tool will help enterprises to map the stakeholders, their control over resources, their influence on the enterprise’s overall vulnerability, and their own risks and vulnerabilities.

There are five parts to this training tool:

1. Stakeholder identification and mapping
2. Stakeholder involvement, interest and importance
3. Classification based on the influence of the stakeholders and their level of risk
4. How to manage stakeholders
5. Overall stakeholder management plan

1. Stakeholder identification and mapping

This tool will assist enterprises to identify and map all stakeholders that are important, because of their involvement or interest in the enterprise operations and revenue generation, or through creating a positive enabling environment. Some stakeholders may have important roles, such as purchasing products/services, but do not pose any risk to the enterprise. Others may pose significant risks to the enterprise even though they are not directly involved in the business. It is important to include all stakeholders in the analysis.

Categorize all stakeholders into two categories: **Primary** and **Secondary**.

- ▶ **Primary stakeholders** are individuals and institutions that are directly involved with your enterprise and are essential for your enterprise, whether in terms of operations, revenue generation or by creating an enabling environment.
- ▶ **Secondary stakeholders** are those that exhibit some amount of influence in the enabling environment, and may be indirectly involved in some way in influencing your enterprise operations and revenue generation, either through an intermediary or indirect influence.

Identify stakeholders and map the areas in which they operate. While mapping them, also state whether they are close to areas of conflict or not. Below are examples of potential stakeholders.

Examples of stakeholders			
Workers	Religious organizations	Military	Cooperatives
Consumers	Security providers	Political Institutions	Competitors
EBMOs	Social/cultural organizations	Financial institutions	Government administrators
Investors	Communities	Lenders	Suppliers
Enterprise partners	Armed rebels	Media	Social service providers

Name of stakeholder	Primary stakeholder	Secondary stakeholder	Located in areas of conflict

2. Stakeholder involvement, interest and importance

Rank all the stakeholders identified according to their involvement and interest in your enterprise with a score ranging from 1 to 5. A low score of 1 to 2 indicates a stakeholder of low importance. A high score of 4 to 5 indicates a stakeholder of high importance.

Very high importance

5

4

3

2

1

Very low importance

Also state whether their attitudes towards the enterprise are positive or negative.

Rank	Primary stakeholder	Rating level of involvement and interest in enterprise	Positive/negative
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Rank	Secondary stakeholder	Rating level of involvement and interest in enterprise	Positive/negative
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

3. Classification based on the influence of the stakeholders and their level of risk

Rank all the stakeholders that have been identified on their ability to influence the enterprise. A low score of 1 to 2 indicates a stakeholder with low influence. A high score of 4 to 5 indicates a stakeholder with high influence. Additionally, make a (general) estimate of how vulnerable these stakeholders are. For example, if a key supplier is located very near a military base (that has been subject to attack), this would indicate a high level of vulnerability.

Very high importance

5

4

3

2

1

Very low importance

State how each of the stakeholders can positively or negatively influence the functioning of the enterprise.

Rank	Stakeholder	Rating level	Positive or negative influence	Level of vulnerability
1.				
2.				

3.				
4.				
5.				

4. How to manage stakeholders

Based on the rating levels that you have assigned to each stakeholder, place these ratings into one of the boxes below. For example, if the stakeholder has a high interest and a high ability to influence the operations of the enterprise, it should be placed in the top right-hand box.

High Influence	Keep satisfied	Manage closely	Manage closely
Medium Influence	Keep satisfied	Manage closely	Manage closely
Low Influence	Monitor	Keep informed	Keep informed
	Low interest/ involvement	Medium interest/ Involvement	High interest/Involvement

The grid provides guidance on how to manage the enterprise's stakeholders. The most difficult stakeholders will be those that have high influence and high interest/involvement. The relationship with them will have to be managed closely. Other stakeholders will have to be kept satisfied, informed or just monitored, depending on their level of influence, interest and involvement.

The colour code for stakeholder management, as per the nine-box grid, is as follows:

MONITOR
KEEP INFORMED
KEEP SATISFIED
MANAGE CLOSELY

5. Overall stakeholder management plan

After identifying how each of the stakeholders should be managed, a focused stakeholder management strategy and plan can be developed. Use the tables below to develop key actions with dates and allocation of responsibilities.

Stakeholders to be managed closely	Actions	Date	Responsibility

Stakeholders to keep informed	Actions	Date	Responsibility

Stakeholders to keep satisfied	Actions	Date	Responsibility

Stakeholder to monitor	Actions	Date	Responsibility

Tool 2: Identifying internal threats to enterprises

This tool will assist enterprises to manage internal threats. Internal threats are threats to the enterprise that are within the control of the enterprise. They include things such as recruitment decisions, hiring practices and workplace policies. This tool is particularly useful if there is a possibility of disruption, violence or threats within the enterprise due to the actions of workers or third parties.

There are two parts to the tool:

1. Identification of different internal threats
2. Classification and effects of internal threats

1. Identification of different internal threats

The first step is to identify the different potential internal threats that are relevant to the enterprise context. The next step is to rank their importance, the frequency of them happening and the likelihood that they will increase.

The checklist below can help in examining level of exposure for the enterprise.

- ▶ Has there been a noticeable increase in theft, for example stock levels? Yes/No
- ▶ Are there indications of increased physical damage to the premises that may have been caused internally? Yes/No
- ▶ Have there been reported cases of ethnic-based violence and harassment? Yes/No
- ▶ Have there been reported cases of religion-based violence and harassment? Yes/No
- ▶ Have there been reported cases of political-based violence and harassment? Yes/No
- ▶ Have there been reported cases of gender-based violence and harassment? Yes/No
- ▶ Have there been reported cases to of physical violence to workers caused by other workers or third parties? Yes/No
- ▶ Are there signs of politicization/radicalization of workers or segments of the workforce e.g. visible political, religious, ethnic paraphernalia such as flags etc? Yes/No
- ▶ Have there been reported cases of blackmail/extortion? Yes/No
- ▶ Other issues? Yes/No

The next step to identify the different internal threats that are relevant to the context: where they occur in relation to the location of enterprise operations, the frequency of them happening (rating of 1 to 5) and the likelihood that they will increase (rating of 1 to 5). If encountered with a have a very high frequency of an internal threat, mark 5 in the box. If experiencing a very low occurrence of this threat, mark 1. Do the same for the likelihood that this threat will increase.

