

Conflict in Developing Countries

Modular value: 20 credits

Module Convenor: **Danielle Beswick** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/government-society/staff/profiles.aspx?ReferenceId=4448>)

Aims of the Module

This module provides an introduction to contemporary conflict analysis with a particular emphasis on the developing world. We will explore the debates around what security and development are, how they can be achieved and how they may be linked.

The sessions will consider whether factors such as resource wealth, chronic poverty, ethnic division and failings of governance can help to explain where conflict happens, why it happens and the forms which conflict in the developing world has taken. It raises questions about the ways we analyse conflict, encouraging reflection on how our understanding of what is important in explaining conflict (e.g.: politics, economics, identity) shapes our assumptions about what is needed to prevent or manage conflict.

You will develop skills in conflict analysis, and work as part of a group to conduct a conflict vulnerability assessment of a case study from the developing world. More broadly, using a range of case studies, the module emphasises the complexity of conflict affected environments for the theory and practice of development (explored further in term 2 in Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development) demonstrating that there is no one explanation for conflict and by extension no easy solution for those working in such environments.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module you will be able:

- Describe and explain patterns of conflict in the developing world
- Compare and contrast competing theories of violence and conflict
- Examine the linkages between conflict, security and development
- Analyse and explain the interaction between exclusion, governance, poverty and violence
- Evaluate a range of theoretical frameworks relating international relations, security and development

Teaching and learning approach

The module will be delivered in 2 hour sessions using a range of teaching and learning methods, including interactive lectures, group discussions, case studies, videos and guest speakers.

Topics covered include:

- Introduction- linking conflict, security and development
- Linking Theory and Practice Through Conflict Vulnerability Assessment
- Economic explanations for conflict: Greed & Grievance
- Political explanations for conflict: Governance and statehood
- Social explanations for conflict: Identity and Ethnographic Approaches
- Geographical explanations for Conflict: 'Bad neighbourhoods' and regional dynamics
- Characterising conflict 1: The New War Approach
- Characterising conflict 2: Shadow Economies
- Characteristics of conflict 3: Genocide and New Barbarism
- Conclusions: Recommendations for actors working in conflict affected environments

Assessment

The assessment for the module will consist of:

- A 2,000 word essay, worth 40% of the marks.
- A 3,000 word essay, worth 60% of the marks.

You may be interested in these modules:

- 20 credits - **Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/modules/post-conflict-reconstruction-development.aspx>)

You may be interested in these degrees:

- **International Development (Conflict, Security and Development)** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-development-conflict-security.aspx>)
- **International Development (with specialist pathways)** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-development.aspx>)
- **Development Management (with specialist pathways)** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/development-management.aspx>)

