



Leadership in Complex Environments

Module 1

This module provides an introduction to the most important foundational ideas in this *Handbook*. It creates a foundation for understanding why it is important for civil society, civilians in government, military and police to coordinate their approaches to human security.

Lesson 1: Understanding Complex Environments & Mapping Stakeholders identifies the diverse stakeholders that may be working to address some aspect of human security.

Lesson 2: Adaptive Leadership identifies the common set of leadership challenges facing civilians, military and police as they attempt to share a common space or environment.

Lesson 3: Inter-cultural Competence and Trust-Building identifies the basic skills for communicating and building trust across cultures with diverse stakeholders.

Lesson 4: Self-Assessment identifies the necessity of self-assessment to recognise one's own capacities and limitations.



Lesson 1

Mapping Stakeholders in Complex Environments

Learning Objectives

At the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- Identify key characteristics of complex environments
- Identify the benefits of multi-stakeholder coordination
- Construct a stakeholder map of a complex environment
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This lesson provides civilian, military and police leaders with a method of mapping stakeholders in “complex environments.” This lesson provides an introduction to the different stakeholders working in complex environments. It also explains what makes “complex environments” distinct from other settings. “Stakeholder mapping” is a tool used to identify the relationships between different individuals and groups. It helps to highlight how our cultural perceptions shape how we see and understand complex environments.

1. What is a complex environment?

The term *complex environment* refers to the real world challenges of living and working in a context where there are many different groups with diverse interests. No one group can control or dominate the space. Attempts by any one group to solve an issue are likely to cause new, unexpected issues. Complex environments require extensive understanding, analysis and conflict assessment to determine the economic, political, social, religious, and other interests of diverse groups (see Module 4 on Conflict Assessment). Solutions to complex problems require coordination between different groups of stakeholders in order to achieve a successful and lasting outcome (see Module 3 on Multi-Stakeholder Coordination).³ Complex environments have greater numbers and greater diversity of groups and issues than “simple” environments.

2. Complex environments have many stakeholders.

Stakeholders are individuals and groups that have a “stake” or an interest in some issue or process. This *Handbook* is about stakeholders that have an interest in human security. They may be affected by actions other groups take. Or they make take actions that affect others.

The media often portray armed conflict as between two or more groups. For example, there may be a violent conflict between state and non-state armed groups. But there are many other stakeholders who affect and are affected by armed conflict. Within any country, there are many different stakeholders who have a stake in peace and security. These include security policymakers, military, police, and people who work in the criminal justice system. Many different types of civilians also care about peace and security, including government civilian personnel, religious actors, business sector, media and civil society.

3. In a complex environment, all stakeholders are interdependent.

Many different stakeholders play roles and hold responsibilities for achieving sustainable peace and human security. The military and police alone cannot create human security. Civil society alone cannot build peace. No one stakeholder can achieve their goals without coordinating with others.

4. National Stakeholders

Many countries manage these tasks on their own, without outside, international intervention. The term “complex environment” does not require the intervention of international actors. However, the more actors involved or affected by a crisis, the more complex the environment will be. The following graph illustrates the multiplicity of national stakeholders that need to coordinate or collaborate in terms of crisis.



Figure 1: National-level Stakeholders

- Civilian Government Agencies: Health, transportation, education, and many other civilian government agencies may be involved in addressing violent conflict and promoting human security.
- Security Sector: The UN defines the security sector as “a broad term used to describe the structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision and oversight of security in a country.” This *Handbook* uses the term “security sector” as an umbrella term including the state’s armed forces (military, police, intelligence services); justice and rule of law institutions; state oversight and management bodies such as national security advisory bodies, parliament; as well as non-state armed groups who in some cases, play certain roles in protecting some population groups. *Security forces* include a limited number of groups that hold the responsibility to protect public order and security, and the power to arrest, detain, search, seize and use force and firearms.
- Non-state Armed Groups: The UN working definition of this term includes groups that have the potential to employ arms in the use of force to achieve political, ideological or economic objectives; are not within the formal military structures of States, State-alliances or intergovernmental organisations; and are not under the control of the State(s) in which they operate.
- Business Sector: This sector includes all organisations that operate for a profit, excluding the economic activities of government, of private households, and of non-profit organisations.
- Civil Society and Media: This sector includes a wide variety of organisations that do not operate for a profit and are independent from government. Civil society includes local religious institutions, local universities, community based organisations, labour unions, industry associations, tribal and traditional leaders, sports clubs and all other groups that represent the interests of a country’s citizens and that provide services to specific groups within its society. Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) are also considered a type of civil society organisation. The media may be considered part of civil society.

5. International Stakeholders and “Complex Emergencies”

Environments become even more complex when international stakeholders become involved due to a breakdown of state authority. When a government can no longer carry out its basic functions and provide for its citizens because it is facing international or non-international armed conflict, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), international NGOs, private contractors, and other foreign governments, including their military forces, start operating within the boundaries of that “host” nation to help re-establish peace and security. The response required from these actors often exceeds the mandate and capacity of a single organisation, which is why the involvement of many is necessary.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), a forum for UN and non-UN humanitarian organisations, has issued the following definition of complex emergencies: “A complex emergency is a situation where there is both a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society and where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the on-going United Nations country programme.”

This definition also makes clear that the term “complex emergency” is usually associated with situations of political instability and conflict rather than those of natural disasters. But earthquakes, famines or other natural disasters may occur in a country experiencing war. This will further aggravate the complexity of the situation, because even more national and international stakeholders will become involved. The graph below illustrates the types of international stakeholders that may interact with the national stakeholders illustrated here.



Figure 2: International Stakeholders

When international organisations, armed opposition groups, humanitarian organisations, private contractors, and other foreign governments and military forces become involved in the peace and security issues in a “host nation”, the environment becomes even more complex.

