What is conflict-in-context?

Conflict-in-context is a method of conflict resolution which is developed directly with the people whose needs shall be met.

One result of globalization is that traditional methods of conflict resolution aren’t sufficient anymore – not only in regions of crisis. If you want to work with Western methods of mediation you’ll need to adapt them to the context of the target group in order to achieve success. Every culture has its specific symbols and habits for interpreting behaviours.

Where icebergs only melt …
… the image of an iceberg as an explanatory model is inapplicable.

To a person who’s never seen one, an iceberg isn’t useful as a model to explain the causes of conflicts. A termite mound is more relevant and has a similar metaphorical imagery as an iceberg: the surface is much smaller than the invisible part, which means you have to “dig” for the causes of conflict...
Why does this approach work....?

• conflict-in-context meets the local needs:
• the facilitators work with different target groups
• the participants have already solved problems at the local and communal level
• the local conflict culture will be affirmed and enriched
• the relevant people have developed their own methods (ownership)

Here is one example of how the conflict-in-context method provides sustainable help:

Three old village chiefs rode their bicycles 30 km on a sandy road to see a local NGO in Ziguinchor, South of Sénégal. Upon their arrival they describe a conflict between two farmers and end it with this statement: “We have learned, that we have to intervene before the wood starts burning”. Which means: ... the conflict escalates.
I. Conflict-in-context – workshops for French speaking countries in Africa, Pacific Islands and Caribbean

A 1

3-6 days conflict resolution – basic workshop*

- meaning and perception of conflicts in their cultural context
- presentation and application of analysis tools
- practice of non-violence communication
- practice conflict resolution with the tools of mediation
- introduction to the «Do-No-Harm» approach by M. Anderson
- reflection on the different methods for choosing local facilitators (capacity building)

A 2

8 days train-the-trainer conflict resolution training*

- 3 days basic workshop in conflict resolution
- 2 days adaptation
- 3 days train-the-trainer
- production of a printed manual for presentation of the adapted methods

(plus 7 days of preparation before and after for research of the local conflict culture, analysis of the needs and production of a manual)

B

10 days workshop and set up “peer mediation” in school*

- 1 day presentation of the idea to the authorities (minister, mayor, teachers etc.) and initiating a committee of students and teachers
- 3 days conflict resolution workshop with teachers and authorities and integration of the learned methods in everyday life at school
- 5 days conflict resolution workshop with the teachers and elected pupils
- 1 day public presentation of the new mediators, parents, press
- coaching

(plus 5 days: analysis of needs and production of a manual for students and teachers)

C

3-5 days workshop peace-in-context training*

- reflection and definition of peace in the local context
- analysis of regional causes for armed conflicts
- exercises with personal experiences of expressing and relieving negative feelings
- revitalisation of reconciliation processes
- development of peace visions
- assessment of peacemaker(s) capacities and competencies
- set up action plan

(Possibility of a trainer’s training with an adapted manual: how to handle workshops with the resources of the participants, exercises, role play, work groups, movements and energizers)

* All workshops are available with a Ghanaian co-trainer.