Very low	5	4	3	2	1	Very high
Threat	Where threat occurs		Frequency (1 to 5)	Likelihood of happening (1 to 5)		
Theft						

Physical damage to premises			
Ethnic-based violence and harassment			
Religion-based violence and harassment			
Political-based violence and harassment			
Gender-based violence and harassment			
Conflict-promoting actions and statements			
Blackmail/ Extortion			
Other			

2. Classification and effects of internal threats

In the previous step, identification was made to the most important threats. The next step is to determine the effects the threats are likely to have on the 5Ps (people, processes, profits, partnerships and planet) and identify potential remedial actions to minimize or manage the threat.

For example, if an enterprise has identified “ethnic-based violence and harassment at work” as a priority threat, the following indicators might signify how it will be manifested across the 5Ps.

People - Lower productivity, absenteeism, staff turnover, trauma, injury

Process - Physical damage, temporary non-functioning, theft

Profits - Decreased profits/sales, lost/disruption to suppliers, sabotage

Partnerships - Reputational impacts, boycotts

Planet - Reduced environmental sustainability

Internal threats	Impact on the five Ps	Likely effect on enterprise (Describe effect on impacted Ps)	Actions needed to minimize/ manage risk of external threat
Theft Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Physical damage to premises Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		

Ethnic-based violence and harassment Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Religion-based violence and harassment Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Political-based violence and harassment Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Gender-based violence and harassment Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Conflict-promoting actions and statements Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Blackmail/ Extortion Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Other: Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		

Tool 3: Identifying external threats to enterprises

This tool is designed to help enterprises manage external threats beyond their control. External threats are threats to the enterprise that is outside the control of the enterprise. They include occurrences such as military or rebel action, crossfire, kidnapping and extortion.

There are two parts to the tool:

1. Identification of different external threats
2. Classification and effects of external threats

1. Identification of different external threats

The first step is to assess whether an enterprise might become a target for violence or unwanted attention. Often, businesses can attract negative focus unintentionally through their activities or affiliations. For example, inviting a local political figure or dignitary to open new premises or launch a new service may create the perception that the enterprise owner is associated with one political faction or another. A new marketing approach, including the use of name boards and business branding strategies, or the clustering of delivery trucks, can convey a sense of a “booming business” and potentially identify the enterprise as a ripe target for extortion.

The checklist below can help in examining the potential exposure of the enterprise to external threats:

- ▶ Is there any perception that your enterprise may be contributing to conflict? Yes/No
- ▶ Is there any perception that your main suppliers may be contributing to conflict? Yes/No
- ▶ Is there any perception that your main customers may be contributing to conflict? Yes/No
- ▶ Is your enterprise vulnerable based on the wider business linkages you have? Yes/No
- ▶ Are some of your business actions likely to trigger violence within the community, or attract violence towards your business? Yes/No
- ▶ Are your links to the community strong? Yes/No
- ▶ Do you maintain respectful and courteous relationships with important stakeholders? Yes/No

Once potential threats are identified, it's important to evaluate their relevance to your specific business environment. This involves assessing where the threats are likely to occur, how frequently they happen (rating from 1 to 5), and the likelihood of their increase (rating from 1 to 5).

Very low	5	4	3	2	1	Very high
Threat	Where threat occurs		Frequency (1 to 5)	Likelihood of happening (1 to 5)		
Conflict-related unrest						
Military actions						
Crossfire						
Verbal harassment						
Physical violence						

Detention by government			
Kidnapping			
Robbery			
Sabotage			
Bombing			
Extortion			
Other			

2. Classification and effects of external threats

After identifying potential external threats, the next step is to assess their impact on various aspects of the enterprise, commonly referred to as the 5Ps (people, processes, profits, partnerships and planet). Evaluating these impacts will help determine appropriate measures to mitigate risks and manager any disruptions caused by these threats.

Using the following table to asses the impact of each identified threat and outline necessary actions to minimize risks:

External threats	Impact on the five Ps	Likely effect on enterprise (Describe effect on impacted Ps)	Actions needed to minimize/ manage risk of external threat
Conflict-related unrest Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Military actions Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Crossfire Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Violence and harassment Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		

Detention Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Kidnapping Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Robbery Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Bombing Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Extortion Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		
Other: Y ☐ N ☐	People ☐ Profits ☐ Processes ☐ Partnerships ☐ Planet ☐		

This systematic approach to identifying and managing external threats helps businesses protect their operations and minimize the risks posed by external, uncontrollable factors. By understanding and classifying the potential impacts, businesses can put in place effective strategies to mitigate harm and continue operations.

Training tool for enterprises on BCPs

Training tool 1: Business continuity planning for medium-sized enterprise (Afghanistan)

Overall context

The province of Kandahar, located in the south of Afghanistan, is one of the most conflict affected areas of the country. Within the province, the city of Kandahar is the largest town and is of strategic and economic importance to the country. Much of Kandahar province's long border with Pakistan is porous resulting in many persons crossing informally back and forth for exchange of goods and visiting relatives. In Pakistan, the main town closest to Kandahar is Quetta, in Baluchistan province. Interaction between the two towns is made easier by the fact that most people, in both areas, are from the Pashtun community and thus speak the same language. The economy of Kandahar is mainly based on agriculture.

While the province is governed by the central government based in the capital, Kabul, provincial authorities also have significant influence. The conflict between the Afghan security forces and the Taliban continues to be active in the region. People have lived with the conflict for over three decades and have a deep understanding of the reasons behind the conflict as well as its causes. In addition to the extremist Taliban-related violence, tribal conflict within the Pashtun community also exists with political opponents vying for control of influential roles locally and nationally. Identify stakeholders and map the areas in which they operate. While mapping them, also state whether they are close to areas of conflict or not. Below are examples of potential stakeholders.

Security issues in Kandahar

Kandahar area faces several security challenges. Shifts in power between the security forces and the Taliban results in civilians being caught in cross fire or bombing raids. Local businesses and civilians are not directly targeted by either the government or Taliban, but it is not uncommon for civilian deaths or property damage to occur when violence escalates. The town is currently controlled by the government security forces, but much of the region in the rural areas is held by the Taliban. The continued conflict over the past decades has also resulted in informal circulation of weapons amongst civilians and poor employment opportunities, which in turn have increased the prospects of violence among the civilian population. As a consequence of the prolonged societal deterioration, there has been an increase in kidnapping, including children, for ransom as well as robbery. Wealthy businessmen and their family members are often targeted.

