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PSD/EW/CEWS HANDBOOK

AFRICAN UNION
CONTINENTAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

THE CEWS HANDBOOK

7th Draft (21 February 2008)

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Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CEWARN	(IGAD) Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CEWS	(African Union) Continental Early Warning System
CEWS Handbook	CEWS Strategic Conflict Analysis and Response Handbook
CMD	(AU) Conflict Management Division
COA	Courses of Action
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPMR	Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution
DFID	(British) Department for International Development
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Warning and Response Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EWS	Early Warning System
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IncRep	Incident Report
MNC	Multi-National Company
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PCIA	Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment
PRC	(AU) Permanent Representatives Committee
PSC	(AU) Peace and Security Council
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RMs	Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SCA	Strategic Conflict Assessment
SitRep	Situation Report
SitRoom	(CMD) Situation Room
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UMA	Maghreb Arab Union
UNDG ECHA	UN Development Group – Executive Committee of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WANEP	West African Network for Peacebuilding
WB	World Bank

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Preface

Africa is currently experiencing a major transformation with regard to the norms and institutions governing multilateral relations on the Continent. This gradual shift has the potential to transform the way Africa addresses the intertwined challenges of development, peace and security. This transformation began on 9 September 1999, when African Heads of State and Government issued a Declaration in which they expressed their decision to transform the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), founded in 1963, into the African Union. On 10 July 2000, at the 36th summit of the OAU in Togo, Lomé, this Declaration was translated into the *Constitutive Act of the African Union*. This was not a mere change in name, but represented a fundamental change in terms of vision, objectives as well as responsibilities entrusted to the organisation. At the core of this new vision is the active promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent understood as prerequisites for sustainable development.

At the time it was founded, the OAU took it upon itself the duty of supporting collective struggles for national liberation from colonialism as well as the responsibility to act as the guardian of Africa's hard-won yet fragile independence from colonial rule. The principles of equality, respect for national sovereignty, non-interference as well as territorial integrity constituted cardinal principles which defined the modalities and parameters of inter-governmental collaboration within the OAU. Yet, the radically altered international environment that resulted from the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the pressures of unrestrained globalisation and the unprecedented increase in the number and intensity of violent armed conflict on the Continent prompted a repositioning and restructuring of the organisation. The transformation of the OAU to the AU was motivated by the need to enable the African continent and its peoples to meet the challenges of the 21st century, in particular those of poverty alleviation, broad-based and equitable development, good governance and the respect for human rights as well as to strengthen the position of Africa in a globalised world.

Furthermore, the realisation that without peace, security and stability the attainment of these goals is severely impaired, led Heads of State and Government to give the African Union the mandate, powers and institutions to comprehensively address issues of peace and security on the Continent. At the root of the African Union's vision is the notion of comprehensive human security. Although reiterating the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and non-interference, the *Constitutive Act* also gives the African Union the right "to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity as well as a serious threat to legitimate order to restore peace and security to the Member State of the Union, upon the recommendation of the Peace and Security Council". This reflects Africa's historical experience, especially in the 1990s, as well as recent developments in international law, in particular international humanitarian law. There is also a provision to suspend governments which have come to power unconstitutionally.

In line with these general principles, the *Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council* which was ratified by the requisite number of Member States during December 2003 and entered into force during May 2004, commits the African Union to work towards "the well-being of the African people and their environment,

as well as the creation of conditions conducive to sustainable development". Furthermore it calls for "the promotion of democratic practices, good governance, the rule of law, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect of the sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law by Member States".

In institutional terms, the transformation of the OAU into the African Union has expanded the sources of authority of the organisation. In addition to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government (the OAU's single source of authority), the African Union has a judicial pillar (the African Court of Justice) and a democratic pillar (the Pan-African Parliament). Furthermore, the administrative secretariat of the OAU has evolved into a fully fledged executive Commission with its own power of initiative, elected Commissioners and recognised political mandates. In addition to carrying out Assembly decisions, the Commissioners – as a collegial decision-making body – fulfil political tasks of their own. Finally, where decision-making at the OAU was primarily inter-governmental in nature, several of the provisions contained in the *Constitutive Act* as well as the *Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council* give the organisation elements of both an inter-governmental as well as a supranational approach.

In terms of the maintenance of peace and security, particularly as regards conflict prevention, management and resolution, the *Constitutive Act* and the *Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council* give the African Union the power to create the structures and processes necessary for the establishment of a comprehensive security architecture for the Continent. This peace and security architecture comprises the Peace and Security Council (PSC), a Panel of the Wise, the African Stand-By Force, the African Peace Facility and the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). The development, operationalisation and therefore institutionalisation of these structures have been actively pursued by the Union and supported by the unwavering commitment of Member States. The launch of the PSC in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 25 May 2004 represented a watershed moment in realising the African Union's objective of systematically engaging and addressing situations of instability, vulnerability and human insecurity on the Continent. The inaugural session of the Pan-African Parliament in Midrand, South Africa, on 16 September of the same year has initiated a new, more inclusive and more representative chapter in the history of the Union to date. Preparations for the creation of a Stand-By Force are well under way, with a Roadmap agreed to by Member States, decisions taken relative to planning elements and regional contingents and full operationalisation expected by 2010. In July 2007, the members of the Panel of the Wise were appointed and the development of specific terms of reference for this important pillar of the peace and security architecture agreed to. Of course, the support and cooperation of international partners have played an important role in the processes described, in particular through the African Peace Facility.

This volume documents the development, operationalisation and institutionalisation of a pivotal pillar of the peace and security architecture, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). This structure is core to the fulfilment of the Union's conflict prevention, management and resolution mandates. Without the capacity to monitor, analyse and develop tailored and timely responses and policy options to threats to peace and security on the Continent, the African Union would be severely limited in its ability to address these appropriately. The PSC *Protocol* gives the CEWS a fundamental responsibility for which a carefully developed methodology and process are required: that of anticipating and preventing the occurrence of conflict through

the provision of information and analysis to the Chairperson of the Commission. In the fulfilment of his responsibility to advise the PSC on potential threats to peace and security in Africa, as well as recommend best courses of action, the Chairperson relies therefore on a well-functioning, comprehensive and African Union specific early warning system. Consequently, the CEWS assumes a critical role as regards the ability of key institutions of the Union and other pillars of the peace and security architecture to perform their responsibilities, particularly the PSC, other Departments within the Commission, the Panel of the Wise and the Pan-African Parliament among others.

During the last three years, in consultation with Member States, the Regional Mechanisms, the United Nations and African civil society and research institutions, the Commission has put in place a process to explore the modalities for the development and operationalisation of the CEWS. This volume contains the various issue papers and background documents that informed the development of the *Roadmap for the Operationalisation of the CEWS*, the framework agreed to by representatives of Member States in December 2006 in Kempton Park, South Africa. On this basis, the implementation began in earnest in the first quarter of 2007 and we foresee that the CEWS will be fully operational by the end of 2009.

The development, operationalisation and institutionalisation of this important pillar of the African peace and security architecture would not have been possible without the support of Member States and the generous and enthusiastic technical and financial support of many organisations and individuals, African and International, who through their commitment to peace and security in Africa have made this structure a reality. My sincere appreciation and deep felt gratitude must be extended to donors, international organisations, and African civil society organisations and research institutes who contributed to the development of the CEWS. Last but not least, this volume evidences the commitment and dedication of staff at the Conflict Management Division at the African Union, without whom the CEWS would not have become a reality.

In the medium and long term a number of important challenges will still need to be addressed. In more general terms, securing permanent, reliable funding for the new African peace and security architecture from African sources will be of paramount importance. With regard to the CEWS as well as other pillars of the architecture, the harmonisation and co-ordination between the African Union and the Regional Mechanisms and other international partners remain important priorities. And finally, the biggest challenge ahead for all of us is to turn our vision of a peaceful, secure, more equitable and dignified life for all Africans a reality. In the fulfilment of this vision, it is my belief that the CEWS has a fundamental role to play.

Ambassador Saïd Djinnit, Commissioner Peace and Security

Addis Ababa, February 2008

Introduction

This Handbook addresses the need for the development of a specific conflict analysis and early warning methodology for the African Union (AU). The issue is clearly identified in Article 12 (4) of the “Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council” (the *PSC Protocol*). It is further detailed in items 14 and 15 of the “Roadmap for the Operationalisation of the Continental Early Warning System” (the *Roadmap*).

Every Early Warning System (EWS) requires an underlying methodology through which data and information are analysed with the purpose of, if required, issuing warnings which enable decision-makers to take early action. This AU methodological framework will be referred to as the *CEWS Handbook*.

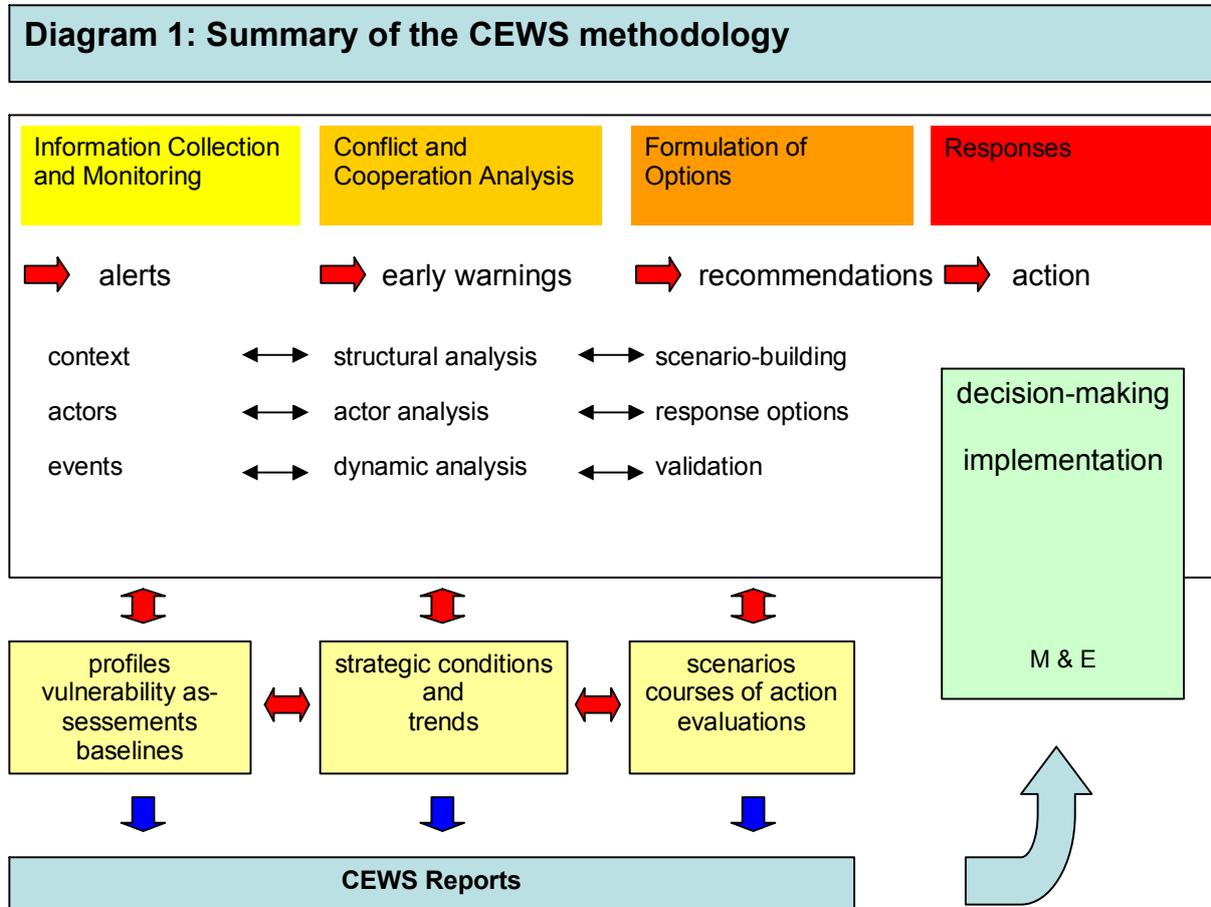
It is both a continental wide framework and a methodology with specific implications to the AU, and in particular to its Conflict Management Division (CMD). As a continental wide framework, it addresses issues of harmonisation and coordination of existing early warning systems as well as those currently under consideration or development in the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs). As conceptualised and elaborated in this document, the CEWS methodology informs the totality of the activities and outputs of the CEWS, bearing in mind the constituent role assigned to the RECs as integral to the CEWS itself. Consequently, the CEWS Handbook is designed to ensure that the CEWS operates in an integrated fashion, with a shared purpose, methodological compatibility and terminology.

Furthermore, and with specific implications for the CMD, the CEWS Handbook has been developed to address the particular needs and requirements of the AU and is in several important respects *sui generis*. As a methodology underlining the operation of the CEWS, the Handbook closely mirrors the “Key Elements of the CEWS” as detailed in the *Roadmap* based around three iterative and interactive phases or steps: (1) ongoing information collection and monitoring, (2) interactive conflict and cooperation analysis, and (3) formulation of policy and response options. Ultimately, the purpose of this document is to guide AU staff involved in the implementation and operation of the CEWS in the provision, through the appropriate channels and outputs, of timely advice on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security so as to enable the development of appropriate response strategies to prevent or limit the destructive effects of violent conflict.

This CEWS Handbook is structured as follows: In Chapter 1, the background and rationale of the CEWS is revisited and the legal and institutional provisions governing the design, implementation and operation of the CEWS recalled. The CEWS institutional structure is discussed with emphasis on the relations with the CERs/RMs as constituent parts of the overall security architecture of the Union.

Focusing on lessons learned, Chapter 2 reviews best practice in the field of early warning and conflict analysis with the purpose of informing the design of a strategic conflict analysis and response framework tailored to the specific needs and requirements of the AU. This chapter includes a brief discussion of two operational African early warning and response systems, ECOWARN and CEWARN, with an emphasis on their approach as well as lessons learned from their operations over the past years.

The following three Chapters discuss the CEWS framework in detail, focusing on the specific processes and functions that will enable CMD staff and, in particular Situation Room, Desk Officers/Analysts and Early Warning Analysts, to arrive at the development of policy and response options which will inform decision-making by the AU. These iterative and interactive phases or steps can be seen in the diagram below and will be explained in detail in the subsequent chapters:



Chapter 3 focuses on *Information Collection and Monitoring* suggesting a step by step process of compilation of country context and actor attribute information. In addition, it focuses on the development of near real-time baselines of conflict and cooperation events through the automated monitoring of news reports as well as event monitoring through field reporting and mission reporting. A data driven approach is outlined in which the *CEWS Indicators Module* is highlighted. Using this approach, the development of open source databases containing contextual, attribute and events data. These databases are kept up to date in near real-time and enable the creation of dynamic profiles, vulnerability assessments and baselines. Inflections and deviations from these baselines call attention to situations of potential disruption, instability or conflict escalation into violence. In other words, the “outputs” of this step are alerts that call attention to areas where further analysis and possible action may be required.

Chapter 4 focuses on the *CEWS Conflict and Cooperation Analysis* explaining how different forms of in-depth interactive analysis – structural, stakeholder, dynamic – lead to insights into the strategic conditions, networks and event trends in any particular situation. These detailed analyses are done on a regular basis or may be triggered by the alerts from the previous stage. In either case, they generate early warnings as appropriate. This is a chapter directed at early warning officers and analysts who, in their day-to-day activities, must interpret and explain dynamic events in their appropriate structural and relational context. This chapter provides therefore a set of early warning tools and processes with which the analysts can develop a comprehensive and holistic understanding of particular situations.

Building upon the in-depth early warning analyses, and critical for the formulation of policy and response options, is the development of alternate scenarios and paths of influences through which they may be realised. The status quo scenario represents the current strategic conditions from phase two. Building upon this scenario of the present, a potential worse and best case scenario are typically outlined. Next the specification of the influences towards these scenarios would be done as a means for discerning progress towards the desired end state. This path specification or formulation of response options also serves as a means for validating the policies and options prescribed by defining measures of success. In other words, Chapter 5 outlines the processes by which policy and response options can be systematically formulated and progress towards their realisation can be assessed.

Chapter 6 focuses on reporting and interaction with decision-makers. It outlines how to link AU specific audiences (or target groups) and specific types of reports with actionable conditions and nodes of influence. It also illustrates how – in combination with forecasts and prognosis – this finally allows to come up with recommendations for action (or policy and response options).

Chapter 7 focuses on *Further Issues*, i.e. matters arising from the development, deployment and operation of the CEWS framework. These relate to quality assurance in terms of Monitoring and Evaluation, training needs, information issues (such as sharing, exchange and ownership), institutional issues, and the adoption to future requirements.

1 The AU Continental Early Warning System

1.1 Introduction and Background

At the beginning of the 1990s, and following the collapse of the Cold War, a series of violent conflicts broke out in different parts of the world. Despite a new thrust on multilateralism heralded by the United Nations, the international community by and large failed to adequately address these conflicts. The cases of Somalia 1992/93, Bosnia 1992/93 and – most importantly – the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda demonstrated the inability (at times outright unwillingness) of the international community to prevent and manage violent conflict. These failures highlighted the critical need for strengthening prevention mechanisms – in particular, the development and implementation of Early Warning Systems (EWS) which could support early action. Numerous governmental and non-governmental bodies became involved in early warning and devised early warning models.

At the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), these concerns led to the creation of a Mechanism for Conflict, Prevention and Resolution in 1993 (see box 1).

Box 1: The OAU's Central Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution

“The establishment of a unit for conflict early warning at continental level was formally initiated in June 1992 when, at its 28th Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, the Assembly of the OAU decided to establish the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. This decision was put into effect in June 1993 with the adoption of the ‘Cairo Declaration’ that established the Central Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The Mechanism was charged with the anticipation and prevention of situations of armed conflict as well as with undertaking peacemaking and peace-building efforts during conflicts and in post-conflict situations. The Mechanism’s operational arm, the Central Organ, was composed of nine and later 14 Member States who met annually and formed the Bureau of the Assembly, plus the country chairing the OAU. As would later be the case with its successor structure, the PSC, the Organ operated at Summit, Ministerial and Ambassadorial levels.

In 1994, the Mechanism created a [Centre] for Conflict Management and formalised an associated financial facility, the Peace Fund. The Conflict Management [Centre] was originally tasked with the development of policy options and the co-ordination of activities in support of the Mechanism’s mission as described above. To this end, the [Centre] was expected to:

- a. Collect, collate and disseminate information relating to current and potential conflicts;
- b. Prepare and present policy options to the Secretary General of the OAU;
- c. Undertake or commission analysis and long-term research;
- d. Support and manage political, civilian and military observer missions, and co-ordinate regional training policies to support peacekeeping operations.

The establishment of the OAU’s Central Organ and its Conflict Management [Centre] reflected the OAU’s desire to focus on conflict prevention (those activities undertaken primarily to reduce the risk of violent conflict eruption) – leaving the more expensive and complex task of conflict management, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction to the United Nations.”

Source: Jakkie Cilliers 2005. Towards a Continental Early Warning System for Africa, Pretoria: Institute for Strategic Studies, April, p. 3.

The OAU transformed itself into the African Union (AU) in 2002. One of the core objectives of the AU is the promotion of peace, security, and stability on the continent, as detailed out in Article 3 (f) of the AU Constitutive Act. With this objective in mind, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted, in July 2002, in Durban, South Africa, the “Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU”, which entered into force in December 2003 and which was solemnly launched on 25 May 2004.

Article 2 (1) of the *PSC Protocol* defines the PSC as “a collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa”. In conjunction with the Chairperson of the Commission, the PSC shall, *inter alia*, anticipate and prevent disputes and conflicts, undertake peace-making and peace-building functions and authorise the mounting and deployment of peace support missions [Articles 3 (a), (b), and 7]. In these, the PSC shall be supported by a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System, an African Standby Force and a Special Fund [Article 2 (2)].