International Organisation: An organisation with an international membership, scope, or presence. The United Nations is the most prominent international organisation. In addition to the UN, there are other

intergovernmental bodies that play important roles in complex environments. They include for example international financial institutions such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund that provide financial support and advice to national authorities or the International Organisation for Migration that supports countries when dealing with problems related to refugees, displaced persons or migrants.

Intervening States: Individual countries may intervene in other countries through diplomatic, development or military assistance, if they feel that this serves their national interest. Global and regional powers as well as neighbouring countries often decide to intervene in complex environments.

Contractors: Contractors, also known as private military corporations (PMC), private military firms (PMF), or private military or security companies, work on behalf of and report to governments that hire them to provide specific types of security assistance. Governments or private corporations may hire private security companies to protect their personnel and assets. There are a non-state entity and operate for a profit, making them part of the business sector.

Humanitarian Organisations: Humanitarian organisations are distinct from other stakeholders in their sole goal to relieve human suffering and in their operational requirements for impartiality, neutrality and independence. There are four broad types of humanitarian organisations: UN humanitarian agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, other international and regional humanitarian organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration, and humanitarian nongovernment organisations (NGOs) such as Medecin Sans Frontier.

International Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs): NGOs are legally constituted private organisations that operate independently from any government. They are “self-mandated” – meaning their mandates do not come from any government or inter-governmental body but, rather, from the initiative of the individuals forming the organisation. Some NGOs only hold humanitarian mandates while most NGOs – such as Oxfam, and World Vision - are “multi-mandate” meaning they may participate in humanitarian activities as well as development, human rights, peacebuilding or other activities. The term NGO typically also means that the organisations are non-profit.

Transnational Non-State Armed Groups: These non-state armed groups operate in multiple different countries. They may recruit in one country, train in another, and carry out violent attacks in other countries.

6. Complex environments often arise out of “wicked problems.”

Social scientists have used the term wicked problems to refer difficult to define or complex issues that resist easy solutions. Wicked problems take place in complex environments and affect every level of society, often lasting for generations.

Problems that stakeholders in complex environments have to address may be “wicked” and thus intractable for three main reasons:

- Stakeholders’ views on what the problem at hand may be irreconcilable and the solutions they propose will therefore be incompatible.
- Stakeholders may not have enough knowledge about a given problem and thus propose inadequate solutions.
- The problem is connected to many other problems and every effort to solve it may create new, unintended problems.

For example, peace negotiations aim to end violence. But negotiation processes can create more violence as opposing groups attempt to win more territory. Negotiation processes also can make those armed groups who are less radical and want to make peace a target for more radical armed groups who do not want a negotiated settlement.

7. Complex environments are difficult to predict.

In complex environments, there is no simple “cause” and “effect” reaction chain where an action leads to predictable results. Both action and inaction can bring changes in systems but it is difficult to anticipate the impact of any choice. For example, a humanitarian organisation may provide food to a population in need, but it may unintentionally create a disincentive for local farmers to continue growing crops, and therefore may contribute more to food insecurity in the long term Here is another example. A choice to use military or police force to intimidate a non-state armed group using violence against civilians can

have the unintended effect of increasing the non-state armed group's ability to recruit more young men to their cause.

Each of the scenario exercises in the beginning of this *Handbook* illustrates the security challenges found in complex environments. Complex environments often have internal political conflicts, economic pressures, business interests, drug profits, climate change-induced droughts, easy access to weapons and multiple divisions within society between religious and ethnic groups. Any effort to address one of these security challenges will likely have impacts on other challenges. The issues are tangled together like a knotted string. Improving human security requires careful attempts to take actions recognising the interdependence of the stakeholders and the issues.

8. Planning is more difficult in complex environments.

When only a few stakeholders are involved, it is easier to anticipate and predict their reactions. In complex environments where so many different actors influence each other, a decision or action can lead to many unintended impacts. It is more difficult to determine the impact of an action in complex environments because many other stakeholders will also make decisions. Complex environments are dynamic; they are always changing. What might have been a good decision yesterday could bring disaster tomorrow given the shifting alliances and issues.

9. Stakeholder mapping is a tool for understanding complex environments.

A stakeholder map creates a visual image of the main stakeholders and how they relate to each other in a complex environment. Also known as "conflict mapping," a stakeholder map illustrates four things:

- Identifies relevant stakeholders
- Illustrates the relationships of different stakeholders have to each other
- Prioritises the importance of stakeholders
- Creates awareness of different stakeholder's cultural perceptions, to highlight how different groups perceive the conflict in different ways

10. How to draw a stakeholder map

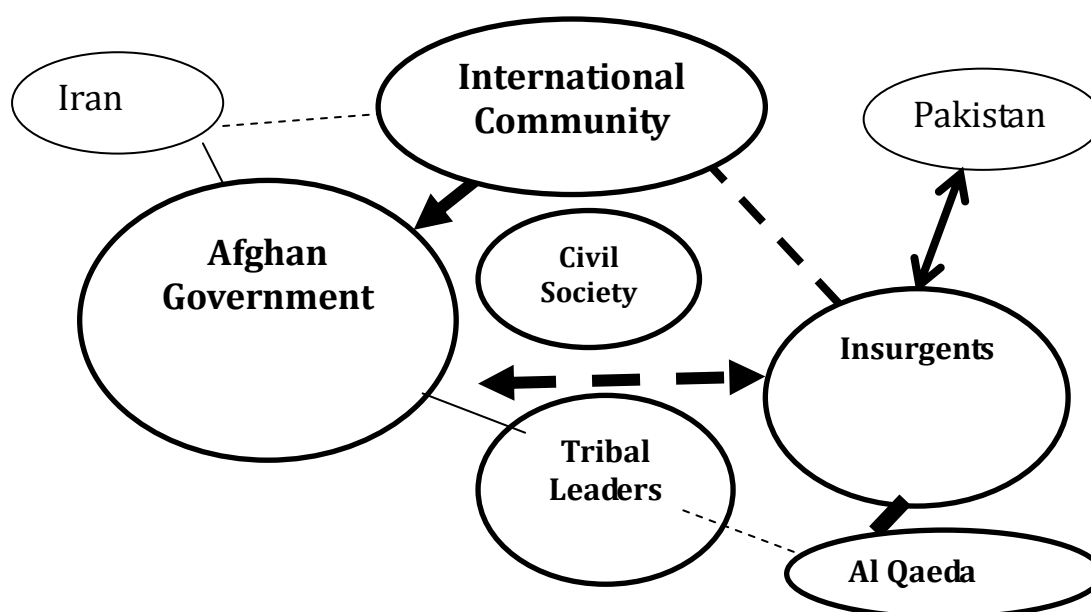
People see conflict differently and thus create different stakeholder maps of the same conflict. If people with different viewpoints map their situation together, they may learn about each other's experiences and perceptions. The process of creating a map is more important than the outcome – as every map will be unique. The dialogue and discussion can help a group identify the key stakeholders and relationships that they perceive as most important to address.

