Introduction

Background

This report has been commissioned by the OECD DAC Conflict Peace and Development Co-operation Network (CPDC) and the Fragile States Group (FSG) as part of the joint workstream on early warning, preventive action, and collective response.

The aim of the report (and indeed of the workstream itself) is to support the efforts of OECD DAC members and other governmental, multilateral and NGO partners to better integrate early warning analysis and response into their programming. The research leading to this report was carried out over five months (December 2007 – April 2008) and involved:

- A web-based review of articles, papers and books on early warning and early response, including good practice, tools and systems.

- A questionnaire survey on early warning and early response to CPDC and FSG members and other partners.

- A questionnaire survey on key methodologies sent to selected agencies involved in the development of such methodologies.

- Meetings and telephone discussions with key respondents on issues that required further investigation.

- Analysis of findings and drafting of the report, including a peer review exercise with key experts in the field.

- Incorporation of feedback from the peer review and client into a final draft report that was circulated to CPDC and FSG members for comment.

In September 2008, the OECD DAC commissioned Patrick Meier (Harvard Humanitarian Initiative) to review the report and compendium.

The reader of this report should keep the following caveats in mind:

- Because of the needs of the target audience of the report, the emphasis is placed on the operational application of early warning tools and systems rather than on theoretical and academic issues.

- The report does not review all existing early warning tools and systems. It is based on responses from surveyed agencies and a review of the tools/systems used by policy makers in selected institutions.

- The report does not review all existing early response mechanisms and instruments. Rather, it is focused on a selection of funding and expertise mechanisms/instruments used by OECD DAC members and multilateral agencies, along with a sample of NGO-led response mechanisms.

- The definitions used for "early warning", "early response" necessarily restrict what is covered in this report. However, discretion has been used to expand coverage when deemed appropriate.

- The "open source" focus of the report means that intelligence-based systems (found particularly in government agencies) are not reviewed in this report.

Key definitions

The scope of the report rests heavily on the definitions used. Among these are the following:

- *Early warning* is a process that *(a)* alerts decision makers to the potential outbreak, escalation and resurgence of violent conflict; and *(b)* promotes an understanding among decision makers of the nature and impacts of violent conflict (adapted from FEWER in Schmid, 1998).

- *Early warning systems* involve regular and organised collection and analysis of information on violent conflict situations. They deliver a set of early warning products (based on qualitative and/or quantitative conflict analysis methods) that are linked to response instruments/mechanisms (adapted from FEWER in Schmid, 1998**).**

- *Early and rapid response* refers to any initiative that occurs as soon as the threat of potential violent conflict is identified and that aims to manage, resolve, or prevent that violent conflict.

- *Early/rapid response systems* are one or several preventive instruments and mechanisms (political, economic/financial, social, security) informed by an early warning that are deployed to manage, resolve, or prevent the outbreak, escalation, and resurgence of violent conflict.

- *Fragile, weak and failing states* are defined here as "countries that lack the essential capacity and/or will to fulfil four sets of critical government responsibilities: fostering an environment conducive to sustainable and equitable economic growth; establishing and maintaining legitimate, transparent, and accountable political institutions; securing their populations from violent conflict and controlling their territory; and meeting the basic human needs of their population" (Rice and Stewart, 2008).

Critical questions

This report seeks to shed light on the following critical questions:

- What is the value of early warning for the prevention of violent conflict and peacebuilding? What role does early warning play in prevention?

- What are the most effective early warning systems? Why are they effective and what impacts do they have?

- What are the comparative strengths and weaknesses of different methodologies – *e.g.* quantitative *vs.* qualitative analysis, and conflict analysis *vs.* assessment of state fragility?

- What does it take to prevent violent conflict? What do we currently know is good practice and what works?

- What early/rapid response mechanisms/instruments are available?

- What influences and blocks early response? What are the personal, institutional and political factors at play?

- Where should the early warning/response field go from here? What role should the OECD DAC play?

These questions are answered in different chapters of the report and revisited in the concluding chapter.

Structure of the report

The report seeks to explore these questions in five chapters:

- *A Short Contemporary History of Conflict Early Warning* (Chapter 1). This chapter covers the integration of early warning into the mandates of different agencies, the evolution of early warning tools into systems, the paradigms underpinning warning and response, and the transition from first to second to third generation early warning and response systems.

- *The Range of Early Warning Tools and Systems* (Chapter 2). This chapter includes a review of governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental quantitative and qualitative tools and methods of analysis, and a discussion of current operational early warning systems.

- *Is Early Early? A Review of Response Mechanisms and Instruments* (Chapter 3). This chapter briefly reviews challenges and lessons for responses to violent conflict; provides an analysis of a cross-section of response mechanisms and instruments; and discusses the warning-response link.

