

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

In preparing this Handbook, we have tried to develop a professional style of language to extend, refine and (hopefully) improve the traditional terms used in the field of third-party intervention, such as 'pacific third-party intervention' or 'consultation' or 'third-party facilitation'. In particular, Conflict resolution can be used both to refer to (i) an outcome, in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily dealt with through a solution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self sustaining in the long run and productive of a new, positive relationship between parties that were previously hostile adversaries and (ii) any process or procedure by which such an outcome is achieved.

It is our contention that resolution of a conflict (in its 'outcome' sense is best and most assuredly achieved by: a collaborative analytical, problem-solving process or approach (CAPS), which involves a set of theoretical assumptions about society in general (and conflict in particular) together with a set of procedures for intervening in a conflict situation. This is only one type of third-party intervention seeking some end to a conflict but it is distinct from adjudication and arbitration (which suggest the application of legal norms); from conciliation (which suggests an attempt focused on reducing hostility); from mediation (which suggests merely the reconciling of positions or interests); and finally from settlement (which suggests elements of imposition or coercion). The approach has many things in common with other informal and non-directive procedures for bringing about the resolution of a conflict, including facilitated dialogues, third-party consultation, interactive conflict resolution, process promoting workshops and 'Track Two' methods.

This CAPS approach aims at a resolution of the conflict, an outcome freely acceptable to all the parties involved in it. Our experiences with the approach suggest to us that it is the best way of dealing with deep-rooted and protracted conflict, which we define as recurring conflict arising from parties holding salient and (ostensibly) non-negotiable values, and exemplified by such conflicts as those in Northern Ireland or between Israelis and Palestinians, or Armenians and Azeris.

An actual application of the approach is a problem-solving exercise, covering all the phases of third-party involvement in a conflict situation: the selection of the situation itself, followed by identification of the parties and the extending of invitations to them, then holding a workshop or series of workshops, and engaging in various follow-up activities. (The sequence used as a basic pattern in this Handbook is analysis, access, preparation, workshop, re-entry and effects.)

A workshop is a lengthy, face to face meeting. It is triangular (at least) in structure, containing participants who represent (although not formally or officially) the two or more parties to the dispute, and a group of third party facilitators making up an informal panel who are applying the problem-solving approach to the exercise. The characteristic activity within the workshop is problem solving, which (in principle, at least) excludes hard bargaining, tough negotiating and destructive expressions of deep hostility. Historically, workshops have tended to be named rather randomly, either after their location - the Maryland workshops (1983-5), the CIBA workshop (1965), the Akosombo workshop (1994) or, more rarely, after the conflict itself - the Cyprus workshops (1993-5).

A project consists of a series of interlinked exercises and workshops, dealing with a single (if complex) conflict or a number of related conflicts forming what Kriesberg has described as a complex interlocking conflict (Kriesberg, 1980).

Past projects have involved both single workshop exercises:

Access Preparation **WORKSHOP** Re-entry Effects.

or a number of such workshops, held at intervals in a connected sequence:

Access **WORKSHOP 1** Preparation Re-entry

Preparation Re-entry **WORKSHOP 2**

Effects Effects

CAPS exercises can, in theory, be conducted by any institution concerned with the resolution of protracted human conflicts. However, given the fact that they are usually employed by non-governmental organizations quietly and in an informal way, they form part of the set of unofficial third-party procedures known as second track [or 'Track Two'] interventions (Diamond & McDonald, 1991). There is much debate in the field about the relationship between second track and first track procedures (formal, official diplomatic activities carried out by government agencies), particularly about the circumstances in which second track processes can successfully be replaced by first track, and vice versa.

We make no claims that these are the 'right' meanings or definitions of any of these terms. There cannot be 'right' definitions in this or any other social science field. Definitions are merely agreements about how terms will be used and what particular labels will stand for. Throughout the Handbook we have merely tried to be clear about what we mean when we use particular terms ('conflict resolution', 'workshops'); to be consistent in their use; and to be as sparing as possible with jargon.

We hope we have succeeded in this.

A NOTE ON THE EXERCISES

The practical and skills development exercises contained in each of the following chapters have all been used in a variety of university courses, but they merely represent the kind of task that can be set for scholars and students interested in developing problem-solving skills. Other scenarios can be developed to fit courses dealing with particular countries, geographical regions or arenas of conflict. We encourage colleagues to develop and use their own scenarios as appropriate.

Some of the background scenarios used in the Handbook are based directly on historical cases, while others are a composite of a variety of protracted conflicts, mostly drawn from the real world of the late twentieth century. We feel that the problems set out in the exercises are realistic and relevant, mainly on the grounds that they represent adaptations of dilemmas that have actually faced us, or some of our colleagues, in the course of practising as facilitators using collaborative, problem-solving approaches in various deep-rooted and protracted conflicts.

Each exercise can be used in a variety of ways. Each sets out a practical task to be undertaken in the context of an ongoing conflict and an effort to carry forward a successful problem-solving process. Some of the more analytical exercises lend themselves to a process whereby individuals 'take away' and think about the problem posed and possible solutions, returning to present these in writing, or orally, for comment and evaluation. However, we have found that most of them are best treated as small group discussion exercises. (Some can be restructured to involve inter-action between several decision-making groups adopting a variety of roles as factions, parties or intermediaries.) Used in this way, feedback can be provided about group process skills as well as about the pros and cons of suggested plans or solutions. Observers can evaluate such factors as a decision making group's use of limited time, its ability to delineate rapidly the central aspects of the problem, its willingness to entertain an initially wide variety of ideas and options, its capacity to keep essential records, its ability to present conclusions and recommendations succinctly and persuasively, and its general ability to work together as a cohesive and productive group.

Often, lessons about such processes have proved the most valuable to be derived from many of the exercises, and they can be added to learnings about abilities to develop a quick rapport with the encountered leaders, to make a persuasive case, to handle meetings between volatile and usually 'touchy' adversaries, and to describe sensitive conflict situations in non-provoking language.

At this point, we should emphasize that there are no absolutely right answers to many of the problems raised by the exercises. There are solutions that are more likely to achieve the desired results (whatever practitioners decide these might be) and others less likely. There are some which achieve the facilitators' immediate objectives, but contain longer-term risks. Each solution can be seen as having a set of 'pros and cons', rather than as being either 'right' or 'wrong', and a great deal of insight be gained by subsequent discussion about what advantages (disadvantages) one group's solution provides compared with others - provided this evaluation process is carried out in analytical rather than a competitive manner. We would, therefore, suggest that an important final part of each exercise should be a thorough discussion of the likely effects of suggested 'answers', not whether one is right and another wrong.

In two of the exercises presented in this work (Exercises 2.2 and 2.6??) we have suggested a number of alternative solutions, together an evaluation of their likely benefits and dangers. However, we have refrained from presenting 'model answers' to any other exercises on the grounds that this could discourage others from thinking about, and crafting, their own (hopefully) realistic solutions to the dilemmas they face as aspiring intermediaries (constrained by circumstances and limited resources) in - for example - the Lusitanian conflict, or those within the Republic of Zandia.

Finally, we should emphasize that, while the exercises in this Handbook are specifically orientated towards initiatives undertaken by unofficial, 'Track Two' third parties - facilitators, consultants, private intermediaries - they also focus on skills that generally are central to the task of mediators and conciliators from international organizations and governmental diplomatic services. Opportunities and approaches may differ, depending upon the nature and affiliation of 'the' third party, but certain analytical, organizational and procedural skills are common to all. We hope these exercises both illustrate and illuminate these commonalities and enable users to practise these basic skills.