CONFLICT STYLES

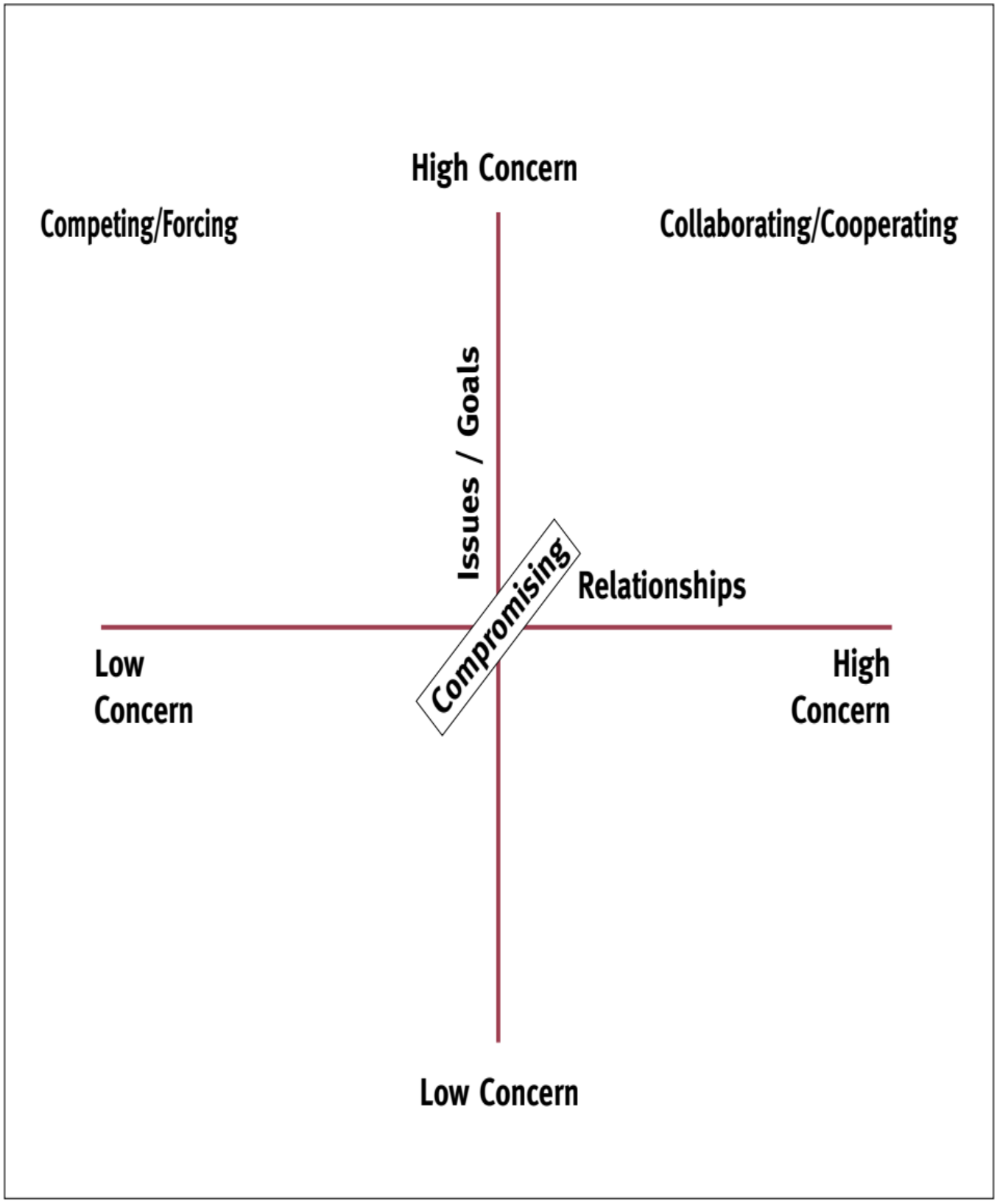
Accommodating. People who accommodate are unassertive and very cooperative. They neglect their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of others. They often give in during a conflict and acknowledge they made a mistake or decide it is no big deal. Accommodating is the opposite style of competing. People who accommodate may be selflessly generous or charitable, they may also obey another person when they would prefer not to, or yield to another's point of view. Usually people who accommodate put relationships first, ignore the issues and try to keep peace at any price.

