>CRISP

MANUAL

PROBLEM ANALYSIS METHODS FOR WOMEN FOCUSED PROJECT DESIGN

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO CREATE SUCH A MANUAL?

WHO ARE THE MANUAL'S POTENTIAL USERS?

The intent of this manual is to give civil society actors, based or working in rural areas, a guide to methods of problem analysis, which can be used to gain information about the social, economic and political challenges and needs of women and other marginalized groups. The manual is a summary of methods introduced in the 2019 project *Women Focused Networks South Caucasus*. In the project, participants were educated in problem analysis tools to conduct a situation analysis of the social, economic or political challenges facing women in rural villages of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Using the information gained from the analysis, the participants developed and implemented initiatives designed to address the main challenges facing women in their area.

This manual was created to compile knowledge from the project and make it available to people working in the fields of conflict resolution and development. The manual is intended for use not only by the direct participants of the *Women Focused Networks South Caucasus* project, but also by civil society actors, non-governmental organizations, local activists and international organizations. The methods are not specific to the project and can be implemented to perform analysis on any topic. The manual is intended to be a low-threshold guide for people wanting to gain information about the problems, challenges or simply the situation of people in a certain area.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN, AND WHAT WAS THE RATIONALE BEHIND, THE PROJECT?

The project *Women Focused Networks South Caucasus* was a pilot project aimed at engaging active women in rural regions of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to create dialogue in their villages on topics related to women´s rights and the social, economic and political situation of women. The long term aim was to develop sustainable, self-managing, village-level women´s support networks that contribute to a culture of cooperation rather than competition between women and empower both men and women to speak out about women's rights and participate in village discourse.

Women form the majority of civil society in the South Caucasus. There is no lack of initiative or motivation, but women have to face strong patriarchal attitude in society when making their contribution to the democratic and social development of their country. A general challenge for women in the region is the difficult access to political decision making and a lack of representation. Furthermore, women often have to compete with other women for the few positions and funds available. The project sought to address these issues at the grassroots level by engaging women in the process of identifying pertinent issues and raising local awareness of them.

The project fostered cooperation between women on the local and regional level in the three countries of the South Caucasus. Women from villages form teams with women working in civil society and/or the administration from the corresponding regional capital and are trained together to establish and administrate self-managing, local, mixed gender support groups in villages that address gender specific issues pertaining to women.

Involved in the project were four organizations: CRISP – Crisis Simulation for Peace e.V. located in Berlin, Germany, IDP Women´s Association "Consent" located in Tbilisi, Georgia, Peace Dialogue located in Vanadzor, Armenia and Youth Club PU located in Baku, Azerbaijan. The project was funded mainly by the German Federal Foreign Office´s Eastern Partnerships Programme, with additional funding provided by Black Sea Trust.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS AS A PRECONDITION FOR EFFECTIVE PROJECT DESIGN

WHAT IS PROBLEM ANALYSIS?

WHY SHOULD IT BE PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE?

HOW ANALYSES CAN BE USED IN DESIGNING PROJECTS?

WHAT IS PROBLEM ANALYSIS?

In the context of the current manual, the term *Problem Analysis* means a set of analytic activities aimed at increasing the understanding of an unbalanced situation (crisis, conflict, injustice, etc.) for the sake of designing a situational change that will ultimately achieve better balance. In other words, it is a set of activities that provides better understanding of a problem in order to choose more appropriate tools for achieving a solution to that problem.

A structured approach to problem analysis is essential in order to identify and examine assumptions about a problem's causes and its nature. This type of investigative approach considers all key aspects of a problem and provides a common vocabulary for describing conflict dynamics. Problem analysis works best when it becomes a habitual activity for all practitioners working in conflict-affected or in post-conflict contexts.

On the following pages, you will find a wide range of practical tools for the systematic study of the structure, causes, actors and dynamics related to problems. In academic circles, these tools are commonly referred to as *conflict analysis instruments*.

WHY SHOULD IT BE PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE?