The business⁵

Zahir Gilani is the owner of a medium size pomegranate processing factory, Gilani Enterprises, which was opened in 2003 in Kandahar town. It employs 82 people and is run as a family enterprise by Zahir and his two sons. Zahir's younger brother, Amir, lives in Quetta with his immediate family and imports the Pomegranate from the factory. Zahir also maintains a home in Quetta and it is currently being used by the wife and children on one of his sons. Amir's business activities are seen by both individuals as being part of Gilani Enterprises.

The business premises comprises of a small office with two computers, three other office tables adjoining a large warehouse for storage and packing of fruit. The warehouse includes machines for sorting and packaging. Recently, Zahir bought a juice making machine but it has not yet been used due to a missing part. A fleet of 10 trucks for fruit delivery sit outside the warehouse on a piece of land that is fenced out and closed off with a large metal gate, kept watch by a guard. Zahir's house is behind the business.

The business is successful and has grown significantly over the past five years. It sources fruits from small holder farmers in the rural areas. Prices of the fruits are negotiated with individual farmers depending on the season and amount of produce that can be supplied. Trucks from his business collect the

⁵ This is a fictitious business case study based on a real context. All names of persons and businesses are fictitious and any resemblance to a real business or person is coincidental.

fruits directly from the suppliers. The factory then sorts the fruits, packages and sells them to different buyers all over Afghanistan. Zahir also exports to different parts of Pakistan through Amir. He has plan to also export to Central Asia in the future. The workers in the factory are from the same sub-ethnic group as Zahir and some are relatives. Since it is a family run business, some responsibilities have been delegated to his two sons, but Zahir continues to take all decisions.

Zahir maintains informal relationships with many external stakeholders to ensure the success of his business. Given that the town is controlled by the government, he has close but not open links with two members of parliament of his ethnic group that represent the region in the government. He has also approached and paid a tax to the Taliban leader in the area from which he is getting the pomegranate fruits. Since he needs to maintain relationships with both politicians and Taliban leaders, he does not support either publicly. Moreover, to ensure smooth operations of his exports, Zahir has also established a close relationship with the customs officials who charge an export tax.

In times of increased conflict escalation, Zahir sends his family across the Pakistan border into Quetta and only leaves if there are direct bombing to the area. He has done that only once before, but came back to find that much of his machinery was robbed. He currently employs five security persons to protect his immediate family mainly from kidnapping and robbery.

The exercise	
Part 1	All participants, using the self-assessment tool, assess the main risks and vulnerabilities to Zahir's business.
Part 2	Working in groups: ▶ Identify the three main internal and/or external threats to Zahir's business. ▶ Categorize which of these threats can be either eliminated or minimized? ▶ Develop a contingency action for each threat?

Guiding answer
Tool 1: Self-assessment of vulnerability
Overall risk assessment ▶ Zahir could confirm that his business was located in a high-risk area. Key areas of vulnerability – safety ▶ While he had put in some measure to protect his family, after using this tool, he realised that it was not sufficient, and had also not done much to protect his workers. Key areas of vulnerability – suppliers ▶ Lack of preparation on logistics issues was also as a weakness. He realised that there was a gap in ensuring uninterrupted communication with Amir and other buyers. Scenario planning ▶ He also became aware that did not have a plan in case the security situation escalated in the areas where the fruits were being grown. Moreover, thus far he had only a loose network of business associates and realised the importance of being formally connected to a chamber of commerce.

Ability to minimize level of risk

- ▶ Almost all risks that he identified could not be eliminated or minimised due to the heightened security situation, highlighting the importance for him think about the security situation more closely.
- ▶ Though he had previously felt that he was able to manage the security situation because of his knowledge of the area and contacts, after going through the tool he realised that the overall rating of the business was 'vulnerable'.

Tool 2: Stakeholder assessment

Zahir already had very strong links with key stakeholders and this tool confirmed the fact that he had a strong and wide set of links.

Supplier assessment

- ▶ Working through the tool he realised that his dependency on certain individual suppliers was too strong.
- ▶ He had also been depending too much on the same supply routes that he had used for the past five years.
- ▶ He also identified two important stakeholders who were likely to be a threat to his business. One was a politician from a different ethnic group who had also recently started a fruit exporting business. The other was the supplier of machine parts, who had gone against his promise to provide the missing component to the new fruit juice machine.
- ▶ He established a system to move production times (according the threat level). Electricity outages usually occurred during spikes in violence so he usually moved production (most reliant on using power) from 5.am until midday when outages started usually)
- ▶ He decided to develop plans to deal with the issues by strengthening relationships and delegated that responsibility to his two sons.

Tool 3: Security plan

Using this tool, Zahir quickly realised that the he was not fully prepared for security threats to his family and workers. While he had put in place some safety measures such as the hiring of five security guards, they could not protect everyone and his factory premises was not fully secure. Also, he had not thought about the emotional stress to his family, in times of conflict escalation, or an escape plan in case of an emergency.

- ▶ He developed alternate routes for his staff to come and go from work
- ▶ If an escalation of violence occurred, he developed a flexible system for working times which staff would switch to
- ▶ An informal alert system was established whereby staff contacted him if they became aware of any change in the security situation. He communicated this to all staff using a WhatsApp Group
- ▶ He set up a telephone tree along with a buddy systems so all workers could be contactable

Tool 4: A safe and neutral workplace

Thus far he had hired people based on contacts and had been giving instructions to staff without any consultations with either members of his family or other senior staff.

- ▶ Using the tool, he could see the benefits of a more consultative approach so that workers could help each other during a problem and play key roles in early warning.

He also realised the importance of hiring staff from a different ethnic group to help build social cohesion. He also realised that he did not have enough female workers. The workforce was overwhelmingly male (and mostly from the same ethnic group). This had unwittingly created an unwelcoming atmosphere for anyone not fitting into this type (gender/ethnic). It also risked his business being strongly associated with one ethnic group – and potentially a target for attack.