Stakeholder maps illustrate the entire system of individuals or groups involved in a complex environment. It may include those stakeholders that use violence, those that support violence, those that work to prevent violence, and those impacted by conflict and violence.

- a. Make a list of all the stakeholders in a conflict. If it is a small conflict, you may want to list individuals. In large conflicts, list groups that share key worldviews, interests and grievances. In total, there should be no more than 10-12 stakeholders in order to make a map clear enough to understand. Create a separate stakeholder map for each sub-group if needed. For each stakeholder, think about how important they are to the key drivers of the conflict. Which key people or individuals have maximum motivation to drive the conflict? Which key people are attempting to prevent conflict or to use dialogue and negotiation? What groups are marginalized? Why might it be important to engage with them?
- b. Create a circle for each stakeholder, with the largest circles for the most influential stakeholders. Be careful how you place the circles, as you will want to plan out your space so that you can show all the relevant stakeholders. If there is a decision-making hierarchy involved, place those with the most decision-making power at the top of the map and those with the least amount of power at the bottom of the map.
- c. Draw lines of relationship between the circles representing stakeholders. If they are close allies, use a thick or double line. If they are in conflict with each other use a dotted line or a zigzag line. If one stakeholder is exercising influence or controlling another, use an arrow at the end of the line to illustrate the direction of control. For stakeholders not directly involved, distance them on the map to illustrate their level of influence.

- d. Identify where you are situated on the stakeholder map. Every national and international stakeholder has a particular understanding of a complex environment based on his or her culture, education, media and experiences. Neutrality is rarely possible. How do others map the conflict? How do others view your relationships with key stakeholders?
- e. OPTIONAL: Score the strength of the relationship on each of the lines of relationship between stakeholders on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the strongest relationship. This provides a quantitative measure of the social capital between groups, with 10 being the strongest relationship. If there are multiple groups mapping the same conflict, the values can be averaged between focus groups.

Figure 3: Sample Stakeholder Map



REVIEW

This lesson introduced the concepts of “stakeholders” and “complex environments.” The practical tool of “stakeholder mapping” creates a visual representation of how different stakeholders relate to each other in a complex environment. This *Handbook* expands on the use of stakeholder mapping in Module 4 on Conflict Assessment.

Citations

³ See also the following resources on complex environments:

Samir Rihani. *Complex Systems Theory and Development Practice: Understanding Non-Linear Realities*, (London: Zed Books, 2002).

John Urry, *Global Complexity*, (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 2003).

Brian Ganson, editor, *Management in Complex Environments: Questions for Leaders*, (Sweden: International Council of Swedish Industry, 2013).

Lesson 1

Learning Exercises

Anchor

10 minutes

To begin the lesson, anchor the content in this lesson with a series of questions:

- Who are the stakeholders related to human security in the area (community, region, state) where you work? Write down the list of stakeholders in large print at the front. This will be used later for the learning exercise.
- What are the challenges of working in a complex environment where there are many different individuals or groups working?

Add

20 minutes

Present the PowerPoint slides or ask participants to discuss the lesson readings in a small group.

Apply

25 minutes

The goal of this exercise is to learn how to draw a stakeholder map and to recognise how culture shapes perceptions of reality. Divide into scenario stakeholder teams. In each group, draw a stakeholder map based on what you know about the scenario and how you are likely to view the situation based on your interests and goals. After twenty minutes of teamwork, each team should present their stakeholder map to the other teams. In a large group, discuss the following questions:

- How are the stakeholder maps similar?
- How are they different?
- How do the stakeholder maps reflect the perceptions and blind spots of each stakeholder team?
- What did you learn from this exercise about the need to listen to diverse stakeholders?

Away

5 minutes

In a large group, participants can discuss this question:

- If I could go back in time, what would I do differently in a past work experience where there were other stakeholders present?
- What will I do differently given what we have learned in this lesson?



Lesson 2

Adaptive Leadership

Learning Objectives

At the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- Identify three characteristics of adaptive leadership
- Identify the difference between a win/lose versus a win/win approach to conflict

This lesson provides civilian, military, and police leaders with an understanding of adaptive leadership. Adaptive leadership is a specific type of leadership useful for working in complex environments. Complex environments are difficult to predict. Diverse stakeholders do not fall within a “chain of command” in a complex environment. No one stakeholder is in control. This lesson describes why using adaptive leadership, taking smart risks, and listening to diverse stakeholders makes sense in a complex environment.

1. What is Leadership?

Leadership is a process of guiding or facilitating a group of people toward some goal. Basic leadership requires an array of skills, including the following:

- A vision and an ability to develop a strategy
- Courage and an ability to make difficult and even risky decisions
- Communication skills to deliver clear messages to mobilise followers

This type of leadership is sufficient to handle most technical problems. But most leadership models are not adequate for managing complex environments with many different stakeholders. It is not possible to “command and control” all the stakeholders operating in a complex environment.