As a general rule, problems and conflicts seldom appear out of nowhere. Crisis, conflicts and injustices are complex consequences deriving from many factors. Various societal groups can be affected by the aforementioned problems; howe-

ver, it is worth noting that one problem can have different effects or impacts for different groups.

Problem or conflict analysis can be carried out at various levels (for instance: local, regional, national, etc.) The issues and dynamics at the national level may be different from those at the grassroots, or local, level. However, when linking the level of problem analysis with the level of intervention (project, program, policy), it is also important to establish systemic linkages with other interrelated levels. This is because all these different levels impact each other. For example, during the regional meetings for the *Women Focused Networks South Caucasus* project, participants from both Armenia and Georgia indicated there was a problem with high levels of unemployment among women. In Georgia, this involves specifically middle-aged, internally displaced (IDP) women living in rural areas of the country[1]. However, if, in a given community, the high level of unemployment for IDP women is perceived as a problem, one should note that the problem's causes run much deeper. They may stem from legislative flaws at the national level, from a global lack of jobs in Georgia, from overall public perceptions of female employments, or even stereotypes of IDPs. Thus, in order to develop a comprehensive strategy for changing the existing unbalanced situation, one must explore shortcomings in national legislation; research reasons for the lack of jobs at the national level; or study existing cultural stereotypes that prevent female employment. From this perspective, broad participation and inclusiveness during problem analysis also increases the chances of achieving positive results. This is because a broad range of actors with different perspectives can provide input on problems being discussed. The more inclusive the analysis, the more comprehensive an image of the problem one achieves as a result of the study.

It is important to notice that actors directly involved in, or affected by, a problem (especially in violent, conflict-affected communities) may be politically or emotionally overly sensitive to many aspects of a problem. This holds especially true for issues such as domestic violence, harassment, political or economic affiliation to perpetuators' groups, etc.

For instance, during regional meetings of the *Women Focused Networks South Caucasus* project, the issue of early marriage in Azerbaijan's rural communities was one of the topics of concern for participants from that country. For a detailed analysis of the latter phenomenon, one should bear in mind that the problem

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1. According to UNHCR statistics, over 220,000 registered IDPs have been living in limbo in Georgia for more than fifteen years. These IDPs fled secessionist conflicts in the two break-away regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the early 1990s. The second wave of displacement swept over Georgia in August 2008 as armed conflict broke out between Russian and Georgian troops over South Ossetia. The total number of the persons displaced during the August conflict reportedly reached 138,000: out of which around 108,600 persons returned to their places of origin while approximately 30, 000 remained to face possible long-term displacement. See Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Georgia: A Gap Analysis: https://www.unhcr.org/4ad827f59.pdf

has diverse causes and subsequently implications at different levels. For instance, the reasons for early marriage can stem from

• families' economic conditions;

• socially accepted misperceptions of women's roles;

• cultural stereotypes perpetuating the belief that a woman should marry before having sexual intercourse and that her husband should educate her as he wishes her to be: the earlier one marries, the easier it is to educate the woman in the desired manner.

The implications of the problem are also diverse:

• it causes the woman to be totally economic and socially dependent on her spouse;

• low levels of education and self-confidence; and

• high risk of being subject to domestic violence, etc.

However, as mentioned before, actors directly affected by a problem may also be emotionally sensitive to its various aspects. For instance, uneducated women with low levels of self-esteem might perceive violence against them (by their husbands or other family members) as an acceptable norm because they were „trained" by their husbands, families and other social constructs to believe this. Or even in case they do not perceive such aggression to be acceptable, they will most likely prefer to remain silent in order to conform to commonly accepted behavioral and social norms. In such conditions, involvement of external actors is crucial. This is because it helps to have an outside view of the problem, its causes and its outcomes.

HOW ANALYSES CAN BE USED IN DESIGNING THE PROJECTS?

