



GOOD INTENTIONS ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH

How we apply the principle of Do No Harm to transform our good intentions into good projects



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Applying Do No Harm in the project cycle

The Do No Harm approach is a tool that focuses on action. It is used to review projects and programmes for conflict sensitivity and to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate them in a way that is sensitive to conflict. Humanitarian and development organisations should embed the Do No Harm approach in their entire project cycle – from project planning to monitoring and evaluation.

Planning: How might the intervention interact with the context?

Monitoring: How did elements of the intervention that have already been implemented interact with the context? Which interactions do we anticipate for elements that will be implemented going forward?

Analysis: How did the project interact with the context? How can we use this information to learn for future projects or the next phase of a longer programme?

Figure 2 shows where the individual steps are used in the project cycle.

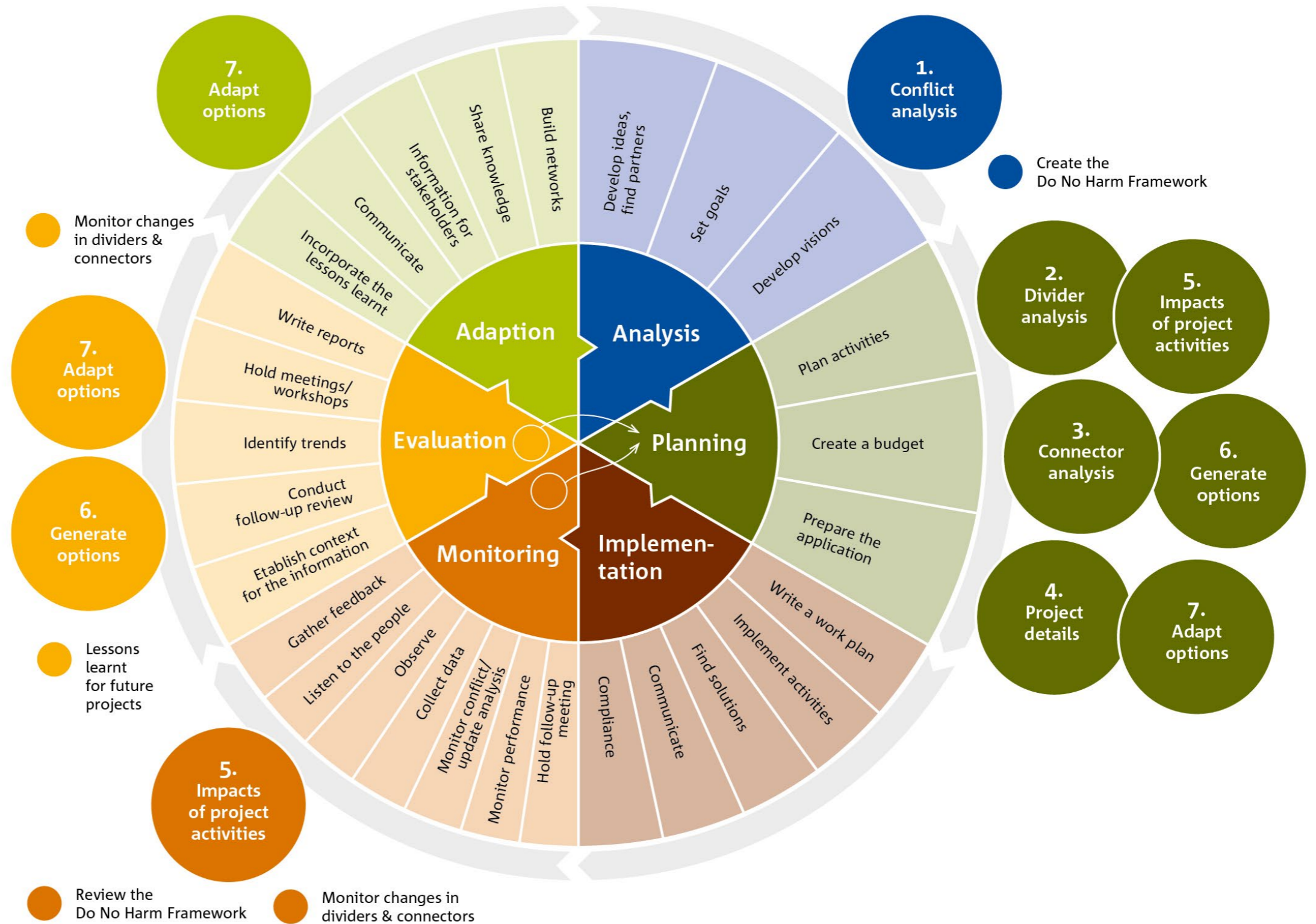


Figure 2: Application of the seven Do No Harm steps in the project cycle (source: author's illustration).