Competing or Forcing. People who approach conflict in a competitive way assert themselves and do not cooperate as they pursue their own concerns at other people's expense. To compete, people take a power orientation and use whatever power seems appropriate to win. This may include arguing, pulling rank, or instigating economic sanctions. Competing may mean standing up and defending a position believed to be correct, or simply trying to win. **Forcing** is another way of viewing competition. For people using a forcing style, usually the conflict is obvious, and some people are right and others are wrong.

Avoiding. People who avoid conflict are generally unassertive and uncooperative. They do not immediately pursue their own concerns or that of the other person, but rather they avoid the conflict entirely or delay their response. To do so, they may diplomatically sidestep or postpone discussion until a better time, withdraw from the threatening situation or divert attention. They perceive conflict as hopeless and therefore something to be avoided. Differences are overlooked and they accept disagreement.

Collaborating or Cooperating. Unlike avoiders, collaborators are both assertive and cooperative. They assert their own views while also listening to other views and welcome differences. They attempt to work with others to find solutions that fully satisfy the concerns of both parties. This approach involves identifying the concerns that underlie the conflict by exploring the disagreement from both sides of the conflict, learning from each other's insights, and creatively coming up with solutions that address the concerns of both. People using this style often recognise there are tensions in relationships and contrasting viewpoints but want to work through conflicts.

Compromising. Compromisers are moderately assertive and moderately cooperative. They try to find fast, mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts that partially satisfy both parties. Compromisers give up less than accommodators but more than competitors. They explore issues more than avoiders, but less than collaborators. Their solutions often involve "splitting the difference" or exchanging concessions. Conflict is mutual difference best resolved by cooperation and compromise.



Adapted from Blake & Mouton, 1979

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF NEGOTIATION

Negotiation is a basic way of getting what you want from someone else, usually using verbal communication. We all negotiate every day – with a vendor at the market, with our friends or relatives in deciding what to eat or where and how to travel. American authors Roger Fisher and William Ury developed a model of business negotiation in 1981 that has become extremely popular. Essentially, they propose four principles of negotiation (Fisher and Ury, 1981):

1) **Separate the people from the problem.** The relationship (the "people") is separate from any substantive conflict (the "problem") you have. By disentangling the relationship from the problem, you reduce the possibility of miscommunication and emotions negatively affecting the negotiation. You want to establish good working relationships in negotiation. Deal with relationship issues, if they exist, separately from substantive issues.

2) **Focus on interests not positions.** Interests are the underlying needs, desires, concerns, wants, values, or fears. Interests motivate people, but often individuals will state a position. Many countries have a position that "we will not negotiate with terrorists." This is a position, but the underlying interests probably relate to concerns and fears about personal security. In conflict, individuals and groups often state only one position, and it will be difficult to negotiate compromises on positions. Behind positions are multiple interests, and focusing on interests allows negotiators more room to generate acceptable solutions.

3) **Invent options for mutual gain.** This requires creativity and the commitment to brainstorm options that will be acceptable to both parties. In brainstorming, negotiators need to separate the stage of evaluating options from the stage of generating options. Both parties need to broaden the number of possible options and not search for just one option. Both parties also need to think about options that will satisfy the interests of the other side.

4) **Insist on using objective or mutually acceptable criteria.** Often it is possible to identify several relevant standards or criteria by which parties can evaluate the fairness or acceptability of a negotiated agreement. Negotiators can brainstorm criteria or standards in the same way as they brainstorm options.

Fisher and Ury also invented the concept of the **BATNA**. This is a term that refers to the **B**est **A**lternative **T**o a **N**egotiated **A**greement. An alternative is different from an option – it refers to a possible course of action if you do not reach a negotiated agreement. The BATNA functions as your bottom line as a negotiator and helps you determine whether or not negotiation is your best option. In order to make a BATNA useful, negotiators need to carefully analyse the costs and benefits of the BATNA, and to evaluate costs and benefits of the negotiated agreement against those of the BATNA. If individuals or groups think they can accomplish their bottom line using other methods (e.g. like a strike, violence, legal options) they will resort to those methods and not use a cooperative model of negotiation.