- ▶ Hiring a wider range of people from wider ethnic groups could improve his networks into different ethnic groups and markets. He did this on the next opportunity to recruit – in advance of that he made great efforts to make sure that these staff could be easily integrated into the workforce.

Tool 5: Overall continuity plan

Zahir developed several plans for his business to cope with risks. Most important were those that ensured the safety of his family and workers, manage risks related to logistics and machinery, diversify his supply routes, diversify his workforce, and develop strong ties with business associations.

He puts costs to different options and decided on the most effective measures. By systematically developing the options, he knew that at a future date, he could come back if necessary a decide quickly on another option if the circumstances changed. He gave his sons and daughters greater responsibility for the plans and brought in two other senior staff to support in making decisions on the way forward. He also discussed all his plans with Amir in Quita and asked him to also develop other plans so that the business could continue in case of an emergency. After completing the plans, the vulnerability of the business to conflict significantly reduced.

Training tool 2: Business continuity planning for small enterprise (Somalia)

Overall context in Mogadishu

Somalia was, until 2012, stateless for more than two decades. War has destroyed much of its infrastructure, institutions and governance structures, and the new government continues to struggle to govern effectively. Personal and family loyalties depend almost solely on tribal clans with represent specific regions in the country. Clan-based conflict is common. However, the biggest threat to the country comes from Al Shabaab, a rebel group fighting against government forces, so much so that Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, is considered the most dangerous capital in the world. The city, like most other areas in the south of the country, is affected by multiple vulnerabilities. In addition to the security threats and political instability, the low social and economic situation compels many youth to leave the city. Some join Al-Shabaab, while others make the difficult and often illegal journey out of the country.

The security situation in Mogadishu is generally dire with bombings and killings an unfortunately relatively common occurrence. However, despite the poor security situation, the society has a high level of resilience and entrepreneurship. It is not uncommon for people to engage in business activity. Trade has been part of the social fabric for several centuries and therefore entrepreneurship continues to blossom even in the most challenging of circumstances – even with the lack of formal employment opportunities. It is further encouraged by the fact that most households have family members living abroad and sending remittances, stimulating the economy and providing a life line to the local entrepreneurs. This is especially important due to the fact that the city, as with the rest of the country, lacks of a proper banking system. Indeed, the society depends on personal relationships and an informal global trading network, rather than a formal system with rules, regulations and contracts to drive business.

The business

Ayan Jama is the owner of a wholesale store selling second hand clothes. She spends most of her day in the store, while her husband, Abdul, helps her as much as his disability (blindness) would allow. They started the business five years ago to supplement the income sent by two of her six children. The eldest

son lives in London and moved there after spending many years in Dubai. The eldest daughter is studying in Malaysia, the only country that provides visa free travel, but due to the pressure of sending money back to Somalia, she is also working, although she is on a student visa. Their other four children are in Mogadishu and all dream of leaving. Her second son, Yusuf, has tried hard to find employment, but because of lack of opportunities, he had told his parents that if he was unable to secure work within the next six months, he would join a friend in Thariin (illegal migration).

The shop does not make a profit. It is only just sufficient for Ayan, Abdul and their family to manage their daily expenses. Ayan, with the assistance of her second daughter, Rimza, buys the clothes from a supplier, Ali, who is also from her clan and imports the clothes from Kenya. Many of the clothes are bought by Ali from second hand Somali sellers in Nairobi and transported via road in a truck. Ayan does not directly pay Ali for the clothes that she buys but rather is given the clothes on credit. Payment to Ali is made by Ayan's son living in London. Since there are no banks and on-line transfer of finance is restricted, cash is given to a trusted individual in London, who travels to Dubai with the money to meet another trusted person known to Ali. The cash is then taken to Mogadishu and given to Ali. This trusted and elaborate informal system, where supply chains are connected to diaspora cash remittance chains in places like Dubai, drives commerce for even small entrepreneurs like Ayan.

The shop is in the city centre, close to an important bus stop. It is large, but simple and because several retail shop owners come daily to the shop, it is often busy. Ayan has six people working for her and conducts all her business through verbal instructions and agreements as both Ayan and Abdul are illiterate. Importantly, their illiteracy has not reduced their ability to engage with customers and clients, and grow their business. Rimza helps her parents when needed, as she finished her secondary school two years ago.

The security threats to the business are significant. There have been a number of recent bomb blasts that have gone off not far from the shop. Whenever a bomb goes off, there is a significant reduction in customers as people avoid the area. However, Ayan has done little to reduce the risks to the lives of family members and business operations. This was primarily due to the fact that she does not know any influential persons or have any way of getting security related information. She had accepted the conflict as part of her daily life that was beyond her control.

The exercise	
Part 1	All participants, using the self-assessment tool, assess the main risks and vulnerabilities to Zahir's business.
Part 2	Working in groups: ▶ Identify the three main internal and/or external threats to Zahir's business. ▶ Categorize which of these threats can be either eliminated or minimized? ▶ Develop a contingency action for each threat?

Guiding answer
Ayan identified the key security threats to her businesses noting where the threats were likely to come from, their frequency and the likelihood that it would increase. She realised that the risk level of the business was very high and that the location of the business was not suitable for security reasons. Two bombs had exploded in the past two months and the chance that Ayan was taking in remaining in that specific location was too high. She developed a plan, which included moving to a location that was less risky and closer to her supplier. She also

discussed her plans also with her clients to make sure that she would not lose business with the move. Ayan understood through discussion that the whole supply chain was keen for all members to continue to operate well without security issues. Notably, the supplier made it known to her that he depended on her business as much as she may be depending on the supplies. She sought advice from others friends as well and consulted her eldest son and daughter in London and Malaysia. With her new plan, Ayan was confident that despite the high level of violence and insecurity in Mogadishu, she had done all that was within her control to ensure the safety of her family and workers, and the security of the assets. Importantly, the development of the plans improved the confidence of both Yusuf and Rimza to further support the business and make it more profitable. Yusuf no longer mentioned that he wanted to engage in Thariin and felt satisfied that he could earn more by expanding their business. Yusuf decided to develop more networks in two other big cities, Basoso and Hargesia which were less conflict affected and provided more opportunities.

Enterprise evacuation plan

When external threats in the region where an enterprise operates become increasingly severe, it is essential to develop a comprehensive evacuation plan. This plan should be created in collaboration with a designated Security Focal Point (SFP), who is a trusted and responsible member of staff. Together, the SFP and the most senior manager or business owner will be responsible for making decisions related to the safety of the enterprise and its workers.

