Humanity & Inclusion
Submission to the World Bank Group
Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence 2020-2050

1. Summary of Humanity & Inclusion (HI)'s work on conflict and fragility

The majority of the contexts where HI operates are highly fragile and marked by violent conflict, as the organization has always had a dual mandate for development and humanitarian action.[1]

Since 2009, as a direct result of the contextual dynamics of our operating contexts, the access HI and our partners have to some of *the* most fragile and conflict affected contexts, requests from donors and demands for support from conflict affected communities, HI has supported projects aimed at addressing conflict and fragility in Mali, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Burundi, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Libya, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Nepal.

Conflict transformation is the organising framework for HI's work on conflict and fragility, it proposes a change-model which *"constructively changes the relationships, attitudes, behaviours, interests and discourses in violence prone conflict settings …it also addresses underlying structures, cultures and institutions that encourage and condition violent political and social conflict".[2]*

Conflict transformation models reflect HI's global theory of change interventions by:
-addressing attitudes, stereotypes and behaviour
- strengthening and building legitimate civil society groups and representatives
- supporting more responsive policy making.

The models also reflect HI's principles on inclusion, respecting local capacities, local ownership and meaningful participation.

HI's objectives of addressing discrimination may also mean HI's programmes, even those which do not have planned for conflict transformative objectives, may also play a role in addressing the root causes of conflict; as discrimination, exclusion (actual or perceived) and inequality are at the heart of many of today's contemporary conflicts.

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[1] HI is operational across the globe, including in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Mali, North Korea, Chad, Afghanistan, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Nigeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Eritrea, Niger. Of the *most* fragile states in the world (Fragile States Index 2019) the only contexts where HI is not operational is Sudan and Zimbabwe.
[2] *Berghof Glossary on Conflict Transformation, 20 notions for theory and* practice (March 2012), p23.

HI's conflict transformation portfolio is only a small component of HI's work. However HI recognises that programming of any type in conflict and fragile contexts can have a material effect, positive or negative, on both the root causes of conflict and the drivers of violence. Since 2018, HI has committed to integrating conflict sensitive approaches into its wider sectorial programmes and approaches.

HI Responses and Recommendations[3]

2. Inclusion – change pathway to transform conflict and fragility

2.1 Most of the contexts where HI works and which are characterised by violent conflict are 'asymmetric,' marked by both <u>actual and perceived</u> inequalities of power and status, which directly affect an individual or group's access to or control over resources and services, and drive group grievances. Inequality, actual or perceived, coupled with weak state legitimacy also make women and men, boys and girls more susceptible to manipulation and recruitment by elites, including factionalised political elites and state and non-state armed groups. **HI therefore welcomes the promotion of equality and inclusion as one of the WBG's approaches to transforming fragility and conflict.**

2. 2 Despite being violent and unstable, **conflict and fragile affected contexts can be incubating environments for social change.** In conflict and fragile contexts, the accepted roles for women and men, youths and elders often change, sometimes as a result of the absence of men. These **embryonic social changes will not necessarily be sustained, spaces can often snap back shut when traditional power brokers 'return' and if patriarchal norms and traditional generational relationships of 'power over' remain unaddressed**, therefore WBG's **focus on gender equality and youth inclusion is critical.**

2.3 However, while the WBG's focus on gender and youth is welcomed, we would **encourage the WBG to consider an intersectional approach,** which recognises that it is the **intersection of different actual or perceived characteristics**, from disability status, ethnic, religious or political identity, to gender and age **and critically how these intersect with contextual dynamics that directly impact on an individual or a groups**' access to, influence and control over resources and services, their different roles and responsibilities and their available influencing and response strategies to different barriers and opportunities.

2.3.1 For example, in a fragile or conflict affected context, a disabled person's ability to influence, or to claim resources may vary significantly based on when and how they were

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[3] Author of this submission is Stephanie Brigden, a Senior Conflict Transformation and Conflict Sensitivity Adviser retained by HI to provide strategic guidance to our work on conflict and fragility. Bridgen has more than a decade of senior level peace building advisory and programme experience.

disabled e.g. as a result of an injury from a land mine, as a direct result of their status as an injured combatant, or if they were born with a disability.

2.3.2 Two equally disabled persons with acquired status as a result of their roles as combatant may have different experiences, power or ability to access resources as a result of the socially-constructed roles their given society has considered most appropriate for women or men.