One will have very little chance of finding a solution to a complex problem without exploring the complexities of the issue in question. In many cases, it is difficult to clearly name the problem, even though its implications are clear, and they can be listed one by one. However, only after proper analysis will it be be possible to see interconnection between the implications in question; i.e. those that are so obvious and vivid at first glance. The reason for such complexity is the simple fact that often the outcome of an unresolved issue becomes the cause of another. A problem (crisis, conflict, injustice, etc.), in its classic sense, consists of packages of such unresolved causes and outcomes. In such circumstances, there is a high risk that after one starts working toward solving a problem, their actions will have very little effect simply because the problem's complexity had not been consi-

dered appropriately. It is worth noting that such actions taken toward solving a particular problem in the modern world would be called a project. In the academic sense, a planned activity (or a group of activities) carried out individually or collaboratively to achieve a particular aim is called a project.

In the context of this publication, we use the term *project* to mean a group of planned activities carried out individually or collaboratively and which aim to bring positive change for resolving an unstable or unjust situation.

Based on the aforementioned descriptions, it can be concluded that a project's design will very much depend on our understanding of the problem that we are striving to resolve. It is worth pointing out that oftentimes, due to problems' complexity, projects do not resolve said problems entirely. Rather, they just contribute to the resolution of factors that make the problem more stable. For instance, referring to aforementioned examples, the problem of high levels of unemployment among middle-aged women in a given community can hardly be solved in the scope of a single project. This is especially true when one takes into consideration the fact that project implementing groups (civil society actors) do not have enough capacity to change national legislation, to open new workspaces or create new jobs, or to change social stereotypes of gender roles at the national level. It is clear that the solution to the aforementioned problem requires long-term intervention consuming way more human, technical and financial resources; skills and knowledge in the relevant area; etc. than justify the legitimacy of such work. That is why proper project design requires a clear understanding of the problem and its different components. Project design also demands a critical, deliberate understanding of the managers'/actors' own roles in the change process, along with their own recourses and capacities.

Indeed, problem analysis will provide answers to the aforementioned points or will at least help to visualize relevant points that need to be considered for designing an effective project aimed at contributing to the resolution of an unjust situation.

PRACTICAL CONFLICT / PROBLEM ANALYSIS TOOLS FOR WOMEN FOCUSED PROJECT DESIGN

In this section of the manual, we present a number of tools that will help develop a comprehensive picture of the context in which you or your organization operate. This chapter consists of some key elements of problem analysis deriving from various conflict analysis tools. Depending on your specific interest, you may want to emphasize specific aspects of key importance. For example, if you wish to emphasize identification of the driving force that maintains the problem's status quo[2], then a good understanding of problem causing factors will be a primary requirement. However, if stakeholders and beneficiaries are the specific focus of your research, then analysis of conflict actors, their interrelations and their needs will become a priority for your analysis.
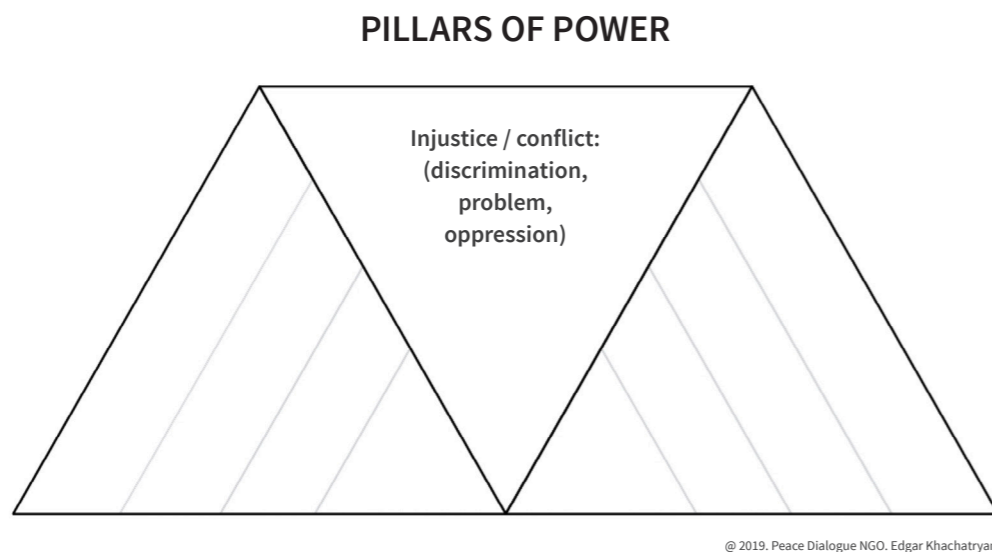
PILLARS OF POWER

PILLARS OF POWER

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Figure 1: Pillars of Power

2. The term status quo is widely used in jurisprudence. The expression „maintain the status quo" means to leave everything as it is. The term is also used in conflict studies, political science, sociology and other areas and has almost the same meaning.