During the July 2003 Summit of the African Union in Maputo, Mozambique, the Heads of State and Government mandated the AU Commission to take the necessary steps for the establishment of the CEWS. Since then, the Commission has set in motion a series of activities with the aim of fulfilling this mandate, including organising several workshops on the establishment of the CEWS with officials from the RECs, the United Nations and UN system organisations, civil society representatives and academic institutions, international organisations and African think tanks. At the same time, strong efforts have been made and continue to be made by the Commission to enhance and strengthen the existing capacities within the CMD, particularly in the Situation Room. This includes the procurement of new equipment and a greater access to online information, to provide timely and up to date information and analysis on issues of relevance to the mandate of the Peace and Security Department.

In July 2005, and based on the series of recommendations obtained from the consultations and workshops referred to above, the Commission developed a draft *Roadmap* for the Operationalisation of the CEWS. The purpose of this Roadmap is the development of an operational, cost-effective CEWS and the associated key steps and requirements necessary for the implementation of the early warning system. The draft *Roadmap* emphasises the core objective of the CEWS: the provision of timely advice on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security to enable the development of appropriate response strategies to prevent or limit the destructive effects of violent conflicts. The *Roadmap* covers, among others, the following areas: (1) information collection, (2) strategic analysis of the data collected and development of an indicators module, (3) early warning reports and engagement with decision-makers, and (4) co-ordination and collaboration between the AU, the RECs and other key stakeholders. The *Roadmap* contains a tentative timeframe for the implementation and operationalisation of the CEWS.

On 21 June 2006, at its 57th meeting held in Addis Ababa, the PSC requested the AU Commission to hasten the operationalisation of the continental peace and security architecture, including the CEWS. The Commission then intensified its efforts to prepare the relevant technical documentation in support of the draft *Roadmap* for consideration by representatives of Member States, RECs and other partners. In addition to an updated version of the draft *Roadmap* itself (Issue Paper 1), the Commission prepared two issue papers of a technical nature (on the *Indicators Module*

and on the *Participation of Civil Society*) and three background papers (on *Development of IT Technology*, on *Conceptual and Methodological Issues in the Development of Early Warning Indicators*, and on *Status of Implementation of Early Warning Systems in the RECs*).

From 17 to 19 December 2006, the Commission convened a meeting of Governmental Experts on early warning and conflict prevention, bringing together experts from AU Member States and representatives of the RECs. Held in Kempton Park, South Africa, the meeting was also attended by representatives of African research centres and academic institutions, NGOs, as well as international organisations, including the United Nations, as observers. The meeting urged the AU Commission and the RECs, working together with the stakeholders identified in the *PSC Protocol*, to take all necessary steps to implement the observations and recommendations made in the draft *Roadmap* within a timeframe of three years, to ensure that the CEWS is fully operational by 2009. In this regard, the meeting requested the Commission to submit regular reports on progress made and challenges faced to the relevant AU organs (the PSC, the Executive Council and the Assembly). The meeting further urged Member States, as well as AU partners, to provide the necessary assistance to facilitate the timely operationalisation of the CEWS.

The Executive Council endorsed the “Framework for the Operationalisation of the Continental Early Warning System” and the timeframe for its implementation as well as the request made to the Commission to “take all the necessary steps for the timely and full implementation of the Framework for the Operationalisation of the Continental Early Warning System, including the mobilisation of the financial and technical resources required from both AU Member States and partners, the speedy recruitment of the human resources needed and other relevant steps”. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, at its 8th Ordinary Session held on 29-30 January 2007 in Addis Ababa, supported the efforts made by the Commission to operationalise the CEWS and welcomed the encouragement given to the PSC to ensure the successful completion of the process.

Box 2: CEWS legal and political basis

African Union Constitutive Act

Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council

Framework for the Operationalisation of the Continental Early Warning System

Relevant Assembly, Executive Council decisions

Relevant PSC Communiqués and requests from the Commission

1.2 The CEWS: Legal Provisions and Rationale

The establishment of the CEWS is a requisite of the *PSC Protocol* as detailed in Article 12 (1) (see box 3) which states that, “in order to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts, a Continental Early Warning System to be known as the Early Warning System shall be established”. The *PSC Protocol* notes that the information and analysis gathered through the EWS shall be used by the Chairperson of the Commission to “advise the PSC on potential threats to peace and security in Africa and recommend the best course of action” [Article 12 (5)]. The Chairperson is also called “to use this information for the execution of the responsibilities and functions entrusted to him/her under the present Protocol” (ibid.). Member States too are urged to “commit themselves to facilitate early action by the PSC and/or the Chairperson of the Commission based on early warning information” [Article 12 (6)].

Box 3: Article 12 of the “Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union”

Article 12

Continental Early Warning System

1. In order to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts, a Continental Early Warning System to be known as the Early Warning System shall be established.
2. The Early Warning System shall consist of:
 - a. an observation and monitoring centre, to be known as "The Situation Room", located at the Conflict Management Directorate of the Union and responsible for data collection and analysis on the basis of an appropriate early warning indicators module; and
 - b. observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms to be linked directly through appropriate means of communications to the Situation Room, and which shall collect and process data at their level and transmit the same to the Situation Room.
3. The Commission shall also collaborate with the United Nations, its agencies, other relevant international organizations, research centers, academic institutions and NGOs, to facilitate the effective functioning of the Early Warning System.
4. The Early Warning System shall develop an early warning module based on clearly defined and accepted political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators, which shall be used to analyze developments within the continent and to recommend the best course of action.
5. The Chairperson of the Commission shall use the information gathered through the Early Warning System timeously to advise the Peace and Security Council on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa and recommend the best course of action. The Chairperson of the Commission shall also use this information for the execution of the responsibilities and functions entrusted to him/her under the present Protocol.
6. The Member States shall commit themselves to facilitate early action by the Peace and Security Council and/or the Chairperson of the Commission based on early warning information.
7. The Chairperson of the Commission shall, in consultation with Member States, the Regional Mechanisms, the United Nations and other relevant institutions, work out the practical details for the establishment of the Early Warning System and take all the steps required for its effective functioning.

Source: *PSC Protocol, Article 12.*

The CEWS is, therefore, to consist of (a) an observation and monitoring centre – the Situation Room – located at the Conflict Management Division (CMD) of the AU; and (b) observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, which shall “be linked directly” to the Situation Room [Article 12 (2)].

In order to analyse developments and recommend appropriate courses of action, the CEWS shall “develop an early warning module based on clearly defined and accepted political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators” [Article 12 (4)]. In addition, to facilitate the effective functioning of the CEWS, Article 12 (3) of the *PSC Protocol* requires the AU Commission to “collaborate with the United Nations and its agencies, other relevant international organizations, research centres, academic institutions and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)”, and Article 12 (7) stipulates that the Chairperson of the Commission “shall, in consultation with Member States, the Regional Mechanisms, the United Nations and other relevant institutions, work out the practical details for the establishment of the Early Warning System and take all the steps required for its effective functioning”.

The purpose of the CEWS is therefore the provision of timely advice on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security to enable the development of appropriate response strategies to a number of principle users at the AU: the Chairperson of the Commission, the PSC and other Departments within the Commission. Others include various organs and structures of the AU, namely the Pan-African Parliament, the Panel of the Wise and the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (see box 4). The relationship between the CEWS and these various end-users is detailed in chapter 6 on Reporting and Interaction with Decision-Makers.

Box 4: Principle users of the CEWS Framework at the AU

Chairperson of the Commission Peace and Security Council Commissioner of Peace and Security AU Commission relevant Departments Panel of the Wise Pan-African Parliament Africa Commission on Human and People’s Rights
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The *Roadmap* considered that the following four elements are key in the development and operationalisation of the CEWS:

- information collection;
- strategic analysis;
- reports and engagement with decision-makers; and
- co-ordination and collaboration.

It is the task of the CEWS to collect and analyse information in a systematised way, using an explicit framework. The *PSC Protocol* calls for the development of an early warning module with clearly defined and accepted political, social, military and humanitarian indicators to underlie the collection and analysis of data [Article 12 (2) and (4)]. The development of the CEWS Handbook – detailed in the chapters below – is a direct result of this mandate.

On sources of information, the CEWS is envisaged as an open-source system where information is gathered from a variety of different sources, including, *inter alia*, governmental and inter-governmental actors, international and non-governmental organisations, the media, academia and think-tanks. While key sources of data include those generated by the AU itself (Commission, AU Field Missions and liaison offices), as well as that generated at the level of the RECs/RMs and Member States or in collaboration with the United Nations, its agencies, other relevant international organisations, research centres, academic institutions and NGOs is clearly requested by the *PSC Protocol*. In fact, it urges the Commission to undertake this collaboration in order to facilitate the effective functioning of the EWS as a whole [Article 12 (3)]. Additional relevant provisions, to be discussed below, include Article 16 (Relationship with Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution), Article 17 (Relationship with the United Nations and other International Organisations), Article 18 (Relationship with the Pan-African Parliament), Article 19 (Relationship with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights) and, finally, Article 20 (Relationship with Civil Society Organisations).

In order to optimise and systematise existing products and processes (i.e. News Highlights, Daily Reports, Flash Reports, Country profiles) and, following the implementation of the CEWS, enable the creation of new ones (i.e. Early Warning Reports, etc.), key recommendations of the *Roadmap* in terms of information collection included: the introduction of an automated data gathering and processing system (including but not limited to news clippings); the introduction of an internal news trends tracking service; the development of a system of grading sources and reports to diminish information overflow and to increase efficiency; greater use of African information sources, particularly in indigenous languages; and, finally, the strengthening of the existing system of internal country profiles through the introduction of sub-national detail.

On analysis, the *Roadmap* notes that strategic analysis and the timely development of policy options require the continuous monitoring of political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators [Article 12 (4)]. As required by the *PSC Protocol*, a core component of the CEWS is an early warning indicator's module – priority has therefore been given to the design and specification of such module. The CEWS Handbook has been developed bearing in mind a limited number of flexible easy-to-monitor indicators and easy-to-control thresholds, based on an inductive approach and bearing in mind financial and institutional constraints. As will be discussed below, the implementation of the CEWS framework will allow the CEWS to undertake the systematic monitoring of risk indicators, including the analysis of trends and dynamics and their significance in their specific, structural contexts.

Box 5: Sources of information – The CEWS as an open source system

Member States
Regional Economic Communities
United Nations and other international organisations
The Pan-African Parliament
African Commission on Human and People’s Rights
Research centres and academic institutions
Civil Society organisations
Media

Source: PSC Protocol, Article 12 (3), and Framework for the Operationalisation of the CEWS.

The sources of information collected and processed by the CEWS are described in the *PSC Protocol* as “open sources”. Thus information comes from the sources already named in the *PSC Protocol* (see box 5), plus a number of other public sources such as newspapers, journals and other media reports as well as online data sources. In addition information originating from AU Field Missions and data shared by the RECs will be part of CEWS data.

By way of summarising, one can thus identify six different functional roles the *PSC Protocol* ascribes to the CEWS (see table 1):

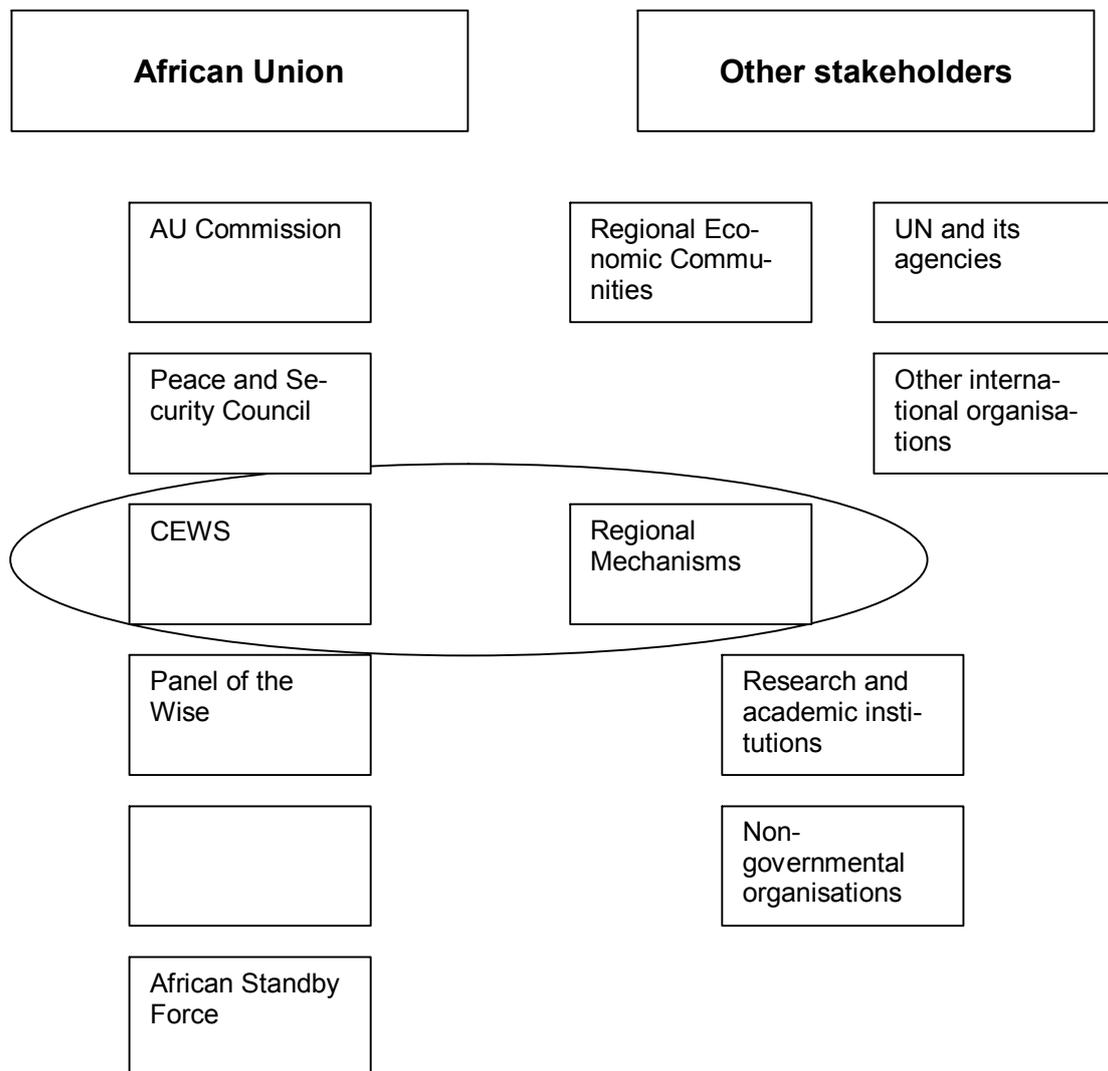
Table 1: Functional roles of the CEWS

- Information collection
- Information sharing
- Information analysis
-
- Coordination
- Harmonisation

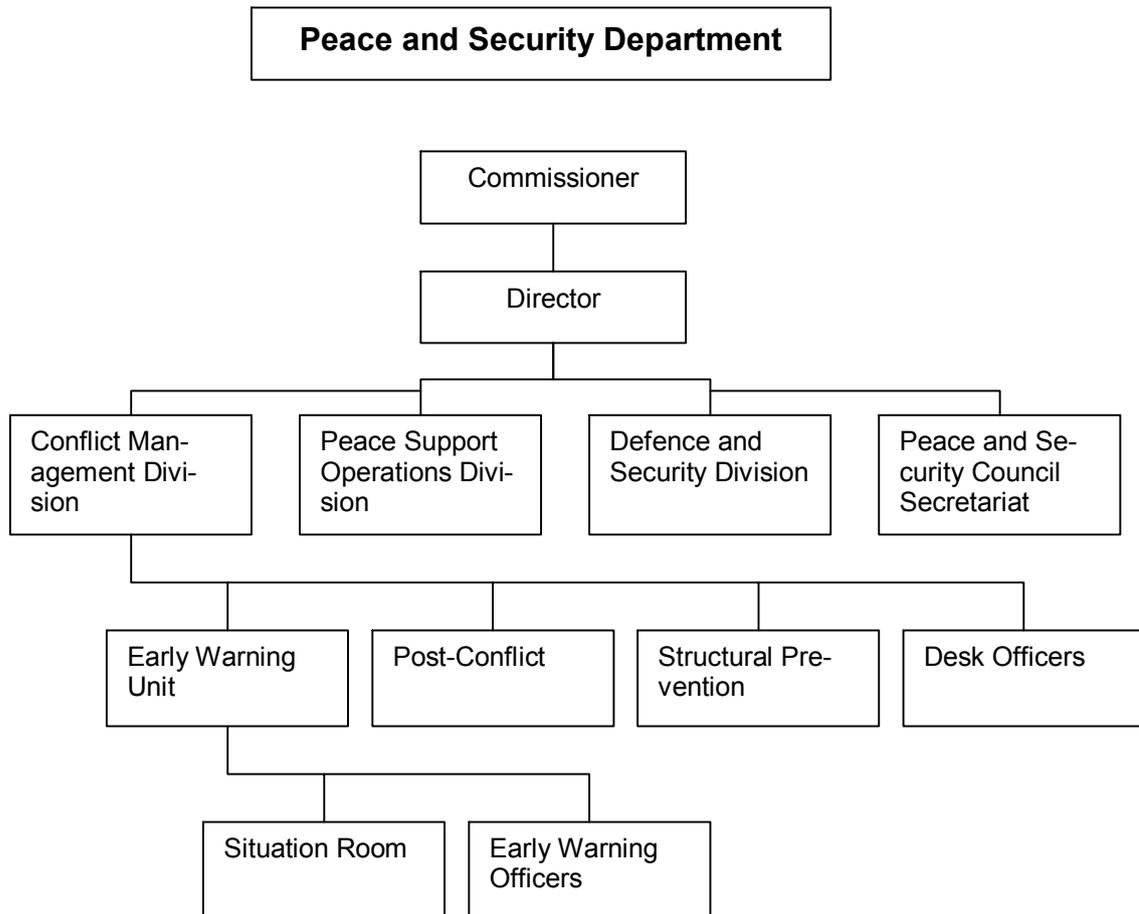
1.3 The CEWS: Institutional Structure

The CEWS is operating in a specific institutional context which is depicted in organigrams 1 and 2. Organigram 1 shows CEWS as part of the African Union's new security architecture and organigram 2 refers to the CEWS' institutional context within the AU Peace and Security Department.

Organigram 1: CEWS within the AU's new security architecture



Organigram 2: The CEWS' institutional context



Note: As of September 2007.

1.4 The CEWS and the Regional Early Warning Mechanisms

Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution are a constituent part of the overall security architecture of the AU [Article 16 (1)] and in particular the CEWS [Article 12 (2)]. As a result of their activities in the fields of peace, security and stability, Regional Mechanisms are given an important and specific role in the development and implementation of the CEWS. The *PSC Protocol* recognises that aspects of harmonisation and coordination are important as a means to assuring that their “activities are consistent with the objectives and principles of the Union” and calls for an effective partnership between the Regional Mechanisms and the PSC (Article 16). Regional Mechanisms are urged to continuously inform the PSC on their activities and when necessary brief the PSC – a request that is based on reciprocity as detailed in Article 16 (3), which states that “the Peace and Security Council shall, through the Chairperson of the Commission, also keep the Regional Mechanisms fully and continuously informed of its activities”.

