

Disaster,
Conflict, and
Impact
Assessment:
Making this
better rather
than worse

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- ▶ A Rapid Tour of **Emerging Technologies** and IA
- ▶ Accessing and Interpreting **Biodiversity** Information for High-level Biodiversity Screening
- ▶ Empowering **Indigenous Voices** in Impact Assessment
- ▶ Understanding Impacts on Vulnerable Populations through **Psycho-Social** Impact Assessment
- ▶ **Health** Considerations in Impact Assessment
- ▶ **Resettlement** and Impact Assessment – Points of Intersection
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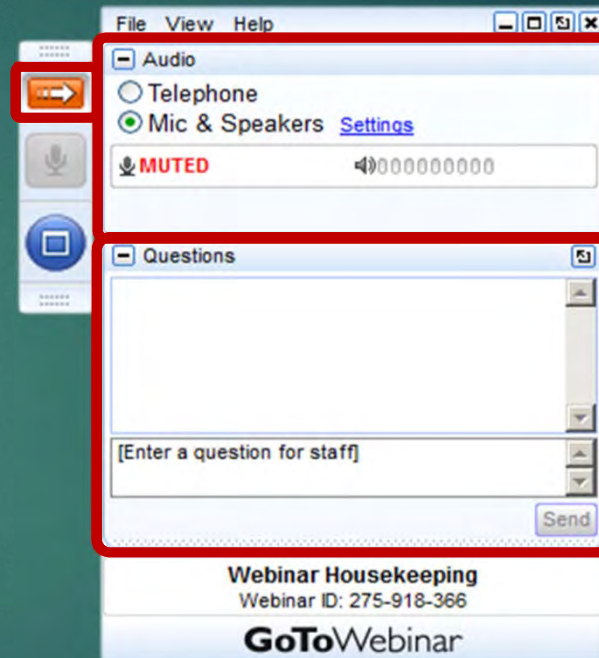
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Housekeeping

Recording? ✓

Questions? ✓

Slides available? ✓





Disaster, Conflict, and Impact Assessment: Making this better rather than worse

C. Kelly

Disaster Management Consultant
Co-Chair, IAIA Disasters/Conflict Section



What is the Webinar About?

- ▶ How disasters, conflict, and impact assessment are linked
- ▶ Critical nature of disasters and conflict in assessing impact

Anticipated Results

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- ▶ Understanding of how disasters and conflict affect and define impacts
- ▶ How to consider disasters and conflict in impact assessment

What is a Disaster?

- ▶ Large unfortunate event
- ▶ Event which exceeds capacity to cope
- ▶ *Normal over time*, but specific timing often uncertain
- ▶ Socially unequal – not everyone is affected equally, or can recover equally (relative level of wealth often critical factor)
- ▶ Generally clear and straightforward
- ▶ Can be seen as a failure of development

Trend: Increasing economic loss, reducing human loss

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- Failure of development

Trend: Increasing economic loss, reducing human loss

Flooding is a hazard



<https://blogs.worldbank.org/sustainablecities/cyclone-idai-building-climate-and-disaster-resilience-mozambique-and-beyond>

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Add people and you can have a disaster



<https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/2019-cyclone-idai-facts>

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Interface of development and nature



http://www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/brochures/brisbane_lower/brisbane_lower.shtml

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Trend: Increasing economic loss, reducing human loss

Normal infrastructure,
extreme events



https://s.abcnews.com/images/US/flooding-dc-ap-jt-190708_hpEmbed_3x2_992.jpg

Summary One

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- ▶ “Good” development comes from assessing and addressing impacts
- ▶ The impacts of natural hazards can be disasters
- ▶ Impact assessments need to consider hazards and potential disasters if development is to be “good”

What is Conflict?

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- ▶ Disagreement
- ▶ Direct or indirect violence
- ▶ Can range in scale from 2 people to billions
- ▶ Generally **not** clear or straightforward
- ▶ Could be increasing, could be decreasing

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Often viewed as armed fighting



<https://media.defense.gov/2019/Dec/12/2002223945/1918/1278/0/191211-M-GL635-008C.JPG>

What is Conflict?

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Often seen as causing significant direct or indirect damage to the environment



Close-up view of makeshift oil site, Dair ez-Zor, Syria, 2016

From **Scorched earth and charred lives: Human health and environmental risks of civilian-operated makeshift oil refineries in Syria**. Wim Zwijnenburg, PAX, 2016.



<https://www.toxicremnantsofwar.info/five-years-on-lessons-learned-from-the-environmental-legacy-of-syrias-war/>

Amidst the debris...

A desktop study on the environmental and public health impact of Syria's conflict



PAX
www.paxforpeace.nl

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Can be a lot more subtle

- About access to and use of resources, of any kind
- About use of land or sea
- Over consequences of business, technology or industry
- Often involves issues of social (in)equality and power relations
- Can involve governance (or lack thereof)
- Often associated with change
- May not seem rational, or based on detailed impact assessments

Summary Two

- ▶ Sources of conflict widely present
- ▶ War gets a lot of attention, but a lot of other sources of conflict out there
- ▶ Conflict can be triggered or exacerbated by change
- ▶ Environmental impact assessment can look at
 - ▶ Possible sources and impacts of conflict
 - ▶ On-going impacts of conflict (not your normal EIA)

The Human Factors

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- ▶ People don't willingly put their lives at risk
- ▶ But, people do do dangerous things: surviving something dangerous once reinforces the view you will survive the next time
- ▶ Only so much time (and money) in day – priorities
- ▶ Immediate benefits may, or may not, outweigh longer term harm
- ▶ Risk reduction comes from
 - ▶ Education
 - ▶ A shock (and not in all cases)

Assessing & Addressing the Impacts of Disasters and Conflict

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- ▶ Identify and scope the natural and conflict hazards
- ▶ Select the more significant hazards and define *disaster* impacts (use expert advice)
- ▶ Consider alternatives which reduce disaster impacts
- ▶ Consultations to define acceptable levels of risks (Note: may be different by gender, wealth, education, profession)
- ▶ Use EMMP to minimize risks which can't be avoided
- ▶ Consider education as a foundation for change when a disaster occurs
- ▶ There is no zero risk, only risks reduced to acceptable levels

At first daunting, but not that hard, really

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- ▶ Lots of experts
- ▶ Models and risk assessment procedures available
- ▶ Generally good understanding of natural and technological hazards
- ▶ As a social issue, understanding of conflict is improving
- ▶ Data may be scarce, but what is new?
- ▶ Minimum outcome is to do no more harm than in the past
- ▶ Preferred outcome is less harm in the future

Anticipated Results

- ▶ Understanding of how disasters and conflict affect and define impacts
- ▶ How to consider disasters and conflict in impact assessment

Questions?





Thank you!

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