The *Pillars of Power*[3] tool is designed for studying the factors that support or perpetuate the status quo of an existing problem (See Figure 1). The problem, injustice or oppression in the figure is portrayed as an inverted triangle. This image symbolizes the instability of an injustice or problem, which is held up only thanks to certain pillars; i.e. factors that make the injustice sustainable.
To work with the tool, one should:

1. **Identify the problem (injustice or oppression);**

2. **Determine which factors or beliefs support the problem or make it stable;**

3. **Answer the question of how the pillars can be weakened or removed;**

4. **Answer the question which pillars we can be weakened based on one's resources, strengths and capacity; and**

5. **You can repeat the exercise putting one of the identified pillars into the problem triangle. Thus, you may explore in greater depth what the factors are that keep the identified pillars stable.**

Based on the above example, the analysis may look as follows:

Problem
Limited access to economic resources, including employment for young Armenian women

Factors or beliefs supporting the problem's stability

- There are no government programs aimed directly at unemployed women, including young women.

- Existing legislation is not supported by an effective mechanism for its practical implementation: both in terms of ensuring the rights of youth in general and in terms of ensuring and protecting the rights of women.

- In Armenian society, traditional beliefs have been maintained that the man is the heir, the successor in the clan, an employee, a breadwinner and a defender of a family. In this sense, a woman is deemed to be of less value, and her duty is to look after the household and raise children. This is the case specifically in rural areas, where patriarchal traditions have been preserved. Preference is unambiguously given (by society) to men and the latter group mostly prefers that women stay at home and take care of their children and the household.

- The country's difficult economic situation, the closure or inaction of many (especially large) enterprises, which creates a limited demand for labor and a constricted workforce.

3. See "Turning the Tide, https://turningtide.org.uk/toolkit/pillars-of-power/

- Inconsistency of the current system of vocational education (at all levels) with the needs of the national economy.

How the pillars can be weakened?

- Develop a package of policy recommendations for the government; one that lists points to be included in the government's program for women's employment;

- Develop a package of recommendations for legal reforms that will include effective mechanisms for ensuring women's rights;

- Reduce the impact of patriarchal traditions in rural areas and fight against stereotypes that misinterpret women's gender roles; and

- Develop a package of policy recommendations for educational reforms and adapt educational programs to reflect the country's economic needs; etc.

Please note that during the analysis you may conclude that there are pillars that you cannot impact; this due to a number of circumstances. For instance, the country's difficult economic situation is an issue that requires permanent actions by the government. The government has the ultimate, legitimate responsibility for developing appropriate policy and seeing to the latter's further consistent implementation. As civil society actors, we can lobby and advocate for the development of such policies, monitor their implementation, and make recommendations on the effectiveness of said policies.

Which of the pillars can we weaken based on our resources, strengths and capacity?
As you can see from the example, possible strategies aimed at resolving the defined problem require expertise, professional resources and capacity. Based on your team's capacities, you can choose a possible approach that will lead to your intended changes.

Such simple analysis can help us better understand the context and more clearly define the problem and the solution thereto on which we want to start working. Moreover, using the above analysis, it will be easier to formulate our work objectives and aims: based on available resources, capabilities and knowledge.

ACTOR MAPPING TOOL

One of the most effective tools for mapping the parties involved in the conflict is the *Map of Actors*[4]. This tool helps identify parties involved in the situation, study the relationship between these parties, and also explore their influence on the situation. (See Figure 2).