- *Future Directions for Early Warning and Early Response* (Chapter 4). This chapter discusses some of the possible future trends in early warning and early response and the potential impact of emerging security threats and technological advances.

- *Conclusions and Recommendations* (Chapter 5). This chapter reviews critical questions and the answers given in the report and concludes with recommendations for the OECD DAC.

A Compendium of Surveyed Early Warning Systems and Early Response Mechanisms/Instruments, with profiles, is attached as annex to this report.

Bibliography

Adelman, H. (2006), "The War Report: Warning And Response in West Africa", USAID/WARP (Accra), February.

Aga Khan, S. (1981), "Question of the Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in any Part of the World, with Particular Reference to Colonial and Other Dependent Countries and Territories" in *Study on Human Rights and Massive Exodus,* United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, 38th Session, Item 12 (b), E1CN1411503, 31 December.

Anderson, M.B, (1999), Do no harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – Or War. Lynne Rienner Pub, Boulder, Colorado.

Austin, G., E. Brusset, M. Chalmers and J. Pierce (2004), *Evaluation of the Conflict Prevention Pools: Synthesis Report,* DFID, London.

Banim, G. (2008) "EU Responses to Fragile States" in Stefani Weiss, Hans-Joachim Spanger, Wim van Meurs (eds.), *Diplomacy, Development and Defence: A Paradigm for Policy Coherence, A Comparative Analysis of International Strategies*, Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, Guetersloh.

Barrs, C. (2006), "Conflict Early Warning: Early Warning for Who?", *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance,* February.

Barrs, C. (2008), *Preparedness Training: Helping Brace Beneficiaries, Local Staff and Partners for Violence*, The Cuny Center, Washington, DC.

Cammack, D., D. McLeod, A. Rocha Menocal and K. Christiansen (2006), *Donors and the "Fragile States" Agenda: A Survey of Current Thinking and Practice,* ODI/JICA, London.

Campbell, S. and P. Meier (2007), "Deciding to Prevent Violent Conflict: Early Warning and Decision-Making at the United Nations", Paper presented at the International Studies Association (ISA) Convention, Chicago, March.

Carment, D., Y. Samy and S. Prest (2007), "Determinants of State Fragility and Implications for Aid Allocation: An Assessment", CIFP, Carleton University, Ottawa, May.

Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1997), Final Report, New York, December.

Cewarn (2006), *Cewarn Strategy 2007-2011.* Cewarn Unit, Addis Abeba, November.

Charney, I. and W. Charney (1982), "How Can We Commit the Unthinkable?" in *Genocide – The Human Cancer,* Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.

Cilliers, J. (2005), "Towards a Continental Early Warning System for Africa", Occasional Paper 102, ISS, April.

European Commission (2001), *Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention*. Brussels, July.

European Commission (2008), "Climate Change And International Security", Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council, S113/08, Brussels, March.

European Parliament (2008), *Options for the EU to Support the African Peace and Security Architecture,* European Parliament, Policy Department External Policies, EP/EXPO/B/AFET/FWC/2006-10/Lot 4/13, Brussels, February.

Fall, I. (2008), "Coopération opérationelle entre organisations internationales en matière de l'alerte précoce et de prévention des conflits", Paper presented to the OIF Meeting on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention, Paris, 21-22 April.

Goldstone, J.A. (2008), "Using Quantitative and Qualitative Models to Forecast Instability", Special Report 204, US Institute of Peace, March.

Hopkins, D. and G. King (2008), "Extracting Systematic Social Science Meaning from Text", Institute for Quantitative Social Science (IQSS), Harvard University.

IGAD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Development) (2000), "Khartoum Declaration of the Eighth IGAD Summit", Khartoum, 23 November.

Lavoix, H. (2007), *Etude sur l'Alerte Précoce*, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris.

Leaning, J. and P. Meier (2008), *The Untapped Potential of Information Communication Technology for Conflict Early Warning and Early Response*, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI) Report for Humanity United, Harvard University.

Matveeva, A. (2006), *Early Warning and Early Response: Conceptual and Empirical Dilemmas,* GPAC Issue Paper No. 1, September.

Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs (2005), *The Stability Assessment Framework: Designing Integrated Responses for Security, Governance and Development,* The Hague.

Nyheim, D. (2003), "What Can Be Done?" in Carol Rittner, John K. Roth and James M. Smith (eds.), *Will Genocide Ever End?*, Paragon House.

OECD (2001), *DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation*, OECD, Paris. (1st edition in 1997).

OECD (2008), *Thematic Meetings on Whole-of-Government Approaches to Situations of Conflict and Fragility,* OECD, Paris, May.

Ogata, S. and A. Sen (2003), *Human Security Now*, May.

PCIA Resource Pack (2004), *Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack,* London, January.