THE PROCESS OF MEDIATION

Mediation is sometimes referred to as assisted negotiation. The main difference is that *mediation* involves a third party whose role is to help the parties reach a mutually agreeable solution to the problem or conflict or disagreement. Mediation is a voluntary process. The exact process of mediation as a process differs from mediator to mediator, and according to the culture in which mediation takes place. In general, there are four stages to mediation (adapted from MCS, 1995, pp.147). The descriptions that accompany these four phases relate to mediation in a western context.

1) **Introduction.** During the introduction, the mediator greets the parties, describes the process and the role of the mediator. The parties, together with the mediator, establish the ground-rules for the mediation session(s).

2) **Story-telling.** During this phase, each party tells their story from their own perspective. The mediator usually summarises each of the stories after the party has told the story. The mediator lists the issues for resolution, and the parties agree to this list.

3) **Problem solving.** During the problem solving stage, parties engage in a problem solving process to generate and then evaluate various options for resolving their conflict. At times the mediator uses a *caucus*, which is a separate session with each party, to explore emotions, unstated interests or goals.

4) **Agreement.** After evaluating the various options for resolving the disagreement, the parties decide on a solution. The mediator facilitates a discussion about the details of the agreement – who will do what, when, and where. This is often written down, with some details about what to do if either party does not uphold his or her part of the agreement.

In a western context, mediators are seen to be impartial or neutral. This means they do not show bias toward either party but instead work to help the parties reach an agreement that is mutually acceptable. In other contexts, mediators might be seen as partial but they are acceptable to both parties. For example, a family member of one of the parties might be an appropriate mediator, provided that both parties agree on the choice of a mediator for their conflict.

Although mediation is often a more formalised and ritualised process, it doesn't have to be. Many people informally mediate between friends, co-workers, or family members, assisting with communication and restoring relationships between conflicting parties.

THIRD PARTY COMMUNICATION SKILLS

In communicating effectively, many conflict resolvers and communication experts emphasise the importance of particular communication skills. These skills are particularly useful for individuals intervening in conflict, like mediators. These third party communication skills include: reframing, restating, and active listening.

Reframing. Reframing involves giving an alternative interpretation of issues or behaviour. In conflict, parties often engage in communication patterns that escalate a conflict, like trading accusations, or not listening to the other side. By reframing, the mediator validates the speaker's experience but opens the door for alternative interpretations of the content. Changing the frame makes room for different perceptions and interpretations of issues and behaviour. For example, a mediator might reframe an action like "forming coalitions against me" to "she must really feel powerless if she finds it necessary to gather the support of others." Reframing might involve moving a speaker from more general to specific comments, might identify underlying feelings, might neutralise attacks or identify areas of common interests (MCS, 1995, p.157).

Restating. This is similar to reframing, except it involves restating what one party says in language that is less accusatory. The person restating does not add anything to the statement, but simply paraphrases the speaker. For example, one party might claim "she is lazy. She never helps me with the difficult tasks of running an organisation." A mediator might rephrase this statement in the mediation: "Running an organisation is difficult and takes a lot of work." A follow-up question that reframes the content might be whether the speaker feels overwhelmed with the amount of work involved in running an organisation. When restating, the third party should check with the speaker to make sure the paraphrase is accurate.

Active listening. Using active listening demonstrates to the speaker that you, as a listener, are really hearing what the speaker is saying. You communicate this by *reflecting* the feelings of the listener (responding "you feel very strongly about this" to a comment about "I've had enough – I want him out of the organisation"), restating the content of the speaker's comments, asking open-ended questions, and generally communicating empathy with the speaker. Empathy communicates that the listener really understands the speaker's point of view. When overused, active listening can be irritating, and it is difficult to do in cross-cultural situations where perceptions and interpretations of content and underlying emotions in conversation are culturally influenced.

Good mediators in a western context make use of good communication skills like restating, reframing, asking open questions (see Section III, 3.4 Skills of a Good Facilitator), or active listening to change communication patterns and assist parties in reaching a mutually acceptable agreement. Other techniques of mediators include the *caucus* (holding a separate session with each party), or asking parties to redirect comments to the mediator instead of to each other. This technique is appropriate in instances where one party refuses to allow the other party to tell his or her story, often continuously interrupting or accusing the other party. *Redirecting* comments to the mediator allows the mediator to take charge of the direction of the communication. However, one of the purposes of mediation is to model good communication and encourage communication between the parties, so this particular technique should be used sparingly. *Reality testing* is a technique mediators use toward the end of a mediation session. The mediator plays the role of an agent of reality by asking questions about the acceptability of the agreement, and the likelihood that all parties will be able to live up to their side of the agreement.