In order to explore the tool features, we will analyze another example that was brought up by participants at the regional meetings during the *Women Focused Networks South Caucasus* project. As mentioned above, participants from Georgia mentioned the issue of high levels of unemployment among IDP women.The first step for visualizing actors involves listing and portraying actors affected by the problem. The tool provides a wide range of symbols for characterizing each of the parties.
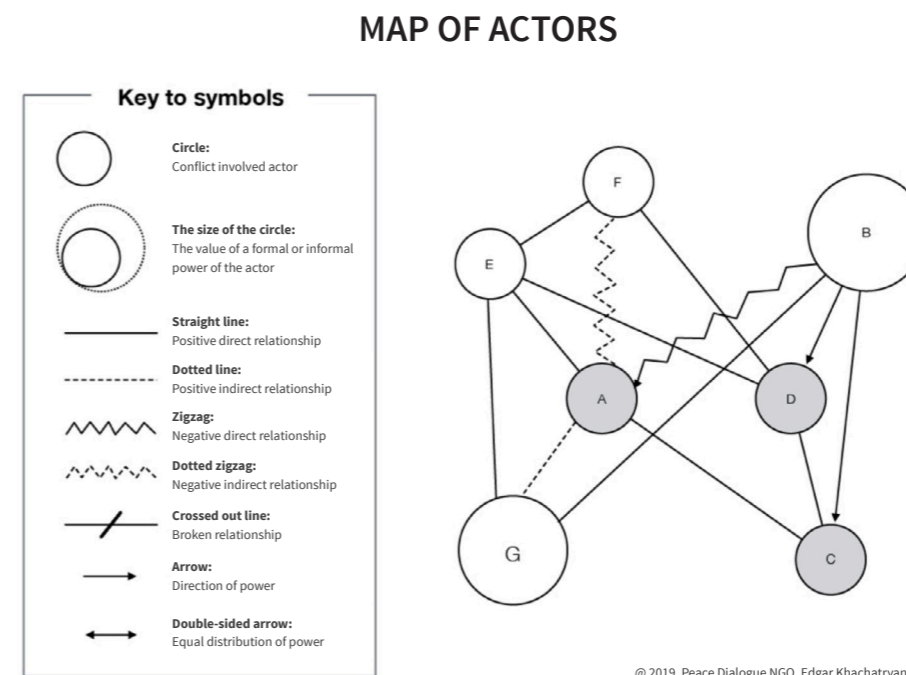
MAP OF ACTORS

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Figure 2: Map of Actors

For example, IDP women are a party to the conflict. We denote this side by circle [A]. Then, let us designate with circle [B] the representatives of the Georgian Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs, which is in charge of regulating Georgia's healthcare system, labor and IDP issues, and social security system. Since the ministry representatives have much more formal power, we will make circle [B] larger. At the same time, we will show the relationship between IDPs and ministry representatives with a zigzag-line running from circle [B] to circle [A]. This means that there is a direct, negative relationship between these parties; one where the power of ministry representatives is directed at IDPs.

4. Fisher S. et al.; Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action, 2000.

However, other parties can also be involved in the situation. Such groups may include representatives of parliament that adopt laws governing such matters; lawyers or representatives of NGOs that help IDP families; etc. In the same way, other parties to the conflict can also be mapped. For example, we mark parliamentary representatives with a circle [G], and the connection between IDPs and parliamentarians can be indicated by a dotted, straight line. Circle [G] is larger in size, since representatives of the parliament have more power and the ability to influence the situation. A dotted, straight line will indicate that there is a positive, but indirect, relationship between the parties. To indicate the relationship between parliamentarians and ministry representatives, we can use a straight line; one connecting the circles [B] and [G] and showing a positive, direct relationship between these parties. The schematic illustration (see Figure 2) shows what kind of signs or symbols can be used to denote different types of relationships between the parties involved. For more effective use of the tool, it is highly recommended that you denote yourself on the map, indicate the potential (or power) of your group, and visualize your relationships with other problem-involved parties using the symbols provided.

Such an analysis can help not only to see all the parties and actors involved in the situation, but also to recognize all parties' potential in achieving positive changes.