Evacuation should be considered as a last resort and only implemented if the SFP determines that remaining on the premises poses a significant and immediate risk to staff. The primary responsibility of the SFP is to establish a procedure for responding to potentially dangerous situations that may occur in or near the enterprise. Initially, the SFP should maintain an elevated state of alert to monitor the situation. If conditions worsen, critical decisions need to be made about whether to Stay or Go:

- ▶ Stay: Staff will remain on the premises. Internal security and safety protocols will be initiated.
- ▶ Go: Evacuate the premises.

An evacuation plan is crucial when a dangerous situation threatens the safety of the enterprise and its employees. The plan should address the following principles:

- ▶ How, where and when to evacuate is clearly communicated to all staff.
- ▶ Who will be responsible during the evacuation, and how other roles will be assigned is clearly understood by all staff, and is well communicated.
- ▶ Ensure multiple emergency exits are available.
- ▶ Implement a system to account for all staff and third parties in the premises once evaluation begins.
- ▶ Maintain confidentiality of the evaluation plan.
- ▶ Establish clear post-evacuation communication systems.
- ▶ Identified staff are trained on emergency evacuation procedures and these trainings are increased as the likelihood of a threat increases.

The SFP should establish an emergency telephone tree, which is a way to connect and account for all staff members. Using this method, a designated leader is in charge of phoning selected staff, who at the same time are responsible for phoning other staff. In this way, a headcount is effectively carried out following disasters or emergencies. If any members of the emergency telephone tree are not reachable, their immediate contact person in the tree should try communicating with them through other means (instant messaging, social media, email, etc.) or meet them in person if it is safe to do so.

However, a potentially dangerous situation can happen quickly with limited warning. If a worker sees that a potentially dangerous situation is developing or appears to be developing, they should first notify the appointed SFP. This person together with the enterprise owner/senior manager should assess the severity of the situation and make a judgement on whether to initiate an evacuation procedure or internal safety protocols.

Evacuation procedure

If evacuation is deemed necessary, the following steps should be followed:

- ▶ Notify all staff immediately to suspend what they are doing and exit the building.
- ▶ Staff should walk towards their designated exit to evacuate the building and reach the designated meeting point. Staff should remain calm and avoid running, and stay attentive to further instructions from the SFP.

- ▶ Staff should walk towards their designated exit to evacuate the building and reach the designated meeting point. Staff should remain calm and avoid running, and stay attentive to further instructions from [the SFP](#).
- ▶ At the meeting point, the SFP should conduct a headcount. Staff should follow instructions and be collaborative.
- ▶ Staff should not re-enter the building for any reason until the SFP indicates that it is safe to do so.

This evacuation plan helps ensure the safety and security of staff and the enterprise during dangerous situations, and should be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changing threats.

Promoting a safe and inclusive work environment

In conflict situations, maintaining an inclusive and equitable workforce becomes both a business necessity and a moral imperative. Conflicts often exacerbate social divisions, leading to heightened tensions within the workforce and broader community. For enterprises, promoting equality and non-discrimination not only upholds ethical standards but also mitigates risks such as workplace unrest, employee disengagement, and reputational damage. Inclusivity fosters resilience by strengthening team cohesion, retaining talent, and safeguarding operational continuity in unstable environments. In volatile regions, an inclusive workforce serves as a stabilizing force that can improve business performance, rebuild trust in communities, and create opportunities for economic recovery.

When businesses adopt inclusive practices, they create a sense of security and belonging for employees, which is particularly important in conflict zones where societal divisions are more pronounced. Promoting equality and non-discrimination contributes to the overall stability of the enterprise, reduces vulnerabilities that could be exploited during conflict, and allows the business to operate more effectively across diverse communities. The tools available in this section help enterprises promote an overall safe and inclusive work environment.

Tool 1: Managing equality in the workplace for enterprises in conflict situations

Why equality is good for businesses

Equality and non-discrimination in employment and occupation is a fundamental right at work and enshrined in international law. Promoting equality and non-discrimination in the workplace is not only the right thing for businesses to do; it is also the smart thing for businesses to do. Key benefits include:

- ▶ **Attracting diverse talent:** In conflict situations, enterprises that promote inclusivity are more likely to attract a broader range of candidates, as workers seek out companies that offer stability and fair treatment. This diversity brings different skills, perspectives, and problem-solving approaches that are crucial for business innovation and growth.
- ▶ **Boost morale and productivity:** Employees who feel valued, regardless of background, are more engaged, motivated, and productive. During times of conflict, when tensions may be high, ensuring that employees are treated fairly and equally can improve workplace cohesion and morale, helping the business weather the instability.
- ▶ **Enhancing reputation and business resilience:** In conflict zones, enterprises with a reputation for promoting equality can build trust with local communities, customers, and even international investors. An enterprise's stance on equality can enhance its brand image, ensuring that it remains part of supply chains that prioritize responsible and ethical business practices.
- ▶ **Mitigating risks:** Conflict often amplifies existing social, ethnic, or political divisions. A commitment to non-discrimination helps protect the business from internal divisions that could escalate during conflict. Additionally, inclusive policies reduce the risk of workplace discrimination claims or conflicts that could harm the business's reputation or legal standing.

Legal aspects of equality

International labour standards, particularly the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) on the elimination of discrimination in the workplace commits employers, workers and the government to taking effective measures to ensure that legislation and operating practices are free from discrimination. Convention No. 111 defines discrimination as:

"[...] any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation." (Article 1.a)

► **International checklist: Prohibited grounds of discrimination**

Type of discrimination	ILO Convention No. 111
1. Sex	✓
2. Race or ethnicity	✓
3. Colour	✓
4. Religious belief or creed	✓
5. Social origin, birth, social status, wealth or other status	✓
6. National origin	✓
7. Political opinion or tendency	✓

Equality and non-discrimination in the workplace

Equality of opportunity and equal treatment in employment means that all persons, regardless of sex, ethnicity, religious belief or any other personal characteristic, can participate in the labour market according to their capacity, without interference of discrimination or bias.

Discrimination refers to treating persons differently, either excluding somebody from an opportunity or extending preferences on the basis of personal features unrelated to the job.