2. Complex environments demand adaptive leadership.

Adaptive leadership helps leaders to adapt to constantly changing dynamics with diverse groups of other stakeholders.⁴ Military and police training academies as well as government, business executives, and civil society are turning to adaptive leadership, recognising that it is more effective in complex

environments. Adaptive leaders accept chaos and ambiguity in complex environments. Despite new and chaotic information, adaptive leaders find a way to understand the motivations and patterns of behaviour in other stakeholders. Adaptive leaders can accept ambiguity; a situation which is unclear.⁵

3. Adaptive leaders listen and share information.

No single person or group can understand a complex environment alone. Adaptive leaders do not try to force a simple “good versus evil” analysis onto a context where there are a lot of people in the middle of a conflict where all sides have legitimate grievances. Adaptive leaders listen to many different points of view to understand how different stakeholders might react or respond and to learn to know their interests and needs. Information is a form of power. While not all information can or should be shared, an adaptive leader recognises that other stakeholders in a complex environment will be better poised to contribute to peace and security if they have information necessary for their work and decision-making. When new challenges appear, adaptive leaders accept the chaos and unpredictability of complex environments. Adaptive leaders continue to listen, learn and share information, in an attempt to learn more about new challenges or threats. Adaptive leaders continue improvising and innovating new approaches instead of repeating the mistakes of the past, hoping for a different outcome.

4. Adaptive leaders communicate, coordinate, and build relationships with all stakeholders, even across the lines of conflict.

No one stakeholder can create peace and security in a complex environment alone. Adaptive leaders foster participation in decision-making. Peace and security require the work of many different stakeholders, usually government, security sector, civil society, and the business sector. Adaptive leaders recognise that these diverse stakeholders need forums for communicating and coordinating their efforts; first to reduce any conflicts or duplication between them, but also to find areas for cooperation.

5. Adaptive leaders foster innovation, creativity, and improvisation.

Since a complex environment is difficult to predict, normal decision-making processes often fail to provide effective solutions. An adaptive leader recognises the need for on-going improvisation, trial and error. Adaptive leaders see the need for continuous learning and evaluation. Listening and learning from others helps develop a common vision. Adaptive leaders think outside the box. They create opportunities for others to criticise an idea and to develop innovative solutions to problems. Adaptive leaders recognise that mistakes are opportunities for learning.⁶

6. Adaptive leaders respond according to their assessment of the context, not according to their individual personality preferences.

Since complex environments are always shifting, leaders cannot use a fixed plan and hope that it works in the changing environment. Daily analysis of stakeholder interests and relationships may be necessary. Individuals and groups have preferred styles for how they will interact with other individuals in a system’s process. These preferred patterns help set the way change happens in a complex environment. Broadly defined, there are five different styles of dealing with conflict: avoidance, accommodation, compromise, collaboration, and competition. These patterned responses to conflict are preferred ways of relating in systems. For example, social cohesion requires using compromise and collaboration patterns to build relationship across the lines of division between people and groups. Although every leader may have a personal preference for one of these styles, adaptive leaders in complex environments learn how and when to use each of these different styles to the benefit of the whole. Their approach adapts to the context.

7. Adaptive leaders take “smart” risks.

Since complex environments are unpredictable, any action carries a risk of unintended consequences. Adaptive leaders do not take all risks. Anticipating potential unintended impacts and weighing costs to benefits help leaders make decisions about which risks are worth taking. Listening and sharing information help determine which risks are smart risks and which are not.

8. Adaptive leaders set an example.

Adaptive leaders illustrate and model how they would like others to act. This means adaptive leaders have to stick to their principles, and only make compromises when it does not violate their integrity.

Adaptive Leadership in the Philippines

Filipino Brigadier General Raymundo Ferrer used adaptive leadership skills to address violence. Reaching out to peacebuilding NGOs and the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute, together the Filipino security sector and civil society are training together, analysing conflict together, implementing peacebuilding projects together and evaluating the effectiveness of security strategies together.

The Philippine case study is an illustration of innovative and adaptive leadership. Ferrer recognised that civil society peacebuilding experts had valid ideas for transforming the conflict. Both civil society and military leaders improvised a way for joint learning to happen, something that had not happened previously.

Both military and civil society leaders took “smart” risks as they decided the benefit of having military leaders train with civil society leaders in the same classroom outweighed the risks of continuing patterns of avoidance.

Ferrer is a leader who led by example. His willingness to show humility and listen carefully to civil society leaders earned him trust with community leaders. His ability to solve difficult conflicts and deescalate tensions in areas under his command earned him respect and career advancement.

*Read more about the innovation and collaboration between civil society, military and police in The Philippines in *Local Ownership in Security*, the companion report to this *Handbook*.

9. Adaptive leaders seek win-win solutions.

Adaptive leaders recognise that the best solution to a problem is not that one group wins while another group loses. Winning refers to meeting the group’s interests. The best solution to any problem is a solution that will last. When there are winners and losers, the losers may simply take time to regroup and begin fighting again. Adaptive leaders look for “win-win” solutions where stakeholders develop a solution that satisfies or addresses their main interests.

The chart below illustrates a simplified outcome of a conflict between two individuals or groups. There are four possible outcomes. Group A can win and Group B can win or both Group A and B can lose. Many violent conflicts result in an outcome where neither group wins or achieves their interests. The number of violent conflicts that result in one side winning and another side losing are very small.