In addition to closely following the provisions of the *PSC Protocol* and the *Roadmap*, the development of the CEWS Strategic Conflict Analysis has incorporated the recommendations made by RECs/RMs in series of consultations over the last several years with the AU. Issues of harmonisation and co-ordination of existing early warning systems with a view to the establishment of the CEWS have been particularly important in the development and implementation of this Handbook. For example, the *PSC Protocol* states that the “observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms (are) to be linked directly through the appropriate means of communications to the Situation Room, and shall collect and process data at their level and transmit the same to the Situation Room” [Article 12 (2, b)]. In addition, the *Roadmap* clearly states that “rather than attempt to create a single, unified system applicable to all early warning systems involved, and following closely the recommendations of the RECs, this Roadmap proposes the development of a ‘continental framework’ of information and analysis sharing able to build and supplement the efforts already developed by Regional Mechanisms”.

Several RECs – in particular IGAD (CEWARN) and ECOWAS (ECOWARN) – have already developed and implemented their conflict analysis and early warning mechanisms, or they are in the process of doing so. Yet, for the purposes of a coordinated, harmonised and, to an extent, integrated CEWS (where the RECs Mechanisms are a constituent part), an overarching framework is required. In such a framework the purpose, method and terminology of early warning will be a shared one. As noted in the introduction above, the CEWS Handbook is such a framework: as an overarching methodology, it informs the totality of the activities and outputs of the CEWS. For the purpose of the CEWS, a *Strategic Conflict Analysis* (CEWS SCA) must per force inform preventive diplomacy, peace-making, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building (the areas of “operations” roughly following the then UN Secretary-General’s 1992 *Agenda for Peace* four main areas in dealing with contemporary conflicts).

Once operational, CEWS will fulfil a number of functional roles (listed in Table 1, above). The very practice of doing so will set standards for the African continent (and beyond). These standards will be both of a technical and of a methodological nature. And they will cover mainly information collection, information sharing and processing.

Partly, the standard setting role of the AU will be due to the fact that the AU is the first African institution to introduce a fully-fledged EWS (i.e. covering all aspects of violent conflict and all geographical areas of the continent); and partly is it because of a specific division of labour evolving between the AU and the RECs (see chapters 2.4, 3.4, 4.4 and 5.4). For instance, when it comes to data collection from open sources the AU, by default, not only takes a continental, but also a transnational perspective. It also enjoys access to specific sources (such as AU Field Missions reports). On the other hand, the RECs currently enjoy a different advantage, i.e. access to and analysis of sub-national or sub-regional information. Hence, a particular modus of sharing information can be foreseen for the CEWS, one that involves an optimum division of labour and resources between the AU and the RECs. In addition and because of its mandate to liaise with other institutions – such as the United Nations, its agencies, other relevant international organisations as well as continental and international research centres, academic institutions and NGOs –, the CEWS Framework will become a standards setting hub for the collection and exchange of open source-based information on early warning with relevance to Africa.

In processing this information, the CEWS is making use of state-of-the-art technology which places it in a unique position not only vis-à-vis other EWS on the continent, but also internationally. And, finally, in the analysis of the information collected, the CEWS utilizes a set of indicators that is continental wide and African-specific. These indicators are tracked with automated information gathering and management technology that generate alerts in near real-time. This constant monitoring will support the production of timely and relevant early warnings.

Against this background, the CEWS framework is set to play an important role in setting harmonising standards and procedures in African early warning. A Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and the RECs is being finalised.

What follows is a brief summary of the legal and institutional provisions that inform each REC's early warning mechanism. Note that this information is current as of September 2007, and is subject to rapid change. The RECs are listed in alphabetical order. In each of the chapters dedicated to the CEWS framework, a section will be devoted to harmonisation and coordination issues with the regional mechanisms (see sub-chapters 2.1, 3.5, 4.4 and 5.4).

Map 1: Africa's major Regional Economic Communities

Africa map:

Create new one!

Table 2: The RECs	
1	CEN-SAD – Community of Sahel-Saharan States
	Homepage: http://www.cen-sad.org/
	Member States: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Central African Republic, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo and Tunisia
2	COMESA – Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
	Homepage: http://www.comesa.int/
	Member States: Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, DR Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Swaziland, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe
3	EAC – East African Community
	Homepage: http://www.eac.int/#
	Member states: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda
4	ECCAS – Economic Community of Central African States
	Homepage: http://www.ceeac-eccas.org/
	Member States: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, DR Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and São Tomé & Príncipe
5	ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States
	Homepage: http://www.ecowas.int/
	Member States: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, , Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo
6	IGAD – Intergovernmental Authority on Development
	Homepage: http://www.igad.org/
	Member States: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda
7	SADC – Southern African Development Community
	Homepage: http://www.sadc.int/
	Member States: Angola, Botswana, DR Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe
8	Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA)
	Homepage: http://www.uma.int/
	Member states: Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia

The following sub-section is intended to provide the institutional and legal framework of regional mechanisms. Partner RECs are invited to contribute one paragraph on the institutional history of the REC, one on the legal provisions with regard to conflict prevention, and one paragraph on the state of implementation.

1 Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)

create new map

CEN-SAD was established on 4 February 1998 following a Conference of Leaders and Heads of States held in Tripoli (Great Jamahriya). The Organisation has developed a Protocol on a Mechanism of Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflict. Under the Protocol, there is provision for the establishment of a Regional Peace and Security Observation System, which will have a Situation Centre. In order to put in place its early warning system, CEN-SAD plans to hold several seminars involving the Secretariat staff, senior officers drawn from External Affairs and Defence and Security establishments, as well as civil society groups, including women and religious leaders.

CEN-SAD
18 member states



3rd para to be drafted with RECs in March 2008

2 Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

create new map

COMESA was founded in 1993 as a successor to the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA), which was established in 1981. The PTA Treaty had provided for the transformation of the PTA into a common market ten years after the entry into force of the treaty. COMESA formally succeeded the PTA on 8 December 1994.

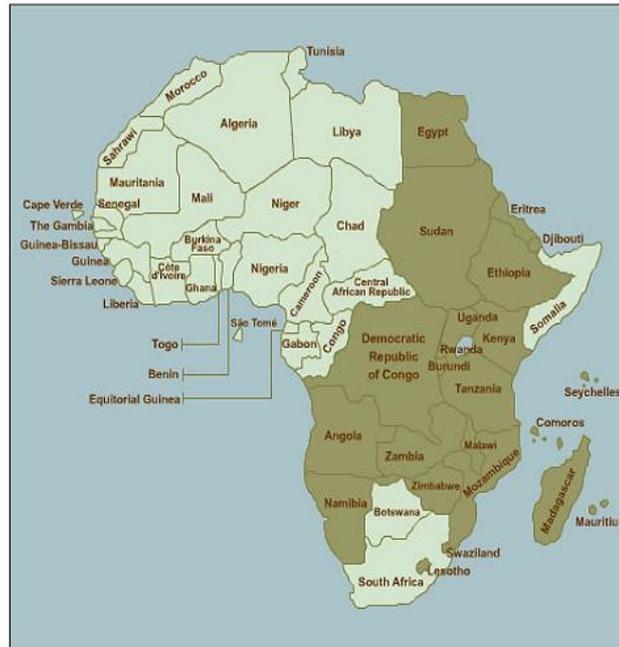
The COMESA mandate on Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution (CPMR) is conflict prevention through preventive diplomacy and is rooted on Article (d) of the COMESA Treaty. The COMESA mandate on early

warning is derived from its conflict prevention mandate. COMESA's "Strategic Plan 2007-2010" states that "the main conflict prevention strategies for COMESA over the next four years will be to ensure that there is no relapse into conflicts in the region". COMESA will thus concentrate on post-conflict reconstruction and early warning. The latter includes the promotion of democratic governance and the establishment of an early warning system. At the Tenth Summit of the COMESA Authority, held in June 2005, the Authority directed COMESA to establish an early warning and response mechanism to compliment the Continental Early Warning System with a focus on the dynamics of the conflicts in the COMESA region.

3rd para to be drafted with RECs in March 2008

COMESA

Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa



3 East African Community (EAC)

add new map

The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community acknowledges the fact that peace and security are a prerequisite to social and economic development urging Partner States to undertake to promote and maintain good neighbourliness as a basis for promoting peace and security within the Community, establish regional disaster management mechanisms and cooperate in the handling of cross border crime, provision of mutual assistance in criminal matters, including arrest and repatriation of fugitive offenders, and the exchange of information on national mechanisms for combating criminal activities.

Following the EAC Council of Ministers call for the development of a mechanism for early warning within the community, a Draft Protocol on Early Warning was agreed upon. According to the Draft Protocol, the objective of the EAC Early Warning Mechanism is to strengthen and complement other regional mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution in line with the provisions of Article 124 of the Treaty.

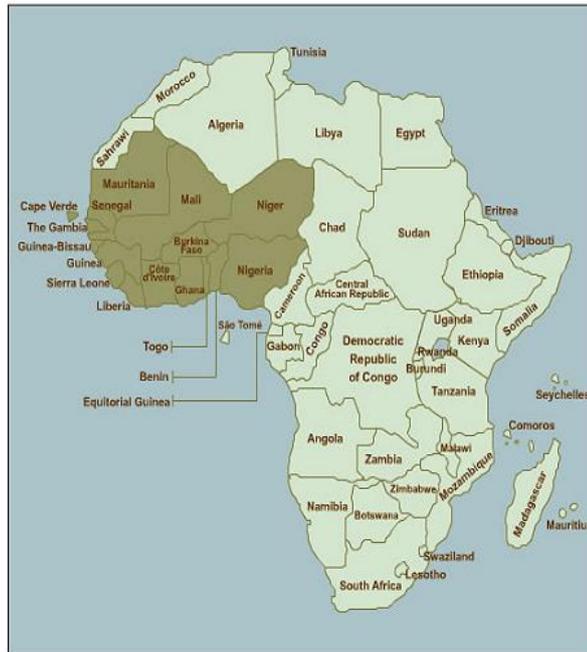
5 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

create new map

ECOWAS was established on 28 May 1975 and formally launched in Lomé on 5 November 1976. In July 1993, a revised ECOWAS Treaty was signed which aimed at accelerating economic integration and increasing political co-operation.

The ECOWAS Peace and Security Observation System was established by the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security, adopted in 1999. Chapter IV of this Protocol called for an Early Warning System that would detect, monitor and analyse signs of threats or breakdown in relations within or between member states (conflict indicators) in accordance with Article 58 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty and make reports for use by the Executive Secretariat.

ECOWAS
Economic Community of West African States



3rd para to be drafted with RECs in March 2008

6 Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

create new map

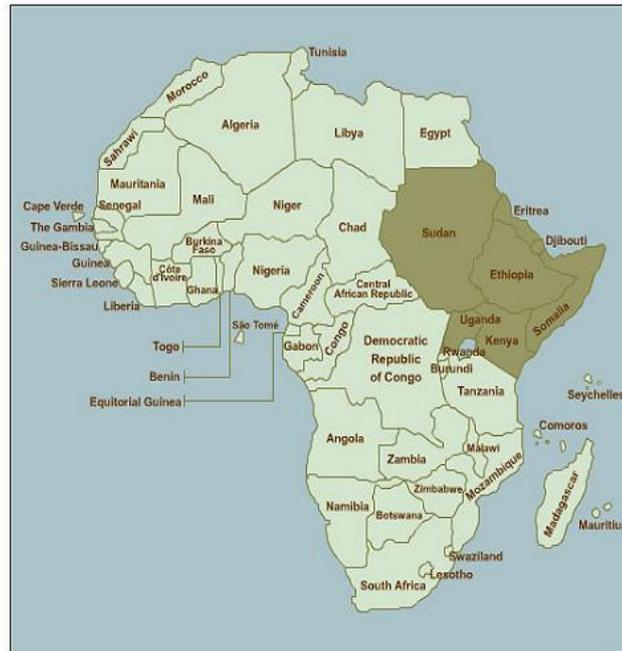
Originally in 1986 the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) was formed with a narrow mandate around the issues of drought and desertification. The Heads of State and Government resolved on 18 April 1995 in Addis Ababa to revitalise the organisation into a fully-fledged REC. On 21 March 1996, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was established.

In 2000, IGAD's Council of Ministers held in Khartoum took the decision to establish CEWARN – the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism. In 2002, a Protocol Agreement on the operational framework was agreed upon. It entered into force in July 2003, having received the necessary instruments of ratification from the State of Eritrea, the Republic of Kenya, the Federal Democratic of Ethiopia and the Republic of the Sudan. The Republic of Djibouti ratified the Protocol in April 2005. One of the main objectives of IGAD is to prevent and manage intra and inter-state conflicts through dialogue. To this end, IGAD created a mechanism to bring about peace and stability within the sub-region and established a conflict early warning and response system.

CEWARN's mandate is "to receive and share information concerning potential violent conflicts as well as their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD sub-region." Since June 2003, CEWARN has been monitoring and tracking cross-border pastoral and related conflicts. CEWARN is a mechanism that coordinates and enhances the cooperation of existing systems of CPMR within each national country and between Member States. Thus in operationalising its early warning and response mechanism, IGAD adopted a "bottom up" and process-oriented approach that builds upon existing efforts, mechanisms and skills within the sub-region. Using the established a system of local information collection networks to collect and document relevant information at the national level, each network is composed of several Field Monitors (FMs), trained in collecting information, categorising and placing that information into prescribed reporting formats.

IGAD

Intergovernmental Authority on Development



to

7 Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)

create new map

The concept of a regional economic co-operation in Southern Africa dates back to discussion among the then Frontline States in May 1979 in Gaborone. In April 1980, the Frontline States established the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) to reduce economic dependency from South Africa, then under the apartheid regime. After the transition to democracy in this country in 1994, SADCC was transformed into SADC.

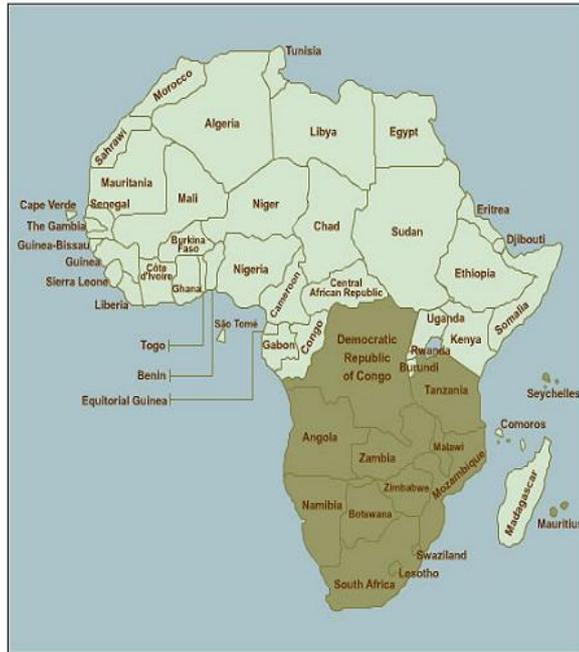
SADC's Regional Early Warning Centre is integrated in the intelligence community and based on classified information. The SADC

system is based on the establishment of the National Early Warning Centres (NECW) in each of the Member States and a Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC), based in Gaborone, Botswana. The organisation tries to address threats and conflicts of a socio-economic nature. SADC is in the process of establishing a Situation Room and recruiting Analysts.

3rd para to be drafted with RECs in March 2008

SADC

The Southern African Development Community



8 Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA)

create map

The first Maghreb Summit of Heads of State in June 1988 led to the establishment of a Maghreb High Commission. On February 17 1989 in Marrakech, a treaty on the establishment of the UMA was signed.

2nd para on conflict prevention decisions

3rd para to be drafted with RECs in March 2008

2 Best Practice and the CEWS

2.1 Conflict Early Warning Systems – An introduction

In the last decade, our understanding and use of so-called “early warning systems” has deepened considerably through both theoretical and methodological development as well as the proliferation of EWS in a wide variety of fields. While these systems had their origins in national military and intelligence establishments, over the last three decades early warning has become increasingly associated with humanitarian action – particularly in the fields of food security and refugee flows. From a focus on the prevention of surprise nuclear attacks and other military incidents during the Cold War, today, early warning is used in a wide range of phenomena ranging from natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods and drought, to the outbreak of epidemics and famines.

In the field of violent conflict, the UN Secretary-General call in the 1992 *Agenda for Peace* for more systematic efforts directed at the prevention of conflict (specifically the adoption of EWS) gave initial impetus to the development and adoption of conflict early warning systems by an increasingly larger number of international organisations (governmental and non-governmental), academic and research institutes and national governments.

The increase in the number, intensity and scope of violent internal conflict following the end of the Cold War, and the dramatic events in Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda led to the realisation of the need for strengthened mechanisms of conflict prevention, in particular preventive diplomacy but not exclusively so. As Lund (1994: #) noted at the time, preventive diplomacy must be “concerned with efforts taken at the low end and incipient stages of a conflict and should be distinguished from action taken with regard to conflicts at higher levels of violence”. The international community was beginning to realise that it had to address problems before they erupted as the costs of inaction in the face of large scale violence were too high in both human and material terms.

Early warning of conflict gradually became – or was seen to have the potential to become – the instrument of choice for the development of preventive options and the deployment of preventive action. Nevertheless, as a result of the variety of actors involved as well as the wide range of issues covered, the theoretical and practical evolution of EWS has resulted in a variety of definitions and methodologies. This is not surprising as “the development of a framework for operational conflict and policy assessment first and foremost asks for (theoretical) knowledge on the causes and dynamics of conflict” (van de Goor and Versteegen 1999: 4). And if there is an issue which divides academics and practitioners it is the causes (aetiology) of violent conflict.

For instance, FEWER (1999: 3) suggests that early warning is “the systematic collection and analysis of information coming from areas of crises for the purposes of: (1) anticipating the escalation of violent conflict; (2) development of strategic response to these crises; and (3) the presentation of options to critical actors (national, regional and international) for the purposes of decision-making and preventive action”. In one way or another, definitions of early warning attach considerable importance to

the quality and timeliness of analysis, the identification of entry points for actions and the provision of sufficient time for the effective planning and implementation of a response as well the potential inherent in these systems to generate awareness and political will necessary for the mobilisation of effective responses.

While the mainstreaming of early warning as an integral part of conflict prevention is widely recognised, two related issues remain contentious. The first relates to debates around methodologies to be applied. Many different methodologies are used in early warning systems, ranging from purely quantitative to purely qualitative systems, to a profusion of hybrid systems in between. The early warning “field” is characterised by the existence of a great variety of disparate tools and incompatible approaches, leading to some incoherence. Virtually no conflict or humanitarian EWS has operated in a sustainable manner over the time required to identify cyclical patterns of turmoil, conflict and disruptions. With the exception of a few data development projects that focus on a particular type of problem (for example, armed conflict or human rights abuses), no project has enjoyed sustained institutional support required to build a sustainable capacity for early warning. Without this, EWS are doomed to breed dependence on external technologies or exacerbate the gaps between rich and poor, governments and civil society.

The second contentious issue regards “the manner in which early responses are produced”, in particular the link between early warning and early action (see for example WANEP and International Alert 2000). As emphasised by Adelman (1996), “the major point of early warning information gathering and analysis is not the information and analysis in itself of the crisis area, but the use of that information and analysis to gain the trust of the decision-makers and to provide them with effective options”. In fact, as an essential element of conflict prevention, early response must include timely and targeted actions undertaken by actors on the basis of early warning. Such timely and targeted action should prevent the (re-)emergence of violent conflicts and embrace “response measures to deal with root causes and risk factors in politically tense situations” (ibid.). This approach to distinguishing root causes and risk factors pointing to “structural long-term and direct short-term preventive actions” was advocated by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1997) and adopted by the European Commission (1996, and reiterated 2001).