At the enterprise level, observing these principles means that all recruitment and employment decisions should be made solely with reference to merit, skills, experience or abilities of the applicant or worker in question. Enterprises can also review team diversity in terms of, for example, ethnicity, and adopt voluntary targets or affirmative action measures to promote diversity. This means that employers should not treat people differently, exclude anybody from an opportunity, or extend preference on the basis of a person's sex, race or ethnicity, skin colour, religious belief or creed, social origin or birth, language, national origin, political opinion, disability, HIV status, membership to a trade union, or any other personal characteristic unrelated to the job.

How discrimination occurs in conflict situations

Discrimination in conflict-affected workplaces often arises from broader societal tensions, manifesting in hiring, promotions, and day-to-day interactions. It can take direct or indirect forms:

- **Direct discrimination:** This involves overt practices like refusing to hire individuals based on their ethnicity or religion, or offering unequal pay for the same work. In conflict zones, such discrimination can deepen social rifts and harm the enterprise's reputation.
- **Indirect discrimination:** Seemingly neutral policies may disproportionately affect certain groups. For example, requiring applicants to have credentials that are inaccessible to marginalized groups in conflict-affected regions is an example of indirect discrimination. These practices, while unintentional, are equally harmful.

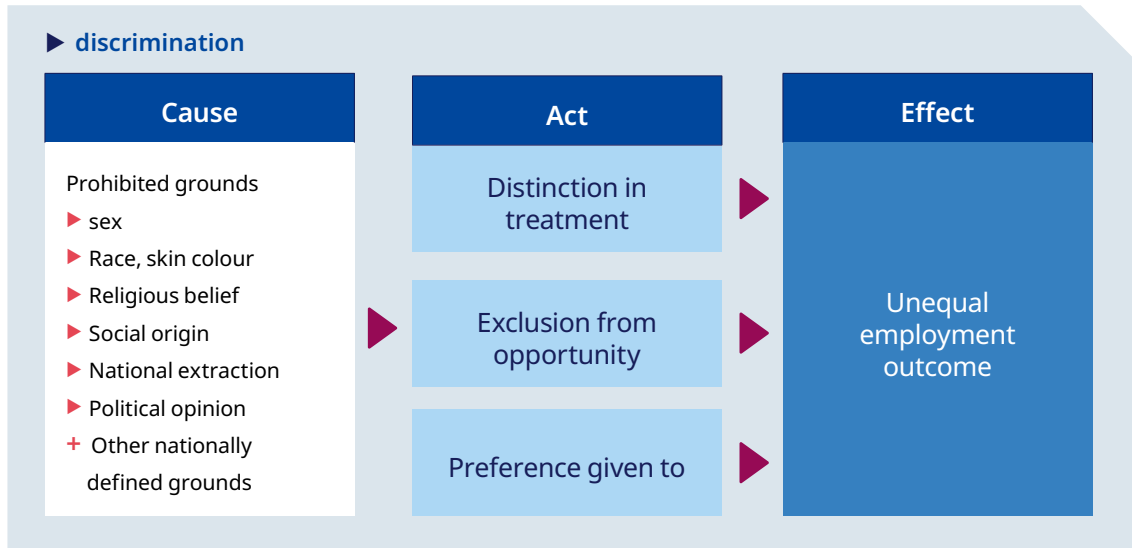
Understanding and addressing both types of discrimination is essential for businesses, as these issues can escalate rapidly in conflict environments.

How to identify discrimination at work

The definition of discrimination in Convention No. 111 includes three components that are useful in identifying how workplace discrimination arises:

- ▶ An act of making a distinction in such a way as to either exclude or favours somebody.
- ▶ A prohibited ground giving rise to this act (for example, sex or ethnicity).
- ▶ An outcome that has a negative impact on a certain group of workers.

If an action taken by anyone in the workplace includes all three components, the person who has been negatively impacted has been discriminated against. The three components of the discrimination definition (Convention No. 111) are illustrated below:



Steps for promoting equality in the workplace

- ▶ **Commit to equality:** Business leaders should demonstrate a strong, visible commitment to equality in all aspects of the business. This can be achieved by developing a formal equality policy that outlines the company's stance on non-discrimination, and ensuring it is integrated into daily operations.
- ▶ **Assess current practices:** Employers should assess their hiring, promotion, and compensation practices to identify areas of bias. In conflict situations, this assessment is particularly important, as societal tensions may influence workplace decisions, even unintentionally.
- ▶ **Define clear goals:** Businesses should set measurable goals for improving workplace diversity and equality. These may include increasing the representation of underrepresented groups in senior roles or ensuring that wages are fair and equitable across all employee demographics.
- ▶ **Implement an equality action plan:** Once goals are established, enterprises should develop a detailed action plan that includes steps to eliminate discriminatory practices and promote inclusivity. This may involve updating recruitment processes, offering diversity training, and introducing mentorship programs for marginalized employees.
- ▶ **Monitor progress:** Regular monitoring of the business's equality initiatives is essential, especially in conflict situations where conditions may change rapidly. Employers should track the success of their initiatives and adjust strategies as needed to ensure continuous improvement.
- ▶ **Communicate with stakeholders:** Employers should maintain open lines of communication with employees, customers, and the community about their commitment to equality. Transparency in these efforts can build trust and foster a positive business image, even in challenging environments.

Developing an equality action plan

Creating an action plan is key to implementing equality measures in a structured and effective way. The plan should outline:

- ▶ **Objectives:** Clear goals, such as increasing the representation of women and ethnic minorities in leadership positions.
- ▶ **Actions:** Steps to achieve these goals, such as revising recruitment processes or offering diversity training.
- ▶ **Accountability:** Assigning responsibility to senior managers to ensure actions are implemented and progress is monitored.
- ▶ **Timelines:** Setting realistic deadlines for achieving specific equality goals.
- ▶ **Monitoring and Reporting:** Regularly reviewing progress and making necessary adjustments to the plan.

Promoting equality and non-discrimination in the workplace is more than a short-term fix for businesses operating in conflict situations. It is a long-term strategy that helps businesses thrive, even under challenging conditions. By fostering an inclusive and fair workplace, businesses can protect their operations from internal conflict, enhance their reputation, and contribute to broader peacebuilding efforts.