Group B	Group A	
	Win/Win	Win/Lose
	Lose/Win	Lose/Lose

10. Women and Men in Leadership

Complex environments require leadership from both men and women. In many places, women’s leadership is restricted to raising children, providing education for children, running the household, and possibly engaging in selling and shopping for household goods. Males, on the other hand, are given leadership responsibilities for politics, security, and other public issues. When women show leadership or aspire to be leaders in their workplaces, communities, or nations, they often meet resistance from other women and men who think they are either ‘too feminine’ or ‘too masculine’ to be a good leader. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and 2242 both affirm the positive contributions women make to peace and security and mandate the inclusion of women in these areas.⁷

There is a growing awareness that when women and men share leadership, especially when there is a “critical mass” of 30-35%, there is more attention to human rights, indigenous and national self-determination for minority groups, greater economic justice and environmental protection, broader ideas of security, and more attention to reproductive issues and population-planning policies. In other words, when women join men in leading their communities, regions, and countries, everyone benefits and real changes take place that support a just peace. Lesson 27 expands on the necessity of “Gender Mainstreaming in Security.”

REVIEW

This lesson identified the characteristics of adaptive leadership. In complex environments, a leader cannot possibly command and control other stakeholders. Adaptive leadership takes a distinct approach. Listening and learning from other stakeholders allows an adaptive leader to respond to new situations, take smart risks, and develop innovative solutions to challenges.

Citations

⁴ Ronald A. Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, Marty Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organisation and the World*, (Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School's Cambridge Leadership Associates, 2009).

⁵ Wheatley, Margaret J. 2006. *Leadership and the New Science* (3rd Edition), (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2006).

⁶ Robert E. Quinn in *Building the Bridge as you Walk on It: A Guide for Leading Change*, (San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

⁷ *United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*. Adopted by the Security Council on 30 October 2000. *United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242*. Adopted by the Security Council on 13 October 2015.

Lesson 2

Learning Exercises

Anchor

10 minutes

To begin the lesson, anchor the content with a series of questions. Think of a time when you were in a leadership role in a complex environment.

- What were your most significant challenges?
- How did you respond to these challenges?
- Did your responses work?

Add

20 minutes

Present the PowerPoint slides or ask participants to discuss the lesson readings in a small group.

Apply

25 minutes

The goal of this exercise is to compare and contrast leadership styles and their impact on others. Each scenario stakeholder team will identify two options for leadership and test how these approaches would interact with other stakeholders' perceptions and actions. Stakeholder teams have twenty minutes to design two specific ideas for exercising leadership in your scenarios. First, what specific step would you take using a "command and control" approach to leadership in this situation? Second, what would it look like for you to take an "adaptive leadership" approach in this situation? After twenty minutes of discussion, each stakeholder team first announces to the group their first action, using a "command and control" style of leadership. After each group shares their plan of action, the group can step out of role and respond with how their stakeholder team would perceive the actions taken by other teams. What types of responses does a "command and control" style of leadership inspire in others? Next, each stakeholder team shares their "adaptive leadership" approach to the situation. Then debrief this round in the same way. How would other teams likely perceive and respond to the team's adaptive leadership?

Away

5 minutes

In a large group, participants can discuss this question:

- If I could go back in time, what would I do differently in a past work experience if I could use adaptive leadership skills?
- What will I do differently given what we have learned in this lesson?



Lesson 3

Inter-Cultural Competence

Learning Objectives

At the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- Define culture
- Identify the characteristics of inter-cultural competence
- Identify how to improve understanding between people with different cultures
- Recognise the challenges and opportunities of building trust between diverse cultural groups

This lesson provides civilian, military, and police leaders with an understanding of culture and characteristics of inter-cultural competence. Building trust between diverse stakeholders requires cross-cultural communication. Improving skills in inter-cultural competence can in turn improve civil-military-police coordination.

1. What is intercultural competence?

Intercultural competence is a skillset that can be learned and developed to build effective working relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds.⁸ Complex environments include people with many different cultures. Complex environments require each stakeholder to relate to other stakeholders who belong to different cultural groups. This requires specific skills in cross-cultural communication and trust building. Culture cannot be summarised in a short list of rules. Lists of cultural dos and don'ts cannot provide the critical thinking skills necessary to build trusting relationships.

Intercultural competence is a way of “seeing” the world, to identify both the common ground and the differences between groups of people. Intercultural competence is like putting on a pair of glasses or binoculars that bring the world into sharper focus.

Without cultural competence, leaders are not able to find common ground and communicate effectively with other stakeholders in the environment. They remain isolated and unable to understand the context. They take actions that are more likely to result in unintended impacts. Cross-cultural competence is an essential element of adaptive leadership in complex environments.

2. Culture is a pattern of learned behaviour.

All human beings are very similar in terms of our genes. There are no groups of people that are better than others. Intelligence is not higher in some cultural groups than in others.

Culture includes the values and behaviours learned and shared within a group. Families, communities, schools, religious organisations and other institutions create and educate people in cultural ways of being. Each person views the world through a “cultural lens.” Each person’s cultural lens limit their perceptions, or the way we view the world. Every person’s “worldview” is incomplete, as we each understand only part of the world around us.

Cultural practices have a history. All traditions, rituals and cultural ways of doing things have a history and began at a certain point in time when someone created them for a certain purpose

Every culture has practices that seems strange to others. But we know the history of this cultural practice, so it makes sense to us within its context. But when communicating with people in other cultures, we may not know the origin of all of their cultural practices.

3. Cultural groups are similar and different.

People in different cultures can find commonalities, but must also acknowledge their differences. Intercultural competence is not a glossing over of the real differences between cultures. Instead, intercultural competence both identifies the differences and builds on the commonalities. Some cultures value beauty and art while others place more value on technology and economic wealth. Intercultural competence requires skills to detect and respect the values and symbols that are important to other cultural groups.

4. Intercultural competence begins with recognising our own cultures.

Every individual belongs to different identity groups. Each identity group has its own culture. We can only begin to understand and communicate with people who belong to other cultures when we have a good understanding of how we learned the values and behaviours in our own culture. The diagram in

Figure 4 illustrates the many different cultural groups to which any one person may belong.