Box 6: Conflict prevention

“There are two ways of understanding conflict prevention. One concerns the *direct* preventive actions: a crisis is judged to be in a dangerous phase of military escalation, intensification or diffusion. Thus, there is a need to act to prevent increasing dangers. The actor is a third party, whose interests are less immediate and not directly linked to the incompatibility between the primary parties. A second concern is the *structural* prevention, where the idea is to create such conditions that conflicts and disputes hardly arise or do not threaten to escalate into militarized action. Here a third party could be involved in furnishing assistance for such conditions to develop, for instance. These two types of prevention are called light, direct or operational prevention on the one hand, and deep or structural, on the other hand, depending on the scholar.”

Source: Wallensteen and Möller (2003: 6).

Moreover, optimising the linkage between early warning and early action has been a primary concern of scholars and practitioners engaged in the development and implementation of these systems. An often cited criticism of EWS points to the fact that, although there is a profusion of ever more sophisticated and timely warnings, there is a lack of political will, ability or capacity of actors to act in a preventative manner, rendering these systems' utility null. Nevertheless, the recognition that, although intimately linked, early warning and early action "have distinctively different dynamics" has been an important contribution which has enabled the further development of both.

In addition, we should note that a wide number of processes and activities are part of an early warning system. In fact, the term is often used to describe a variety of activities that are not strictly early warning. These include conflict analysis and monitoring, data analysis, risk assessment and advocacy (Austin 2004). While early warning requires the on-going and near real-time assessment of events that in a high risk situation are likely to accelerate or trigger the rapid escalation of conflict (Gurr 1996), analysis of these events in their specific context is critical as without it the response options developed may be unsuited to the situation and/or unrealistic as regards availability of means. A detailed understanding of the issue and its context is absolutely critical. This is why several authors have considered that purely quantitative systems are unable to identify the causes of conflict as they rely on "empirical causal relationships" – ultimately, as noted by Austin (2004: 21), "conflict analysis is where the researcher must draw the line himself".

The importance of sound analytical tools is also emphasised by Carment and Schnabel (2003: 15) who posit that "a key concern in ensuring effective conflict prevention is how to ensure that the practitioner is equipped with the best available analytical skills to ensure valid and reliable evaluations of potential problems". More importantly, these authors note that "while some systems may rely on the monitoring of background factors and enabling conditions that are associated with the risk of conflict, others only provide information on the probability of specific events leading to conflict ... ideally, both approaches should be pursued simultaneously" (ibid.: 16).

Early warning is best conducted in a participatory manner where governments act in partnership with relevant civil society organisation, based on open sources and transparent methods. The *PSC Protocol* has recognised the importance of these features as they figure prominently in the language describing CEWS. ECOWAS, has explicitly partnered with civil society in the implementation of ECOWARN. Through its transparent, jointly developed set of indicators and procedures, ECOWARN's partnership with a civil society "implementing partner" offers a possible model for CEWS interaction with civil society. In any case, the mandate for civil society participation in CEWS is clear, as is its potential contribution to empowered citizens and good governance.

The PSC Protocol also stipulates engagement of academic institutions and research centres in the development and operation of CEWS. Given the importance of sustainability for the CEWS effort, jointly building a capacity for ongoing development with African academic institutions in particular is key to its long term viability and success. The CEWS system will require continuous updating and its personnel, ongoing training. Thus it is prudent for CEWS to engage leading academic institutions

and research centres to maintain its technological and analytical leadership in the field of early warning.

One additional sector is mentioned in the PSC protocol, the UN, its related agencies and other international organisations that deal with social, political, economic and environmental issues in Africa. CEWS cooperation and collaboration with the AU's "sister" organisations can be mutually beneficial, particularly with those already having regional operations in Africa. More importantly, CEWS engagement with inter-governmental organisations working on related issues can help optimize the linkage between early warning and early responses, from development assistance to peace support operation to reconciliation and reconstruction.

2.2 Conflict and Cooperation Analysis Frameworks – A critical methodological requirement

As noted in the introduction, EWS requires an underlying methodology through which data and information are analysed. In fact, the quality of the warning itself depends on soundness of the analytical process. After all, early warning is a function rather than a method in and of itself. Underlying every EWS – whether designed to deal with refugee flows, human rights violations, ethno-political conflict, genocides, armed conflict, famine and food insecurity, minorities, terrorism etc. – is a form of conflict analysis. Especially, a systematic and transparent approach to conflict assessment such as outlined in this CEWS Handbook can facilitate a better understanding of dynamic phenomena in their unique contexts. This is *not* to say that conflict is the outcome of rationale choices that can be articulated and logically influenced. What the CEWS methodology offers is a comprehensive approach that is amendable to scientific validation.

The considerable resources channelled into the development and application of conflict analysis frameworks by a wide range of organisations (from UN system organisations, to Regional Conflict Prevention Mechanisms, to local NGOs) has been a function of both the increasing complexity of conflict and post-conflict situations (in their political, socio-economic and humanitarian dimensions; as well as their internal and international ramifications), as well as an exponential increase in the number, scope and mandates of organisations trying to address conflict prevention, management, resolution and peace-building in these environments.

The methods used in EWS differ widely, using either a variety of quantitative or qualitative methods or some combination of the two. Those working with qualitative methods use structural models, accelerator models, threshold models, conjunctural models, response models – or, again, combinations of the aforementioned (Austin 2004: 5ff.). Most of the early EWS of the mid-1990s lacked strategic focus. Often the practical purpose of EWS is not clear (e. g. adding to existing reporting systems or enhancing desk officer analytical capacity? forming part of a chain of systematic information gathering and subsequent action? etc.). In a second phase of the debate towards the end of the 1990s, different donor agencies reconsidered their own contribution to the failure of the international community's response to violent conflict. Incidentally, in this context a number of different tools geared towards use by practi-

tioners were developed to assist in the analysis of violent conflict or the potential thereof.

Most important in this respect has been a joint assessment of donors on emergency aid to Rwanda (Joint Evaluation 1996), a report on the influence of aid in situations of violent conflict commissioned by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (Uvin 1999), another report on the effect of aid in conflict commissioned by the German Ministry of Development Cooperation (Klingebiel 1999) and, finally, a report commissioned by the British Department for International Development (DFID) on NGOs and peace building in what was labelled “complex political emergencies” (Hulme and Goodhand 2000).

The CEWS Handbook does not posit a hard distinction between qualitative and quantitative evidence, nor does it forsake the theoretical for the practical or vice versa. Rather, the CEWS approach supports measurement of empirical data to the extent possible, interpreting these observations in context and subjecting them to rigorous tests to render transparent judgements. In other words, the CEWS methodology embodies a scientific approach to early warning.

By and large, the impetus for the development of conflict assessments has been that of assuring that humanitarian assistance, post-conflict peace-building and, ultimately, development assistance should aim at minimizing unintended negative impacts by “understanding the underlying causes and consequences of violent conflicts, as well as the dynamics supporting or undermining peace efforts” – the “conflict sensitivity” issue referred to above. In addition, for operational agencies such as UN system organisations, the development of a common framework of analysis has been strongly related to the need, as perceived by these organisations, “to *promote a coherent and integrated response*” (UNDG ECHA 2004). In fact, the development by UN Development Group Executive Committee of Humanitarian Affairs of a standardised inter-agency methodology for conflict analysis is evidence that both interlocking sets of considerations (“doing no harm” and “response coherence and integration”) are critical for the success of peace-building activities.¹

Moreover, the development of conflict analysis frameworks has benefited significantly from the contributions of at least three very different fields: on the one hand, the contributions of conflict research and peace studies as regards our understanding of conflict, its prevention, management and resolution; secondly, the contributions of strategic studies and in particular those of strategic intelligence; and finally, the contributions from management science and organisational development – as regards a number of tools that have formed part of the “arsenal” of tools at the disposal of organisations to measure the impacts (positive as well as negative) of development policies and practices – conventional risk assessment methodologies or management-related tools such as programme log frames.

Irrespective of the influences of different fields of enquiry, the primary aim of conflict assessment frameworks has been of a very practical nature: maximizing the peace-building impact of activities, policies and programmes by organisations on the ground. Kenneth Bush’s Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) methodology developed for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Can-

¹ In this regard, it is useful to recall the UN Secretary-General’s definition of peace-building in the 1992 Agenda for Peace as “actions to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict”.

ada (Bush 1998) is paradigmatic of this – PCIA’s main objective is to give development and peace-building interventions a tool to enhance their awareness of how their interventions may create negative effects.

In the UN system for example, the UNDG ECHA (2004: 14) working group concluded that “it is critical that the recommendations [from conflict analysis] feed into other planning frameworks that are available to the UN system in transition countries such as the CAP (Consolidated Appeals Process), UNDAF (Common Country Assessment and Development Assistance Framework) and PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Process) as well as into national development plans”. In addition, it stated that “while transition planning should be based on a needs assessment, it is equally important to ensure that conflict analysis forms part of this process” (ibid.: 14).

More recently, conflict assessment methodologies have been recommended as tools in the planning and development of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reconstruction (DDR) programmes, whether as part of peace-keeping operations or as stand alone operations. Conflict analysis is recommended so that these operations are based on an analysis of the “root causes” and nature of the conflict and post-conflict environment.

Typically, SCAs aim to find answers to comprehend the nature of violent conflict, to identify the stakeholders involved, to understand the causes of conflict and to look into trends and opportunities (see box 7).

Box 7: Key concerns of Strategic Conflict Assessments	
Issue	Major questions
Nature of conflict	What type of conflict are we dealing with? When did it turn violent? How did it develop over the last years?
Stakeholders	Who are the stakeholders? Who are the parties in conflict? Can their positions, interests and capabilities be identified? If so, are they stated or implicit? What are the interests, the alliances and networks are representing? What capacities do the conflicting parties have to continue the conflict? Are there capacities or peace?
Causes of conflict	Why did the conflict start? What are the root causes? What are the structural causes of conflict? What circumstances contribute to prolonging the conflict? What are the main obstacles to a peaceful solution? Is there a gender dimension to the conflict?
Trends and opportunities	Where is the conflict in the different conflict phases? What factors provoke violence, what factors contribute to peace? Are there peace initiatives? At what level? What have they achieved? How can linkages between micro-level activities and macro-level processes be achieved?

Conflict assessment in international development assistance has advanced to levels that allow for a transfer of approaches and tools to other policy sectors, including conflict early warning.

The following assessment of lessons learned and best practice is based on a review primarily, but not exclusively, of four major international approaches to SCA (see table 3). In order of development, these are the German Development Agency (GTZ)’s

Conflict Analysis Framework, DFID's Conflict Assessment Framework, the World Bank's Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF), and the United Nations Inter-Agency Framework for Conflict Analysis in Transition Situations.

Table 3: Principal approaches to strategic conflict analysis

Approach	Agency	Source	Website
Collection of qualitative approaches and tools	German Development Agency, GTZ	Manuela Leonhardt 2001a. Conflict Analysis for project Planning and Management. A practical guideline – draft. Eschborn: GTZ. Manuela Leonhardt 2001b. Conflict Impact Assessment or Development Projects. Eschborn: GTZ.	http://www.gtz.de/en/themen/uebergreifende-men/krisenpraevention/4091.htm http://www.gtz.de/de/dokumente/en-crisis-conflictanalysis-2001.pdf
Qualitative (combination of structural and accelerator models)	Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom	DFID 2002. Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes. London: DFID.	http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/conflictassessmentguidance.pdf
Qualitative (combination of structural and accelerator models)	UNDG ECHA	UNDG ECHA 2004. Inter-agency framework for conflict analysis in transition situations.	
Qualitative (combination of structural and accelerator models)	The World Bank, Washington DC	Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Team (CPR), Social Development Department, World Bank 2005. Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF). Draft. Washington DC: The World Bank.	http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCPR/214574-1112883508044/20657757/CAFApril2005.pdf

These four conflict analysis frameworks tend to emphasise that, because of the unique nature of each conflict situation, the design and conduct of conflict assessments will vary from case to case. One important recommendation stems from the UN's inter-agency framework (2004: 4): that "the intention in applying this framework should therefore not be to 'fill in the boxes' but, in view of the specificities of each transition situation, to organise a process, which will help arrive at some common understanding of the key analytical components". Equally, DFID (2002: 7) warns that the methodology should not be seen as a formula and that it should (1) adapt according to the needs and objectives of the end-user; (2) develop according to the nature and phase of the conflict; (3) develop dynamic forms of analysis and, finally, (4) encourage "joined-up" analysis.

Several of the methodologies currently in use share a very similar approach to the stages or steps of conflict analysis. For example, both DFID's *Conflict Assessments*

and the UN system's *Common Framework* are based on three analytical stages, combining the analysis of conflict causes with a scrutiny of responses, before going into the development of strategic options. Also, these approaches share considerable common ground in terms of what they conceive to be the essential units of analysis. Yet implicitly there is little consent on how exactly these units have to be framed.

The debate has also shown that the development of analytical instruments by and large was disconnected from their potential end-users. Although there was a demand for practical assistance, especially "from the field", the issue of conflict prevention was not yet mainstreamed into operational routines of development assistance agencies. The added-value of the tools introduced was unclear because the purpose was not politically or organisationally defined.

In principle, conflict assessments are undertaken to enable and strengthen the development of response options rather than mere research exercises – the development of strategies and policy options as well recommendations at a programmatic level being the ultimate objective. In fact, this orientation towards the exploration of response options determines the structure as well as the process by which SCAs are normally undertaken. Ultimately, it is the use or otherwise of the Strategic Conflict Assessment Report (the main output of a conflict assessment) by agencies which will determine its usefulness.

2.3 Lessons Learned from African Best Practice

Two RECs in particular have already established operational EWSs, i.e. IGAD's CEWARN and ECOWAS' ECOWARN. Both systems show a number of methodological similarities to the CEWS Framework. The operational set-up and practice of both EWS are introduced in this sub-chapter.

CEWARN (IGAD)²

In each of the IGAD Member States, CEWARN has designated certain institutions to act as National Research Institutes (NRIs) and contracted them as partner organisations. Each NRI has a CEWARN Country Coordinator (CC), supported by an assistant, who is responsible (a) to organise and supervise the required field monitoring, (b) to coordinate information and data collection, and (c) to analyse the data and submit EW reports. The CEWARN Unit in Addis Ababa is the regional hub for data collection, conflict analyses, information sharing, and communication of response options. It acts as a clearing house and is responsible for quality control. It supports CEWARN stakeholders in capacity-building (including training), coordinates the different CEWARN organs, assists in developing regional cooperation structures and is the driving force for the political process behind the Mechanism. The CEWARN office started its work in 2002, and field data has been continuously collected and analysed since mid-2003.

² See homepage: <http://www.cewarn.org>.

At the national level, the CEWARN Mechanism builds upon Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Units (CEWERUs) as focal coordinating units integrated to operate within relevant Ministries of IGAD Member States. These units are directed and managed by CEWERU Heads who are nominated by the Member States themselves. Each CEWERU is mandated to form a Steering Committee including representatives of relevant ministries, security bodies such as police, intelligence and military, legislative bodies, civil society organisations, academia, religious organisations or other influential members of societies. Bringing together governmental decision makers and civil society representatives, the CEWERUs are the responsible bodies for response initiatives on a country level to be implemented in close cooperation with Local Committees or Sub-Regional Peace Councils.

The two regional coordinating structures of the Mechanism are the Technical Committee for Early Warning (TCEW) and the Committee of Permanent Secretaries (CPS). At the intermediate level, the Heads of CEWERUs collectively form the Technical Committee, which convenes twice a year to run technical consultations on the CEWARN Mechanism, including the discussion of early warning reports and response options. The TCEW submits its recommendations to the CPS that comprises of senior governmental representatives designated by IGAD Member States. The CPS is the policy-making organ of CEWARN and it reports to the Council of Ministers, which in turn reports to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The Executive Secretary, the Director of Peace and Security Division and the Director of the CEWARN Unit are ex-officio members of the CPS. CEWARN has fully implemented its mechanism in three countries – Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The National Early Warning and Response Units (CEWERUs) has been established in all other member countries, except Somalia.

The methodology adopted by CEWARN involves (1) information collection and (2) analysis, (3) formulation of best/worst/most likely case scenarios and response options, and (4) the communication of these to the decision makers. Taking a comprehensive approach, it collects both qualitative (violent event data) and quantitative (constant behavioural factors) information through identified indicators that will enable it to collect data on both conflictive and peace developments. The analysis of data uses the analytical framework of root causes, proximate causes and triggering factors.

CEWARN has an information gathering and analysis tool known as the CEWARN Reporter, used for coding, graphing and analysis of data. The tasks of CEWARN include collecting data and producing reports, which are eventually discussed by Member States. From the field data, CEWARN produces two types of reports: Incident Reports (violent pastoral and related conflicts – submitted as they occur) and Situation Reports (general cultural, social, economic and political situation of the targeted areas – submitted weekly). CEWARN produces Country Updates, from Situation and Incident Reports, three times a year. The reports provide response recommendations.

An important lesson that has been learned from CEWARN over the past five years is that conflict does not erupt from a vacuum. At its first technical consultative meeting held in 2002, a group of local scholars and practitioners were asked about early warning in the (Karamoja) region. Their response was unanimous: people on the ground know when raids will happen and they know when their security is threatened. The consultation thus proceeded with a discussion of *how* these local experts

knew ... in other words, they began to articulate the signs of imminent conflict in the region. Thus was born the pastoral conflict indicators that subsequently were monitored by field reporters on a weekly basis. The CEWARN approach of specifying and monitoring indicators specific to the local context is a good example of a data driven EWS.

ECOWARN (ECOWAS)³

The system consists of an Observation and Monitoring Centre (OMC), which is based at the ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja, as well as of four Zonal Offices, which, gathering information from their focal areas on a daily basis, report to the OMC. These Zonal Offices are located in Cotonou (covering Benin, Nigeria and Togo); Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Niger); Monrovia (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana); and Banjul (The Gambia, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal). ECOWARN has collected and analysed field data continuously since early 2006. ECOWARN field officers, together with representatives from WANEP, its implementing partner, collect and analyse field data. OMC staff then compiles reports based on these analyses, which are submitted to the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS.

ECOWARN and WANEP have jointly developed a series of indicators of conflict and peace specific to the mandate and to the ECOWAS region and track them with a field reporting and analysis system for systematic monitoring and analysis of conflict and peace trends. The process of identifying and specifying these indicators was accomplished through a series of consultations, both large and small, of local academics and practitioners throughout the region. It took nearly two years to formulate a first draft of the operationalised indicator set to cover a wide range of social, political and economic precursors to conflict, instability and disruption. ECOWARN and WANEP jointly draw upon the services of governmental and non-governmental focal points in the Member States whose task is to input data into the EWS. Like CEWARN, ECOWARN presents a good example of a data driven EWS.

The IGAD and ECOWAS early warning and response systems are each designed and operate to their unique regions, specifications and requirements. Together these two RECs have systematically specified, collected and analysed field data in their respective regions for a total of more than five years, which offers a tremendous wealth of experience that has been drawn upon by CEWS in the design of its framework. Actually, significant interaction and some cooperation among the three has occurred since their operations began. This cooperation has yielded a congruent set of systems that together can inform and guide a continent wide interoperability for CEWS.

One final comment on the CEWARN and ECOWARN systems is in order here. It relates to the CEWS challenge of inter-operability among diverse systems across Africa. The indicators developed for CEWARN's narrow focus on pastoral conflict are quite different from ECOWARN's indicators yet the two are congruent in their approach and thus are comparable at a higher level of analysis. This kind of interoperability made possible through the coordinated development between developers at

³ See homepage: <http://www.ecowarn.org/Home.sap> (login only!).

CEWARN and ECOWARN as well as with CEWS. This kind of cooperation is useful as a model to extend the CEWS interoperability across the continent.