Maintaining equality in conflict environments helps build bridges within divided societies, reducing the likelihood of workplace tensions spilling over into broader conflict. Moreover, businesses that champion equality are better positioned to attract international investment, as investors increasingly prioritize companies with strong ethical foundations.

In conclusion, equality and non-discrimination are vital components of a resilient business strategy. By embedding these principles into the fabric of the company, businesses can not only survive but also contribute positively to the rebuilding and stabilization of conflict-affected societies.

Tool 2: Recruitment practices that promote equality, diversity and inclusion in conflict situations

This tool is designed to help businesses operating in conflict zones improve recruitment practices, ensuring they are free of bias and discrimination. By doing so, businesses can attract a broader range of talent, build trust with local communities, and mitigate risks associated with conflict-related instability.

Review recruitment procedures

In conflict settings, recruitment is particularly prone to discrimination, whether conscious or unconscious. Given the sensitive nature of these environments, recruitment policies should be reviewed and designed to ensure equality and avoid inflaming local tensions. By adopting non-discriminatory hiring practices, businesses gain access to a larger talent pool, promote social cohesion, and build a more resilient and motivated workforce.

The recruitment process

Job descriptions

To ensure that recruitment is fair and based on merit, job descriptions must clearly outline the essential tasks and responsibilities, without specifying unnecessary personal characteristics.

DOs:

- ▶ **Clarify job roles:** Detail key tasks, responsibilities, and qualifications required, such as relevant skills or experience. Be specific—mention if physical tasks are required or if a driver's license is necessary.
- ▶ **Use inclusive language:** Ensure that job titles and descriptions are neutral. For example, use “camera operator” instead of “cameraman.”

DON'Ts:

- ▶ **Avoid irrelevant personal requirements:** Do not require unnecessary personal characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, or religion unless these are essential to the role.
- ▶ **Avoid vague descriptions:** Words like “physically fit” can be exclusionary. Be specific about the tasks involved, like “able to lift 10 kg regularly.”

Job advertisements

Job advertisements should accurately reflect the job description and promote equal opportunities and treatment for all applicants, particularly in conflict zones where tensions may arise from perceived favouritism or exclusion.

Guidelines for Job Advertisements

- ▶ **Clear criteria:** List skills, qualifications, and experience objectively without personal bias.
- ▶ **Equality statement:** Include a statement like “We welcome applications from all sections of society” to encourage diversity.
- ▶ **Avoid discriminatory language:** Words like “young,” “fresh graduate,” or “prefer men” can alienate potential candidates and fuel tensions.

Job application forms

Application forms should focus solely on job-related information and avoid personal questions that could lead to bias or discrimination.

Guidelines for application forms:

- ▶ **Job-relevant information only:** Request details about skills, experience, and education directly related to the role.
- ▶ **Avoid personal questions:** Do not ask about marital status, family plans, ethnicity, or religion. These are irrelevant and could lead to bias, particularly in conflict situations.

Shortlisting candidates

Shortlisting should be conducted using clear, measurable criteria to ensure that candidates are selected based on merit, not personal characteristics.

Guidelines for shortlisting:

- ▶ **Objective Criteria:** Develop selection criteria from the job description and rank them in order of importance.
- ▶ **Consistent Evaluation:** Assess all candidates equally, avoiding personal judgments or assumptions.
- ▶ **Training:** Ensure that those involved in the process are trained to identify and mitigate bias.

Be aware of bias: In conflict situations, unconscious bias can become more pronounced, leading to discrimination based on ethnic, religious, or social divisions. Train hiring managers to recognize and avoid biases that could harm recruitment efforts and aggravate local tensions.

Conducting job interviews

The interview stage is crucial, particularly in conflict zones, as it can determine whether an applicant feels fairly treated or excluded based on bias.

Guidelines for conducting interviews:

- ▶ **Relevant questions only:** Focus on job-related questions that assess the candidate's ability to perform the role. Avoid personal questions about family, religion, or ethnicity.
- ▶ **Panel interviews:** Where possible, interviews should be conducted by a diverse panel to minimize individual bias.
- ▶ **Provide reasoning for sensitive questions:** If specific job requirements (like physical tasks) necessitate potentially sensitive questions, explain the relevance to the job.

DOs:

- ▶ Ask about qualifications, experience, and abilities directly related to the job.
- ▶ Focus on how the candidate can meet the job's demands, such as handling specific tasks or responsibilities.

DON'Ts:

- ▶ Do not ask about personal details like family status, religious beliefs, or political opinions, especially in conflict situations where such questions could inflame tensions.

Voluntary targets or affirmative action and inclusivity in recruitment

In conflict zones, enterprises have a unique opportunity to actively promote inclusivity and diversity through voluntary targets or affirmative action measures. This can involve:

- ▶ **Targeted recruitment:** Actively seeking candidates from underrepresented or marginalized groups, particularly those affected by conflict.
- ▶ **Community engagement:** Partnering with local organizations to ensure that recruitment reaches a diverse range of candidates, including those who may not have access to traditional job channels.

- ▶ **Ethnic and gender balance:** Ensuring that recruitment processes aim for a balanced workforce that reflects the diversity of the community.

Examples of inclusive recruitment statements:

- ▶ "We encourage applications from women, minorities, and all members of society."
- ▶ "Candidates of all backgrounds, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or gender, are welcome to apply."

Tool 3: Dealing with discrimination-related complaints in conflict situations

In conflict-affected areas, discrimination-related complaints can intensify tensions within an already fragile workplace environment. Establishing or enhancing a structured procedure for handling grievances related to discrimination is crucial for maintaining workplace harmony and preventing further conflict. Such a process allows for quick and effective resolution of complaints, ensuring that employees feel heard, protected, and respected.

Benefits of an effective grievance procedure:

- ▶ **Fosters trust:** Employees are more likely to feel secure and supported when they know there's a clear process for addressing discrimination.
- ▶ **Prevents escalation:** Early intervention can prevent workplace issues from intensifying.
- ▶ **Promotes inclusion:** A transparent process reinforces the company's commitment to equality, helping to maintain unity in a divided environment.