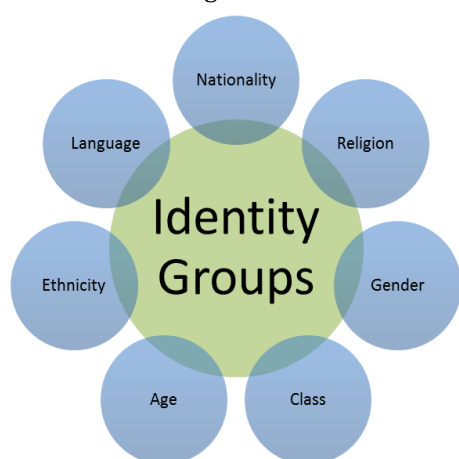


Figure 4: Identity Groups

Each person already holds some level of intercultural competence as they move between different identity groups in their own life. Identity groups are the same thing as “cultures.” *Identity* is a way we define ourselves and a way others see us.⁹

People of the same age – also known as “age mates” – often share a culture. People of the same religion, of the same ethnicity, or the same language or class may also share some aspects of culture. Each of these circles in the diagram here represents an “identity.” Everyone belongs to multiple cultural identity groups.

**“I’ve learned
that people
will forget
what you
said,
people will
forget what
you did,
but people
will never
forget how
you made
them feel.”**

-Maya Angelou

For example, an individual might show respect to his or her grandmother in one cultural way and to his or her neighbour or work colleague in another way depending on their identity. Understanding identity and culture begins with self-assessment. Each person can draw a map of their identity and the cultural groups to whom they belong.

5. Showing respect to others is a key intercultural competency.

While some ethics and values are different across cultures, the values of honour, dignity, and belonging to a group are found across all cultures. All people in every culture want to feel respected by others.

Demonstrating respect for other people is a skill. It is communicated in different ways, in different cultures. Learning how to show respect to people in different cultures is essential to cross-cultural communication and trust building. Module 6 in this *Handbook* provides an introduction to the communication skills necessary for building relationships with respect and trust.

Respecting a person's humanity and treating people with dignity does not require agreeing with them. It does require learning to express disagreement in a respectful way. Respect is a currency; it is a resource. The most important skill any leader can exercise is showing respect to others. It costs nothing. But it can greatly improve relationships.

Humiliation is the opposite of respect. Punishment feels like humiliation. Though the intent of punishment and humiliation is to defeat and deter others, the impact of humiliation often leads to increased levels of conflict and violence.

6. "Monoculturalism" prevents cross-cultural understanding.

Many people are *monocultural* meaning they understand the world only from their own cultural point of view and they cannot see the world from other points of view. Without intercultural competence to understand the world from different cultural points of view, people of all different cultures often resort to stereotyping.

7. Stereotyping decreases trust.

Stereotyping is a simple way to group people together according to their culture and generalise about the way all of them think and act. Stereotyping assumes that all people within a cultural group are similar.

We know from our own cultures that even within a cultural group, there is wide variation between individuals. All young people are not the same. All people of ___ race or culture are not all the same. It is not possible to meaningfully guess whether a person is smart or not so smart depending on their culture.

Intercultural competence helps people to see that there is wide variation between individuals in every culture. Stereotyping generally decreases trust between groups. People who feel "pre-judged" by others may feel frustrated. Even if the stereotype of a group is positive, people feel unfairly obliged to live into a stereotype that simply is not true for every individual.

Intercultural competence requires us to judge people based on the individual character, not on the basis of a stereotype of other people in their culture. Judging each person as a individual, rather than prejudging them based on often negative stereotypes can prevent civil-military-police coordination and obstruct human security.

8. "Ethnocentrism" means that people believe their own culture is better than others.

It is common for people to grow up being taught to think of life as a competition between groups. Some people refer to this as an "us" versus "them" mentality. People tend to see their own culture as evolved and civilised, while they often see other cultures as morally inferior and uncivilised. It may be easier to

Some people use the word "respect" to mean "treating someone like a person."

Other people use the word "respect" to mean "treating someone like an authority."

Sometimes people who are used to being treated like an authority say "if you won't respect me I won't respect you" and they mean "if you won't treat me like an authority I won't treat you like a person."

point fingers at the problems in other people's culture rather than examine the challenges in our own cultures. For example, different cultures have different ideas of sexuality. One culture may encourage women to cover their heads. Another may encourage women to wear high heels. Women in each culture may look at the other as oppressed, but feel their own culture is superior.

A fundamental idea in intercultural competence is learning that there is no "normal." "Normal" is only normal to you and your identity group. Cross-cultural communication begins with humility, to recognise there are common challenges in each culture, and no culture is superior to others. Intercultural competence requires a critical eye on one's own culture.

9. Trust building requires smart risks.

Trusting others is always a risk. But without trust, there would be no civilisation, no rule of law, no community or religion. Human beings rely on trust in order to live together. Building trust across cultural divides requires smart risks. There are also risks and costs of not having trust with others. These costs can outweigh the risk of building trust across cultural groups. While distrusting other groups and relying only on those in your own unit or organisation may seem safe, it will be impossible to solve difficult challenges driving violent conflict, or design a future that protects the needs and interests of all groups. Leaders who take smart risks to build cross-cultural trust will find that the benefits of building relationships often create unanticipated rewards in terms of improved understanding of and planning for working in a complex environment.

"Search for Common Ground" is the name of one of the world's largest peacebuilding NGOs. Their approach is to "identify the differences and build on the common ground" - a core principle of all conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes.

* Read case studies of Search for Common Ground's approach to building relationships between civil society, military and police in *Local Ownership in Security*, the companion report to this Handbook.

10. Building trust requires understanding the values, interests and perspectives of other people.

Learning to actively listen to other people and to affirm that you have heard and understood their point of view, even if you disagree with it, is one of the most important aspects of trust building. People who feel listened to have more trust in the person who has understood them.

11. Building trust across cultures requires humility and transparency.

Humility is the acknowledgement that we are not better than others and that we make mistakes. Transparency is the openness to recognise our positive capacities and interests, but also our shortcomings and the negative effects that our actions may have on others. Leaders with intercultural competence build trust by demonstrating transparency and humility in their relationships with others. Self-assessment, the focus of the next lesson, is important to intercultural competence.