Rice, S. and P. Stewart (2008), *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World,* Brookings Institution.

Rupesinghe, K. (1989), "Early Warning: Some Conceptual Problems", *Bulletin of Peace Proposals,* 20, 2.

Schimd, A. (1998), *Thesaurus and Glossary of Early Warning and Conflict Prevention Terms (Abridged Version)*, FEWER/PIOOM.

Schmeidl, S. (2008), "Early Warning at the Grassroots Level", Paper presented at the International Studies Association (ISA) Convention, San Francisco, March.

Schmeidl, S. and E. Piza-Lopez (2002), *Gender and Conflict Early Warning: A Framework for Action,* International Alert, London.

Singer, J.D. and M.D. Wallace, eds. (1979), *To Augur Well: Early Warning Indicators in World Politics*, Sage Focus Editions, Sage Publications, Inc.

Slim, H. (2006), *Towards Some Ethical Guidelines for Good Practice in Third Party Mediation in Armed Conflict,* Oslo Forum, Oslo.

Smith, D. (2003), *Getting Their Act Together: Towards a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding* (Synthesis Report of the Joint Utstein

Study of Peacebuilding), Commissioned by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo.

Sriram, C.L. and K. Wermester (2003), *From Promise to Practice: Strengthening UN Capacities for the Prevention of Violent Conflict: Final Report,* International Peace Academy, New York, March.

Steering Committee of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (1996), *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience,* March.

swisspeace (2005), "FAST Update: Russian Federation/Chechnya", Semi-annual Risk Assessment, November 2004 to February 2005, *www.swisspeace.ch/typo3/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/FAST/archive/nort h_caucasus/FAST-FEWER_Update_Chech_Nov04-Feb05.pdf.*

swisspeace (2007), "FAST Update Afghanistan No. 4", August to September 2007.

Taleb, N. (2007), *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*, Random House, New York.

Teslik, L.H. (2008), "Iraq, Afghanistan, and the U.S. Economy", Council on Foreign Relations, March.

United Kingdom Government (2000), *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor,* Government White Paper, London.

United Nations (1992), "An Agenda for Peace Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping", Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, A/47/277 - S/24111, New York, 17 June.

United Nations (2000), "Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations", New York.

United Nations (2001), "Prevention of Armed Conflict Report of the Secretary-General", General Assembly Fifty-fifth Session, Agenda Item 10, A/55/985–S/2001/574, New York.

Woocher, L. (2007), "Early Warning for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities", Paper presented at the International Studies Association (ISA) Convention, Chicago, March.

World Bank (2006), *Engaging with Fragile States,* World Bank, Washington, DC.

Zeeuw, J. de (2001) *Building Peace in War Torn Societies: From Concept to Strategy*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael", Conflict Research Unit.

Table of Contents

Tables

Figures

Boxes

List of Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
APFO	Africa Peace Forum
AU	African Union
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)
CDA Inc.	Collaborative Learning Projects
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CEWERU	Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIFP	Country Indicators for Foreign Policy
CPDC	Conflict Peace and Development Co-operation Network
CPP	Conflict Prevention Pool
CPR Network	Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Network
DFAIT	Department for Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EAWARN	Network for Ethnological Monitoring and Early Warning
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EISAS	Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat
EU	European Union
EUSITCEN	European Union Situation Centre
FAST	Early Recognition and Analysis of Tensions
FCE	Foundation for Coexistence
FEWER	Forum on Early Warning and Early Response
FEWER-Africa	Forum on Early Warning and Early Response-Africa
FEWER-Eurasia	Forum on Early Warning and Early Response-Eurasia
FSG	Fragile States Group
GCPP	Global Conflict Prevention Pool
GEDS	Global Events Data System

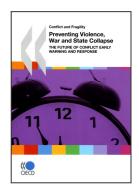|	
GIGAS	German Institute for Global Area Studies
GTZ	*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*
HMT	Her Majesty's Treasury
ICG	International Crisis Group
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IGO	Inter-governmental organisation
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
KEDS	Kansas Events Data System
LICUS	Low Income Countries Under Stress
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MARAC	Mécanisme d'alerte rapide de l'Afrique centrale
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity (now AU)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PANDA	Protocol for the Analysis of Nonviolent Direct Action
PCIA	Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment
PITF	Political Instability Task Force
PPEWU	Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit (EU)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	*Système d'Alerte Précoce* (France)
START	Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force (Canada)
UN	United Nations
UNDHA	United Nations Department for Humanitarian Affairs (now UNOCHA)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPA	United Nations Department for Political Affairs
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VRA	Virtual Research Associates
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WARN	West Africa Early Warning and Response Network

From:
Preventing Violence, War and State Collapse
The Future of Conflict Early Warning and Response

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264059818-en