FORMULATION OF THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF WOMEN FOCUSED PROJECTS BASED ON COMMUNITY NEEDS

Clearly-defined aims and objectives are key components in designing a project or choosing a strategy. It is important to understand how, and in what way, our actions can contribute to solving the identified problem. In other words, the statement of the aims and objectives will help define what exactly we want to change, i.e. by considering the analysis of problems mentioned earlier.

With a high degree of probability, the correct use of the *Pillars of Power* tool will help determine and clearly formulate work aims and objectives. Answers to the question **"which of the pillars can we weaken based on our resources, strengths and capacity"** (as presented in description of the *Pillars of Power* tool) have the potential to identify possible vectors for actions aimed at solving a problem or an unjust situation.

Crises, conflicts and injustices are usually complex consequences deriving from many factors. As a rule, they arise due to a whole mass of many unresolved is-

sues. Taking into consideration the fact that a single project will not be able to address (or resolve) the whole complex of issues sustaining the problem, it is important to identify those particular areas where project organizers can be successful. Project organizers should take into consideration their own role in the change process; their own recourses and capacities.

In the previous section of this manual, we paid close attention to the importance of context analysis (in particular, analysis of actors involved in a problem on which we decided to work). Awareness of the problem we are looking to resolve and a clear vision of the project's aim could afford us the opportunity to define well our project's target group and its beneficiary group. Moreover, this will help us define actors who have the potential to influence positively the identified problem. In other words, within the framework of a wide range of possible stakeholders, we need to identify precisely those we plan to influence during the implementation of our specific project.

In general, the term *target group* refers to the group who will be positively affected by the project at the project purpose level and with whom project organizers will work very closely. On the other hand, the term *beneficiary* refers to those persons whom the project benefits over the longer term.

However, even when the target has been clearly identified, it is still crucial to ask yourself: What will change in people's lives after they take part in your project or activities?

In order to work most effectively with the selected target audience, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of that group's features and characteristics. Think about who they are, what their interests are, what gender roles they have, what they expect from you, and how they can help you achieve your aims and objectives.

The more you know about your target audience, the greater chance you will have in choosing the right approach to your work.

NEEDS PYRAMID

In conflict management (in order to study the needs of groups involved in a conflict), the Pyramid of Fears and Needs tool is often used. It is based on a theory from American psychologist Abraham Maslow and gives a hierarchical model of human needs. Maslow believed that people have many different needs, which can be divided into five main categories[5]:

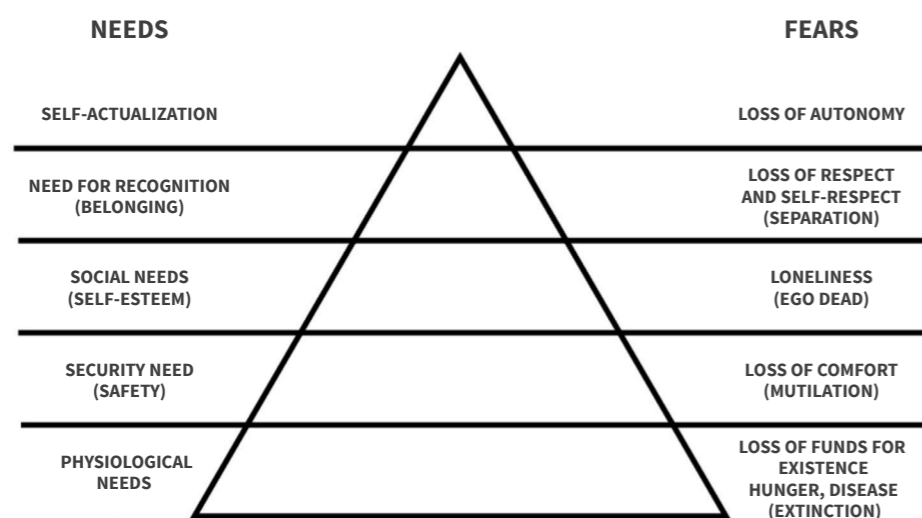5. Maslow, A. Towards a Psychology of Being. 1968.