Like peacebuilding, mediation is not only a science in terms of its stages and its skills and techniques, but is also an art. Mediators often intuitively respond, using various skills in their repertoire to assist parties in communicating and in reaching an agreement. This only comes with practice. Although some individuals are natural mediators, it generally takes practice to be a good mediator.

Skills for the Peacebuilder - Programme Analysis, Design and Evaluation

Connectors and Dividers for Peace

Within each conflict context there are people, organisations, and experiences that can connect people and help solidify a sustainable infrastructure for peace. This section identifies categories of connectors, based on the work of the Local Capacities for Peace Project (LCPP), an initiative of Mary Anderson and the Collaborative for Development Action. LCPP was a collaborative effort launched in 1994 to answer the question of how aid may be provided in conflict settings to help people disengage from the violence that surrounds them, rather than having aid feed into conflict. In analysing 14 case studies, Anderson identified both connectors and dividers for peace. The connectors are more specific examples of what Lederach refers to as vertical capacity, horizontal capacity, and vertical and horizontal integration.

Connectors refer to everything that links people for peace across conflict lines, while dividers or tensions refer to those things that divide people. Dividers include sources of conflict, or the issues in conflict. The analysis tools in Module 3 (Context Analysis) are useful for identifying dividers, so this activity is not included in this module. In analysing the peacebuilding potential of programming, we want to look more closely at the connectors that still exist in any country or region in conflict. Each of the following connectors can supply natural linkages (adapted from Anderson, 1999).

Systems and Institutions. In all societies where intrastate war erupts, systems and institutions like markets and communications systems continue to link people across conflict lines. For example, local markets or the continued need to trade goods may bring together merchants from opposing factions in a conflict. Media sources (foreign or local news broadcasts on the radio or television) also provide linkages between people regardless of their affiliation. Irrigation systems, bridges, roads, and electrical grids are additional examples of institutional and systemic connectors.

Attitudes and Actions. Even in the midst of war and violence, it is possible to find individuals and groups who continue to express attitudes of tolerance, acceptance, or even love or appreciation for people on the "other side." Some individuals act in ways that are contrary to what we expect to find during war – adopting abandoned children from the "other side," linking across lines to continue a professional association or journal, setting up new associations of people opposed to the war. They do these things because they seem "normal" or "right." Often, they do not think of them as extraordinary or even as "non-war."

Shared Values and Interests. A common religion can bring people together, as can common values such as the need to protect a child's health. UNICEF, for example, has negotiated days of tranquillity based upon the value placed upon inoculating children against disease. These same connectors sometimes act as dividers, but we tend to think more about the divisive effects of values in times of war.

Common Experiences. The experience and effects of war on individuals can provide linkages across the conflict lines. Citing the experience of war and suffering as "common to all sides," people sometimes create new anti-war alliances across conflict lines. Sometimes the experience of war unites individuals who are traumatised by violence, regardless of their different affiliations.

Symbols and Occasions. National art, music, historical anniversaries, national holidays, monuments, and sporting events (e.g., the Olympics) can bring people together or link

them across conflict lines. They also may divide individuals. One example is the stories of soldiers during World War I who, on Christmas Eve, began to sing the Christmas carol "Silent Night" together before returning to war.

It is important not to assume any one category of individuals – women, for example – or organisations – churches, for example – are always connectors. These individuals and organisations, although they have the capacity to be connectors, are sometimes deeply committed dividers.

Evaluation

We evaluate programmes for many reasons. Usually we want to assess the impact of a programme and determine whether we have successfully met our goals and objectives. We also want to improve how we implement our programmes to make them as effective as possible, and to revise our programmes if they are inadvertently causing harm or not having the intended effects.