2.4 Strategic Conflict Analysis for the Purposes of the AU – Introducing the CEWS

The CEWS is both a continent wide framework and a methodology with specific implications to the AUCMD. As a continent wide framework, it addresses issues of harmonisation and coordination of existing early warning systems as well as those currently under development in all the eight RECs. The CEWS methodology must inform the totality of the activities and outputs of the CEWS, bearing in mind the constituent role assigned to the RECs as integral to the CEWS itself. Consequently, the CEWS methodology is designed to assure that the CEWS operates in an integrated fashion, with a shared purpose, methodological compatibility and terminology. Furthermore, the CEWS methodology has been specifically developed to address the particular needs and requirements of the AU. This methodology underlines the operation of the CEWS. The CEWS Handbook closely mirrors the “Key Elements of the CEWS” as detailed in the *Roadmap*.

In the previous pages, it was argued that a specifically tailored SCA methodology would be a viable method underlying the CEWS early warning function. In the past, however, SCAs have been conducted to produce stand-alone reports. These reports are not part of a larger and regular cycle of reporting, assessment and policy/response options formulation. Usually, this type of SCA is carried out once a crisis situation has already arisen. The policy advice derived from such an exercise is singular in the sense that there are no systematic follow-up assessments. CEWS is different from this practice: It looks at emerging violent conflict, it aims at producing regular reports and it is integrated in feed-back loops which link reporting to decision-making on emerging violent conflict.

Although the SCAs referred to above have proved to be a proper analytical tool for an ex post understanding of violent conflict, for strictly conflict preventive purposes they must be conducted prior to the outbreak of violent conflict, they have to be based on risk propensities and baselines, and they should be carried out on a regular basis as an integrated exercise of a larger decision-making process.

The specific challenge CEWS has to meet is the character of regular and repeated assessments which are based on a continuous process of data collection. Therefore, more than a specific report-type, CEWS is an overarching framework which includes three iterative and concurrent phases (see box 8):

Box 8: The CMD's Strategic Conflict Analysis flowchart					
	Activity		Interim outputs		Final outputs
STEP 1	Information collection and monitoring		Profiles, vulnerability assessments and baselines		Alerts
STEP 2	Conflict and cooperation analysis		Strategic conditions, networks and trends		Early Warnings
STEP 3	Policy and response formulation		Scenarios, courses of action and evaluations		Recommendations for action

The first activity, step 1, focuses on the continuous (and automated) *Information Collection and Monitoring*. The aim here is to produce country and actor profiles, vulnerabilities propensities and baselines (as detailed in chapter 3 below) upon which alerts are initiated. This first activity assures that CEWS fulfils the requirement of continuous monitoring of political, economic, humanitarian, social and military developments across the continent. At the same time, these activities enable the development of base line information critical for conflict and cooperation analysis. In the second step, the conduct of *Conflict and Cooperation Analysis* leads to the creation of systematic knowledge on strategic conditions, networks and trends (as elaborated in chapter 4). This phase corresponds more closely to the traditional understanding of SCAs as detailed above. It helps to contextualise the alert against the specific nature and background of the conflict in question. Finally, it will lead to the production of early warnings. In the third step, *Policy and Response Formulation*, the focus will be on the development of possible scenarios and actionable options. This will enable the CEWS to come up with recommendations for action to their specific end-users. Before the next three chapters, which will discuss these activities in greater detail, the experience of the RECs with EWS will be briefly recalled.

It is to the development of conflict analysis tools that this document now turns, in an effort to arrive at a specifically tailored analytical basis for CEWS. In the next two chapters, the analytical tools will be detailed.

3 Information Collection and Monitoring

As noted in the pages above, the “efficient management of data and information must include adequate collection, compilation, management and distribution systems”. The *Roadmap* refers to the CEWS as an “an open-source system where information is gathered from a variety of different sources, including, *inter alia*, governmental and inter-governmental actors, international and non-governmental organisations, the media, academia and think-thanks”. In fact, “while key sources of data include those generated by the AU itself (Commission, AU Field Missions and Liaison Offices), as well as that generated at the level of the RECs and Member States, collaboration with the United Nations, its agencies, other relevant international organisations, research centres, academic institutions and NGOs” is clearly stipulated by the *PSC Protocol*.

Appropriate information collection, compilation, management and distribution systems are therefore critical for the functioning of the CEWS. In the CEWS methodology, information collection and monitoring are carefully considered – as the continuous monitoring of political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators at multiple levels of analysis and for a large number of countries and regions (which is a requirement of the *Roadmap*) is a complex undertaking.

To enable the efficient collection, monitoring and management of information, the specification of the framework of variables, indicators and parameters that will guide these activities must be conducted *jointly* by CEWS staff (the Situation Room, Early Warning Unit and the Desk Officers). This will address the requirements expressed in the *PSC Protocol* and detailed in the CEWS Background Paper No. 2 for the development of an *Indicators Module*, based around political, economic, social, humanitarian and military indicators. Once the range of parameters have been established for the entire continent, regular information collection, monitoring and management are to be carried out by Situation Room staff members and the RECs.

The CEWS’ staff, the CEWS methodology outlines three generic clusters within which these activities can be subsumed:

1. Context and Structural Information on Countries and Regions;
2. Actor Attribute Information on key Individuals and Groups; and
3. Information on Behaviours and Events as they evolve over time.

3.1 Data Driven Analysis and Indicators

For each of these steps dealing with information collection and monitoring, the CEWS methodology is anchored upon data driven analysis. Data driven analysis begins with the specification of indicators followed by continuous monitoring for changes over time. The results are presented in a baseline or time series measure of the indicators as they evolve. The baseline may reflect a stable situation, with relatively little change, or it may reflect an escalation into a violent conflict. In other words, inflections in the baselines represent potential escalations (or de-escalations) of conflict. The degree to which current baselines deviate from historical baselines

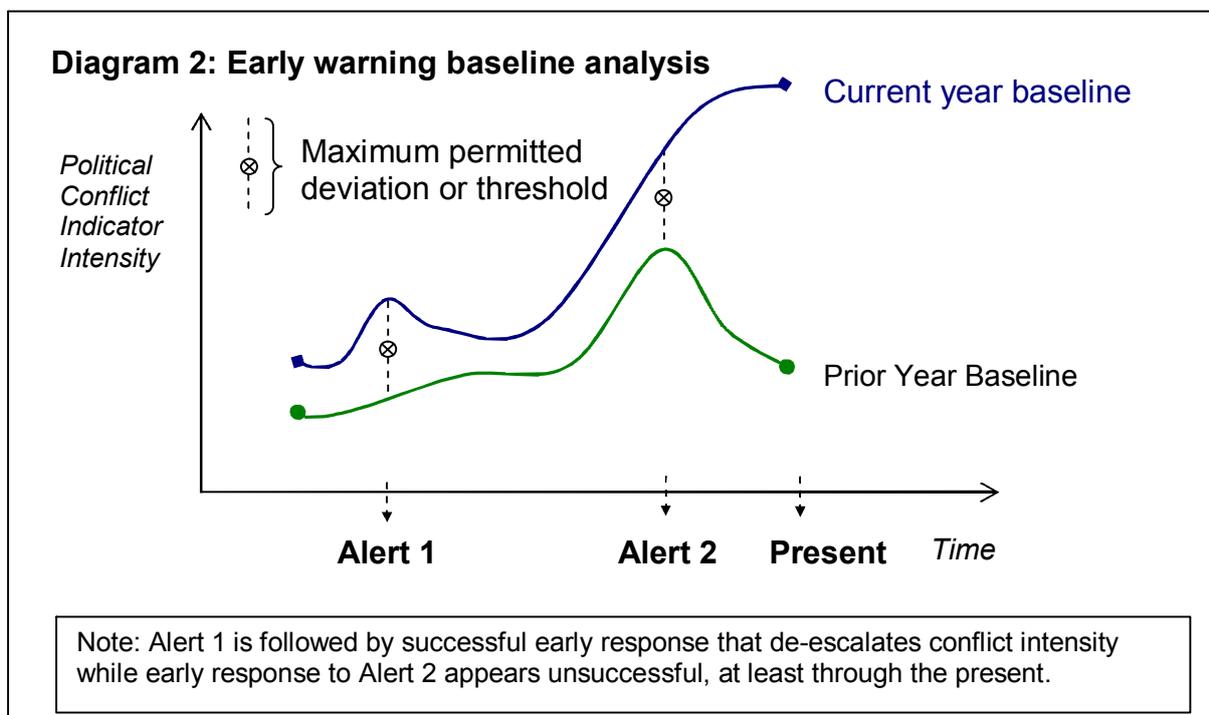
may also indicate a potential conflict. In practice, both inflections and deviations are considered in the generations of alerts.

Baseline analysis is a pre-requisite for effective early warning and early response. The development and updating of baselines for political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators is called for in the *PSC Protocol*. By continuously tracking the evolution of conditions and events, CEWS analysts are better able to compare baselines over time and anticipate subtle changes that may lead to escalations in a conflict situation, instability or disruption. Significant inflections in baselines reflect a deviation from the “norm” which, if undesirable, may indicate a need for early response to prevent conflict.

Baselines are developed by monitoring a pre-defined set of indicators within political, economic, social, military and humanitarian domains. Two of the RECs, IGAD and ECOWAS, have already developed operational frameworks for indicators relevant to their respective mandates and/or areas of interest. These include pastoral conflict, the media and peace-building, state collapse, elections, forced migration, human rights and judicial reform, small arms proliferation and environmental degradation. Additional areas of interest may also be added in conjunction with these and other RECs to represent the full range of interests across the continent. As a continental framework, the *CEWS Indicators Module* will take into account these and other indicators.

The maintenance of historical as well as current baselines enables CEWS to integrate early warning analysis with early response by facilitating retrospective testing across time and like conditions. For example, when political conflict intensity passes a pre-defined threshold or limit, automatic alerts may be generated and presented to CEWS analysts with a host of pre-defined response options based on prior contingency planning exercises (for the principle see diagram 2).

In this way, the same logic of data driven analysis described above holds; specifically, continuous monitoring of a set of indicators is conducted and when inflections over time indicate a possible escalation, especially when the deviation is large relative to historical patterns, an alert is generated. This alert in turn is examined by an analyst and/or regional expert to determine whether the deviation has surpassed a threshold that may call for action or at least further analysis.



In short, the thresholds may be integrated into a menu of pre-defined options for early response. For example, a list of contingency response options could be identified and relevant parties contacted automatically when one or more baselines monitoring humanitarian indicators reach a particular threshold. CEWS thus can conduct near real-time baseline monitoring and communicate timely alerts to relevant parties.

Alerts then may be considered the analytic product of the information collection and monitoring step. Such data driven analysis is also usefully considered a pre-requisite for effective early warning and response. Behaviour baselines in particular are useful due to their short-term, rapidly changing character. However, changes in profiles may also be revealing of more slowly changing, structural issues that may exacerbate a conflict. In either case, significant deviations or inflections may signify a departure from the “norm” which, if undesirable, may indicate a need for early response.

In the discussion that follows, the approach of using data driven baselines applies to the structural data of a country context, the attribute data of actors and their networks, as well as to the dynamic data of interactions and behaviour.

3.2 Context and Country Profiles

Information collection and management must contribute to the development of baseline data and be easily updatable and retrievable by CEWS staff. As noted above, although a function of the Situation Room, the development of country/regional profiles is the product of the interaction of the entire CEWS staff, particularly in its role of setting standards among the RECs. The continuous collection and appropriate management of baseline information on all countries and regions (for example in a web-based relational database format) will provide an invaluable resource for analysts and EW officers at both the AU and the RECs as it will allow them to have an up to date source of the evolution of events as they occur in any particular conflict situation.

Furthermore, and from an early warning point of view, as the profiles, risk propensity ratings and baselines are updated continuously by the Situation Room, any strong deviations on any parameter will be noted and an alert will be issued to the relevant analyst or desk officer, for follow up analysis.

Typically, country profiles would include details on the following issues (see table 4). As noted above, even though the changes in these country profiles may be slow to evolve, their effect may be to exacerbate a situation of conflict to the point where escalation is more likely. It is this kind of subtle inflection in the country profile baselines that may call for early response in the form of development assistance designed to mitigate that exacerbating condition.

Table 4: Illustration of country profile details

Areas	Issues
Map	Administrative boundaries; climate; ; distribution of ethnic identity groups, natural resources, ...; physical features, railways, roads, sub-region, towns; airports; dams, ...
Environmental conditions	Climate, weather, ...
Political system	Armed groups, constitutional-legal system, corruption, CSOs (profiles of the most important ~), political parties, political rights and civil liberties, system of government, ...
Economic	Annual budget, agricultural production, economic growth (gross & per capita), external debt, foreign direct investment (FDI), GDP, GNP, human development index (HDI), income (gross & per capita), industry, inflation rate, infrastructure, natural resources, unemployment rate, ...
Social	Demographic, ethnic identity groups, health, languages, literacy, religion, stunting rates, traditions and belief systems
Military	Expenditure, private security, size and structure, SALW availability, special forces ...
Regional and international issues	Cross-border issues (pastoralism, ...), membership in international organisations, migration patterns, relations with neighbouring countries, ...
Media	Communication, media types and outreach, press freedoms

3.3 Actors and Their Networks

To enable analysts and EW officers to carry out an “actor analysis” appropriately (see next chapter on Conflict and Cooperation Analysis), the identification of main protagonists – groups, institutions, individuals – who influence or are affected by a situation (at country, regional or international levels) is critical. As with country/regional profiles, the definition of parameters and actor-types should be undertaken *a priori* by the CEWS staff in consultation with the RECs. Over time, the appropriate collection and management of information (open source) on the key actors contributes to the maintenance of a current reference source of comparable information which strengthens the analyst’s ability to understand motivations and interests.

Individual actor parameters typically include basic information about somebody’s age, gender, education, family and profession. In addition, affiliations and memberships in political groups may be included, particularly when they are relevant to politically active organisations. Group actor parameters typically include the same kinds of information as it describes the group as a whole. Thus the number of members of a group and who they are, the group’s objectives and activities are recorded. The actor “biographies” are used to develop profiles of the operative social, political and economic networks in a given country relevant to a given purpose.

In the development of an actor profile, the analyst should list the actor parameters deemed important for the CEWS to monitor at the national level for any given case of interest. The analyst should therefore identify specific individuals and groups who are influential and relevant to the CEWS mandate. This should include a brief explanation of the reasoning for the selection of the parameters themselves and some information on sources as well as a note where appropriate on the logistics of gathering and continually updating this information.

Like the country profile baselines, shifts in the actor network and profile baselines can reveal situations of potential conflict escalation. Thus each baseline is monitored for inflections and deviations to be examined and interpreted by an analyst and/or regional specialist at the next step.

3.4 Behaviour and Event Baselines

Event baselines may be generated from field or news reports, with a typical temporal interval ranging from daily to weekly. These event baselines represent the interaction of dynamic events in volatile situations. However, baselines may also be generated from evolving structural attributes over longer periods of time. Examples of these slower moving baselines may include annualised economic data such as GDP/capita and trade flows, and demographic data such as population and mortality rates. In the discussion below, emphasis is first placed on event baselines generated from field reports. In the discussion of baselines below, the focus is on the dynamic baselines generated from field and news reports.

Field reporting is carried out by AU Missions and regional offices, but the bulk of the burden for field data collection is likely to be carried by the RECs. As noted above, both IGAD and ECOWAS are already operational in their field reporting, with field data streams that extend four and two years respectively.

A critical issue in field reporting is the misguided notion of focusing on incidents, typically violent (or even “events” more broadly defined as including both cooperation and conflict) that has driven most early warning efforts to date. With this all too common approach, - an under reporting of signs of local cooperation is often noticed because it is far easier to document violent incidents given their higher visibility and certainty with respect to their threshold of inclusion as an event. Thus the danger here is not fully mitigated by monitoring both conflict and cooperation incidents; the issue of conditions for or situations of peace and conflict is not addressed when the focus is exclusively on interactions or “events” that must be defended as significant, typically at the national level.

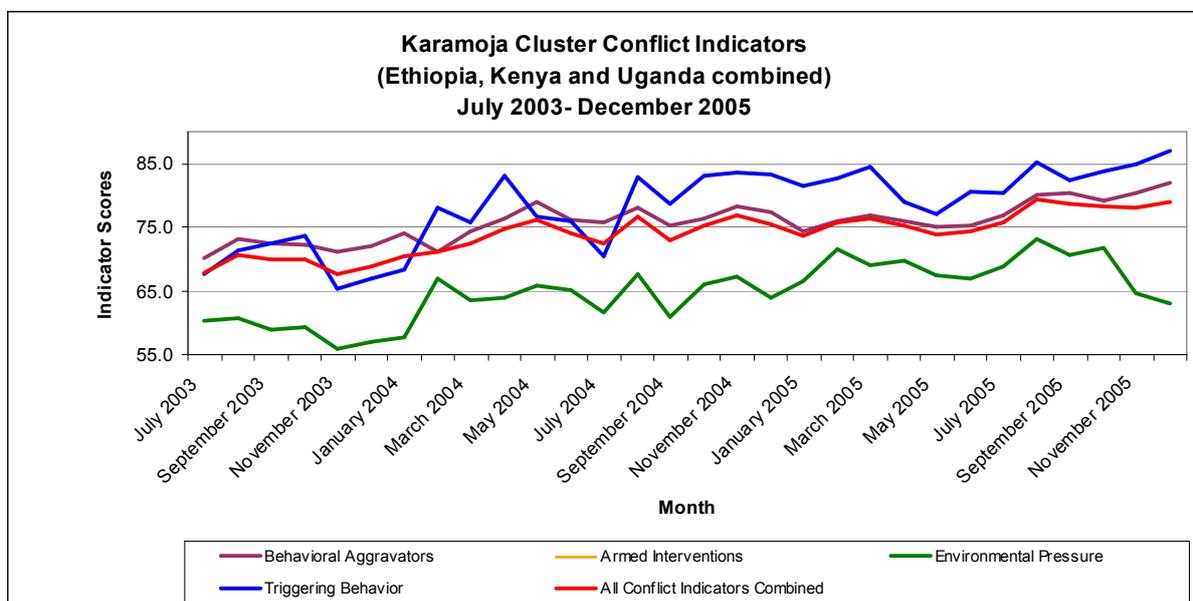
In addition to Incident Reports, or “IncReps,” the integration of Situation Reports, or “SitReps”, to the information collection framework is important. SitReps enable observers to provide contextual information and narratives on a regular (typically weekly) basis; thus ensuring continuity in the data stream collected at the field level. More importantly, SitReps monitor pre-cursors to conflict and cooperation.

By integrating SitReps, CEWS analysts will be better able to identify which pre-cursors documented in the SitReps lead to the *post facto* violent incidents recorded in the IncReps. This approach can provide CEWS analysts with advanced warning of

upcoming incidents making conflict prevention more than a hypothetical possibility. Indeed, the IGAD/CEWARN and ECOWAS/ECOWARN efforts have demonstrated the value of this integrated approach to structured field reporting over the past several years in their field monitoring efforts.

As noted above, the specific indicators to be monitored may be unique to a country or region. It is important for CEWS to develop a continent-wide core of shared or common precursors, complimented by additional indicators developed to monitor the unique aspects of conflict in the participating sub-regions. In all areas, the SitRep indicators are designed to emphasize peace generating and conflict mitigating factors. In this way, CEWS can facilitate the drafting of targeted response strategies. It is the inclusion of SitReps that makes this integrated, structured report approach a proven and distinctive early warning mechanism. The integration of protocols for response mechanisms will lend CEWS the capacity to actually link early warning signals with responses. A sample SitRep baseline from IGAD follows (see diagram 3). It was generated by the weekly field situation reports submitted by the CEWARN Field Monitors:

Diagram 3: IGAD CEWARN baseline



Source: http://www.cewarn.org/index_files/Page360.htm.

