

# Video Worksheet 6: Managing non-violent conflict

[Watch video here](#)

In any discussion people are likely to have different views on the topics raised. Because people care deeply about children, discussions about harms to children and how to address them can often become animated and lead to debates or arguments. One role of the facilitator is to help manage any conflict that may arise during discussions.

Disagreement is not necessarily bad. Listening to people express different views on child protection allows everyone to deepen their understanding of the issues. As people share and explore different ideas the participants may come to an agreement around some of these ideas. This is the goal of constructive dialogue.

However, when people argue about who is right or wrong or get angry with people who express a different viewpoint, this can make genuine listening and empathy very difficult. This is destructive conflict. When this kind of conflict occurs, people may leave the discussion feeling upset, and may not want to take part in future discussions. If conflict is not managed during discussions, it can also cause harm, as it could have repercussions for the community or certain members outside of the child protection process.

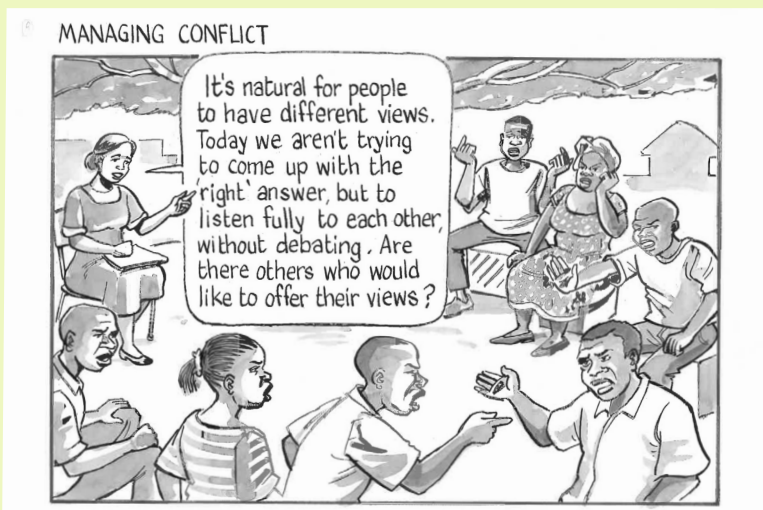
## How can we prevent or manage non-violent conflict?

The job of the facilitator is to encourage constructive dialogue and avoid or limit destructive conflict. The best way to ensure dialogues remain constructive is to prevent arguments or heated disagreements before they start.

- **Learn about social norms:** Ask around in the community to learn what people consider acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in discussions and what disruptive behaviours to expect.
- **Identify local mechanisms for resolving conflict and use these to manage conflict:** For instance, local people might use prayers, song, or humour.
- **Engage with existing community structures early on:** Communities will already have their own structures for maintaining constructive dialogue. From the very beginning, facilitators should reach out to key people and use these mechanisms to support community-led dialogues and decisions around child protection.
- **Frame discussions in a way that encourages constructive engagement:** Frame discussions and dialogues in a way that makes it clear that all ideas are welcome and that there is plenty of time to discuss together. If participants understand that the aim is to listen and learn and not seek to 'win' an argument, then there is a better chance of the community eventually agreeing on a plan.
- **Identify the common ground between participants:** If conversations become heated, point out the things that people have in common such as shared values or their care for children. Where people may feel they have opposing views, point out the similarities in their views.

## Learn More

Learn more about how to manage conflict when it does occur by reading the section on [defusing or containing destructive conflict here](#).



## Discussion and self-reflection

1. What is happening in this picture?
2. Think of a discussion that you have been part of in which there was destructive conflict. Was there anything you would do differently?
3. Now think of an example of a constructive dialogue. Perhaps a sensitive discussion that was handled well. What helped keep the dialogue constructive?