Once the programme or project is underway, several evaluation options exist. Two basic types of programme evaluation are *formative evaluation* and *summative evaluation*. Formative evaluation, also known as *process evaluation*, refers to a type of programme evaluation that seeks to determine what approaches were used, which problems were encountered, which strategies were successful and why. Formative evaluation is similar to the concept of monitoring. Summative evaluation, which is also known as outcome evaluation, aims to assess programme achievements in comparison to planned objectives and activities. It occurs after the programme has been implemented. Formative evaluation often uses qualitative data and summative evaluation typically uses quantitative data to determine if change has occurred.

Qualitative data includes stories, anecdotes, interviews, and personal reflections. These sources provide more in-depth and complex pictures and understandings of programmes and results as people are able to expand on details they think are important. With qualitative data, you determine the themes and variables after collecting data. The disadvantage of qualitative data collection is that it is time-consuming and requires more interpretation and summary. The advantage is that qualitative data are more detailed, nuanced, and can capture unexpected results or achievements because people are not confined to particular categories and choices in giving their evaluations.

Quantitative data refers to numerical data – for example, the number of people trained, or the number of hectares rehabilitated. The data are collected based upon pre-established objectives and variables in order to determine their frequency and magnitude. With quantitative data, you determine the themes and variables before collecting data. The disadvantage of quantitative data is that the data are rigid and unable to respond to changing circumstances. The advantages are that the data are faster and easier to collect and analyse.

Given that peacebuilding is a long-term and unpredictable process that must take into account the changing circumstances in a community and a country, it is more helpful to think about evaluation in terms of process. It is extremely difficult to identify all the possible effects and variables of peacebuilding programming ahead of time, for which qualitative data are better suited. This does not exclude the possibility of combining process and outcome evaluation, or qualitative and quantitative data and indicators, but it is important to make sure these indicators are used. These may be augmented by outcome evaluation and quantitative indicators.

The next sub-section focuses on how to do evaluation using the peacebuilding principles, followed by a more narrowly focused section on how to evaluate the effects of programming on a conflict while it is ongoing.

Using Peacebuilding Principles in Evaluation

Changes in circumstances, intangible results of repairing relationships, and taking a long-term perspective pose substantial challenges to evaluating peacebuilding programming. Because peacebuilding is a relatively new term and lens for development programming, few have developed indicators that can link the micro-level processes of local programming with the broader, macro-level changes being pursued. This next section provides a framework for evaluation that builds on the peacebuilding principles and suggests an elicitive approach for evaluation.

To be comprehensive, sustainable and build up an infrastructure for peace, programmes need to take a *long-term perspective*. This requires thinking beyond the current project to a programme's broader social goals, thinking beyond five or even ten years. Violent conflicts build over generations and it takes at least as much time to get out of them and create just and peaceful societies (Lederach, 1997). To capture gradual change, we need to use a long timeline in planning and evaluating programming and the effects that programmes had on the context.

Peacebuilding Evaluation Framework

The five peacebuilding principles can provide a framework for identifying indicators for process and outcome evaluation that go beyond working in emergency and immediate conflict situations. The principles can be used to monitor and evaluate peacebuilding activities that focus on prevention as well as post-conflict recovery. This framework is a conceptual tool to help generate indicators for programming that will meet the peacebuilding principles.

To review, the five principles are: (1) interdependence (relationships), (2) infrastructure, (3) sustainable (long-term), (4) strategic, and (5) comprehensive. Taking the five principles along with a focus on the process of how we do our peacebuilding work (discussed further in Section I), we can develop a matrix to help identify indicators to monitor and evaluate peacebuilding programming (Figure 6.2). The evaluation process itself needs to be designed in a way that respects the principles, as discussed above in the subsection Using Peacebuilding Principles in Evaluation.

The principle of being strategic is broken down in the matrix into the three categories of the strategic who (whom we work with), the strategic what (what we do in our programming) and the strategic where (where we focus our efforts). The matrix provides a tool for strategic assessment, which may be particularly helpful at the planning stage of peacebuilding programming to help think through the strategic concepts – who, what and where – in terms of the peacebuilding principles from Module 4. These include the strategic who, using the relationship concepts and metaphors of the critical yeast and siphon, the strategic what, focusing on for example, our comparative advantage in terms of our resources, energy, or expertise, and the strategic where, which identifies locations that are best situated for linking groups or other peacebuilding activities. The matrix also provides a tool for comprehensive and long-term assessment, to examine how strategic programming relates to the bigger social, political, and economic picture of the country and region.