As noted above, another source of event baselines is news reports. With this approach, a software application automatically monitors and analyses numerous international news service feeds as well as regional and local news sources to develop the baselines similar to the field data baselines discussed above.

The AU has partnered with the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre to design and deploy an Africa-specific news tracking system for exclusive use by CEWS and its partners. The application will eventually track news reports in real time using the basic events data parameters, *who does what to/with whom, when, where,*

why and how. For now, the system is tracking the news reports based on a proxy for these event parameters, topic of each (news) report. These topics (for example, violence, the environment, health and agriculture issues) can be treated in the same way as the full set of event parameters for the purpose of developing dynamic baselines of events reported in the news.

Whether tracking event parameters or topics, this events data approach yields a measurable baseline for the full range of social, political, economic and environmental events reported in the news. From these events data, dynamic baselines are compiled from which subtle inflections and anomalies in their incidence may be visualised. In other words, the inflections in the baseline of reported activities can be flagged prior to their escalation into a volatile situation and possible violence.

This application presents the content summaries of news reports in graphic and geographic form. Intuitive displays enable analysts to monitor developing trends and conduct analyses by visualising emerging media coverage. Analysts can also use the built-in statistical tools to assess the significance of emerging trends in the ongoing traces of events and develop reliable baselines for early warning.

Another consideration in the tracking of events is the recognition that what has been described above is a complement to the more conventional incident and situation report narratives that are typically associated with early warning analysis. The emphasis herein on quantifiable measures of events complements, but does not replace the more qualitative interpretation of these reports.

With respect to field reports, the conventional mode of operation is to use a template with topical divisions, such as social, political, economic and military issues, and invite the field reporters to comment on these issues in each report they submit. The reports take on the form of a structured narrative. What is emphasized here is to continue with this approach but add to it a quantifiable template of events or situation parameters that can be checked by the reporters and submitted together with any additional narratives they may wish to offer. Both CEWARN and ECOWARN already have the ability to (and, in fact, do) track this kind of mixed (quantitative and qualitative) field report.

With respect to news reports, of course they are already in the form of structured narratives, edited and polished by their source agencies. Much more than a clipping service, the AU Situation Room's "Africa News Brief" application already delivers daily briefings on relevant news events collected from hundreds of news and other on-line sites. The topic counts derived from this tracking service already offer dynamic event baselines in near real-time.

The Situation Room is considering various technologies to support a "Bulletin Board" for joint use with the RECs. The posting of certain field news narrative reports with such a system would facilitate collaboration with the RECs by allowing annotations and other evaluative narratives to be integrated into the databases of field and news reports and offering a kind of quality control by collective assessment. The bottom line for the event tracking system is to make it as rigorous as possible while also offering open ended commentary to be added at any point. Only in this way can the event baselines be interpreted in their full context.

3.5 Harmonisation and Coordination

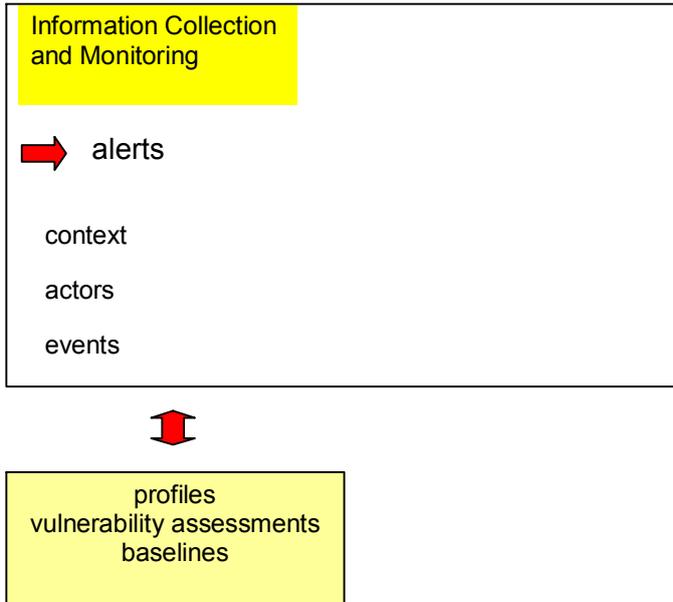
Although the RECs have been engaged throughout the CEWS formation process, the details of system (AU-RECs) inter-operability have yet to be jointly resolved. The inter-operability of systems affects all aspects of communicating on early warning between the AU and the RECs, including – in the case of information collection and monitoring – the question of applications, data, formats, indicators etc. Thus, this issue is on the CEWS agenda for the next several months. It therefore has to be subject to a participatory process of joint design. It cannot be stressed enough that the CEWS methodology has a unique standard setting role as it will offer the full range of indicators that allow the RECs to operate independently and at the same time to interact with each other.

For CEWS to set meaningful and useful standards, it will require interoperability and a division of labour among the RECs. The inter-operability is being addressed through periodic consultations with the RECs, both bilaterally and as a group. The optimal division of labour, however, is likely to involve policy considerations that transcend the technical issues.

One plausible scenario is to build upon existing strengths and resources among the RECs, specifically their proximity to the conflicts within their respective regions. Such a scenario might draw upon the RECs to continue their field information collection and monitoring while CEWS coordinates the sharing of data summaries among them. Meanwhile the CEWS Situation Room could take primary responsibility for information collection and monitoring of news reports given that it is a more centralised activity the results of which can be readily distributed to the RECs.

Another area where the CEWS may take a central role is with the development and maintenance of an indicator module as specified in the *PSC Protocol*. The CEWS SitRoom could manage a “basket” of indicators to which RECs may contribute and from which the RECs may use for their information collection and monitoring activities in the field. Such a division of labour with respect to indicators module would facilitate interoperability and data sharing among the RECs. It would also support the setting of common standards while encouraging region-specific in-depth analysis.

Diagram 4: CEWS methodology – Step 1



4 Conflict and Cooperation Analysis

The strategic conflict and cooperation analysis is based on the development of baseline data and information as detailed in chapter 3. The approach taken in this stage includes both the analysis of conflict as well as cooperation. This analysis of “structures” requires the identification of key sources of tension that have led to or are likely to lead to conflict (*root causes*). These key structural sources may be found in political, economic, security, social, religious structures; they may also be found at local, regional, national and international levels. Actor analysis focuses on identifying the main protagonists (groups, institutions, individuals) who influence (positively or negatively) the situation under analysis. The analysis of both structural causes and actors may benefit from being mapped out in tables. The analysis is informed by the country and actor profiles and resulting baselines referred to above – therefore the importance of collaboration between the analyst and the Situation Room in the definition of country and actor parameters. Once structural causes and actors are analysed and identified, the next step is dynamic analysis: identifying possible aggravating, inhibiting and triggering events and behaviour will allow for scenario development and a prognosis (see chapter 5).

This chapter explains how different forms of analysis – structural, actors, dynamic – as well as a related scenario-building lead to insights into conditions, networks and prognosis and this, in turn, results in proper *early warning* (see box 9).

Box 9: Overview – Conflict and Cooperation analysis		
Type of analysis	Tools	Output
Structural Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline • Political, security, economic & socio-cultural areas 	Root causes of conflict, and strategic conditions
Actor Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict mapping 	Interests, incentives and networks
Dynamic Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggravators • Inhibitors 	Points of potential deviation and deflection, and trends

4.1 Structural Analysis

To start with the analysis of “structures” requires the identification of the key sources of tension that have led to, or are likely to lead to, open conflict. These “key sources” of tensions may be found in security, political, economic and/or social, religious structures in the society(ies) in question. One useful approach to the development of structural analysis is a broad contextual analysis which includes history of the conflict to date as well as all features relevant to conflict analysis.

A useful tool to start the analysis is the so-called *Timeline*. This is a simple instrument that lists key events of a conflict in chronological order (see Leonhardt 2001a: 56-57). Such events may include military clashes, the recruitment of combatants, political propaganda, expulsions, famines or peace initiatives, to name but a few. In the context of the CEWS Framework it is primarily used to identify important events. But it can also be used to document and/or clarify different perspectives of the conflict. The conflict line reflects the subjective perception of the conflict as seen by the group being questioned or the desk officers involved in this exercise. This is why it is particularly well suited to distinguishing between different perspectives of a conflict. These may be the perspectives of individual parties to the conflict, or the standpoint of the central government as opposed to the standpoint of the local population, among others. It may also be the different perspectives of analysts. It is seen again and again that different groups remember different events, and that they have different explanations for particular developments such as the escalation of the conflict or the conclusion of a peace accord. Timelines are also helpful in the analysis of complex conflicts that are taking place simultaneously between a large number of actors and at different locations.

Yet, there are a number of methodological problems – a result of the conflation between data of a structural nature and dynamic data of a more proximate nature; in the absence of a rigorous weighting technique, on what basis is the relative weighting of different levels and different sectors undertaken? The conflation between factors of a structural nature (for example economic exclusion or globalisation) and factors of a proximate nature (for example decline in foreign investment or sharp decline in commodity prices) may lead to a degree of confusion as regards the development of policy and response options at a later stage. The issue (both practical as well as theoretical) of how to differentiate between “structural”/“root” and “proximate” causes must therefore be discussed prior to the development of SCAs. Answers to this question have diverged, often a function of a particular orientation of the author concerned as regards the most important factor or dynamic to take into account in the occurrence of conflict.

Defined broadly, “structures” are considered the “long term factors underlying violent conflict”. They are regarded as “cleavages” in the political, economic and social realms upon which the mobilisation of individuals and groups for violent conflict is often undertaken. They are regarded as “pervasive and long standing factors and differences that become built into the policies, structures and culture of a society and may create the conditions for violent conflict” (UNDG ECHA 2004: 5).

It is useful to differentiate between different geographical levels (local, regional national, international), on the one hand, and different arenas (political, security, economic, social), on the other. The information gathered and preliminary analysis can

benefit from being summarised and mapped out in a table format (see table 5 with some typical, though not case specific, examples). Used in several SCAs, these tables map the data in terms of areas of focus or sectors (political, security, economic, social) as well as levels of analysis (local, national, regional, international). Once this is done, some weighting (in terms of relative importance) of the sources of tension and conflict needs to be undertaken. In addition, linkages and connections between sources of tension in different sectors and levels have to be identified.

Table 5: Root causes of conflict (examples)				
Level	Political	Security	Economic	Socio-cultural
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate governance • Marginalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proliferation of SALW • History of conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate distribution of scarce resources (land, water, ...) • Imbalance of opportunities • Population growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problematic histories of identity groups (e. g. ethnic groups)
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy of colonialism • Inadequate governance • Exclusionary national ideologies • Ethnic geography (e. g. North-South conflict) • Inter-group politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of security at boundaries • Strategy of the centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to and control of oil or other resources • Inadequate distribution of scarce resources • Discriminatory economic systems / imbalance of opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns of cultural discrimination
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacies of colonialism (e.g. contested boundaries) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prehistory of bilateral conflict 		
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse interests of neighbouring country(ies) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural and other resources • Interests of multinational companies 	

Source: Partly adapted from Michael E. Brown 1996. Introduction. In: M.E. Brown. The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict. Cambridge Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, p.14 (= CSIA Studies in International Security).

4.2 Actor Analysis

Actor analysis – sometimes also called stakeholder analysis – focuses on identifying the main protagonists (groups, institutions, individuals) who influence or are affected by the situation under analysis. It assesses their interests and motivations, and also

looks into their relationships. The interest is on both the actor's potential for conflict and for cooperation. Actor analysis is meant to focus on shorter term issues and dynamics and be comprehensive in the sense of including as many internal and external relevant actors as possible. Possible actors include: governments (and within them government departments and ministries), armed and security forces, political leaders, non-state armed groups, traditional and community leaders, trade unions, political parties, businesses, other interested governments, MNCs, humanitarian and human rights organisations, etc.

In this regard DFID, recommends that the analysis for each of the actors should include:

- (1) Interests: what interests do they have in relation to the conflict and how do these interests influence the conflict? (difference between stated interests and hidden agendas)
- (2) Relations: what are the relationships between the various actors? (and perceptions)
- (3) Capacities: what capacities do they have to influence to conflict positively or negatively? (present and future resources, capacities for peace)
- (4) Peace agendas: do they have an interest in peace?
- (5) Incentives: what kind of incentives could be offered for them to choose peace?

A useful tool to answer these questions is to produce a geographical representation of interests, relationships and conflict issues – a so-called *Conflict Mapping* (based on Leonhardt 2001b: 59-62). This method entails producing a graphical representation of the conflict actors, their relationships and the respective conflict issues. As well as the parties directly involved in the conflict, this should also take account of other groups which are allied with the parties or which are able to influence them. This helps the observer to identify patterns of power, alliances, neutral third parties, potential partners for cooperation and possible points where influence could be exerted. It is therefore important to include the AU and its relationship with the various actors as well.

In order to focus *Conflict Mapping* on a particular problem area, it is essential to define certain points at the outset: (1) *what* precisely it is intended to show, (2) the point in time to which the analysis should relate (*when*), and (3) from *whose perspective* the mapping should be carried out. The networks of relationships that are identified in this process are dynamic; this means that, after a few months, the picture may be entirely different. In addition to the actors and their relationships, the issues causing the conflict between the respective partners can also be mapped. The position adopted by the more important actors can also be included in more detail, in a type of speech bubble. This is a good lead-in to an analysis of the conflict causes and issues in the dispute.

In the CEWS Handbook, the *Conflict Mapping* is used (1) to get a greater understanding of the relationships and balance of power between the parties involved in the conflict, (2) to identify potential cooperation partners and target groups and examine their position in the conflict, (3) to examine one's own position / neutrality, and (4) to identify possible points of departure for conflict management.

At a later stage, the formulation of policy and response options is depending on knowledge of the “capacities for peace” of different actors. These may refer to structures, mechanism, processes and institutions which exist in society to peacefully manage conflict (practical examples being: a strong civil society, role of traditional authorities, informal approaches to conflict resolution, etc). On a macro-level, understanding existing and potential capacities for peace can help us understand a country’s “peace-building capacity”.

Actor analysis should focus on interests and motivations, including hidden agendas, relationships, and resources – especially those the actors have at present to realise their agenda and those they still require in order to realising their agenda. This analysis should also take into account different geographical arenas, ranging from the local to the international. The UN inter-agency framework offers a useful way to map the capacities of different actors. The following table shows an actor mapping tool adapted to the needs of the AU (see table 6):

Table 6: Actor mapping						
	Actor	Stated or apparent interests	Non-stated interests	Connects with / contradicts with	Resources they have	Resources they need
Local						
Sub-national						
National						
Regional						
International						

4.3 Dynamic Analysis

Once the structural causes of conflict are known and the actors and their different interests as well as peace capacities have been mapped, one needs to turn to the analysis of conflict dynamics. Basically there are two dimensions: so-called “proximate” causes (or aggravating factors) and conflict triggers which cause the outbreak of violent conflict.

Proximate causes are regarded as “factors likely to contribute to a climate conducive to violent conflict or its further escalation” (often used examples include uncontrolled security sector, human rights abuses, population movements, etc). Again, use is made of - Brown’s example of proximate causes considered in the context of the structural causes above (see table 7):

Table 7: Proximate causes of conflict (examples)	
Fields	Principle causes
Political factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political transitions • Increasingly exclusionary ideologies • Growing inter-group competition • Intensifying leadership struggles
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instable states • Changing intra-state military balance
Economic / social factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mounting economic problems • Growing economic inequities • Fast paced development and modernisation • Changing demographic patterns
Cultural / perceptual factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensifying patterns of cultural discrimination • Hate-speech

In addition to proximate causes of conflict, it takes a case specific trigger to turn a constellation of structural and agency related facts into a situation where violent conflict actually is breaking out. *Triggers* are thus understood as single acts, events or their anticipation that may set off or escalate violent conflict (examples could include coup attempts, sudden changes of government, a forthcoming election, assassinations, sudden movements of large numbers of people, spill-over effects from neighbouring countries or the anticipation of such effects, the discovery of new mineral resources, etc.). However, sometimes a conflict might not be triggered by a single identifiable act, but just start on the basis of aggravating factors. Also, certain aggravators can act as triggers.

Likewise, certain activities, events or perceptions can work against the escalation of conflict or the occurrence of violence – these factors are called *inhibitors*. This can be incentives to the conflicting parties (like the prospect of becoming part of a power-sharing arrangement), strong non-conflict interests of a third-party to the conflict, the threat of an intervention, etc.

This analysis also takes into account the responses of other international actors. In a first instance, responses of international actors in a variety of fields is investigated – including in areas such as humanitarian relief, development assistance, political cooperation, security, etc. In the case of the UN framework, a recommendation is made to build on the thematic and level-based categories used for identifying structural and proximate conflict factors as well as to include the role of external actors in collaborative processes (such as the CAP or the CCA/PRSP). In the case of DFID, the recommendation is that international actors (donor countries, other interested countries, regional and international organisations) as well as development actors (with the aim of assessing the capacity to respond to and potential for influencing conflict) are to be analysed so as to “then focus on the role of development interventions and their interactions with conflict”.

Both aggravators and inhibitors can be summarised at different geographical levels and in different fields or arenas (see table 8).

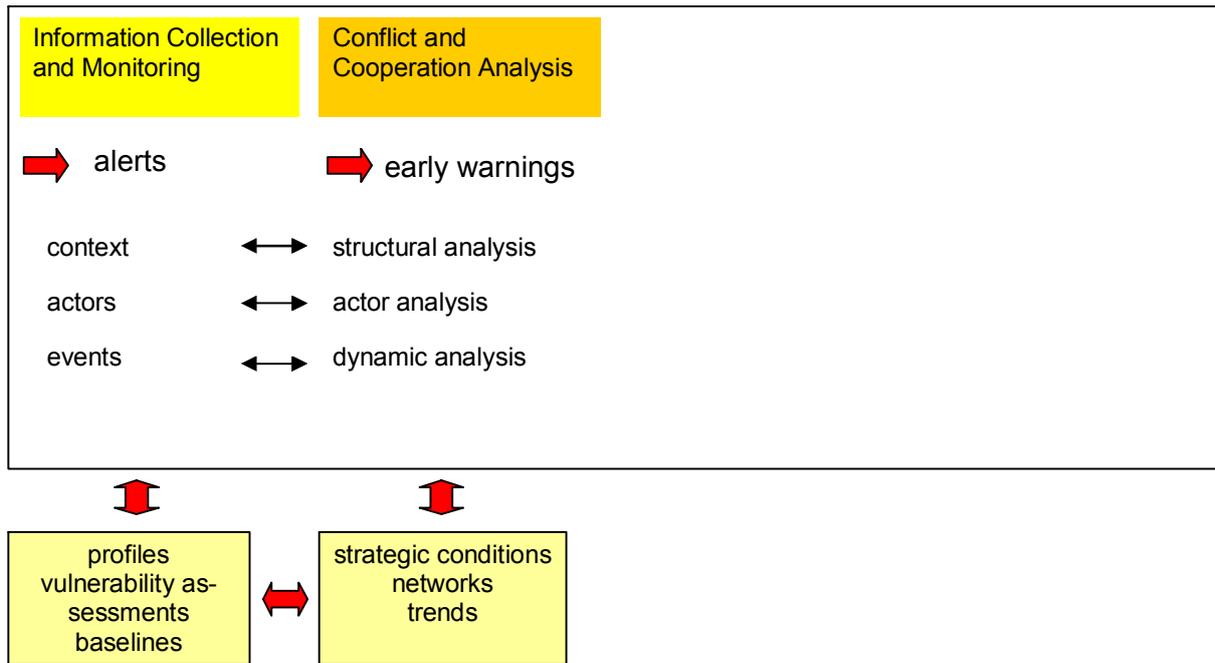
Table 8: Aggravating and inhibiting factors				
Arena	Political	Security	Economic	Social
Level				
Local	... / / / / ...
National	... / / / / ...
Regional	... / / / / ...
International	... / / / / ...