1. Physiological needs: hunger, thirst, etc.

2. The need for security (safety): comfort, constancy of living conditions.

3. Social needs (self-esteem): social links, communication, affection, caring for others, joint activities, etc.

4. The need for recognition (love, belonging): respect from others.

5. Self-actualization: cognition, self-actualization, self-expression and self-iden- tification.

Moreover, according to the above theory, human needs and fears are arranged in hierarchical order. As the needs of a lower instance are satisfied (for example, physiological needs), those of a higher level become more relevant (i.e. the need for recognition or spiritual needs). Based on Maslow's ideas, conflict theorists de- veloped a theory about people's fear of the inability to satisfy their needs. In the schematic Figure 3, you can see a model for the analysis of needs and fears. This makes it possible to analyze in detail the motivation for the actions of certain actors involved in a conflict or problem situation.

This analytical tool can help us list the needs and fears of all parties that have been identified using the Map of Actors tool. The analysis will provide an oppor- tunity to better understand the roles of actors involved and to comprehend and study the motivations for their actions.

PYRAMID OF NEEDS AND FEARS

NEEDS		FEARS
SELF-ACTUALIZATION		LOSS OF AUTONOMY
NEED FOR RECOGNITION (BELONGING)		LOSS OF RESPECT AND SELF-RESPECT (SEPARATION)
SOCIAL NEEDS (SELF-ESTEEM)		LONELINESS (EGO DEAD)
SECURITY NEED (SAFETY)		LOSS OF COMFORT (MUTILATION)
PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS		LOSS OF FUNDS FOR EXISTENCE HUNGER, DISEASE (EXTINCTION)

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Figure 3: Needs and Fears Pyramid [6]

The following matrix can help you list the needs and fears for each of the identi- fied actors. For instance, using the example of forced early marriages in Azerbai- jan as described above, we can list the needs and fears for each group of identi- fied actors.

NEEDS OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO ARE SUBJECTED TO EARLY MARRIAGE	FEARS OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO ARE SUBJECTED TO EARLY MARRIAGE
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

NEEDS OF A MAN WHO WANTS TO MARRY A YOUNG GIRL	FEARS OF A MAN WHO WANTS TO MARRY A YOUNG GIRL
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

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6. La Conte Consulting, https://laconteconsulting.com/hierarchy-of-human-needs-fears-expectations-pt-1/

Based on the same logic, the needs and fears of other specific actors that have been identified during the problem mapping phase can also be analyzed. For instance, one can assess

- the needs and fears of families of young women who are subjected to early marriage;
- the needs and fears of families of men who want to marry a young girl.

Please note that there is a chance that male and female family members of young girls and the men who want to marry them could be also different. Thus, it would make sense to analyze the needs and fears of the aforementioned male and female actors separately.

All tools presented aim to provide a more comprehensive and multilayered image of factors that sustain a problematic situation and actors that might suffer from that situation. Moreover, these instruments can be used separately or together. They can help users define actors who have the potential to influence positively the identified problem and who can become agents for positive change in our communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We highly recommend spending adequate time on situation and problem analysis at the start of any project that intends to develop or change a community or group of people. In our experience both trainers and participants are often eager to get to the implementation phase. Participants arrive at the first workshop with clear ideas of the initiative or project they want to develop. These ideas are based upon their own interests and ambitions, their lived experiences, observations or casual conversations with acquaintances. While each person is an expert in his or her own experience, that does not make the person an expert on a topic and informal talks about a topic do not suffice as analysis. Thus it is vital that trainers recognize the importance of thorough analysis as a mechanism for the success of any subsequent activities. Trainers must introduce methods of analysis to participants and give them time to practice and become familiarize themselves with them before returning to their community for implementation. It is also important to give participants a variety of methods to choose from, as some will feel more comfortable, both personally and in their local situation, with some of the methods than others. A variety of methods also ensures that the participants look at the situation from multiple angles and gain diverse perspectives on the problem.

A problem analysis must be as unbiased as possible. Focus groups, interviewees and other participants in the analysis should represent all sub-groups of the community in order to achieve an analysis that reflects all dynamics and demographics. The people conducting the analysis should be inclusive in their thinking and respectful of differing opinions among the participants in the analysis.

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