12. Building trust across cultural divides requires finding common ground.

Finding common ground can open a door to building the trust that is required to address differences and conflicts between groups. Finding common ground happens by determining the areas in which cultural groups overlap. They may share values and experiences. For example, young people around the world hold many different religions and ethnicities, but many share an interest in music, sports, and popular culture. These commonalities can provide an opportunity to bring people together across the lines of conflict to address problems.

REVIEW

This lesson introduced the concept of intercultural competence as a key skill for building trust between diverse stakeholders working in a complex environment. Each person holds many different identities and belongs to different cultures. We can learn most about how to move between cultures by examining our own lives and how we already do this. Intercultural competence is ultimately about finding common ground and learning how to show respect to people from other cultural groups.

Citations

⁸ Myron W. Lustig and Jolene Koester. *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication Across Cultures*, (New York: Pearson, 2009).

⁹ Jay Rothman. *From Identity-Based Conflict to Identity-Based Cooperation: The ARIA Approach in Theory and Practice*, (New York: Springer, 2012).

Lesson 3

Learning Exercises

Anchor

10 minutes

To begin the lesson, anchor the content in this lesson with a series of questions:

- What are some of the challenges of communicating with someone different from yourself?
- What factors make people different? What influences how people think and act?

Add

20 minutes

Present the PowerPoint slides or ask participants to discuss the lesson readings in a small group.

Apply

25 minutes

The goal of this exercise is to practice intercultural competence skills of showing respect to other stakeholders. Showing respect to other stakeholders is a way to build trust between groups with different cultures. Each scenario stakeholder team has ten minutes to identify a culturally appropriate symbol for showing respect to three of the other stakeholder teams with whom they would most want to build trust. Then the scenario facilitator will begin the role-play. Each team will have twenty minutes to attempt to build trust with other teams by making a gesture of respect. Debrief this experience.

- How would the teams likely perceive and respond to the other team's gestures of respect?
- What did you learn about adaptive leadership in this role play?

Alternate Exercise:

This exercise aims to help participants reflect on the cultural geography of any city. It emphasises that culture is not just something that other people have in other countries. Seeing the cultural elements in one's own community provides a foundation for identifying cultural elements in complex environments where violent conflict may be occurring.

Ask participants or small groups of participants from the same cultural background to imagine walking down the main street of the town or city where they live.

Draw a map or make a list of what you see that informs you about:

- the role of religion
- the ethics and values
- the roles of men and women
- the value of children and elders
- the rules for acting in public

Away

5 minutes

In a large group, participants can discuss this question:

What will I take away from this lesson on the security sector that might impact the way I do my work in the future?

- If I could go back in time, what would I do differently in a past work experience if I could use cross-cultural communication and trust-building skills?
- What will I do differently in the future given the ideas in this lesson?



Lesson 4

Self-Assessment

Learning Objectives

At the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- Define the relevance of self-assessment for working in complex environments
- Identify four questions used in self-assessment
- Identify how self-assessment relates to perception management

This lesson provides civilian, military and police leaders with an understanding of their capacities and lack of capacities, and how others perceive them. Self-awareness is an important element of adaptive leadership and cross-cultural communication in complex environments. Self-awareness enables civilian, military, and police leaders to coordinate effectively to support human security.

1. What is self-assessment?

Self-assessment¹⁰ is a process to become more self-aware of one's strengths, weaknesses, capacities and lack of capacities. Self-assessment is a key element of adaptive leadership and cross-cultural communication and trust building. Adaptive leaders who are able to respond to new and challenging circumstances in a complex environment know their capacities and also their limits. They are confident to describe who they are, but they also recognise that others may view them differently. Lack of self-awareness is a characteristic of unpopular and ineffective leaders. In surveys of the effectiveness of leaders, the number one complaint against leaders is "lack of self-awareness." Civilians, military and police often hold stereotypes of each other. Self-assessment can help each individual and each group to

become more aware of how others view them and what they can do to reduce or overcome these negative stereotypes to improve civil-military-police relations.

2. Self-assessment is also necessary for multi-stakeholder coordination.

No one group can do everything. Groups are most able to coordinate when each group is clear on what it can do and what it cannot do. This requires each group do a self-assessment.

3. Self-assessment requires identifying the gaps in your knowledge.

How well do you understand the local context, language, cultures, religions, etc.? Do you know and recognise the limits of your knowledge of the local cultures, languages, and systems? Do you know what you don't know?

Identify the limits of your understanding of the local context. List types of information on the local context you do not have access to and describe how you will continue to gather information about the context.

4. Map your capacities as well as your lack of capacities.

No one group is capable of doing all the different types of activities required to support peace and security in a complex environment. Governments, security forces, the business sector, and civil society each have a role to play. Assessing the capacities and lack of capacities of each group is a necessary step in recognising the need to build respectful, trusting relationships with other groups.

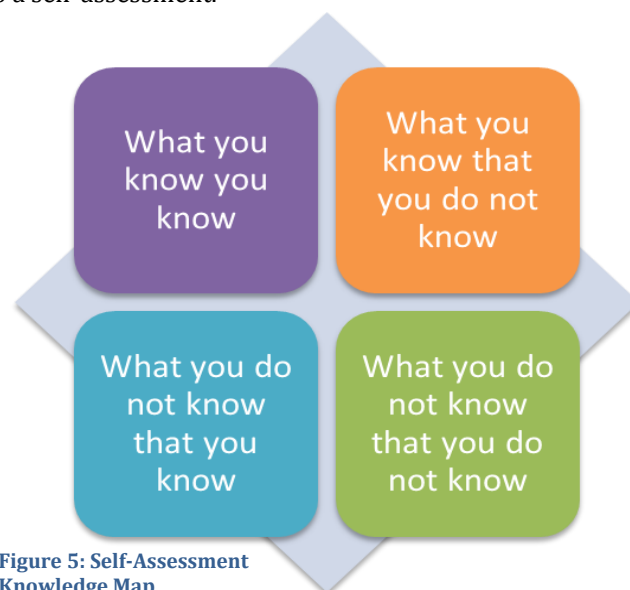


Figure 5: Self-Assessment Knowledge Map

Self-Assessment Capacity Chart: What you Can and Cannot Do

Your Capacity:	Your Extended Capacity:	Your Lack of Capacity:
What you can do well	What you can do if you need to, but you would prefer to have someone else do it	What you do not know how to do

5. Assessing the impact of your actions.

Most people view themselves positively and believe they are motivated by good intentions. But often the gap between “intent” and “impact” is large. Even when people set out to do good, they inadvertently harm others.