4.4 Harmonisation and Coordination

Although the RECs have been engaged throughout the CEWS formation process, the details of system (AU-RECs) inter-operability have yet to be jointly resolved.

To summarise chapter 4 on *Conflict and Cooperation Analysis* (see diagram 5) explained how different forms of in-depth analysis – structural, actor, dynamic – lead to insights into the strategic conditions, nodes of influence and event trends in any particular situation. These more detailed analyses are done on a regular basis or triggered by the alerts from the previous stage. In either case, they generate early warnings as appropriate. This chapter provides a set of tools and processes by which the analyst can arrive at a comprehensive and holistic understanding of particular situations, enabling, in turn, the development of early warning analysis.

Diagram 5: CEWS methodology – Step 2



5 Formulating Options

Recall that the process of information collection and monitoring “begins” with continuously observing events and actors in their unique contexts. However, the process also “ends” with these observations. In other words, the information collection and monitoring process is continuous, and it merges into the regular analysis of the data driven baselines, keying off of the alerts that represent deviations and inflections from the past. Likewise, the analytic process is continuous and feeds into the process of formulating response options. Ideally, of course, the formulation process anticipates conditions in a proactive mode as opposed to simply offering reactive responses.

The three processes of information collection and monitoring, strategic analysis and the formulation of response options are continuous, iterative and interactive. They are also integrated in the sense that each feeds into or may be triggered by the others. These alerts may take the form of a warning that something negative may be imminent or the form of evidence that something positive is likely. Each of these negative and positive alerts needs to be evaluated in a timely manner and in the unique context in which it is occurring.

It is these contextualized and actor specific negative and positive polarity conditions or scenarios that drive the formulation of response options. Thus the formulation process begins with the specification of alternative scenarios representing a worse (to be avoided) and best (desired) case, and the default status quo condition that marks the starting point or conditions as described in the strategic analysis. Once these scenarios are outlined, alternative paths leading from the current conditions to the desired state can be specified. This paths specification guides and informs the formulation of response options. However, an evaluation process is also needed to monitor progress and to facilitate corrections as the events and/or interventions take place. It is this continuous evaluation that feeds back into the information collection and monitoring that “begins” the ongoing strategic analysis.

5.1 Scenario-Building

Once strategic conditions and networks of influence are identified (corresponding to structural analysis and actor analysis), and dynamic analysis of proximate events developed, the analyst can produce scenarios as regards possible conflict dynamics (see box 10). Is the conflict likely to escalate, de-escalate or remain at the same level of intensity? And what needs to be done if these things happen?

A basic type scenario is called the *demonstration scenario*, pioneered by Herman Kahn, Harvey DeVeerd and others at RAND in the early days of systems analysis. As noted by Robert Clark, “in this scenario, the writer first imagines a particular end state in the future and then describes a plausible path of events that could lead to that state. The *branch-point* version of this type of scenario identifies decisive events along the path (events that represent points at which key choices determine the outcome)”. This notion of branch points is very important for the purposes of scenario

building as part of the CEWS methodology. By mapping out all the possible paths by which a specific situation (scenario) can materialise, the early warning officer/analyst becomes sensitive to these key moments – as they ultimately provide opportunities for preventing, diverting or facilitating a particular set of processes.

Box 10: Scenarios

“Scenarios are used primarily for planning and decision-making. Scenario planning is normally used to explore possible future conditions given a set of assumptions. Each scenario represents a distinct, plausible picture of a segment of the future.

Because it is impossible to know the future precisely, the solution is to create several scenarios. These scenarios are, essentially, specially constructed stories about the future, each one modelling a distinct, plausible outcome.”

Source: Robert Clark 2004. Intelligence Analysis: A Target Centric Approach. Washington DC: CQ Press, p. 173.

In order to structure policy and response options around *demonstration scenarios* it is useful to focus on three basic scenarios: (1) a worst case scenario, (2) the continuation of the status quo and (3) a best case scenario. The worst case scenario refers to a feared state of affairs, a deterioration of the present situation; the status quo describes the situation as identified through the Conflict and Cooperation Analysis detailed above; and the best case scenario outlines a desired, but also attainable situation. The case-description then has to be matched with a preliminary outline of goals or strategies – what kind of activities by whom would contribute towards the realisation or achievement of the described scenario? – what we referred to path. Finally, recommended *courses of action* (COAs) which are based on actual mandate, instruments and political will should be attached to each of the three scenarios. In order to build any of the three scenarios, the analyst will take into account a number of key questions to be asked (see box 11):

Box 11: How to build a scenario

- Defining the *problem*: What is the key question the scenario aims to address? Is the focus on behavioural variables, such as a particular actor or coalition of actors and his or their strategies? Or is it on structural variables, such as access to minerals or an even distribution of wealth?

Identifying key *forces*: What is the nature of the factors at play, are they political, social, economic or cultural? What is the single most important critical force? How do the other forces affect this most critical one? What are the critical trends in the development of the conflict?

Note: This is different from discussing the root causes of conflict although they tend to exert path dependent influences which are likely to structure the strategies of the conflict parties.

- Identifying *actors*: Who are the important actors? What are their interest and resources? What are the incentives for them to go for any of the three sce-

narios? What are the disincentives? What is the balance between conflict triggering and conflict inhibiting factors?

Note: On this point, the analyst will rely on the stakeholder analysis developed before and adapt it accordingly.

- Identifying possible *solutions*: How do the instruments available to the AU relate to the conflict parties? How do the interests of Member States affect the potential use of these instruments? What course of action needs to be taken (1) to prevent an escalation, (2) to sustain and (3) to improve on present levels of conflict? What course of action can realistically be taken?

Source: Based on Robert Clark 2004. Intelligence Analysis: A Target Centric Approach. Washington DC: CQ Press, pp. 177-181.

The primary utility of scenario building for the formulation of response options lies in the specification of the key or decisive events along the paths that shape the outcomes. The specification of these paths represents the range of response options for courses of action to be considered in any given situation. The process of specifying these alternative paths helps illuminates opportunities in terms of timing as well as in terms of the key networks or nodes of influence that can help achieve the desired outcomes.

This process of path specification may be characterised as reverse engineering in that one begins with a desired or undesired end state (scenario) and then working backwards from this point, the analyst identifies the critical branches in the path that connect the end state to the present condition. And these can only be fully understood on the basis of a prior SCA, as detailed in chapter 4, whereby the analyst has identified the structural root causes, key actors, conflict dynamics etc. In this way, one can formulate courses of action or response options that are likely to be successful in moving from the present condition to a given scenario's desired state, or to prevent movement towards an undesired state.

5.2 Formulating Response Options

Once scenarios of desired and undesired developments have been built, the formulation of response options can begin. This process of formulation links the present to the desired (or undesired) scenarios and is informed by the data driven analysis. Alternative paths are specified that begin with the current conditions and highlight the choice points along the way. These points serve as markers of progress and can guide the formulation of response options. The formulation of options is also based – on past experience and a wide range of principle courses of action as detailed in the *PSC Protocol* (see table 9):

Table 9: Principle response options as detailed in the PSC Protocol

Actor	Response options
Chairperson of the Commission Commissioner of Peace and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bring issues to the attention of the PSC and / or the Panel of the Wise • follow-up PSC decisions , including decisions on the deployments • request action by the Panel of the Wise • appoint and send special envoys and special representatives • follow-up on decisions of the Assembly • prepare and issue comprehensive and periodic reports and other documents • issue communiqués/press releases • act through the RECs
PSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convene meetings • deploy peace support missions, and deal with all related aspects, including observer and monitoring missions, demobilisation and disarmament missions, preventive deployment, provide humanitarian assistance • recommend, to the Assembly, intervention in a Member State • institute sanctions • promote harmonisation, coordination and cooperation with the RECs • initiate partnership with the United Nations and its agencies • follow-up progress of Member States on democracy, human rights and governance • examine threats to the independence and sovereignty of Member States • request action by the Panel of the Wise • submit regular reports to the Assembly • establish subsidiary bodies, such as ad hoc committees etc. for mediation, conciliation or inquiry • harmonise and coordinate the activities of the RECs
Panel of the Wise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet to review situations of potential conflict • issue statements • advice the PSC and, through the PSC, the Assembly • report to the PSC and, through it, to the Assembly
<i>Source: PSC Protocol.</i>	

5.3 Validation

Validation of the dynamic analyses described above ideally entails testing of the recommended response option or Course of Action (COA) in a similar past situation. To the extent that the historical conditions are analogous to the present, such validations can lend insight into likely levels of likely future success for alternative COAs. In

other words, the process of validation can help illuminate the lessons learned, both positive and negative, from past interventions. For example, if the baselines for pastoral conflict reveal seasonal fluctuations in the raiding at a particular time of year, one can assess the prior attempts to address these raids to identify the most efficacious response option under similar conditions in subsequent seasons.

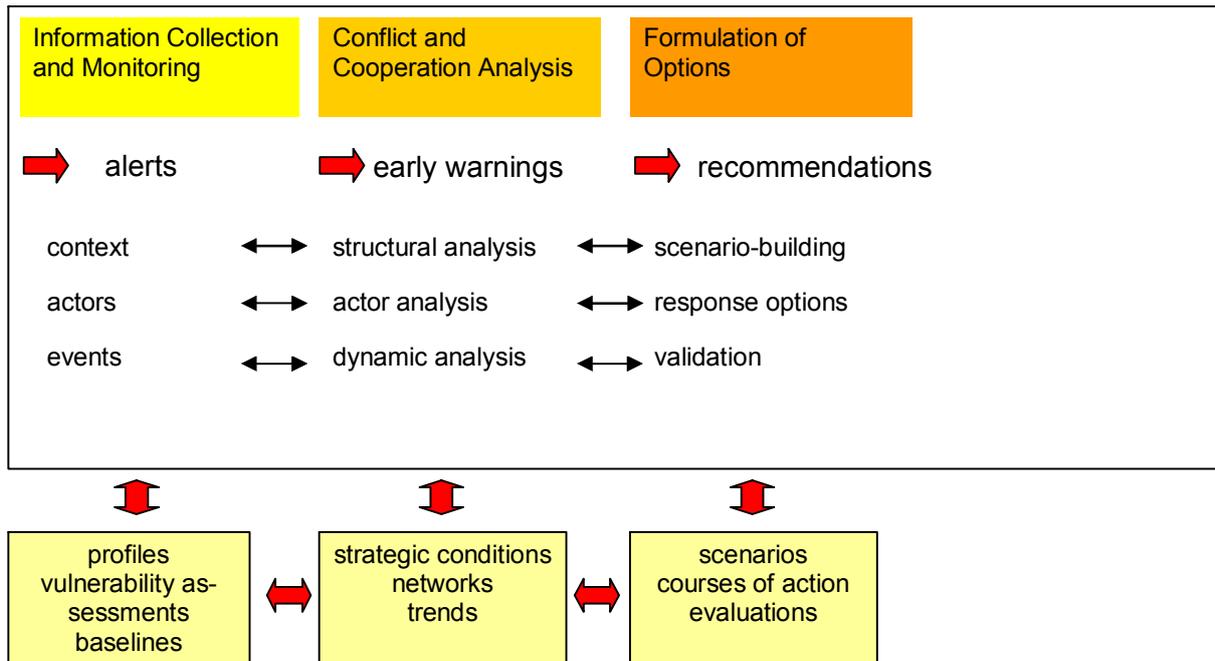
To formalise this validation procedure, analysts should track each course of action taken and its outcome as well as the conflicts themselves. This approach offers feedback to the entire process beyond the basic data quality control procedures that are typically associated with validation. To be sure, validation certainly includes on-going quality control of the data collection process. Here we simply add the validation of the response options to integrate the lessons learned from the past.

5.4 Harmonisation and Coordination

This section, written at the beginning of September 2007, necessarily is incomplete because although the RECs have been engaged throughout the CEWS formation process, the details of system (AU-RECs) inter-operability have yet to be jointly resolved.

To summarise this chapter on *Formulating Options*, it was stressed that the development of alternate scenarios and paths of influences through which they may be realised is critical for the formulation of policy and response options (see diagram 6). The chapter focused on the development of a worse and a best case scenario. Next the specification of the influences towards these scenarios would be done as a means for discerning progress towards the desired end state. This path specification also serves as a means for validating the policies and options prescribed by defining measures of success.

Diagram 6: CEWS methodology – Step 3



6 Reporting and Interaction with Decision-makers

6.1 AU Reports

The ability of the CEWS to engage AU decision-makers appropriately has been a fundamental concern in the development of this Framework. As noted in chapter 1 above, the purpose of the information and analysis produced by the CEWS is to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts by advising AU decision-makers on threats to peace and security and recommend best courses of action. In this regard, written reports have been, and will continue to be a primary tool by which the CEWS engages the various levels of decision-making at the AU, including the Commissioner of Peace and Security, the Chairperson of the Commission and the PSC.

As described in the chapters above, every iterative step of the CEWS methodology results in a number of interim analytical products – represented in orange in Diagram 1. These interim analytical products include country and actor profiles, vulnerability assessment and event baselines (Step 1 on information collection and monitoring); strategic conflict and cooperation assessments, including strategic conditions, networks and trends' analysis (Step 2 on conflict and cooperation analysis); and, finally, scenario building, options development and evaluations (Step 3 on formulation of options).

As interim analytical products, the above forms the basis for the production by the CEWS of a number of reports and other outputs which are both statutorily defined in the PSC Protocol and the Roadmap as well as stem from current best practice within the organisation. As a result, the CEWS improves on a number of existing report types and outputs such as the “News Highlights”, “Situation Reports”, “Mission Reports” and “Flash Reports”, and, in addition, introduces a new type of report – the “Early Warning Report”. The table below (table 10) illustrates the various report types and other outputs and the

As regards data collection and event monitoring, the CEWS has developed a primary output in the form of the *Africa News Brief*. The Africa News Brief provides a fully automated news clipping service (open source International and African media sources) and has the capacity to analyse news reports in graphical and geographical forms. Some of its features include:

- *NewsBrief*: provides a summary of news stories on Africa from around the world, and it is automatically updated every 10 minutes, 24 hours a day.
- *NewsExplorer*: aggregates, analyses and visually displays news reports;
- *NewsAnalyzer*: provides analysis of violent incidents and events compiled from news reports, including deaths and kidnappings;
- Real time alert system via e-mail and SMS;
- Graphical analysis of the number of news on a particular theme or a country and also the number of violent incidents, etc.

Table 10: CEWS reports and other outputs

group	Situation Room	Desk Officers / Analysts	Field Missions	Early Warning Officers	Chairperson of the Commission	Peace and Security Council
CEWS report/output types						
Africa News Brief (<i>continuous monitoring</i>)	X					
News Highlights (<i>push and pull daily and weekly</i>)	X					
Daily Reports (<i>Monday to Friday</i>)	X		X			
Flash Reports (<i>when required</i>)	X		x	X		
Briefing Notes (<i>when required</i>)	X	X		X	X	X
Early Warning Reports (<i>under implementation</i>)	X			X	X	X
Chairperson Reports to the PSC (<i>when required</i>)		X		X	X	X
Chairperson Reports to the PSC on Peace and Security in Africa's Regions (<i>2/3 year</i>)		X		X	X	X
Chairperson/PSC Reports to Assembly of HoS (as above, <i>2/3 year</i>)		X		X	X	X
PSC Report to the Pan-African Parliament on Peace and Security in Africa (<i>1 per year</i>)		X		X	X	X

The “Africa News Brief” builds on the practice and lessons learned on an earlier output (which will be gradually phased out), *News Highlights*. Over the years, the News Highlights has become a valuable and indispensable instrument for the monitoring of events across the African continent. As a news clipping service compiled entirely from open media sources, the News Highlights are produced seven days a week, issued at 8a.m. in the morning and distributed to AU staff, Member States, RECs, International Organizations and other relevant users. Typically focusing on 3 to 6 countries per issue, the News Highlights may include information on the political, military, security, humanitarian, human rights and civilian situations on priority countries and regions.

In the fulfillment of its data/information gathering and collection, the CEWS also issues a *Daily Report* which is compiled mainly from daily situation reports received from AU Field Missions and is produced from Monday to Friday and issued at 3 p.m. Distribution of the Daily Report is limited to AU staff, including staff at the PSD, the Bureau of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson and Field Missions. As noted in chapter 3 above, a primary source of information for the CEWS is that produced by AU personnel deployed in AU field missions. The information and analysis of situations, events and incidents at field level is formally communicated by Field Missions to AU headquarters in the form of *Field Mission Reports*. As the CEWS framework is gradually implemented, the inclusion of these reports as part of the development of data driven analysis and continuous monitoring is critical. In this regard, the stan-

standardization of the structure of Field Mission Reports currently being undertaken will enable the incorporation of the data produced at field level into the CEWS system in an appropriate way. The Daily Report is a critical monitoring and dissemination instrument which enables all AU staff focusing on peace and security issues to stay abreast of the situations where the AU has a physical presence. When required, and in addition to the information provided by AU Field Missions, the Daily Report may include additional information from open sources (on political, military, security, humanitarian and human rights situations). At the end of every week, the CEWS compiles a weekly summary of the Daily Report focusing on high priority countries and issues, titled the *Weekly Update*.

To strengthen its ability to provide on-going and near real-time monitoring, the CEWS has developed a specific kind of report titled the *Flash Report*. Flash reports are issued in the event of an important development/ incident that warrants the immediate attention of relevant AU personnel. These are brief narrative (descriptive) reports which may be followed by follow-up reports if and when additional information becomes available. Flash reports are distributed to a limited number of AU staff, including the desk officer concerned, the Head of CMD as well as the Director and Commissioner of Peace and Security. As this framework is gradually implemented, these Flash Reports will become the “Alerts” described in Chapter 3 above – the primary vehicle for the communication of these and other kinds of deviations on CEWS-monitored indicators to early warning officers/analysts and desk officers. These alerts will then prompt, if required, the production of Early Warning Reports (see below).

As concerns conflict and cooperation analysis - the function of analysts, early warning officers and desk officers – the *Briefing Note* (also termed *Background Note*) has become an important instrument in the communication of contextual and background analysis with the purpose of informing key AU decision-makers on on-going situations and events on the African continent. With the implementation of the CEWS framework and, in particular, the introduction of Country and Actor Profiles as well as Strategic Conflict Assessments, the process by which analysts, early warning officers and desk officers produce these Briefing Notes – often under time constraints – will become more systematized and routinely incorporated as outputs of the CEWS. As noted in chapter 4 above, the process by which SCAs are developed and updated on a regular if situation specific basis will enable these staff to more easily provide AU decision-makers with the required up to date contextual and background information required. This also applies to cases where AU decision-makers specifically require the analyst to develop policy options and recommendations – as the regular updating of the dynamic analysis and policy options components of the framework will enable a more systematic approach to the production of these specific outputs.