HOW IS DO NO HARM INTRODUCED SUCCESSFULLY?

Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid build largely on cooperation between local organisations in the project region and organisations from abroad that act as partners. Organisations that implement projects on the ground generally receive support from other organisations, mostly from the Global North, who provide financial resources, staff postings and advice. These relationships in the spirit of partnership are complex structures involving numerous interactions. Another fact is that the organisations providing support themselves often receive grants from other donors (back donors). In Germany, for example, they include the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) or the Federal Foreign Office (AA).

All stakeholders are called upon to play their part if the Do No Harm approach is to be applied effectively in emergency aid measures or development projects. Conflict-sensitive project planning by the implementing organisation will only be effective if the funding organisation and the back donor provide it with the necessary leeway.

Implementing organisations

Based on current knowledge, Do No Harm and a conflict-sensitive planning and implementation process should be viewed as standard for all projects. It can be helpful here if the seven steps in the Do No Harm analysis are not completed alone. Dialogue with colleagues is just as important for critical analysis of the own projects as appreciative interaction with one another.

Organisations with practical experience confirm that the Do No Harm tool does not involve any significantly greater workload or time frame. However, Do No Harm must already have been rolled out as a working tool. And while doing so will take some effort, it does pay off.

Do No Harm is introduced at three levels:

1. at the cognitive level of understanding (Learning);
2. at the practical level of application (Doing);
3. at the level of structural change within the organisation (Embedding).

The Do No Harm approach must be applied at all three levels in order to be successful (known as 'mainstreaming'). Systematic structural change will not be induced within the organisation if only the cognitive and practical levels are addressed. But this change is necessary in order to enable the evolution of regulations, tools and processes within an organisation according to the principle of Do No Harm. It makes sense to embed the method in the project cycle in order to facilitate the necessary structural adjustments (refer to Figure 2, page 12).

Funding organisations

Organisations that provide financial resources, human resources or their expertise to support development projects and Humanitarian Aid must also enshrine conflict sensitivity into their policies, criteria, procedures and guidelines. The ∞ Better Programming Initiative by the International



Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is an interesting example. They can also assist their partner organisations in adapting Do No Harm and conflict sensitivity to their specific context and embedding the principles in their work.

Do No Harm and conflict sensitivity therefore mean two things for funding organisations: Firstly, Do No Harm can – and should – be translated into questions in order to engage in a form of dialogue that encourages partners to perform a systematic analysis of their context. The questions must not be framed as test or control questions or even come across as lecturing. Instead they should encourage people to scrutinise current perceptions and certainties in relation to the context in a spirit of self criticism.

Another key factor is that the funding organisation must ensure that its financing terms permits adequate flexibility. Only then will the implementing organisations be in a position to respond quickly to unintentional effects and adapt the measures in order to ‘avoid harm’ (Do No Harm), instead of inhibiting the opportunities for forces of peace to take action (conflict sensitivity).

Donor institutions (back donors)

In many cases, funding organisations not only have their own funds they generate themselves, but also receive grants from other donors (back donors). Mainstreaming Do No Harm in a spirit of partnership with implementing organisations means that

these organisations must also check the requirements and guidelines imposed by their back donors to check whether they promote or perhaps even inhibit conflict-sensitive action in the project region. In the latter case, it is important to engage in dialogue with the back donor to ensure that conflict-sensitive project work remains possible and is strengthened in the interests of all parties.

Donors can also promote the embedding and, at the same time, adaptation and continued improvement of conflict-sensitive project work, not only by including Do No Harm and conflict sensitivity in their funding policies and guidelines, but also by actively seeking to share experience with their grant recipients and their implementing partner organisations. Donors and funding organisations can also help to ensure that implementing organisations can draw on the necessary resources and time to conduct in-depth conflict and context analyses. By doing so, they can analyse the lessons learnt from conflict-sensitive project work and use it to improve their own routines.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

A

@fire Internationaler Katastrophenschutz
 Deutschland e.V.
 action medeor
 ADRA Deutschland e.V.
 AGIAMONDO
 Aktion Canchanabury
 Aktion gegen den Hunger*
 AMICA e.V.
 ANDHERI-HILFE e.V.
 Apotheker helfen e.V.
 Apotheker ohne Grenzen e.V.
 Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland
 Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Eine-Welt-Landesnetzwerke
 in Deutschland (agl)
 Arbeitsgemeinschaft Entwicklungsethnologie
 arche noVa
 Ärzte der Welt
 ASW – Aktionsgemeinschaft Solidarische Welt
 AT-Verband
 AWO International

B

Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (bezev)
 BONO-Direkthilfe
 BORDA e.V.
 Brot für die Welt – Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst
 Bund der Deutschen Katholischen Jugend (BDKJ)
 Bundesvereinigung Lebenshilfe