For example, an NGO may arrive in a village to provide healthcare. They may not be aware that three other groups are already in the village and the village feels obligated to host and feed the visiting NGO, which creates a stress on community resources. In another example, a military representative may come to visit an NGO office with the good intention to start a dialogue, but he does not realise that his mere physical presence may put the NGO at risk of being seen as taking sides in the conflict.

Analysing the potential harm your activities may cause helps to avoid such negative impact. All too often, groups examine the problems and capacities of others in the conflict without looking inward at their own problems or limits.

6. Understanding how others perceive you.

When others see you, what aspect of your identity do they see? Lesson 3 on Intercultural Competence introduced the diagram of identity and cultural

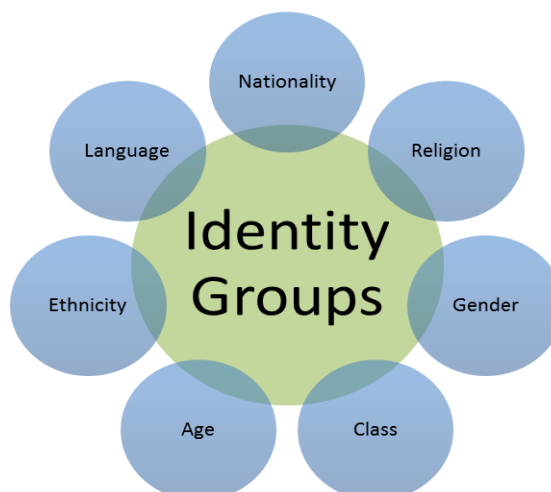


Figure 6: Identity Groups

groups. How do other stakeholders perceive your identity? How do key stakeholders view your organisation based on their perceptions and experiences? Have public figures or media outlets commented on your motivations? How will these perceptions shape their interest and support for your efforts in a complex environment?

You may need to carry out research to determine how stakeholders perceive your group. Useful questions to ask are:

- a. Which other stakeholders do you relate to?
- b. Who else might be affected by your presence? This may include individuals who inadvertently benefit from your presence such as hotels, drivers, food providers, etc, and those that may feel threatened by your efforts or goals.
- c. How do your interests connect with other stakeholders' needs and interests?
- d. How do other stakeholders perceive your interests and objectives?
- e. How are you managing other stakeholder's perceptions of you by explaining your motivations and addressing criticisms or suspicions of your motives by others?

7. Perception management first requires self-assessment.

Adaptive leaders in complex environments want to influence and control how other groups perceive them. This is called *perception management*. Leaders manage perceptions by how they behave, as actions speak louder than words. Rather than asking "what can we do to change them" adaptive leaders ask "what can we do differently so that they can better understand our role in the conflict?"

REVIEW

This lesson identified the importance for stakeholders to do a self-assessment of both their capacities and lack of capacities. This is necessary for him or her to be able to build trust and coordinate with each other so that each stakeholder contributes where they have the most capacity.

Citations

¹⁰ Stephen Robbins. *Self-Assessment Library 3.4*, (New York, New York: Prentice Hall, 2008). See online-self-assessment tools at http://www.pearsonhighered.com/sal_v3_demo/ accessed January 2016.

Lesson 4

Learning Exercises

Anchor

10 minutes

Anchor the content in this lesson with an open question. Participants can share in groups of two or three people their response to these questions:

- What choices do you make that shape how others perceive you?
- What do you wear or how do you travel that impacts how others view you?
- Do others view you positively or negatively? How do you know how they perceive you?
- What impact do other stakeholder's perceptions of you have on your work?

Add

20 minutes

Present the PowerPoint slides or ask participants to discuss the lesson readings in a small group.

Apply

25 minutes

The goal of this exercise is to practice using self-assessment tools. The president of the country in your scenario is coming to visit to assess the capacity of different groups. Each scenario stakeholder team will have two minutes to answer the following three questions the president has sent out to all of the stakeholders. Based on point three in this lesson, do a self-assessment of your scenario group.

- What can your group do well?
- What is your "extended capacity?"
- What is your lack of capacity?

The president then asks the groups to refute or challenge each other. The president is looking for honesty and humility, as well as capacity to respond. Which of the stakeholder teams can best demonstrate an accurate self-assessment of their capacities that other groups do not challenge?

Alternate Exercise:

This exercise aims to help security personnel and civilian leaders identify how other groups perceive them so that they can make choices that better influence and build positive perceptions.

A carload of NGO workers drives up to a checkpoint where security forces meet them.

What choices could each of the NGO workers make in terms of their appearance and their behaviour? What will increase trust? What will decrease trust in what they say, what they do, and how they look?

What choices do security forces make in terms of their appearance and their behaviour? What will increase trust? What will decrease trust in what they say, what they do, and how they look?

What might the use of sunglasses, smoking, cursing, or loud music communicate to the other group?

Away

5 minutes

In a large group, participants can discuss these questions:

- What is the gap between how you see yourself and how those outside of your group see you?
- What would you do differently to manage perceptions of you and your group?
- How will you explain your motivations and address criticisms or suspicions of your motives by others?