2.4 Evidence from across HI's programmes including in Columbia, Iraq, Mali, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Myanmar illustrate that **in conflict and fragile affected contexts, considering how different identity characteristics intersect with local and national conflict or 'peace' dynamics is critical if programmes are to reach the most vulnerable and are to 'do least harm' concerning the drivers of violence and the root causes of conflict.**

2.4.1. In Iraq where HI is part of a consortium delivering key services, applying only a disability gender and age sensitive approach to the design and implementation of our needs assessments would have failed to recognise how ethnic and tribal identity was an overarching factor excluding individuals from accessing services. It may have also lead the consortium to having designed a programme which inadvertently favoured access to services of one ethnic group, to the detriment of another 'harder to reach' group, reinforcing the entrenchment of identity-politics and group grievances which has both driven violence and been a structural cause of conflict in the region.

2.5 Ensuring a conflict-sensitive intersectional approach to inclusion helps safeguard against the risk of an "add women or youth and stir" approach which can risk inclusion strategies that 'do-harm' by reinforcing existing power imbalances.

2.6 We also **welcome the WBG's acknowledgement that in addition to actual inequality and discrimination, 'trust, confidence, and perception of inclusion' is also important**. Understanding the perceptions as well as the measurable impact of programming on different social groups is critical so that programmes do not inadvertently contribute to deepening social divisions.

2.7 Ending violence, transforming conflict and addressing fragility require that the structural causes of conflict are addressed, however too little emphasis is often given to the requirement to support attitudinal, relational and behavioural change, necessary change pathways alongside addressing structural causes.

2.7.1 Armed violence, as well as peace, happens among individuals and communities. It is ultimately individuals who need to negotiate 'away' their resources or reduce their power, shift their attitudes and values or change their behaviour. Attitudes and beliefs of "the

other" don't only 'allow' violence, but also encourage it. It is individual women and men who will sit behind desks at newly refurbished Ministries who will interpret how and *if* new inclusive or protective policy and legislation is actually implemented, or not. It is individuals who will determine if peace 'sticks.'

2.8 The **WBG Strategy** recognises that working in FCV contexts demands a holistic approach. The Strategy recognises the importance of engaging citizens and mechanisms for participation but **is silent on the need for relational, attitudinal and changes in behaviours.** HI would encourage the WBG to consider how this can be acknowledged and realised through the strategy. For example through funding innovation and research to understand how the impact of addressing different forms of discrimination and exclusion, for example against women or people with disabilities, can have a wider transformative effect on other discriminatory attitudes or social norms which drive violence.

3. Integrate Conflict Sensitivity as a mandatory cross-cutting approach at the WBG

3.1 HI welcomes that the WBG approach to private sector development must be guided by "do no harm," and therefore **HI recommends** that **the WBG Strategy** go further and its business model **mainstream conflict sensitivity as a cross-cutting approach** across WSG's processes, approaches, programming, personnel and partnerships.

3.2 HI regards conflict sensitivity as a quality tool, which not only aims to ensure that programmes do no harm on conflict dynamics but also, where possible, adapt to contribute toward transforming conflict dynamics.

3.3 HI staff aim to invest in understanding the context and how our interventions interact with existent conflict dynamics and drivers of fragility. HI then adapts interventions to ensure we do least harm and where possible adapt our recruitment strategies, partnerships, ways of working, inclusion strategies and projects to contribute towards transforming drivers of violence and conflict dynamics.

3.4 The WBG Strategy recognises the importance of "access to accurate, reliable and timely data on local and regional dynamics ...". **When understanding the context, we encourage the WBG to ensure conflict affected communities are consulted directly and consideration is given to understanding the agency as well as the needs of these communities**. As the Strategy recognises in conflict and fragile affected contexts the state may be largely absent and individuals and communities would have developed their own coping and resilience strategies. **Respecting local capacities and ownership is critical to ensure 'top down' strategies do not inadvertently weaken or undermine existent (even if only fragile) local**

social cohesion modalities, local peace building or governance capacities and resilience approaches.

3.5 Finally, HI encourages the WBG to fund research into understanding the actual impact of inclusion approaches as a conflict transformation pathway. This would be a significant addition to the knowledge base and could significant improve project implementation at the field level.