The CEWS methodology also introduces a new type of report, the *Early Warning Report*. This is an entirely new type of report which becomes possible due to the introduction of a comprehensive and real-time monitoring function. These reports may be prompted by, as noted in Chapter 3, a deviation of some kind on one of the indicators being monitored by CEWS Situation Room staff (but also as important by a specific alert issued by a Field Mission or information sent directly to the analyst/desk officer from other sources). The subject of the alert which is issued by the Situation Room and communicated to analysts may then – on a case by case basis and subject to the interpretation/analysis developed by CEWS staff – be developed

as an Early Warning Report. In this report, the analyst addresses the specific deviation, event or incident directly and explores (1) the significance of the incident within its specific context and (2) possible courses of action for the AU. Typically, the early warning report will be composed of a description of the event in question (includes source referencing), a brief background (including previous AU engagement with the issue/country/actor) and a detailed section on policy options, including possible scenarios and recommended courses of action specifically directed at relevant AU decision-makers. The Early Warning Report may also serve as an instrument on the basis of which and through the appropriate channels the specific issue or incident is tabled for discussion by the PSC – by communicating to other Divisions, to the Commissioner on Peace and Security and to the Chairperson the urgency of a specific issue or event.

As emphasised throughout this document, the development of appropriate modes of engagement by the CEWS with the Chairperson of the Commission is key to the fulfilment of the CEWS primary functions. The Chairperson's pivotal role in efforts and initiatives to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts – by bringing to the attention of the Peace and Security Council any matter which may threaten peace and security in the Continent – require the CEWS to contribute in an efficient and timely manner to the formal as well as informal communication between both institutions on peace and security matters. In this regard, *Chairpersons' Reports to the PSC* have become a primary instrument – and the CEWS Handbook builds on its strengths and tested practice. The purpose of the Chairperson's Reports to the PSC is to allow for early and preventative action if required, on-going monitoring and management of situations/events/issues, the tabling of initiatives and strategic planning. In the development of these reports, the information, analysis and policy options generated by the CEWS (as Early Warning Reports, Background/Briefing Papers, etc) are critical components as they contribute with a level of structured early warning focused sections which should strengthen the development of appropriate policy and response options.

In addition, the Chairperson of the Commission is tasked with presenting regular reports to the PSC as well as to the Assembly of Heads of State (two or three a year) addressing the overall peace and security situation in the five regions of the Continent (West, Central, South, North and East). Again, the CEWS methodology allows for a degree of systematisation of its contributions to the *Chairpersons' Report to the PSC on Peace and Security in Africa* as well as *Chairpersons' Report to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on Peace and Security in Africa* as the strategic conflict assessments developed as Step 2 of this framework are ideal sources for bringing to light the type of analysis required by these institutions.

The implementation of additional strategies for engaging decision-makers and in particular, the development of an effective outreach strategy in support of key AU structures as well as other stakeholders outside the AU is also critical priority. In this regard, the ability to simultaneously reach as well as integrate the views, policy initiatives and recommendations of a number of key AU institutions is critical (systematic feedback loop). These include, as per the PSC Protocol, the Pan-African Parliament. The presentation of an annual report to the Pan-African Parliament on peace and security in the continent as well as other reports upon request will require the implementation of this framework. A similar type of relationship is called for as regards the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, while particular focus is given in the *PSC Protocol* to the relationship with the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Pre-

vention, Management and Resolution, with the United Nations and other international organisations and with Civil Society Organisations (see section below).

Finally, this Framework also prioritises other types of interaction (more informal) with decision-makers such as on-demand briefings and unstructured interaction – not in prejudice of formal lines of communication. In this regard, the Situation Room, in its role as “Point-of-Contact”, plays a critical role providing a “point of contact” service between the AU and its various field missions, Member States as well as other Organisations; answering requests for information and inquiries from a wide variety of stakeholders as well as serving as the main point of contact between the CMD and UNDPKO.

6.2 Other Types of Interaction: RECs and CEWS partners

As noted in several of the chapters above, the effective functioning of the CEWS as an open-source system and its efficacy in support of conflict prevention, management and resolution efforts in Africa requires close interaction and collaboration with a wide variety of stakeholders beyond AU structures. International organisations, research centres, academic institutions, NGOs, CBOs and other civil society organisations are, in this regard, particularly important. As a result, it should be recalled that the PSC Protocol specifically tasks the AU Commission with undertaking efforts at strengthening collaboration with these organisations in order to facilitate the effective functioning of the CEWS.

This section explores some of the dimensions of the interaction between the CEWS and these other stakeholders. While at each stage of the CEWS methodology discussed above, opportunities for collaboration and interaction were discussed, in this section we will focus on interactions with these organisations with the specific purpose of supporting the AU’s decision-making process. And in this regard, because they are constituent parts of the overall security architecture of the Union and, more specifically of the CEWS, one must first start by exploring additional dimensions of the AU’s interaction with the RECs. As noted in several of the sections above, strengthening the working relationship between the AU and the RECs in the field of early warning and conflict prevention requires the establishment of a close partnership, one based on collaboration and coordination of efforts and activities, on division of labour, functionality and cost-efficiency. The development of an MoU which guides the interaction between the AU and the RECs on issues of peace and security has been a very important development in this regard.

For example, in chapters 3, 4 and 5 above, the possible roles that RECs can play in the provision of information, analysis and the development of policy and response options was emphasised and the modalities of this exchange with the AU explored. Yet, as noted, this is not a one way street – in fact, the various ways in which the CEWS contributes to the RECs’ own peace and security related activities were also discussed. These included, among others, the sharing of CEWS information (country and actor profiles or the *Africa Newsbrief* for example) as well as sharing and co-development of strategic conflict and cooperation assessments or exploration of policy options with the RECs.

Beyond the development and implementation of a system of regular exchange of information and the creation of AU-REC liaison offices at both the AU and in each of the relevant RECs, the convening of periodic and on-demand meetings which bring together the RECs and the AU on issues and situations of mutual concern is also required. This is particularly relevant as regards the participation of the RECs in the discussion of questions brought before the PSC – specifically called for in the PSC Protocol whenever those questions are being addressed by a Regional Mechanism. This is a very important provision of the PSC Protocol and one that must be proactively explored as it presents an important opportunity for collaboration and coordination through the development of concerted policy options.

Furthermore, in defining the Rules of Procedure of the PSC, the PSC Protocol allows for “any international organisation or civil society organisation involved and/or interested in a conflict or a situation under consideration by the PSC, to be invited to participate, without the right to vote, in the discussion” [Article 8 (10, c)]. This provision assures that stakeholders beyond AU structures and RECs can play a decisive role in AU/CEWS activities. In fact, the PSC Protocol specifically calls for the establishment of a “strong partnership for peace and security” with relevant international organisations and the encouragement of “non-governmental organisations, community-based and other civil society organisations, particularly women’s organisations”, to actively participate in efforts towards peace in Africa.

The CEWS methodology recognises that international organisations, NGOs, the media, human rights groups, academia, community-based organisations, think-tanks are simultaneously primary sources of information, experts on analysis as well as basic response partners – as a result, the identification of key civil society partners and their involvement in the development and implementation of the CEWS has been essential. In this regard, a number of specific strategies for civil society participation in the CEWS were detailed in Issue Paper No. 3 on “Civil Society Participation in Conflict Prevention in Africa”. Some of these have been captured in box 12:

Box 12: Strategies for civil society participation in the CEWS

“The first critical step for the involvement of civil society in the AU’s conflict prevention strategy is the establishment of a focal point within the AU Commission, to coordinate civil society inputs into AU’s Early Warning System, in particular, and the larger AU’s peace and security agenda in general. CIDO has been very active as the focal point for civil society activities within the Commission. CIDO and the PSD could, therefore, further strengthen their collaboration to ensure that credible CSOs, Non-Governmental Organizations, Community-based Organizations and other non state actors are given the opportunity to brief, address or make submissions to the PSC within the framework of Article 20 of the PSC Protocol on urgent and demanding continental issues.

In this regard, both CIDO and PSD should work out the details of Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct that will guide CSOs’ contributions to the PSC, including procedures for making requests for submissions to the PSC, how these inputs can be processed, the format of presentation and recommendations for processing outcomes.

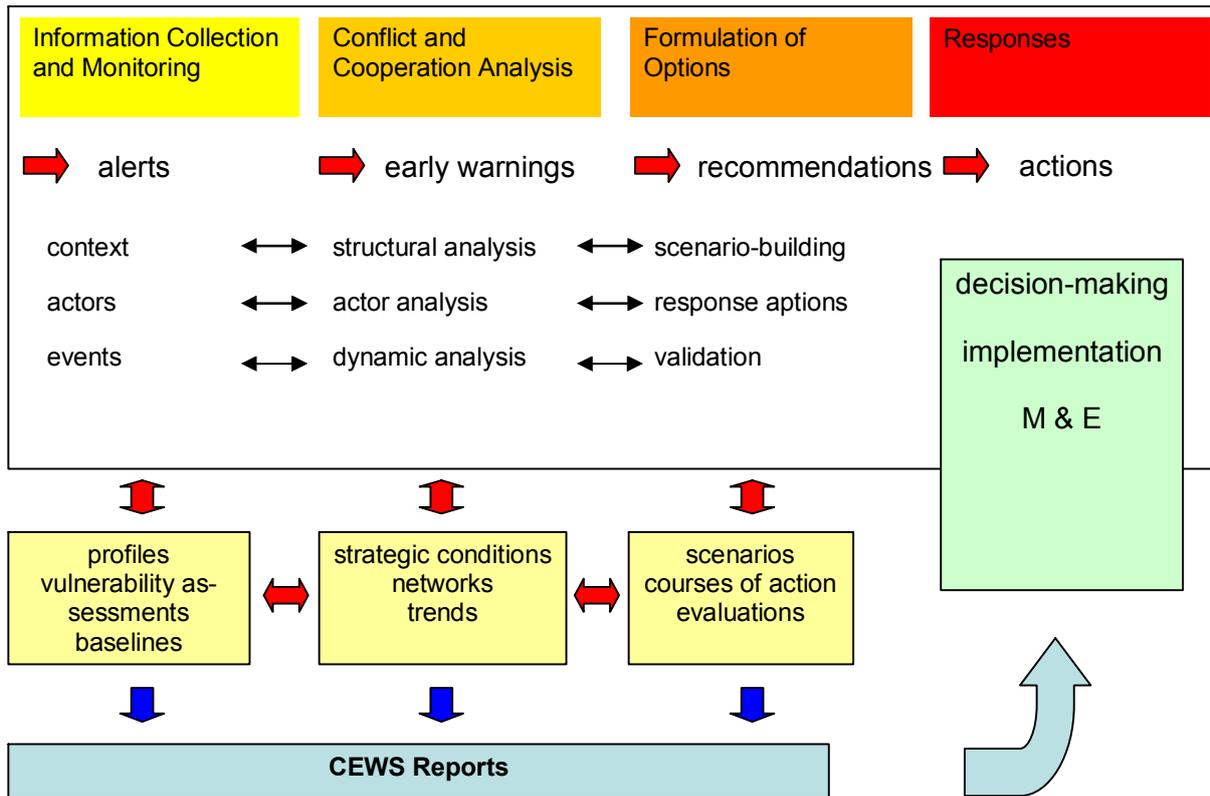
Moreover, ECOSOCC provides another window for structured engagement of civil society with the PSC through the prerogative of offering advisory opinions to all organs of the African Union. CIDO and PSD could, through further collaboration, make use of this ECOSOCC channel to evolve a subsidiary or complementary methodology for receiving and utilizing inputs from CSOs to specifically serve the needs of the CEWS and broader issues of peace and security issues.”

Source: AU Meeting of Governmental Experts on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention 2006. Kempton Park, South Africa, 17-19 December. Issue Paper No. 3: Civil Society Participation in Conflict Prevention in Africa: An Agenda for Action. African Union, PSD/EW/EXP/5(I).

Finally, close cooperation and continued interaction with the United Nations and its agencies, but in particular the Security Council (as the institution with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security) and the Office of the Secretary-General must equally be pursued. Periodic meetings and regular consultations on issues of peace, security and stability in Africa as well as the invitation of UN system organisations to address the PSC on issues of common interest are called for in the PSC Protocol. Because of the critical importance of the United Nations system (as a key decision and policy-maker with a considerable implementation presence at regional, national and sub-national levels in Africa), the ability of the CEWS as an open-source based system to adequately reach as well as integrate the analysis, policy initiatives and recommendations of the United Nations and other international organisations has been provided for (i.e. an example of this regards the need to integrate early warning information/analysis concerning emerging natural and humanitarian disasters and situations of conflict produced by OCHA).

This chapter on *Reporting and Interaction with Decision-Makers*, focused on reporting and interaction with decision-makers (see diagram 7). It outlined how to link AU specific audiences and specific types of reports with actionable conditions and nodes of influence. It also illustrated how this finally allows to come up with recommendations for action (or policy and response options).

Diagram 7: Summary of the CEWS methodology



7 Further Issues

This last chapter focuses on matters arising from introducing the CEWS methodology. These relate to quality assurance in terms of Monitoring and Evaluation, training needs, data as well as institutional issues, and the adaptation to future requirements.

7.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to maintain the quality of the CEWS methodology, to integrate lessons learned while running the system and to provide for further improvements of this continental mechanism, a number of quality assurance measures need to be taken: (1) The Strategic Conflict Assessments produced by the Conflict Management Division will be regularly assessed, both internally and with the assistance of external independent “peer reviewers.” Analysts, Desk and Early Warning Officers as well as Situation Room personnel will review the process of information collection and monitoring with a view to optimizing the availability of critical sources and improving country profiles, vulnerability assessments and country baselines. (2) The CMD will also review on a regular basis the different CEWS reports with a view of enhancing analysis on strategic conditions, networks and trends in particular cases of conflict. (3) The CMD will also evaluate constantly the process of options formulation with a view of generating best practice and lessons learned-type of knowledge regarding the building of scenarios, the linkage between scenarios and response options as well as the process of validation. (4) For this purpose, the CMD will periodically interact with the principle users of the CEWS methodology to produce demand analysis and assess the appropriateness of CEWS products. (5) The CMD will periodically assess questions of inter-operability between the AU and the RECs with regard to the CEWS. (6) Finally the CEWS staff should hold an annual meeting to allow for critical and constructive assessments of CEWS operations.

7.2 Training

Different levels and methods of training are critical to maintain and improve levels of individual and institutional capacity of the CEWS. To preserve ownership and sustain the CEWS it is absolutely vital that this training is conducted by the CMD itself, and not outsourced. While implementing CEWS, Analysts as well as Desk and Early Warning Officers need to be mentored in terms of analysis and option formulation. Likewise SitRoom staff needs to be mentored on SOPs specific to them. Training should include orientation modules as well as periodic on-the-job training exercises.

To fully integrate and harmonise the CEWS, joint forms of training should be provided CMD personnel and officers from the RECs and partner organisations who work at the various interfaces of CEWS. Most importantly, the entire CEWS staff will need to continue their professional development through regular enrolment in con-

tinuing education opportunities, participating in academic and professional conferences and through subjecting their practices and findings to peer review. Only with a concerted effort to maintain their professionalism will the CEWS staff be able to lead the ongoing development of their system and adapt to the changing challenges that they will face in the coming years.

7.3 Data Issues

During the implementation stage of the CEWS, a number of questions need to be addressed which concern the sharing, exchange and ownership of data. Two other issues that need to be addressed are degree to which CEWS will rely exclusively on open sources and the degree to which CEWS results will serve strictly internal interests versus the larger interests of the African Union, including the Regional Mechanisms and Member States. Specifically, protocols for collaboration and measures to insure confidentiality of sensitive information will be paramount. In addition, procedures for controlling the dissemination of information and the harmonization of a common indicator framework jointly used by the AU and the RECs will need to be detailed.

7.4 Institutional Adaptation and Future Requirements

In the future it will be crucial to systematically address questions of operational development and sustainability of the CEWS. Among others, this includes, finance and staffing, training, monitoring and evaluation, etc. In addition, the organisational interactions with external partners need to be assessed regularly with a view to further integrating and harmonizing the CEWS.

Throughout the implementation process of the CEWS capacity-building efforts have to be taken to strengthen staff technically, analytically and operationally. Likewise, there is constant need for organisational capacity-building to allow the CEWS to become institutional sustainable. If CEWS is to be sustainable, not only must its results be timely, useful and effective, but its institutional infrastructure must anticipate future needs, financial, technical and otherwise. In other words, each step in the deployment of CEWS should be cast within a long-range plan and periodic assessments conducted to measure its continued progress.

Finally, in order to provide for a user-driven as well an independent assessment of the CEWS methodology and peer review and periodic independent reviews are strongly encouraged.

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Appendix 1: Glossary

Conflict

A relationship between two or more interdependent parties in which at least one of the parties perceives the relationship to be negative or identifies and pursues opposing interests and needs. Both parties are convinced that they are in the right. Conflicts are an essential ingredient of social change. They become dangerous when not solved in a peaceful and constructive manner.

Conflict analysis

Action-oriented analysis of the causes and dynamics of a conflict in order to identify starting points for peaceful management and transformation of the conflict.

Conflict impact assessment

Systematic observation of the positive and negative impacts of development cooperation on the dynamics of a conflict at the project and country level. The term is also used in the sense of a risk appraisal.

Conflict management

Short and medium-term activities directed at the peaceful resolution of material conflicts and relationship-based conflicts between the various parties concerned; can take place at any stage of a conflict.

Conflict prevention

A much used but frequently misunderstood term, since as a rule it is not the conflict itself which can be prevented, but rather its destructive escalation or the acute use of violence (= prevention of violence).

Crisis prevention

Activities set out over the long term to reduce structural tensions and/or to prevent the outbreak or repetition of violence (also: conflict prevention).

Early warning

Systematic observation of a latent conflict, using conflict prediction tools. The objective is to detect the signs of conflict escalation in due time (early warning) in order to initiate preventive measures (early response, early action).

Human security

This includes the protection not only against violence but also against other threats to people's physical well-being and livelihoods such as environmental destruction, disease and economic crises.

Impact

The actual consequences of an intervention – whether intentional or unintentional – for the life of the target groups and others involved, that go beyond the direct project outputs.

Mediation

Various possibilities exist for third-party intervention in favour of conflict management, ranging from the political intervention of a powerful outsider with its own interests to diplomacy between the opposing parties and "good offices". In "mediation," a neutral third party directs the process of conflict management and assists all parties involved to spell out their interests and develop "inclusive solutions". At the same time, the mediator works to strengthen the parties and helps them achieve mutual recognition so that they are increasingly able to regulate the conflict themselves.

Peace-building

Medium and long-term measures aimed at setting up mechanisms of peaceful conflict management, overcoming the structural causes of violent conflicts and thereby creating the general conditions in which peaceful and just development can take place.

Peace-keeping, peace enforcement

Observation and enforcement of the implementation of a peace accord and of agreed confidence-building measures, if necessary by military force.

Peace-making

Short-term diplomatic, political and military activities aimed at the immediate ending of violent confrontations and the conclusion of a peace accord.

Proximate conflict factors

Factors likely to contribute to a climate conducive to violent conflict or its further escalation, sometimes symptomatic of deeper problems.

Root causes of conflict

The key structural sources of tension that have led to or are likely to lead to violent conflict.

Structural conflict factors

Pervasive and long standing factors and differences that become built into the policies, structures and culture of a society and may create the pre-conditions for violent conflict.

Structural stability

"Structural stability is to be understood as a term denoting a dynamic situation of stability able to cope with the dynamics inherent in (emerging) democratic societies. Structural stability thus can be defined as a situation involving sustainable economic development, democracy and respect for human rights, viable political structures, healthy social and economic conditions, with the capacity to manage change without resorting to violent conflict" (Commission of the EU 1996).

"Structural stability embraces the interdependent and mutually-reinforcing objectives of social peace, respect or the rule of law and human rights, social and economic development, supported by dynamic and representative political institutions capable of managing change and resolving dispute without resorting to violent conflict" (OECD DAC 1997: 10).

Violence

Direct physical action by men meant to harm, hurt or kill other people.