C

CARE Deutschland e.V.
 Caritas International
 CBM Christoffel-Blindenmission Christian Blind
 Mission e.V.
 CHANGE e.V.
 ChildFund Deutschland
 Christliche Initiative Romero

D

Dachverband Entwicklungspolitik
 Baden-Württemberg (DEAB)
 Das Hunger Projekt
 DED-Freundeskreis
 Deutsche Entwicklungshilfe für soziales Wohnungs-
 und Siedlungswesen (DESWOS)
 Deutsche Kommission Justitia et Pax
 Deutsche Lepra- und Tuberkulosehilfe (DAHW)

Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)
 Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband
 Deutsch-Syrischer Verein e.V. (DSV)
 DGB-Bildungswerk BUND – Nord-Süd-Netz
 Difäm – Deutsches Institut für Ärztliche Mission
 Don Bosco Mondo
 DVV International – Institut für Internationale Zusammen-
 arbeit des Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verbandes

E

Eine Welt Netz NRW
 EIRENE – Internationaler Christlicher Friedensdienst
 Energypedia UG
 EPIZ – Zentrum für Globales Lernen in Berlin
 Erlassjahr.de – Entwicklung braucht Entschuldung
 Evangelische Akademien in Deutschland (EAD)

F

Fairtrade Deutschland e.V.
 Fairventures Worldwide
 FIAN Deutschland
 Forum Fairer Handel
 FUTURO SÍ

G

Gemeinschaft Sant'Egidio
 German Doctors
 German Toilet Organisation
 Germanwatch
 GLS Zukunftsstiftung Entwicklung

H

Habitat for Humanity Deutschland
 Handicap International
 Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe
 HelpAge Deutschland
 Hilfe für Afrika e.V.
 Hoffnungszeichen / Sign of Hope
 humedica

I

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 INKOTA-netzwerk
 Internationaler Bund (IB)
 Internationaler Hilfsfonds
 International Justice Mission Deutschland
 Internationaler Ländlicher Entwicklungsdienst (ILD)
 Internationaler Verband Westfälischer Kinderdörfer
 Islamic Relief Deutschland



J

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K

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Karl Kübel Stiftung für Kind und Familie

KATE – Kontaktstelle für Umwelt und Entwicklung

Kinderhilfswerk Stiftung Global-Care

Kindernothilfe

Kinderrechte Afrika

KOLPING International Cooperation e.V.

L

Lateinamerika-Zentrum

Lesben- und Schwulenverband (LSVD)

Lichtbrücke

Light for the World

M

Malteser International

Marie-Schlei-Verein

materra – Stiftung Frau und Gesundheit

medica mondiale e.V.

medico international

MISEREOR

Mission East Deutschland e.V.

Missionsärztliches Institut Würzburg

N

NETZ Partnerschaft für Entwicklung und
Gerechtigkeit e.V.

Neuapostolische Kirche-karitativ e.V.

nph Kinderhilfe Lateinamerika e.V.

O

OIKOS EINE WELT e.V.

Ökumenische Initiative Eine Welt e.V.

Opportunity International Deutschland

Ora International Deutschland

OroVerde – Die Tropenwaldstiftung

Oxfam Deutschland

P

Partnership for Transparency Fund e.V. (PTF Europe)*

Plan International Deutschland

R

Rhein-Donau-Stiftung

S

Samhathi – Hilfe für Indien

Save the Children Deutschland

Senegalhilfe-Verein

Senior Experten Service (SES)

Society for International Development
Chapter Bonn (SID)

SODI – Solidaritätsdienst International

SOS-Kinderdörfer weltweit

SOS Humanity*

Stiftung Childaid Network

Stiftung der Deutschen Lions

Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden (SEF)

Stiftung Kinderzukunft

Stiftung Nord-Süd-Brücken

Street Child Deutschland e.V.*

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Susila Dharma – Soziale Dienste

T

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Terra Tech Förderprojekte

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terre des hommes Deutschland

Tierärzte ohne Grenzen (ToG)

V

Verband Entwicklungspolitik Niedersachsen (VEN)

Verbund Entwicklungspolitischer Nichtregierungs-
organisationen Brandenburgs (VENROB)

Verein entwicklungspolitischer Austausch-
organisationen e.V. (ventao)

W

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Weltfriedensdienst

Weltgebetstag der Frauen – Deutsches Komitee
Welthaus Bielefeld

Welthungerhilfe

Weltladen-Dachverband

Weltnotwerk der KAB Deutschlands

Werkhof Darmstadt

Werkstatt Ökonomie

World University Service

World Vision Deutschland

Z

ZOA Deutschland gGmbH

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deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen e.V. (VENRO)
Stresemannstr. 72
10963 Berlin
Phone: +49 (0)30 2 63 92 99-10
Email: sekretariat@venro.org

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