Guidelines for developing a grievance procedure

An effective grievance procedure should be formalized in writing and communicated to all employees, particularly in conflict situations where misunderstandings and tensions are common. Follow these steps to develop a clear, transparent process:

- ▶ **Written procedure:** Develop a written grievance procedure, either as a standalone document or part of the broader workplace equality policy.
- ▶ **Commitment to fairness:** Clearly state the company's commitment to resolving all discrimination-related grievances fairly, confidentially, and efficiently.
- ▶ **Confidentiality:** Ensure the process guarantees the confidentiality of both the complainant and the respondent.
- ▶ **Fair treatment:** Commit to treating all complaints seriously, investigating properly, and ensuring both parties can explain their side.
- ▶ **Protection against retaliation:** Clearly prohibit any form of retaliation or victimization against employees who bring forward a complaint.
- ▶ **Step-by-step process:** Establish clear, simple steps for employees to follow when submitting a complaint, offering both informal and formal resolution options.
- ▶ **Resolution at lowest Level:** Aim to resolve complaints at the lowest management level, if possible, while offering the option to escalate to higher management if the issue remains unresolved.
- ▶ **Defined timeframe:** Set reasonable deadlines for addressing and resolving complaints, ensuring a quick and fair process.

Sample grievance procedure

Purpose

At [enterprise name], we are committed to promoting equality in the workplace. This procedure outlines the steps to take if an employee experiences discrimination or violence and harassment.

Step 1: Attempt to resolve informally

Whenever possible, employees are encouraged to address the issue directly with the person involved. This can often resolve misunderstandings before they escalate.

Step 2: Report to the equality officer

If you are uncomfortable addressing the issue directly, or if the issue persists, report the matter to the Equality Officer [Insert name and contact information].

The officer will meet with you confidentially and will not discuss the complaint with others unless required for investigation. If the issue poses a risk to others, the officer may need to act without your consent for safety reasons.

Step 3: Investigation process

The Equality Officer will promptly investigate the complaint, gathering information from both parties and any witnesses. The investigation should be completed within [timeframe], and both sides will have the opportunity to provide their perspectives.

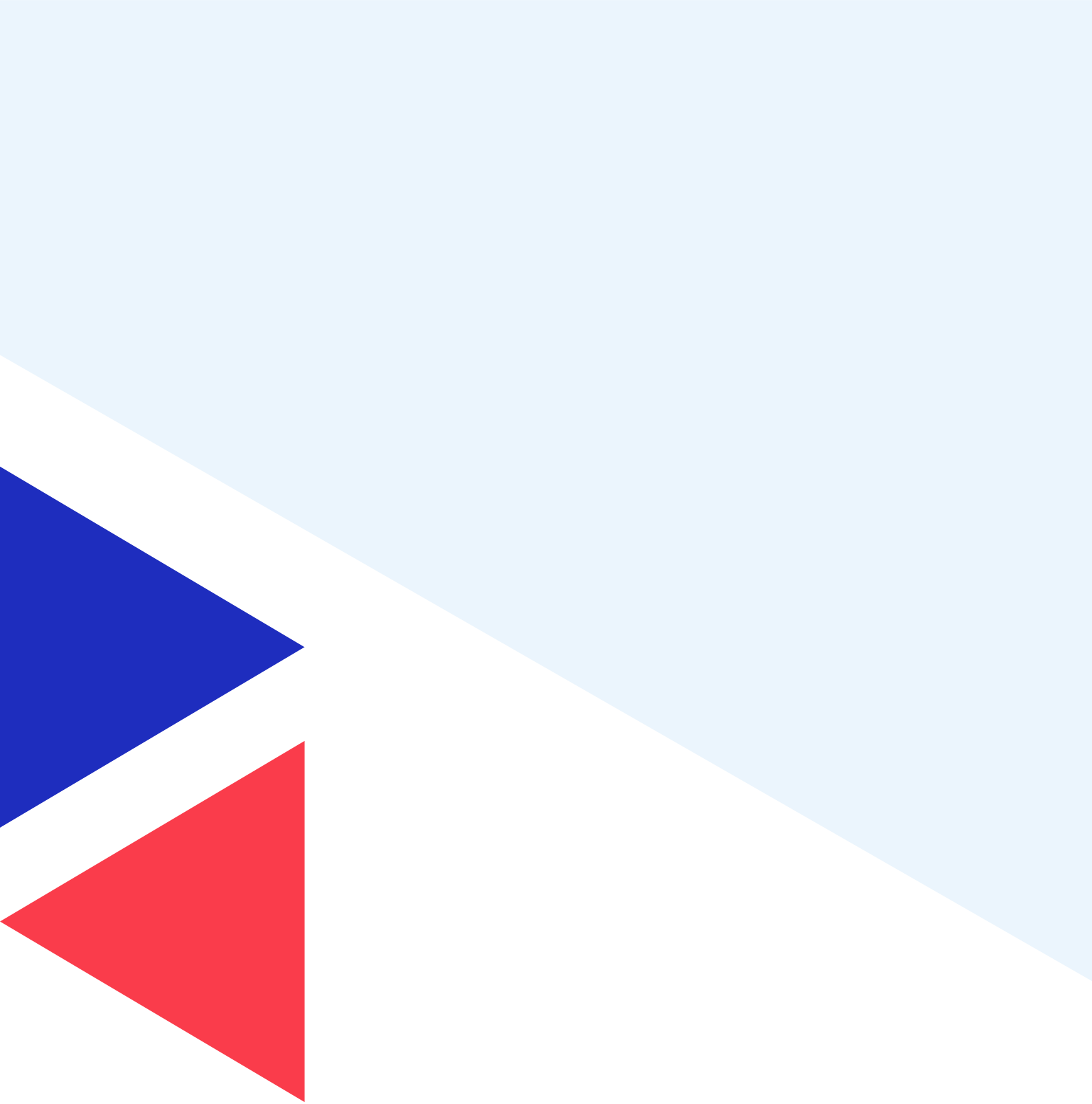
Step 4: Resolution

Once the investigation is complete, one of the following resolutions will be pursued:

- ▶ **Mediation:** A meeting between both parties to reach an agreement, where appropriate.
- ▶ **Disciplinary Action:** If the complaint is serious and proven, appropriate action will be taken against the offender, which may include formal warnings, demotion, or termination.

Step 5: Confidentiality and non-retaliation

All complaints will be handled confidentially. Retaliation against employees for filing complaints will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken against any individual who engages in such behaviour.



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